



PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

FOURTH SESSION - THIRD MEETING

TUESDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2025



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA
IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FOURTH SESSION - 11TH SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Tuesday, 11 February 2025

Parliament met at 2.00 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I welcome you to this afternoon sitting. I would like to take this opportunity to commend you for the timely consideration of the National Budget Framework Paper, which you finished last week; Financial Year 2025/2026 - 2029/2030 in line with Rule 145 of the Rules of Procedure and Section 9(8) of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015.

As I have always stressed, the legacy of the 11th Parliament will be efficiency and we must be able to fulfil the constitutional deadlines because that is what leads to our effectiveness and responsiveness.

Aware that efficiency and effectiveness are dependent on the timeliness of submission of the Budget and its related documents, I hereby guide as follows on the timeliness of the yearly budget process - in the same vein, I urge the Front Bench to timely submit the ministerial policy statements as per Rule 146(1) of the Rules of Procedure, which stipulates that by the 15th of March, the ministerial statements shall be brought to the House.

Now that the 15th of March will be a Sunday, it will require us to have the ministerial statements in the House between the 11th and 13th of March. I hope the ministers on the Front Bench will relay that information. I see the two - they are now three. I am counting them out of 83.

Additionally, I will require the Leader of the Opposition to ensure that he submits the alternative policy proposals by the 27th of March, given that the timeline of 29 March, stipulated under rule 147, also falls on a Saturday; you can do it earlier than that time.

Honourable members, as you may be aware, Section 4 of the Leadership Code Act, 2002 requires a leader to specifically declare his income, assets, and liabilities after every two years - to declare poverty – yes. So, honourable members, I urge you to declare your riches and poverty to the Inspector General of Government (IGG). Fill in the forms so that you are not caught by the law.

That will help us in accountability and transparency in whatever we do and it will help you, as leaders, because you know very well if you do not do that, you can lose your seat. Let us do that and abide by the law. Thank you so much for coming to this afternoon session. Hon. Atkins, what happened? These days you sit there.

Thank you so much - honourable members, allow me to amend the Order Paper to receive a report from the Leader of the Opposition on his

oversight visit to Inspire Africa Coffee Factory in Ntungamo. Leader of the Opposition, present your report.

2.07

MR JOHN-BAPTIST NAMBESHE (NUP, Manjiya County, Bududa): Thank you, Madam Speaker. As you were making a clarion call to the Front Bench to make a timely submission of the ministerial policy statements, I keenly observed that it was only my uncle, Hon. Gidudu Mafabi, who was present. The rest were just entering – (*Interjections*) - even the Minister of State for Fisheries was here. However, these are a minority. The majority of the Front Bench are, as usual, conspicuously absent.

Madam Speaker, our side has already been whipped by yours truly and by that date, we shall be ready with the alternative policy statements. However, this is a very bad sign from the Front Bench that they have perfected the art of delaying very important mandates like this one of the Budget preparation. You would rather crack your whip, Madam Speaker, this time around. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The Government Chief Whip should hear this; he needs to crack his whip. We will not be presiding officers and at the same time whips, and *mine* truly, you are doing a good job. Yes, Hon. Ssewungu, point of procedure under which rule?

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I stand on a procedural issue. You seriously insist that discipline be paramount here, and the Members of Parliament, when they have any issues, like petitions, respect their members here.

However, yesterday we saw ugly scenes where fellow Members of Parliament were attacking the institution of Parliament by saying, why are Members saying this and that in the House? Among them were Hon. Kabanda, Hon. Mawanda and the third one, who is very rare in Parliament, Hon. Lwanga -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, please wait to raise that issue when Hon. Kabanda and Hon. Mawanda are here. You know very well that we cannot discuss honourable members who are not in the House. I will allow you to raise it.

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Madam Speaker -

THE SPEAKER: You wait, when they are in the House, you will raise it.

MR SSEWUNGU: Can I say my last submission, not related to that matter?

THE SPEAKER: Not on that?

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Madam Speaker. In your communication, you talked about ministerial policy statements and I had come to your office on the same matter. We have heard about a report from the Commission headed by Col (Rtd) Nuwe Amanya Mushega stating new changes in the education system, but as Members of Parliament and the Committee on Education and Sports, we have not received a single copy of that report.

We pray that the Ministry of Education and Sports provides us with a copy of that report and all the changes they introduced so that we digest and know the changes they are introducing because it is an open document.

The public is getting different information. For example, we are not sure whether it is true - because we have not seen the document - that there is going to be a change; merging the National Curriculum Development Centre with the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB). Those are issues we have to look at but if the document is not given to us -

THE SPEAKER: But these are Acts of Parliament. How can you merge UNEB with the National Curriculum Development Centre? I think you are speaking based on hearsay.

MR SSEWUNGU: That is why I am seeking your indulgence; that this document be availed

to Members of Parliament. The information I have is that during their presentation, those of us who are interested in education never got copies. We pray, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Let us first get the copies, study them and then act. Thank you. There is a procedural matter here. (*Hon. Macho rose*) I asked you under which rule.

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE: Madam Speaker, I refer to Rule 224 of the Rules of Procedure. The heading is “Contempt of Parliament.” It states: *“An act or omission which obstructs or impedes Parliament in the performance of its functions or which obstructs or impedes a member or officer of Parliament in the discharge of his duties or affronts the dignity of Parliament or which tends either directly or indirectly to produce such a result shall be contempt of Parliament.”*

I am a member of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs and I am also the shadow Minister of Internal Affairs. First of all, I commend the Uganda Police Force for having allowed Ugandans to demonstrate peacefully yesterday. I hope that the same is extended to all people who would wish to carry out any form of demonstration.

Having said that, I can now go to the procedural matter under the rule I have raised. Yesterday, we heard that some people are promising to lynch Members of your Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs. Why? It is because we, in our capacity as a committee of Parliament, in the discharge of our duties, invited the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) of this country, not as a person, but as an officer.

What is even sadder is that some of the demonstrators were members of this House. The procedural matter I would like to raise now -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, hold on for a minute. I have just made a ruling to that effect. The people you said were demonstrating are not here. What you are saying about them wanting to lynch Members of Parliament - if

they want to do anything to a Member of Parliament, they have to write to the Speaker but I have not received a letter to that effect. That is why nobody came here. If you heard about that, I am yet to get that information but rest assured, you are safe.

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE: Madam Speaker, the information you are yet to receive is what I am giving you.

THE SPEAKER: Please sit. We do not legislate in anticipation, Madam teacher? Hon. -

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. By way of procedure, Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure talks about your general powers and I would like you to guide me further.

Will these general powers of yours also summon – because you have said, we should raise this matter when our colleagues are here, but what about those people who were not members of this House? Should we also wait in order for us to talk about them?

THE SPEAKER: We should not discuss people who are not members of this House in the House.

MS NAMBOOZE: I am talking about the other people who demonstrated against Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: We shall not talk about them because they are not members of the House. We are only waiting for those who are Members of the House to respond.

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE: Madam Speaker, I beg – it is another matter -

THE SPEAKER: No, we have other Members - do not abuse my generosity. You will come back.

Honourable members, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have students from the Ethru Makerere University School Association. They have come to observe the proceedings of this

House. These people expect a lot from you when you are discussing. You should be able to guide, help and show them how things are done in this House. Where are they? Please stand. You are most welcome. Join me in receiving them. *(Applause)*

The students of Ethur Makerere University Association - I do not know what the abbreviation stands for. What is it? It could be an abbreviation.

Well, again, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation of the Executive Committee of the Uganda District Council Speakers Association, where I am a patron. You are most welcome, my colleagues. Those are the Speakers of the local councils and we must welcome and thank you for coming. *(Applause)* Those are the people who chair the councils. Hon. Naluyima, do you want to speak on my behalf? She would like to welcome my people.

2.17

MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I happen to be the shadow Minister of Local Government. Therefore, on behalf of the local governments, the Speakers Association, the Rt Hon. Speaker, the patron of the Speakers, allow me to appreciate you and also thank you, for the time you were with them in Wakiso District.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Macho.

2.18

MR GEOFFREY MACHO (Independent, Busia Municipality, Busia): Madam Speaker, I am always proud of your wise guidance when you are in that chair. Hon. Namboozie brought up an issue that you have ruled on and your guidance was wonderful.

However, it worries me because the key people who were the ringleaders of the demonstration, Hon. Mawanda in particular, is never in the House. Since he is out on bail, I am worried that he might totally disappear – *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Please sit. When Hon. Mawanda is here, you will raise it. He is going to come because this is where he belongs. Yes, Hon. Atkins.

2.19

MR ATKINS KATUSABE (FDC, Bukonzo County West, Kasese): Thank you, Madam Speaker. First of all, I welcome you back to the family and to the House.

Around September last year, I presented, on the Floor of Parliament, the issues that relate to Kasese as a community. Madam Speaker, as you -

THE SPEAKER: Have we gone to matters of national importance?

MR KATUSABE: No, this is not a matter of national importance. It is something that you directed upon. That is the reason I am bringing it as a procedural issue. Also, I deliver greetings from your uncle, His Majesty the King of the Rwenzururu Kingdom, Omusinga Wesley Mumbere Irema-Ngoma. Greetings, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Clap for my uncle. *(Applause)*

MR KATUSABE: All right. Madam Speaker, to let you know that your uncle, together with the leaders that hail from Kasese as a community, are assembling 18 points. His Majesty the King asked me to deliver his deepest gratitude to you when you ruled in September that the 18-point master plan be assembled by the leaders with the signatures and brought to your office for your endorsement and approval. *[Hon. Macho rose]*

THE SPEAKER: He is on procedure. Hon. Atkins, finish.

MR KATUSABE: Thank you. I appreciate it, Madam Speaker. To let you know, sometime next week, our chairperson LC V at the district level will be travelling to Kampala and he is going to join the leaders in this House by the privilege of being Members of Parliament - we

will have the 18-point master plan assembled and we shall come to your office for the approval. That is what I wanted to bring to your attention.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. No problem. Honourable Minister of Education and Sports, there was a procedural matter that was raised on the issue of - can you repeat your issue?

2.22

MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West County, Kalungu): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Honourable minister, I raised an issue about the report that was presented by Hon. Amanyana Mushega on the education reforms.

THE SPEAKER: Remember, Hon. Amanyana Mushega was on the commission of inquiry.

MR SSEWUNGU: Our issue here is that we, Members of Parliament, have not had a chance to get copies of that report. However, we are sure it is a public document because it consumed money from the Consolidated Fund. Guide us on that.

Also, we welcome you back from releasing the results of the O-Level Examinations where you spoke more than 30 times the word “*Maama*.” Thank you very much. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Member, it does not matter whether you call the name *Maama* a hundred times, that is the person who gave birth to you. Honourable minister, was this document that came out of a commission of inquiry presented to the Cabinet? The Amanyana Report -

2.23

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (HIGHER EDUCATION) (Dr John Chrisostom Muyingo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. In the morning, we released to the public the results of the Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) first cohort of the new curriculum. I can share with you that the performance was fairly good. *(Applause)*

I would like to thank you, particularly, Madam Speaker and the committee here that has always come out to support us. There is a lot of good work that is going on to implement the new curriculum.

The Amanyana Report has come out; it was handed over to the ministry and we are studying it before we roll it out to the public. Soon, this report will be presented to Parliament and the Cabinet.

However, we have put up a technical committee to study and advise the Government concerning the issues that were raised. I submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, when the report of a commission of inquiry is presented - Hon. Ssewungu, when the report is completed, it is given to the ministry, and the ministry will prepare a white paper. It is this white paper that translates into a policy. The policy is then brought to Parliament for consideration and this is provided for under the Commission of Inquiry Act. You need to check the Act.

The Ministry of Education and Sports will be required to bring a policy to Parliament after the Cabinet has considered it. That is the right procedure. Whatever is happening now is not complete. It has to go through the Cabinet, come here for approval and then it will become a policy.

MR SSEWUNGU: Most obliged, Madam Speaker, but still my prayer to the minister is that there is a communication officer in the ministry. They should dispose of any misleading information by the leading newspaper of the Government - *The New Vision* - because what comes out is what is debated in public and it leads to confusion.

As a professional teacher, like me, he knows what comes out of leaving wrong notes on the blackboard after teaching. It will just expose the messes to the mistakes of a teacher. He knows that once you finish teaching, you clean the blackboard.

Therefore, keep your document confidential until – but it is the Government-leading newspaper that is giving information to the public, which information is causing a lot of debate; that is the spirit in which I brought up that matter.

Also, if I am to implore the minister, we need to make some amendments to the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEBC) Act. When you cheat in exams, there are all the parameters to punish you, but when you complain about receiving wrong results for your school, there is no room to complain, in the Act.

Parents and schools have been left crying because they have no remedy where they can address their issues of receiving the wrong results. Therefore, we cannot have an Act that handles misconduct in exams on the side of UNEBC but then does not address the issue of those with complaints –

THE SPEAKER: You are discussing what has not been brought before you. Next item. Yes –

2.28

MR MATHIAS MPUUGA (NUP, Nyendo-Mukungwe, Masaka City): Thank you, Madam Speaker. In your communication, you made reference to the timely submission of ministerial policy statements from both the Government and the Opposition to rhyme with the statutory timeframes.

Last week, the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs was here and he made some inept statements on the Floor of Parliament, which were even expunged from the record of Parliament and was ordered to return here and clarify particular positions in relation to how the forthcoming election is being prepared. We were expecting the minister here to respond to those queries away from his less-than-satisfying remarks he made here and disappeared in thin air.

Now that the Attorney-General is around and they work closely with the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, will he explain

whether he is available to Parliament to respond to those issues because part of the budget could be responding to the forthcoming election and there will be no other budget.

Would you demand that the Attorney-General clarifies if he is representing the minister and, therefore, clarifies issues that have a timeframe related to them?

THE SPEAKER: Attorney-General –

2.29

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate the issue raised by my senior colleague. I want to pledge to the House that we are in touch with the Electoral Commission. You want information that satisfies your queries; please, give us time. I can pledge that, next week, we will be in position to give that response.

MR MPUUGA: That was not the instruction of the Speaker. If the Attorney-General is amending that instruction, let him state so. The Speaker ordered that today, the minister appears to respond to these issues. Probably, the Prime Minister can respond, in the absence of the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs.

THE SPEAKER: You have heard from the Deputy Attorney-General. I think he is a better person to give that response than the Prime Minister.

Honourable members, I want to correct what the LOP was asking: “Which association is that?” The association is called “Ethur”. That is a tribe from Abim. Hon. Janet can clarify more.

MS OKORI-MOE: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for this time. Honourable colleagues, when you look at the Third Schedule of our Constitution, Karamoja has 11 tribes and the tribe in Abim is called Ethur. So, those students of Makerere University are from Abim.

Before the 1995 Constitution, they were referred to as “Acholi Labwor”. Those are the people; It is not an abbreviation. I welcome them.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you for the clarification. Ethur, stand again. Thank you. *Apwoyo bino.*

MS OKORI-MOE: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I want to welcome the Ethur Students Association of Makerere University. You are most welcome. This is your Parliament, the Parliament of the people, headed by the Rt Hon. Anita Among, a very able lady. Thank you. *Apwoyo wunu bino. (Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I will allow only two matters.

2.33

MR FRANCIS MWIJUKYE (FDC, Buhweju County, Buhweju): Thank you very much. Madam Speaker, I also want to take this opportunity to welcome you back. I have a matter of national importance –

THE SPEAKER: From where?

MR MWIJUKYE: From Bukedea. *(Laughter)* We saw you doing work in Bukedea, and we want to welcome you back.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I bring you greetings from the mighty people of Bukedea.

MR MWIJUKYE: Madam Speaker, on the 31st of last month, there was a Supreme Court ruling, and I do not want to go through what happened; everybody knows what it was about. Consequently, there are civilians who remain detained even after the ruling on the operations of the court martial.

However, whereas some of them should have ceased to be in prison, a one Dr Besigye has remained illegally detained. The uniqueness of this is that yesterday, we got information that Dr Besigye had again stopped receiving visitors, including his wife who went there

yesterday. She could not meet Dr Besigye. He had stopped meeting the three people who were accredited to give him food. He is on strike.

Today, he was expected to appear at Buganda Road Court, for a different case. However, we got information, through court, that he wrote to the court saying: “I am not able to come. I am indisposed. I am very weak.” The letter was shown to us in court. We are worried that such a person, who cannot come to court because he says he is indisposed, remains in illegal detention.

We would want the Minister of Internal Affairs to come and tell us the status in which Dr Besigye is, in illegal detention.

Two, the Attorney-General said they were in the process of transferring civilians to civil courts. We want to know – *(Interjections)* - as ordered by the court, of course – how long this process will take now that there is a situation of somebody who has stopped eating. He is on hunger strike; he is too weak to appear in a civil court.

Madam Speaker, I come before you to request you to direct the Minister of Internal Affairs to come to this House and tell us what exactly is happening with Dr Besigye and the other civilians. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Deputy Attorney-General.

2.36

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you, Hon. Francis Mwijukye. The Attorney-General made a statement on the Floor of Parliament, and I re-echoed that statement the following day, by which we emphasised the Government’s commitment to fulfilling all the requirements of the Supreme Court’s judgment. What I can say is that there are processes ongoing. I would humbly request my colleagues in Parliament to be patient and wait. We will present a report once the transfers are done. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Akello -

2.37

MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of very urgent national importance regarding the absence of radiologists at our regional hospitals.

Last week, I had a patient who was referred to do a CT scan. He went to Gulu Regional Referral Hospital. It was conducted, and they asked him to provide a phone number on a smartphone so that they could give him the video. Unfortunately, he had no smartphone. Therefore, the video had to be sent to another person who had a smartphone. Eventually, it was sent to me.

They told him to go back after four days and get the results. At first I did not understand why it takes about four days until I asked a friend, an OB actually, who works in Mulago Hospital. That is when he explained to me that the policy has now changed: all the results are analysed centrally from Mulago yet there are very few radiologists working on those issues. Indeed, it took four days for the results to come. However, I was lucky that I had somebody who could interpret the results immediately and I got the results of my patient immediately.

How about the other Ugandans who are unable to get people to help them interpret the results quickly? This is, to me, a very big problem, because emergency issues are not handled immediately.

My plea to the Minister of Health is that this issue must be urgently handled since we are now in the budgeting process. Can we have radiologists employed and deployed?

I am reliably informed that it is not only in Gulu. Even Soroti, Mbale, and Arua Regional Referral Hospitals have nothing. This is a crisis and many Ugandans are actually suffering silently. Madam Speaker, Ugandans need an urgent answer. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you so much. Rt Hon. Prime Minister - even Soroti has the same problem.

2.40

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is really an urgent matter. I am going to get in touch with the minister so that it is considered in the Budget. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, you cannot give equipment to a hospital when you do not have human resources. We need to have the human resources. We passed the Uganda Human Organ Donation and Transplant Act, 2023 but we do not have the people there. We need the human resource to operate the equipment to be able to treat our people.

Next item. Doctor, it is not a veterinary issue.

DR BWANIKA: Madam Speaker, point of procedure.

The committee that I lead, that is, the Committee on Government Assurances and Implementation, has a report on equipment in the hospitals. We did walk throughout the entire country. We seek your quick indulgence, Madam Speaker, to present the report so that Parliament and the nation get a picture of what is happening in terms of equipment and the technical people who are supposed to work on it.

THE SPEAKER: Okay. Next item. We will have that on the Order Paper.

BILLS FIRST READING

THE VALUATION BILL, 2024

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, pursuant to Rule 128 of the Rules of Procedure, I invite the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development to table The Valuation Bill, 2024 for the First Reading together with the Certificate of Financial Implication.

2.43

THE MINISTER OF LANDS, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (Ms Judith Nabakooba): Thank you, Madam Speaker. In accordance with Rule 128 of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Uganda, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Valuation Bill, 2024”, be read for the first time.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS NABAKOOPA: Madam Speaker, in accordance with Section 76 of the Public Finance Management (Amendment) Act, Cap. 171 and Rule 118 of the Rules of Procedure, I beg to lay on the Table the Certificate of Financial Implication for the Valuation Bill, 2024.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Pursuant to Rule 129(1) of the Rules of Procedure, the Bill stands referred to the Committee on Physical Infrastructure to report back to this House. Thank you.

LAYING OF PAPERS

(I) THE TIER 4 MICROFINANCE INSTITUTIONS AND MONEY LENDERS (LENDING CONDITIONS) REGULATIONS, 2024

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, pursuant to Section 112(2)(d) of the Tier 4 Microfinance Institution and Money Lenders Act, 2016, I now invite the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to table the regulations. However, in this, the role has been delegated to the Prime Minister. They wrote to me.

2.45

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the Tier 4 Microfinance Institutions and Money Lenders (Lending Conditions) Regulations, 2024.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, the parent Act does not require

parliamentary approval for the regulations to take effect. The regulations that have been tabled are for information purposes for the House. Thank you.

REPORT ON THE OVERSIGHT VISIT TO INSPIRE AFRICA COFFEE FACTORY IN NTUNGAMO DISTRICT

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Leader of the Opposition -

2.46

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Normally, when I stand here, I tend to complain and raise issues of concern. Even in the brief report I am going to read here, there are a few complaints and concerns.

Madam Speaker, allow me to begin by complimenting the Government because I do not do this often. I would like to compliment the Government for providing security to the demonstrators we saw yesterday. *(Laughter)* It is a good thing when the Constitution is followed to the latter. I do not agree with the reason they were demonstrating and some of the language used because they were threatening to beat up some Members.

I hope the Police investigate some of those indiscipline cases that happened during a peaceful protest. However, the idea of Ugandans peacefully protesting and being protected is a good thing. I hope that the Government will keep doing this for all other intended protesters.

Therefore, Government, today, we have given you your flowers. Even though I learned that those who were peacefully demonstrating were protected by police, some others were much fewer but were being beaten up. Please, do not put us in a difficult situation. We want to keep giving you flowers every so often. Keep doing that.

Madam Speaker, I rise to present a very brief report on an oversight visit that I carried out together with the shadow ministers to Inspire Africa Coffee Factory.

The Office of the Leader of the Opposition organised an oversight visit to Inspire Africa Coffee Factory in Ntungamo District. I undertook this oversight visit on 11 December 2024, together with the shadow ministers.

The visit was in line with Section 6E (1) of the Administration of Parliament (Amendment) Act, 2005, which empowers the Leader of the Opposition to play the oversight role and keep the Government in check.

During the Financial Year 2023/2024, the Government undertook to establish a tertiary hub for last-mile coffee value addition in Ntungamo District through the Science, Technology, and Innovation Secretariat in the Office of the President under a private partnership arrangement with the Coffee Investment Consortium Uganda and Inspire Africa Coffee, both privately registered entities.

The construction of this coffee value addition facility began in October 2023 and had been projected to be completed by December 2024. We were told that the factory is expected to produce various coffee products including instant coffee, drip coffee, malt coffee, coffee energy drinks, as well as beauty cosmetics.

However, since this strategic Government intervention was initiated, various stakeholders, as well as policymakers have expressed concerns with respect to the implementation arrangements.

Some of these concerns include:

- (i) Rationale followed to establish this coffee value addition factory in Ntungamo;
- (ii) The selection criteria followed to procure the private investor;
- (iii) The reason behind the decision by the Government to support the building of a coffee factory in Ntungamo District, while not paying attention to other areas known to produce a lot of coffee in Uganda;

(iv) Capital investment - the exact amount of money that the government of Uganda is injecting into this project, because that is not known yet.

(v) Projected economic benefits in terms of the anticipated employment opportunities as well as export revenues.

Therefore, the primary objective of this oversight visit was to further interrogate and verify all matters related to the above-mentioned concerns as elaborated briefly before.

During the Financial Year 2023, the Government earmarked and allocated Shs 37 billion, which is about US\$ 10 million in the national Budget to support coffee value chain development under a newly created Vote 167 in the Science, Technology and Innovation Secretariat in the Office of the President.

Also, according to the annual budget estimates of the Financial Year 2024/2025, an additional Shs 75 billion was provided for in the corrigenda to the budget and approved by Parliament to support coffee value addition initiatives. To date, a total of Shs 112 billion has been appropriated by Parliament towards support for coffee value-addition initiatives.

Some of these initiatives include the promotion of Uganda coffee globally through coffee trade hubs and the establishment of a tertiary hub for last mile coffee value addition in Ntungamo District, implemented by Inspire Africa Coffee, which according to Mr Nelson Tugume, the proprietor, is at an estimated cost of US\$ 122 million, that is about Shs 451 billion.

It is important to note that these coffee value addition initiatives are not directly implemented by the Government, but rather through partnerships, such as the Presidential Advisory Committee on Exports and Industrial Development that is chaired by Mr Odrek Rwabwogo, the Senior Presidential Advisor on Special Duties.

There is also the Coffee Investment Consortium, a privately registered entity comprising about 21 coffee companies interested in promoting coffee production and providing value addition in the coffee value chain, and Inspire Africa Coffee, an affiliate of Inspire Africa Group, a human resource organisation initially established primarily to address the challenges of youth unemployment on the African continent.

Government argues that the initiatives will significantly increase the country's coffee export earnings through the export promotion of processed, ready-to-drink coffee instead of raw coffee beans. However, since the above-highlighted coffee value addition initiatives were earmarked and subsequently funded by the Government, various stakeholders as well as policymakers have expressed serious accountability, legal, and policy concerns with regard to the implementation arrangement of these initiatives.

Therefore, it was paramount to further interrogate and verify all matters related to the implementation of these initiatives, to ascertain their feasibility and value for public funds in line with the existing legal and policy frameworks.

Let me run through the areas of concern, Madam Speaker.

(1) Funding and transparency queries

In the financial year 2023/2024, the Government of Uganda allocated resources through the Science, Technology, and Innovation Secretariat under the Office of the President towards the establishment of a modern industrial coffee park in Rwashamire Town Council in Ntungamo District.

We found that there is no memorandum of understanding between the Government of Uganda and this private entity. So, the manner in which money was extended to this entity is not clear. Madam Speaker, it is wrong for taxpayers' money to be spent without any clearly defined binding relationship between

the Government and any entity, and in this case, Inspire Africa Coffee, and no documentation whatsoever.

The proprietor told us that there was a co-investment arrangement that was ongoing between the parties, that is the Government and them, but there was no clarity on whether this arrangement would result in a joint shareholding, a grant arrangement, or a bailout.

We recommend, together with my colleagues, as follows:

- (i) The Government should come out clearly on the relationship that exists between Inspire Africa Coffee and the Government that warranted the disbursement of public funds to this private entity.
- (ii) Parliament should stop any further disbursements to this entity until a clear and rational memorandum of understanding is reached between the Government and this entity.
- (iii) The Government ought to come out with a clear procedure on how private entities can get Government support. Uganda has many young and innovative entrepreneurs who only lack funding. If the Government comes out clearly on the formalities, then more Ugandans could benefit as opposed to just a few.

(2) Unfulfilled Government commitments.

Uganda is currently the leading coffee exporter in Africa and the second largest coffee producer in Africa having exported 6.13 million bags in Financial Year 2023/2024, valued at over US\$ 1.14 billion.

In order to handle the value additional call, the Government stipulated under the National Development Plan NDP III that two modern industrial coffee factories would be established, one in Bugisu and another one in Buganda, because these are the highest coffee-growing regions in the country. These two factories were to be constructed by the end of June

2025 when NDP 111 would lapse. This was a commitment by the Government in NDP 111. We are concluding NDP 111 and Parliament has even passed NDP IV but these plans have not seen the light of day, Madam Speaker.

It brings the question: why did Government prioritise a private plant in Ntungamo specifically, which is part of Uganda, fine, yet it did not even attempt to implement and fulfil the commitment made in NDP (III), which was passed by Parliament?

Madam Speaker, the Government should budget for, as a recommendation, and embark on fulfilling the commitment it made in NDP (III) to build a coffee factory in Bugisu and central regions. The capacity of Inspire Africa Coffee Factory is small compared to the magnitude of the coffee produced in different parts of the country. Besides, it is not practical to expect farmers to transport their coffee from far-flung districts in the country to Ntungamo for processing.

(3) Uncertainty about the exact amount of money so far injected into this project by the Government.

During our visit, Madam Speaker, the proprietor was unclear about how much money the Government has so far injected into this project, so it becomes difficult to establish the return on investment that the taxpayer will get. For as long as this information is unavailable or kept as a secret, people will keep raising eyebrows about this project. In the quest for accountability, we ought to start by being open about how much money has been injected in this project. There should not be anything to hide by Government.

The recommendation, Madam Speaker, is that Government should explain to Parliament and the country how much money has so far been injected into this project, the terms of the agreement, and how the taxpayers will get value for their tax money.

The proprietor said the factory will be completed in March of this year - that is next

month - and begin full operations in the same month. I do not know if that is going to happen. Assuming that gets to happen, the cost-benefit analysis of investing in this entity should be examined. We need to know. There should be clear terms on what is likely to accrue from this investment. Every coin of taxpayers' money injected into this project must be accounted for because it is taxpayers' money.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, let me state this for the umpteenth time. The idea of Government bailing out or offering support to private companies is not a bad one in and of itself. The problem has been that for each of the private companies given money, there is no clear procedure on how this gets to be done. Madam Speaker, I have tabled those reports here: Atiak Sugar Factory, Dei Biopharma, Roko Construction and so on.

Additionally, there is never any agreement signed between the Government and these private entities to spell out the terms and conditions of the support extended. Most disturbingly, there is usually no value for the money extended to these entities after several years. For as long as these concerns are not attended to, usage of taxpayers' money will continue to be shrouded in mystery and there will always be suspicion about these bailouts, given that they are accessed by a few people who probably have connections in the Government. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Leader of the Opposition. To the House, you have heard what the Leader of the Opposition has said.

Deputy Attorney-General, we need a proper memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the people we are giving money. We need to understand what the Government is doing; whether we are buying shares or giving them money just to support them.

As such, the committees on finance, agriculture, budget and trade should take note of the concerns that have been raised by the Leader of the Opposition since we are going into the budgeting process.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, do you have something to say? – (*A Member rose*) On what? You have just come and we are not debating this report. I am telling them to take note of the concerns. This is an oversight report that has been brought by the Leader of the Opposition. It is opening your eyes.

3.00

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for those concerns; we have taken note. As you have directed, the ministers for finance and agriculture will be here to give answers -

THE SPEAKER: No, sectoral committees.

MS NAKADAMA: Yes, the sectoral committees will come here to give answers to the questions raised. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: We actually want them to take note of the issues that are being raised. The committees must report to Parliament when they are doing that. If Inspire Africa gets money from the Government then they should be able to go there and see what is happening but, first, we must regularise the relationship between Inspire Africa and the Government of Uganda.

Honourable members, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation of the African Friendship Association from Istanbul, Turkey. Thank you for coming. You are welcome to Parliament of Uganda. Have a seat. They are here to witness our proceedings. (*Applause*) Yes, Hon. Jonah?

3.03

MR JONATHAN ODUR (UPC, Erute County South, Lira): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have been here and the Leader of the Opposition has had very many of these oversight visits, producing good reports to this House.

Without prejudice to your ruling, I suggest, Madam Speaker, that you do a formal referral

of this report to those committees so that the Leader of the Opposition can make further submissions and clarifications on these particular issues. Then, the committees can formally report. If we allow them to just take note of these issues, we may lose track of the particular issues.

It will also help us, Madam Speaker, to follow up with your own plea to us. When we were passing some of the supplementary budgets, I recall you made an undertaking and said, “Honourable members, please, let us do it for the last time and we are going to follow it up” and we listened to you during that plea.

I request you to formally have this matter referred so that the committees can do a thorough job. The next time they come here for money, maybe, you will not have that pulling of strings because issues would be clear that A, B, C, D has already been dealt with, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Deputy Attorney-General.

MR KAFUZI: Madam Speaker, I am seeking clarification. While Hon. Odur is requesting that you formally make a referral of all the reports that the Leader of the Opposition has presented to Parliament to the relevant committees, I am sure that myself and colleagues in Parliament cannot, off-head, tell which reports he has presented because he has done this overtime -

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Let me help you on that one.

MR KAFUZI: I request that we are given a list and get to know which is which -

THE SPEAKER: Let me help you on that one.

MR KAFUZI: Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Opposition has been doing an oversight role in most of these areas: Atiak, Bay, Inspire Africa and now ROKO. Leader of the Opposition, I request you to bring all those reports and lay them on the Table tomorrow and we formally

refer them for further action - He does not have the one for Lubowa. *(Laughter)*

MR SSENKYONYI: Madam Speaker, you said that for Lubowa, we shall wait for yours and the Deputy Speaker's report. We are waiting for you.

Nonetheless, I have actually laid all those reports before but I will lay them again, tomorrow -

THE SPEAKER: I know.

MR SSENKYONYI: I have no problem at all. We shall print them again and lay on the Table. In the past, for each of those, you kept tasking the Government to come back and respond but they have not. However, for avoidance of doubt, tomorrow, I will be here and I will lay them again, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Yes. Let it be a substantive item. We can say, "Reports of oversight from the Leader of the Opposition." Thank you. Next item?

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
RULES, PRIVILEGES AND DISCIPLINE
ON THE REVIEW OF THE RULES OF
PROCEDURE OF PARLIAMENT

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, you may recall that on Wednesday, 5 February 2025, the Chairperson of the Committee on Rules, Privileges, and Discipline, Hon. Abdu Katuntu, presented a report of the committee on the review of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

As you are aware, rules are always reviewed, depending on the environment. The presiding officer deferred the debate to accord Members adequate time to study the report. I am convinced that the four days have been sufficient enough for you to study the report and understand it as well as the proposals that have been made by the committee. I now call upon the House to debate that. Yes, Hon. Ebwalu?

MR EBWALU: Madam Speaker -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, what you are going to debate is not going to form the changes in the clauses. We will have to go to Committee Stage and look at clause by clause and have your input on that clause. The debate is on the report, just like we always handle. Yes?

MR EBWALU: Madam Speaker, as you rightly put it, we had four or five days to go through the report. I propose that we move straight to Committee Stage so that we can follow clause by clause in detail. Now, we are going into a general debate, and we shall not have sufficient time - *(Interjections)*

THE SPEAKER: Is that seconded? Honourable members, I wish you could understand what Hon. Jonathan Ebwalu said. *(Hon. Ssewungu rose_)* Help your namesake, being senior.

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My name was even mentioned in this report. Actually, the committee chairperson called me; remember that one time I raised the issue of the committee on -

THE SPEAKER: So, what is the procedural matter?

MR SSEWUNGU: I raised an issue of the Committee on Human Rights coming to the opposition side. You directed that at one time, you would invite the Leader of the Opposition, the Attorney-General, the Prime Minister, and I, to forge a way on what exactly should be carried out.

I said that the Committee on Human Rights is an accountability committee. Incidentally, I was not invited to appear before the committee to give my position. My good friend, Hon. Abdu, whom I emulated to become a lawyer, said that he invited me, but I said, "No." He said that the Leader of the Opposition was informed, but I was not informed.

I pray that if possible, that component of the Committee on Human Rights be saved for that reason. We did not appear to give our position yet as you had directed. There are many issues - I wanted to talk about this committee being headed by the Opposition.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I also want to instil discipline amongst us. If the matter concerns somebody in the Opposition, it should be discussed with the Leader of the Opposition so that he can transmit it to his Member or whoever - yes, Hon. Abdu Katuntu.

MR KATUNTU: Madam Speaker, it is true, and I would like to confirm that I called my friend, Hon. Gonzaga Ssewungu, complaining about remarks he had made while appearing on some programme on a radio station and the record is clear. Before we began this process, I did direct the clerk to the committee to formally invite:

1. The Leader of Government Business;
2. The Government Chief Whip;
3. All chairpersons of committees;
4. The Leader of the Opposition;
5. The Chief Opposition Whip;
6. All party whips; and
7. All members of Parliament, including Hon. Ssewungu, in writing and all the documents were deposited in your pigeonholes.

The first time we met - except the Office of the Clerk had responded - I directed the second time, and I emphasised, especially with the Office of the Leader of the Opposition, the Government Chief Whip and the Leader of Government Business, that they should even sign for it and prove to me that they had been served but none of them replied and we adjourned the meetings twice because of non-response.

Two, some Members did and that includes Dr Lulume Bayigga, Hon. Opendi and Hon. Mavenjina. We have put them in the report. They responded to the communication we did.

Therefore, it is disingenuous and unfair, especially when I hear things on the radio

and so on. I, together with my colleagues on the committee, try to act as professionally as possible. We do not want to be dragged into unnecessary controversies.

We are conscious because these rules are for everybody. Why would we sit on a committee and decide on them without your input? But you all kept quiet, and now you are complaining; it is not fair.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. *Hajjat*, you are a Member of the committee.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Yes, but we are not debating the report, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Did you present your minority report?

MS AISHA KABANDA: I did and that is the matter I want to talk about.

THE SPEAKER: Okay. But you are very smart today.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The matter of the leadership of the Committee on Human Rights is part of the report. I even made a disclaimer here that whereas I did not report about it, I do not agree with the views on the minority report.

Therefore, it is a subject of debate. We shall debate it, and whichever positions that the House will like will take the day. It is part of the report, and it is debatable.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

3.16

MS DORCAS ACEN (NRM, Woman Representative, Alebtong): Thank you, Madam Speaker. This report from Hon. Abdu Katuntu that we are talking about is very bulky. Most of us who were in the House would agree with me that we need sufficient time to go through it clause by clause.

I, therefore, stand to second the motion moved by Hon. Jonathan Ebwalu that we move directly

to Committee Stage and have sufficient time. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Those who second that we go clause by clause for you to understand the changes – honourable members, remember that the report is only informative. What is important is the clause-by-clause debate and the amendments that you are going to bring up. *(Hon. Nambooze rose-)* Honourable Member, do you want to second?

3.18

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE (NUP, Mukono Municipality, Mukono): Madam Speaker, I wish to respectfully disagree with the motion. The very reason we want to be very careful at Committee Stage is because these rules are very important and -

THE SPEAKER: Okay, go ahead and debate. I am giving only five people a chance.

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE: Thank you, Madam Speaker – *(Interjections)*

THE SPEAKER: Do not listen to Hon. Linos.

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE: Madam Speaker, these rules are very important to this House. I would like to seek procedural guidance because every House makes its own rules and this House is entering its final year. But before I start the debate, I seek to know whether this is not to pre-empt the 12th Parliament because we have entered the year of elections.

Why don't we allow the Rules of Parliament to be made by the 12th Parliament, and we proceed with our own rules?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, as a senior legislator in this House, you know that the rules are amended at any time it is deemed fit. They are living documents that you need to refer to on a day-to-day basis. When we got COVID-19, didn't we amend our rules? So, there is no problem with amending these rules - even those who are coming back in the 12th Parliament, like some of you, will amend them.

Yes, Hon. Ethel, Hon. Edakasi -

3.19

MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for allowing the debate. I will immediately go to the committee's recommendation on traditional wear on page 38.

The committee observed, under part two, that: *"ii) A pair of long trousers with a jacket, kanzu and jacket, safari suit and decent -*

THE SPEAKER: What rule is that?

MS NALUYIMA: Under Rule 82 of our Rules of Procedure.

THE SPEAKER: That is what I was saying. We would get there and look at it. It is okay; go ahead.

MS NALUYIMA: I concede. As we go to that very point, we should note that we are not in agreement with removing traditional wear from our rules as part of our dress code. Let us get there. Please, in advance, note that we shall be against these recommendations. I also agree that we can go to Committee Stage.

THE SPEAKER: There is a motion. *(Mr Ssenyonyi rose_)* Okay?

3.20

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Madam Speaker, this might not be captured at Committee Stage, but I thought I would be guided a bit. In the committee's report, the Speaker directed the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline to conduct a comprehensive review of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, excluding rules 7 and 8, and report back to the House within two months.

Rules 7 and 8 have to do with the powers of the Speaker. I want to be guided: are the powers of the Speaker entrenched such that they cannot be revisited? I want to know the wisdom behind saying these should not be looked at. This is

because, who knows, Madam Speaker, they could even have added you powers if you had allowed them to touch rules 7 and 8 or perhaps balanced things up.

I want to understand and get guided on the reason behind saying, “Please, do not touch rules 7 and 8”, which have to do with the powers of the Speaker. I thought none of the rules was entrenched, so, we can review, amend and make alterations as we deem fit. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Motion?

3.22

MS SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move that we end the debate and go to Committee Stage since, right from the first submission, we are already moving on to what is supposed to be discussed at Committee Stage.

Madam Speaker, I beg to move.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Is that seconded? (*Members rose*) It is seconded by Hon. Apolot, Hon. Itungo, Hon. Ruyonga, Hon. Agnes for Workers, Member for Alebtong, Hon. Lilian, Hon. Thomas, Member for Kikuube, Hon. Edakasi, Hon. Peninah, Hon. Annet, Hon. Atyang, Hon. Okori-Moe, Hon. Oulanyah, Hon. Linos, Hon. Kenny Auma, Hon. Apolot, Member for Nakasongola, Hon. Connie, Member for Namayingo, Hon. Emmanuel, Member for Apac, Hon. Jonathan Ebwalu and Member for Soroti East.

Honourable members, I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline on the review of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament be adopted by this House.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report, adopted.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

Rule 2

3.25

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES AND DISCIPLINE (Mr Abdu Katuntu): Amendment of Rule 2: Interpretation

Rule 2 is amended by -

(i) deleting the definition of “Cabinet”;

(ii) substituting for the definition of “Leader of Government Business”, the following -

“Leader of Government Business” means the Prime Minister appointed under Article 108A of the Constitution; and

(iii) substituting for the definition of “Leader of the opposition” the following -

“Leader of the Opposition” means the Member of Parliament who is the leader in Parliament of the party in Opposition to the Government and having the greatest numerical strength in Parliament”

(iv) substituting the phrase “Leave of Parliament or the House” with the phrase “Leave of the House”

(v) substituting for the definition of “Official Report” the following -

“Official Report or Hansard” is a record of parliamentary proceedings in text or audio-visual”

(vi) substituting for the phrase “By order of Parliament or the House” the phrase “Order of the House”

(vii) substituting for the definition of “Precincts of the House or Parliament”, the following -

a) “Precincts of Parliament” means the Chamber and offices of Parliament and the galleries and places provided for the use or

accommodation of strangers, members of the public, and representatives of the press, and includes, while Parliament is sitting, and subject to any exception made by the direction of the Speaker, the entire building in which the Chamber of Parliament is situated, and any forecourt, yard, garden, enclosure or open space adjoining or appertaining to that building and used or provided for the purposes of Parliament.”

- b) in the definition of “Question” by deleting the phrase “and a question of privilege.”
- c) by substituting for the definition of the word “Whip” the following -
 - xiii) “Whip” means the Government Chief whip, Chief Opposition whip and the party whip.”
- ix) by inserting in the appropriate alphabetical order, the following definitions –
 - a) “Dignified” is as prescribed under Rule 82
 - b) “Official record” includes the Official Report, audio or visual recording of the proceedings of the House or committees
 - c) “Privilege” means powers, privileges and immunities enjoyed by the Parliament collectively and by Members individually under the Parliament (Powers and Privileges) Act.”
 - d) “Report of a Committee” means the report signed by the majority of the members of a committee, the minority report signed by members dissenting from the opinion of the majority and members abstaining;
 - e) “Ruling” means a decision by the Speaker on a matter of order, procedure or privilege.
 - f) “Subsidiary legislation” means any document by which a power conferred by any Act on the President, minister or any other authority to make, or a power exercisable by making proclamations, rules, regulations, bylaws, statutory orders, or statutory instruments is exercised.

Justification

- i) To delete definitions that have been used in the rules.

- ii) To improve, clarify and align some definitions that have been used in the rules with the Constitution and other legal provisions.
- iii) To insert definitions that are necessary for better interpretation of the rules.

Madam Chairperson, I would have begged to move, but ordinarily, we handle the definition sections at the end. Therefore, I pray that as the colleagues think about it, we handle this particular one after we have concluded the process.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. We are standing over rule 2.

Rule 3

MR KATUNTU: Madam Chairperson, rule 3 is amended by substituting subrule (4) for the following:

“(4) Where the Oath of Allegiance and the Oath of a Member is to be taken after the first sitting of Parliament, the Speaker shall administer the Oath of Allegiance and Oath of a Member of Parliament”

Justification

To ensure that a Member who joins Parliament after the first sitting takes both the Oath of Allegiance and the Oath of a Member of Parliament.

Madam Chairperson, previously, it was not provided for under the rules.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Hon. Aisha.

MS AISHA KABANDA: No objection to that particular rule.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. I put the question that rule 3, be amended, as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Rule 3, as amended, agreed to.

Rule 9

MR KATUNTU: Madam Chairperson, we propose that rule 9 is amended as follows:

- i) In subrules (2) and (3), by inserting immediately after the word “hand”, the word “side”
- ii) By inserting immediately after subrule (4) the following: “(4a) Where the Speaker determines that it is not practicable to comply with the sitting arrangement in subrules (2), (3) and 4, the Speaker may permit a Member to sit on either side of the House.

(4b) Notwithstanding subrule (4a), the front row seats to the -

- a) The right-hand side of the Speaker shall be reserved for the Leader of Government Business, the Government Chief Whip and ministers; and
- b) The left-hand side of the Speaker shall be reserved for the Leader of the Opposition, the Chief Opposition Whip, shadow cabinet and party whips of any other party in the Opposition.
- i) By substituting for subrule (5) the following: “The Speaker shall ensure that each Member of Parliament has a comfortable seat taking into consideration the age and physical disability of a Member.
- ii) By inserting immediately after subrule (5) the following:

“(5a) Notwithstanding subrule (4a), the Speaker shall ensure that the seats allocated to older Members and Members with physical disabilities are reserved for such Members”

Justification

1. To give the Speaker the discretion to allow free sitting whenever necessary; and
2. To cater for the sitting arrangement of Members with disabilities and older persons.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Aisha?

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I have no problem with allocating a sitting area for older persons. The point of contention is offering free sitting to the whole of the left.

I was persuaded to give some space – we are a big number and if we restrict ourselves to left on the left and right on the right, probably some people might not get a seat.

My humble prayer is that at least two rows be reserved for the Opposition.

Madam Chairperson, the minority needs to be protected. Also, the leadership at the front needs people to speak to at the back.

Madam Chairperson, it is not usual that you find the Opposition shift to the right-hand side. Rather, it is the people in the Government that shift to the left-hand side. However, if we are to give in, you should give at least the rows. The only difference - and I am explaining so that people can follow because there has not been a debate.

The difference with my divergence is that - I am not suggesting that the whole Parliament should be free sitting. Colleagues, say, “The Speaker should restrict the Front Benches to the ministers on both sides” but I am praying that we reserve two rows - the first and second - so that leaders here have people to speak to when they turn behind. That is my prayer.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I do not think she is asking too much. Hon. Aisha is proposing that as the Opposition, the first and second rows -

Honourable members, I would like to ask a question - you are talking about the third row but I am talking about what Hon. Aisha said. If you are saying, “Up to the third row, if in the circumstances you have space, like the one between Hon. Abed and Hon. Apolot, can’t one of your colleagues sit there? Or, will you leave that space free?”

MR SSENKYONYI: Madam Chairperson, that is similar to asking – you see, on the Front Bench this side, there are only two people. I do not know whether I can cross over and sit there.

THE CHAIRPERSON: By the way, I agree with what Hon. Aisha is saying in totality.

MR SSENKYONYI: I would like to suggest a slight amendment because she is talking about rows; one and two on both ends. Aside from the front rows, let us count one and two because it helps when we are coordinating our operations, debates, and so on. It helps a great deal when we are together.

Madam Chairperson, I would not like a situation where the second or third row on the other side is filled by the Opposition members. Otherwise, some people can choose to say, “Okay, let us now do it that way”. Then you will find that even on the Government side, on the second and the third, there are Opposition people. This is why I am suggesting that aside from the Front Benches; one and two on both sides should be protected.

THE CHAIRPERSON: One and two. Honourable members, notwithstanding what the Speaker will pronounce, that is a simple thing.

MR KATUNTU: Maybe, let me try to clarify so that Members can speak from an informed position. Currently, what has been happening is that whenever they have declared free sitting because of challenges of numbers - and I want you to know that the issue is about numbers. You find that many Members, especially this side where - the other side are many; so, there is an overflow. The overflow has been sometimes even on the Front Bench of the Opposition.

Madam Chairperson, the innovation we are bringing is that even if there is an overflow -

THE CHAIRPERSON: Especially, Hon. Panadol. *(Laughter)*

MR KATUNTU: We are saying that even if there is an overflow of benches on the Opposition and Government sides, the hierarchy of leadership in this House should be reserved for those who are entitled to sit on it. That is number one.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

MR KATUNTU: That is number one - *(Interjections)*- can you listen? Number two, when do we declare free sitting? Free sitting is because the seats are not enough and you have a challenge of numbers. Therefore, whenever you continue exempting more, you cause more crises of Members lacking space to sit. What we are looking at is to respect the leadership of both sides. But the other seats can be available to all other Members so they can sit comfortably. That is the innovation.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Angura.

MR ANGURA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Last week, when Hon. Katuntu presented here and Hon. Aisha Kabanda in her minority report also presented to us who were here, we appreciated the well-thought-out position that came from the committee chairperson and also from Hon. Aisha Kabanda.

Those two, the front and the next one, provide an opportunity for sharing information. Many times when we are there, we also give some backup. Now, we cannot have the rest of the seats behind open and yet we have Members standing.

Therefore, let us go by the position that Hon. Aisha Kabanda has presented. We unanimously moved and adopted it the other time; we can do the same today. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Honourable Member from Alebtong and then - Hon. Naboth, I am coming to you.

MS ACEN: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The clarification I am seeking is whereas I do not totally disagree with the proposal by Hon.

Aisha Kabanda, and I think it is very healthy, we have had scenarios where sometimes some Members decide to abscond or to walk away when there are very critical matters of national importance to be discussed.

At times when we are sitting in other spaces, for example in Kololo, as a space for Parliament to sit - we have had scenarios where we were sitting at the regional sitting in Gulu and the issues to be discussed were very pertinent - we do not feel comfortable to leave the front rows empty.

Therefore, I would like to agree with the proposal by the chairperson of the committee that based on the discretion of the Speaker, when she finds it necessary, the Speaker can guide on free sitting. Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable members, what Hon. Aisha is saying is not ring-fencing per se. We are not ring-fencing. It depends on the circumstances. Like now, you cannot come to the House and because you have seen only the Leader of the Opposition (LOP) sitting, then “Panadol” is going there to sit, and then Hon. Macho, and yet you know very well that it is supposed to be for the opposition leaders; you get it -

That from today, “Panadol,” that is where you are going to be sitting. So, depending on the circumstances - I do not have a problem because if the Leader of the Opposition is sitting here, or the Chief Whip, they may want to consult from behind about what they think and that kind of thing. Same thing here. That is that.

MR KATUNTU: Can I suggest a way forward? The sort of issue we are discussing is important and so on. I have been consulting my colleague. Let us concede to the two rows. I concede to the second row and we proceed.

MR ODUR: Thank you. Madam Chairperson, I would like to be on record -

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Jonathan, let him speak first.

MR NGOMPEK: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We are discussing and mentioning the Opposition and the Government side. Where does this leave the independent Members?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Where you are seated.

MR NGOMPEK: But usually we also occupy that seat. Like the Government Side (NRM), we usually sit where the Opposition sits.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I am the Dean of the Independents. I will know where my independents will sit. The amendment does not take 9(1). Okay? Let us first hear from the minister.

MS ASAMO: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In the amendment, the committee mentions physical disability, but we, who sit here, are not all physically disabled. We have a representative who is deaf. Physical disability, according to our Act, is caused by cerebral palsy, amputation of a limb, and paralysis or deformity. So, we need to look at whatever it is -

THE CHAIRPERSON: There is also “Panadol” who has no eyes.

MS ASAMO: He also has a definition here. Even “Panadol,” with partial disabilities, is in the law. Therefore, let us recognise that it is the Persons with Disabilities who are Members of Parliament of this House so that you do not have words that are discriminatory against others.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Katuntu -

MR KATUNTU: Thank you. I concede, for Hon. Mugema’s sake. *(Laughter)*

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Jonathan -

MR ODUR: Madam Chairperson, I wanted to go on the record that I oppose the amendment entirely, for the reasons that the sitting in Parliament is not just a mere rule. It draws

from the recognition that there is democracy on two sides in the House.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Left and right.

MR ODUR: Also, Madam Chairperson, in Parliament, as you know, there are also occasions when tensions may arise out of the subject matter at hand. The separation proposed, including the demarcations that you recently ordered, speaks to that spirit, that this is a House of two sides, and there may be situations that may need physical barriers. That is why, Madam Speaker, you protected yourself there, and then you have put these barriers here. That recognition should not be swept aside.

I also want to say that some of the proposals are redundant because the rule, as it is, I can read subrule (4): *“The Speaker shall reserve seats for Independent Members of Parliament and other categories of Members.”* What are those other categories of Members –(Interjections)- exactly! To again say that is reserved for older persons, reserve for this, what if next time we have another category coming into this other Parliament? We cannot list them; so, by saying other categories, I feel every other situation has been taken care of.

Madam Chairperson, lastly, if this amendment is to go through, I want to propose that we insert where you, the Speaker, or the presiding officer consults the two whips. It would be courteous that before such a decision is made, that there is free sitting, there is consultation because – (Interjections) - yeah, and this is in good spirit. I know the House has been trying to fight that we must be together. We are together, but let us recognise the pillar of democracy, Madam Chairperson.

MR KATUNTU: Madam Chairperson, I wish to respond to my brother’s submission. First, just imagine a situation where you have a House and you only have 10 Members of Parliament. This particular House, the entire House, this side, and the rest are the other side. How are you going to govern it?

Secondly, the Speaker has been invoking what we call general powers - she has. What this rule is providing are specific powers of the Speaker regarding the issue of sitting. It cannot be redundant because the Speaker was not empowered other than using the general powers she has for Members to be comfortable.

Do not allow that sort of situation because chances are that whenever the Speaker uses general powers, somebody can allege bad faith sometimes. However, here he will be – (Hon. Ssewungu rose_) - Do you want to inform me of the rules, really? Okay. (Laughter)

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, my senior Member, for giving way. Madam Chairperson, as Members of Parliament, we are mandated to be here whenever there is a sitting. It is only on rare occasions where a Member may be indisposed and the Speaker must be in the know of your absence.

Therefore, I want to inform the honourable members that whether there are 10 Members seated on this side and the other side has 100, business can continue. We have been in this House where the Opposition says, “We shall not be in this sitting.” Once we move out, the Speaker says, “No, Members, some of you come and sit where you want, where the Opposition has been” and the House goes on.

What am saying is that the Speaker of Parliament has all the powers to determine our sitting arrangement. However, following the rules – because this House already has two sides; the ruling Government and the Opposition - and the Independents.

When you look at – I do not know – you can correct me because what you talked about – the number 10 on this side, would not arise – whether we are 10 and the other side is bigger, it can remain as the rule has been. That is what I want to inform you of, Hon. Abdu.

MSAISHAKABANDA: Madam Chairperson, allow me to inform Hon. Jonathan and colleagues that this report is alive to the fact that we are in a democracy and we subscribe

to the Commonwealth countries that have a sitting arrangement in Parliament. The report recognises that the Members of the ruling party will be on the right-hand side and the Members of the Opposition will be on the left-hand side. This report recognises that.

However, it also recognises that there are exceptional circumstances. Now, what we are talking about are those exceptional circumstances where the Speaker has always said, “free sitting.” What the major report was saying is that the free sitting, whatever the circumstances would be, should exclude the Front Benches. Now he has conceded to the fact that the free sitting, whatever the circumstances may be, should exclude two benches on the front side of the Opposition.

Madam Chairperson, it is also okay for the public to see that their Members of Parliament are not there. If the seats are empty, let people know that Members of Parliament either have walked out or have absconded from duty. Therefore, it is okay.

Will you allow me to read the amendment as proposed?

THE CHAIRPERSON: The amendment? Please read the amendment. (*Hon. Ekanya rose*) Hon. Ekky, how do you access the microphone? Hon. Aisha, can you read?

MSAISHA KABANDA: Madam Chairperson, I, therefore, move that Rule 9 is amended by inserting immediately after subrule (4) the following:

“(4a) Where the Speaker determines that it is not practicable to comply with the sitting arrangement in subrules (2), (3) and (4), the Speaker may permit a Member to sit on either side of the Speaker.

(4b) Notwithstanding subrule (4a), the Speaker shall reserve the front rows to the right and left-hand sides of the Speaker for the ministers and shadow ministers respectively, and the second row on the left-hand side of the Speaker for Members of the Opposition parties in the House.”

The justification is:

1. To give the Speaker discretion to allow free sitting whenever necessary;
2. To reserve the front seats on either side of the Speaker for ministers and shadow ministers; and
3. To reserve the second-row seats on the left-hand side of the Speaker for consultation purposes.

Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much. Then the amendment proposed by Hon. Asamo to –

MR KATUNTU: Madam Chairperson, I conceded after listening to my colleague.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. We are taking the amendments proposed by Hon. Aisha and Hon. Asamo. That also happens –

I now put the question that Rule 9 is amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Rule 9, as amended, agreed to.

Rule 11

MR KATUNTU: Rule 11 is amended by substituting for subrule (4) the following: “(4) Nomination of the candidates for election to the Commission of the four members of Parliament referred to in subrule (1)(f) shall be made by the Government and the Opposition sides in accordance with the rules set out in Appendix BA”

The justification is to provide for a detailed procedure for nomination and elections of the four Commissioners to the Parliamentary Commission, which is not provided for in the rules.

Madam Chairperson, the justification has been that whereas the Parent Act had provided for the election of the members of the Commission,

the practice has been designated. Then the rules had introduced the word “designation”, which is contrary to the parent Act.

Therefore, we are trying to streamline our rules in accordance with the Administration of Parliament Act, which provides for the election of commissioners.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Aisha Kabanda.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Chairperson. There is no disagreement on the proposal.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that Rule 11 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Rule 11, as amended, agreed to.

Rule 13

THE CHAIRPERSON: *(Mr Ekanya rose_)* You had all the time to go to the committee.

MR EKANYA: Thank you very much, Madam Chairperson. Before we moved to Committee Stage, you guided us that when we are at the Committee Stage, Members will be able to debate and discuss. It was your ruling, Madam Chairperson. Basically, that is what we are trying to follow; that you grant us an opportunity to debate each clause at Committee Stage.

THE CHAIRPERSON: We are proceeding very well. Hon. Abdu, please go to the next rule. *(Ms Nambooze rose_)* Point of procedure under which rule? Rule 8 is it? *(Laughter)* Madam teacher?

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE: Madam Chairperson, I am proceeding under a rule that talks about your general powers, as the Speaker.

The procedural issue I want to raise was to seek your guidance under your wide powers to be

clarified. You have just ruled here that we have passed the clause but we have commissioners in this House right now. I understand that – I was trying to consult Hon. Katuntu here to know if what I understand is proper - That we cannot make rules that act backwards.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, retrospectively.

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE: Indeed. Madam Chairperson, now that we have commissioners and we make this rule – and you had guided me when I raised the matter about the fact that this might have been working for the next Parliament – you said, “Indeed, we still need to make rules for this Parliament.” Does it mean that now that we have that rule, we are going to get new commissioners, or are we making this for the future? Are we supposed to legislate for the next Parliament? I want that to be clarified.

MR KATUNTU: These amendments shall not have retrospective effect. Therefore, the commissioners, as currently constituted, were elected in accordance with the rules as they were then. However, tomorrow, a vacancy can fall open, either by an act of nature – which could be that one that I do not want to talk about – or resignation or for whatever reason.

Then the new incoming commissioner – *(Interjections)*- why don’t I explain first? Then that incoming commissioner will be elected in accordance with the rules as we pass them.

Therefore, we are not – first of all, to lose the position of the commissioner, you must do so in accordance with the rules and the Act. As of now, none of those commissioners have violated any of the provisions to lose the seat.

THE CHAIRPERSON: *Ow’ekitiibwa? (Laughter)*

MR ODUR: Thank you, Chairperson. I would like clarification from the chairperson of the rules committee. Except for adding the words that the election will take place in accordance with the appendix proposed under B(a), subrule (4) of the rules, they have replicated the same. If we can read together, the rule as it is now,

says, “Nomination of candidates for election to the Commission of the four members of Parliament referred to in subrule (1)(f), shall be made by the Government and Opposition sides.”

The committee added that it will be in accordance with the Appendix. Therefore, the clarification I want from the chairperson of the committee on rules is that he says that an election took place in accordance with the current rules; let him brief us on when this Parliament sat to elect the commissioners.

MR KATUNTU: I said that in the current rules, we were using the word “designation.” Do you get it?

Two, to understand this amendment, you have to read it together with what is now provided for on page 118, appendix B(a). This is because it now gives the detailed procedure of elections, which did not exist.

In our view, you now need to read Appendix B(a), which introduced a very different method of elections, such that you satisfy both the Administration of Parliament Act and anything to do with the designation, as it has been. It cannot be in case that office falls vacant tomorrow.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Do you have that procedure in the old rules? It is not there. So, they are only introducing it by saying that, within two days of the first sitting of the first meeting of the first session of Parliament, we should have the elections. This is in conformity with the Administration of the Parliament Act.

Do you have something contrary?

MSAISHAKABANDA: Madam Chairperson, to facilitate debate of this particular rule, it would be procedurally right for us now to discuss the procedure. This is because whether commissioners are elected or not is not a matter of contention. The law actually required us to have elected commissioners.

The issue would be how they are elected. If it pleases you, Madam Chairperson, you could take us to that particular appendix at this time so that people can agree with it or make possible amendments to it.

MR SSEWUNGU: Madam Chairperson, I pray that we do not create a situation where we are preparing rules for the next House in anticipation of our being there, if God makes it possible, unless we are stating expressly that those clauses be reserved for that coming Parliament.

After the Speaker’s swearing-in, Parliament makes its own rules. The moment we tamper with them and give procedures on the election of commissioners, it means we are preparing rules for the next House, yet we are not sure of being there.

Maybe, by my Rosary, I will be there. You never know and prayers- *—(Interjections)—* no there is nobody who is assured of that. It is God and your personal *chi* that is going to help. Madam Chairperson, we have to take a keen interest in that. Otherwise, we cannot prepare rules for the next Parliament.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Committee chairperson, please walk us through the procedure, Appendix B(a). Honourable members, you cannot expect new members to come and start making rules. The rules we are using were made by people who were not here — most of us—you know very well. You go ahead.

MR KATUNTU: Madam Chairperson, you cannot enact a law on elections in the past. It is about elections, which are going to happen in the future. Other than having a debate, like we used to have some time when we were down - so, currently, we are looking at (*Hon. Ekanya rose*) I am ready to take any clarification. I do not want anybody to imagine that it is a big question.

MR EKANYA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Hon. Abdu Katuntu, you are the one who has been mentoring us, saying that we do not legislate in anticipation. It seems you are now taking us to anticipate.

This is because the commonwealth practice, the foundation upon which our rules are prepared, is that every Parliament makes its own rules. We can adopt the rule, and if a new Parliament comes, it can decide to adopt that rule or make its own rule.

Therefore, I seek clarification from you; is it proper for you to be on record making a statement in anticipation of the next Parliament – that we are making this rule for them, such that it helps them to conduct elections in their first sitting?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Abdu Katuntu, Rule 13.

MR KATUNTU: Rule 13 -

THE CHAIRPERSON: We had finished.

MR KATUNTU: I am going back to Rule 13. As I go back, honourable colleagues, we did not have an election, but now we are providing for it. That is the essence.

Rule 13 is amended -

THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable members, I think members did not hear the question. I put the question that Rule 11 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Rule 11, as amended, agreed to.

Rule 13

MR KATUNTU: We propose the amendment of Rule 13 by inserting immediately after subrule (1) the following:

- i) Subject to subrule (1), at least one of the members of the Pan-African Parliament shall be a woman. Madam Chairperson, we are aligning with Article 4(2) of the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the Pan-African Parliament Community relating to the Pan-African Parliament, which requires

that one of the five members shall be a woman. It is not like this is independent. We are just aligning our rules to the treaty establishing the Pan-African Parliament.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable members, that did not exist in the original rules, and it is in alignment with the Constitution and the treaty. Hon. Aisha Kabanda?

MS AISHA KABANDA: I agree with the majority report.

MR ODUR: Madam Chairperson, before you put the question, I propose an amendment to Rule 13, to read as follows: “A Member elected to the Pan-African Parliament shall relinquish any other position or a Member elected to the Pan-African Parliament shall not hold any other position in Parliament.”

This will allow the Member not to hold two concurrent positions, like the current chairperson of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline. He is also a Member of the Pan-African Parliament.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable members, that is a good one. You cannot be in the Pan-African Parliament and also be the chairperson of a committee.

MR KATUNTU: Madam Speaker, I concede.

THE CHAIRPERSON: You concede. *(Laughter)*

MSAISHAKABANDA: Madam Chairperson, I think Hon. Odur must have noticed that the committee chairperson gave the Deputy Chairperson a lot of time to do a good job. So, it is good that he has conceded.

THE CHAIRPERSON: You have conceded. Honourable members, I put the question that rule 13 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Rule 13, as amended, agreed to.

New Rule

THE CHAIRPERSON: No, he has not resigned. He has a dean, who will – *(Laughter)*

MR KATUNTU: I can say that the rules do not have a retrospective effect. *(Laughter)* I think we have already explained that to Hon. Nambooze. We are now on rule 14.

THE CHAIRPERSON: 14? Is there a new rule?

MR KATUNTU: Yes. The rules are amended by inserting immediately before rule 14 the following -

“Role and functions of the Leader of Government Business

- (1) There shall be in Parliament a Leader of Government Business designated as such by the President, who shall be responsible for the coordination and implementation of Government policies across ministries, departments and other public institutions.
- (2) The Leader of Government Business shall perform such other functions as provided under the rules.”

Justification

To provide for the role of the Leader of Government Business in the rules.

Honourable colleagues, as you realise, whereas the role and functions of the Leader of the Opposition are provided for in the rules, the rules were silent on the role and functions of the Leader of Government Business. Therefore, we are now just transplanting them as they are in the Constitution. The roles we are giving here are those provided for in the Constitution, like those in the rules for the Leader of the Opposition, were also transplanted from the Constitution.

MR SSEWUNGU: Madam Chairperson, I want to thank the committee chairperson. Let him come out straight on this new rule. We

have the Prime Minister being the Leader of Government Business in the Constitution. Are we creating a new position? If it is, or if it is not, I would wish to see this new insertion talking specifically about the Prime Minister as being the Leader of Government Business.

Otherwise, if we are creating something new, we are going to have a challenge between the Prime Minister and the new Leader of Government Business. Could we understand what you specifically mean by this? This is because the Leader of Government Business, by our Constitution, is the Prime Minister.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Katuntu, is this not redundant?

MR KATUNTU: No, it is not. Actually, I wish he had read the amendment. It says, “There shall be in Parliament a Leader of Government Business...” – it is there because that is what the Constitution provides for – “...designated as such by the President...” – that is what the Constitution provides – “... who shall be responsible for the coordination and implementation of Government policies across ministries, departments and other public institutions.” I am scratching my head to see the controversy.

THE CHAIRPERSON: You know, Hon. Abdu, “... who shall be responsible for the coordination and implementation of Government policies across ministries, departments and other public institutions.” That is from the Executive, not the Legislature. Let your neighbour explain to you. That is from the Executive, not the Legislature. The Executive defines it. We are legislating on what we do, day-to-day, in Parliament. Now, this is what the Executive has given to the Leader of Government Business. Then, the Leader of Government Business shall perform such functions as provided under the rules. This is what the President has designated.

MR KATUNTU: The one which has been designated is under subrule (1).

THE CHAIRPERSON: Even subrule (2).

MR KATUNTU: No, what has been designated is the Leader of Government Business. Actually, it is not even the President. The Constitution designates the Leader of Government Business to be the Prime Minister – who shall be responsible for coordinating and implementing Government policies across the ministries – within Parliament. That is the Prime Minister. I do not know whether I understand you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: The Executive defines her roles. You know, let us not go into – let us not clash.

DR BWANIKA: Madam Chairperson, that amendment presupposes that the President can appoint another Leader of Government Business apart from the Prime Minister. It is very dangerous for us to put that in our rules. The Constitution is very clear that the Prime Minister is the Leader of Government Business in Parliament. We do not need him to provide for it in our rules.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Under Article 108A (2):

(2) *The Prime Minister shall –*

- (a) *be the Leader of Government Business in the Parliament and be responsible for coordination and implementation of Government policies across ministries, departments and other public institutions; and*
- (b) *perform such other functions as may be assigned to him or her by the President, or as may be conferred on him or her by this Constitution...*”

MS KABANDA: Madam Chairperson, what Hon. Bwanika is very fearful of is taken care of under the definition. In the definition, the Leader of Government Business is defined as “Prime Minister”, so, we cannot have another office created. However, the role of the Leader of Government Business in Parliament is not stipulated in the rules, as of now.

Therefore, the committee thought it was prudent to get the role of the Leader of Government

Business to be stipulated in the rules and to define the Leader of Government Business as the Prime Minister.

MR SSEWUNGU: Madam Chairperson, I am asking the chairperson of the committee, through you, that there is no problem in making a transplant. We can expressly state it and include the words “Prime Minister” in the new insertion, so that it sits in our rules comfortably. However, the moment you do not put it there – in our rules, we create offices.

THE CHAIRPERSON: The rules exist to operationalise the laws. However, we should restrain ourselves to the Legislature. Hon. Odur?

MR ODUR: Madam Chairperson, my understanding of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament is that they are only applicable when Parliament is in motion – when you, Madam Chairperson, are seated there to guide us on how we conduct business within this building. Anything in the rules that purports to prescribe things outside would not be in that spirit.

I had already noted that I would oppose that amendment. One, we will be dictating to the President and the Executive on what their appointee should be doing, which is not our work. If we intend to extract some roles that are limited within parliamentary business, for example, the Leader of Government Business – who is the Prime Minister – shall be the one answering during the Prime Minister’s Time. That is something else.

Madam Chairperson, we should be explicit but to lift from the Constitution as is – otherwise, the Prime Minister has responsibilities in the Executive and also here.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, Hon. Katuntu.

MR KATUNTU: I am still not convinced. Let me tell you why I am not convinced. Does the Constitution provide the functions and roles of the Leader of the Opposition? Have we transplanted those roles from the Constitution to our rules? - (*Interjection*) - Have you read it? (*Hon. Naluyima rose*) Just look at it,

honourable member; just look at whether we have translated the roles given by the Constitution to the Leader of the Opposition and provided for it in our rules.

What we are trying to do – (*Interjection*) - can you listen? What we are trying to do is exactly to do the same; what you have already done for the Office of the Leader of the Opposition and we are doing it for the Office of the Leader of Government Business.

When you look at the new rule, it is not inserting anything outside what is provided for. If you are not comfortable, we can leave it, but I am not convinced.

THE CHAIRPERSON: It is not about being comfortable; it is separation of powers. As Hon. Odur has said, when the House is in motion, what is expected of it?

MS ALUM SANTA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I stand to support Hon. Katuntu. Marrying Hon. Katuntu's proposal to what Hon. Jonathan has stated – the Leader of Government Business is a Member who sits in this Parliament. In our Rules of Procedure and even the Constitution, all of us have been mentioned, including the Government Chief Whip. Therefore, I am proposing that we stand over this and then Hon. Katuntu, as the chairperson, sits down and not only lifts from the Constitution but comes up with a clear proposal on how we are going to govern the Leader of Government Business when Parliament is in operation.

Madam Chairperson, that should come out clear.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Do you want to govern the Leader of Government Business?

MS ALUM SANTA: Madam Chairperson, our Rules of Procedure-

THE CHAIRPERSON: No. I am asking: Do you need to govern the Leader of Government Business?

MS ALUM SANTA: Madam Chairperson, let me withdraw that word. How the Leader of Government Business is going to operate should come out very clearly in our Rules of Procedure? Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable members, can we stand over this?

MR KATUNTU: If the House is uncomfortable, we can leave it out. Then we have the Leader of Government Business whose roles are not provided for under our rules.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Abdu –

MR KATUNTU: I concede.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Do you concede? Okay. I want to ask: What are we curing?

MR KATUNTU: I concede.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

Rule 15

MS NALUYIMA: Madam Chairperson, before we go to Rule 15, there is need to introduce the Leader of the Opposition. It should read, "There will be a Leader of the Opposition in Parliament –" It states the roles; it does not show anything as far as – They only start with the roles –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Look at Article 82A of the Constitution.

MS NALUYIMA: What about including it in our rules? Like the way we have introduced whips, the Leader of Government Business, there is also need to introduce the Leader of the Opposition. I propose that it starts by highlighting the roles – (*Interjections*) Look at the whips. We introduce the whips –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Look at Rule 14.

MS NALUYIMA: In the rules, it starts with the roles.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I am saying, look at Rule 14. It says: “Role and functions of the Leader of the Opposition”

MS NALUYIMA: It does not introduce the Leader of the Opposition. Let me just concede.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Look at Rule 14 and read it.

MS NALUYIMA: Madam Chairperson, in Rule 14, we have outlined the functions of the Leader of the Opposition. Rule 14(1) reads, “*The principal role of the Leader of the Opposition is to keep the Government in check.*”

Madam Chairperson, I suggest, just like we have introduced the whips, let us introduce the Leader of the Opposition to say, “There will be a Leader of the Opposition.” Then we can mention the roles.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Check the Constitution, which is supreme.

MS NALUYIMA: Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Katuntu, next rule.

Rule 15

MR KATUNTU: Rule 15 is substituted for the following:

- 1) There shall be in Parliament –
 - (a) a Government Chief Whip appointed by Government from among Members of Parliament representing the ruling party;
 - (b) a Chief Opposition Whip appointed by the party in Opposition to Government having the greatest numerical strength among Opposition parties in Parliament; and
 - (c) party whips for any other parties in the Opposition.
- 2) The role and functions of the whip are to -
 - a) ensure that Members attend, participate in proceedings and vote in Parliament;
 - b) organise party business;

- c) keep Members informed of parliamentary business;
- d) supply lists of Members to serve on standing and sectoral committees;
- e) coordinate and implement agreed parliamentary business;
- f) act as intermediaries between leaders and other party members;
- g) arrange representations of party members on official parliamentary delegations; and
- h) act as tellers during divisions.

Justification

To consolidate the functions of the whips under one subrule for clarity and ease of reference.

Madam Chairperson, the functions and roles were spread; so, we have just consolidated them in one rule and assigned some other functions, which ordinarily should be the functions of the whips.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Hon. Aisha?

MS AISHA KABANDA: I agree with the proposal.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that Rule 15 be amended –

MR ODUR: Madam Chairperson, I want to use this opportunity to correct an anomaly under proposal 2(b), which reads, “organise party business”.

Madam Chairperson, I would like to add the words “in Parliament” so it reads, “party business in Parliament”.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes?

MR ODUR: The responsibility of organising party business is with the Secretary-General. Let us add the words “in Parliament”.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Chairperson – Honourable members, let us sort out one issue at a time.

MR KATUNTU: Madam Chairperson, a few minutes ago, Hon. Odur was saying, these rules only govern internal workings in the Parliament.

THE CHAIRPERSON: For clarity -

MR KATUNTU: They cannot apply outside Parliament. *(Laughter)* That notwithstanding, now that he has come to the position that I was in, I concede. He has already moved away from the injury position.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

MS KAAYA: Madam Chairperson, I am also proposing: in the previous Parliament, there was interest in having deputy chief whips and even in this Parliament –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Were you in the last Parliament?

MS KAAYA: I was following – the National Resistance Movement (NRM) side. In this one, the Opposition also had an interest in having it.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Our rules only provide for party whips. The other one is administrative. You can plan according to what you want.

MS KAAYA: We could propose it at this time.

THE CHAIRPERSON: No, we are not proposing. I put the question that Rule 15 be amended with amendments from Hon. Odur, as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Rule 15, as amended, agreed to.

Rule 16

MR KATUNTU: Amendment of Rule 16: Rule 16 is substituted for the following:

“(1) A Member may, with the consent of the Speaker, move that a rule be suspended

in its application to a particular motion before the House.

- (2) A Member moving the motion under subrule (1) shall give reasons why the rule should be suspended in its application to a particular matter before the House.
- (3) Where the motion is carried, the rule shall be suspended in its application to the matter before the House.
- (4) This rule shall not apply in respect to rules; 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13(1), 24, 88, 93, 98, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 118, 124, 125, 126, 127, 134, 143 and 195.”

The justification is to enhance the entrenchment of rules that cannot be suspended in conformity with the Constitution and with due regard to natural justice.

Madam Chairperson, many of these rules we have added are a result of the Constitutional Court decision, where we suspended the rules. The court held that suspending the application of that rule would lead to unconstitutionality. That is what we have just done – to harmonise this with the court decisions and also to make sure that this rule, including the rule suspending, to be entrenched. It cannot be suspended.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Aisha Kabanda?

MS AISHA KABANDA: I entirely agree with the proposal.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. I put the question that Rule 16 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Rule 16, as amended, agreed to.

Rule 19

MR KATUNTU: Rule 19 – Sitting of the House

Rule 19 is amended by inserting immediately after subrule (1) the following: “(1a) Subject to these rules, the House shall sit at such place as the Speaker shall determine.”

The justification is to make provision for Parliament sessions in any other place, including regional sittings.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Aisha Kabanda?

MS AISHA KABANDA: No objection.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that Rule 19 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Rule 19, as amended, agreed to.

Rule 25

MR KATUNTU: My sister had an amendment.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This is about quorum in the House. Often than not, to ascertain quorum in the House, we consider Members present in the House and also those in virtual attendance.

Also, you will note that most decisions here are made by voice voting through “Aye” and “Nay.” However, people in virtual attendance cannot be heard to pronounce their decision, whether they are saying “Aye” or “Nay.” Therefore, I am here to propose that for purposes of quorum where a decision is made through voice voting, Members in virtual attendance should not be considered to be part of the quorum because their voices cannot be heard.

Madam Chairperson, in the committee, we entertained members from the technical team who spoke to us and were explicit about that. They said that the way the situation is, there is no way people in virtual attendance can pronounce themselves through “Aye” and “Nay” because voices can come in at different times or there is a problem in the network; except, if a decision is going to be determined by either show of hand or roll call.

This proposal is that those people in virtual attendance can only be part of the quorum if the decision is made through other methods like roll call, hand counting, and others, but not voice voting.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Aisha, that is administrative. Quorum is about the number, not the voting. The people who will be present will vote, but we will ascertain the quorum both virtually –

MSAISHAKABANDA: Madam Chairperson, let me make a final statement: I contend that this matter is not just administrative; it is very important. That is why we say quorum shall be determined at vote taking. This includes “Aye” and “Nay” where people cannot be heard to pronounce their decision on a matter. They cannot be considered to be part of the quorum. It is very important and cannot be simply taken to be administrative.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Aisha, we are looking at two issues; quorum and voting. Is that clear?

MS AISHA KABANDA: Particularly here, yes. We have to look at the two together because quorum –

THE CHAIRPERSON: No. Look at Rule 93 about questions to be decided by the majority. Here, it states; “93(1) *Except as otherwise prescribed by the Constitution or any law consistent with the Constitution, all questions proposed for decision of Parliament shall be determined by the majority of votes of Members present and voting.*”

When you get to 93(3); “*The proxy form shall be submitted to the Clerk within 12 hours before the commencement of the sitting to which it relates.*”

MSAISHAKABANDA: Madam Chairperson, a quorum is determined by vote and my assertion is that you cannot be considered to be part of a decision when you cannot vote. We were told by technical people that Members in virtual attendance cannot vote where we say “Aye” and “Nay”.

Therefore, people in virtual attendance cannot be part of the quorum; it is as simple as that. They cannot be part of the quorum because they cannot be heard.

MR SSEWUNGU: Let us put the record correct. I remember very well in the 10th Parliament, honourable members were debating online. If you can debate online, you can as well vote online. That is the reason we have –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, when we were voting for the famous Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) motion, Members voted online.

MR SSEWUNGU: With modern technology, we cannot restrict ourselves by putting such; so, I pray that we sustain it as it is. Otherwise, we can vote online as we debate online.

THE CHAIRPERSON: That can only be seen by the presiding officer.

MSAISHAKABANDA: Madam Chairperson, that is another point of contention.

THE CHAIRPERSON: What is your view?

MS AISHA KABANDA: It is okay for people to attend virtually – How I wish Hon. Ssewungu could listen. The situation he is referring to is for people who are voting through roll call and I am saying in cases where the decision is made through voice voting, people in virtual attendance cannot be part of the quorum because they cannot be heard.

THE CHAIRPERSON: First hear from another Member.

DR BWANIKA: Madam Chairperson, Hon. Aisha Kabanda is talking about quorum. You do not determine quorum by saying “Nay” or “Aye”. These are numbers. There is a difference between quorum and voting.

THE CHAIRPERSON: That is what I said.

DR BWANIKA: Yes. The way it is, quorum can be determined.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Connie?

MS GALIWANGO: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. As Dr Bwanika said, a quorum is different from voting and there is no guarantee that everybody votes because there are those who abstain. Therefore, it is still valid that by voice – there are those who speak softly and others loudly, but the highest will be the one that will take the day.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable members, I would like to refer you to Rule 24(6) of the Rules of Procedure which states: *“For the avoidance of doubt, a Member virtually present in the House shall form part of the quorum of the House.”*

We are talking about quorum, not voting. Yes, Hon. Jonathan?

MR ODUR: Madam Chairperson, I propose that when we come to the rules on voting, you can give audience to Hon. Aisha Kabanda to deal with that.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes. Hon. Aisha, when we come to the rules on voting on Rule 93, we can then incorporate your matter.

MR SSEWUNGU: Honourable members, they allowed us and we must exhaust the matter extensively. In this House, there are ex-officio Members. When you ask a question here on the Floor – if you want to go by what Hon. Aisha is saying – it means that whenever you are going to ask for voice voting, the ex-officio Members must get out because you are going to say, “The ‘Ayes’ have it.”

What I am saying is that the rules are very clear. Where honourable members are not satisfied, they remain standing to challenge.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Rule 25.

MSAISHAKABANDA: Madam Chairperson, before you go to Rule 25, the rule that you read is the one that I am seeking to amend because I am suggesting that –

THE CHAIRPERSON: We shall amend when we reach that rule. We have not yet reached there.

MS AISHA KABANDA: You are skipping Rule 24. It says, *“For the avoidance of doubt, a Member virtually present in the House shall only form part of the quorum of the House where voting is by roll call and tally, by show of hands or by electronic voting.”*

That is only when he can form part of the quorum. Otherwise, he cannot be part of the quorum because his decision cannot be determined. That is the point of the very rule I seek to amend.

Honourable friends, let me remind you that severally here, we have a small number that is complemented by people in virtual attendance. For example, we can be here and we are about 56; the virtual attendance is about 175. So a quorum is there, as we start to debate. In the process when you are deciding issues, they put the question and we say, “Aye.” It is only the people here saying “Aye” while the majority in virtual attendance are not heard, and yet we determined them to be part of a quorum in the beginning.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Linos?

MR NGOMPEK: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. As you mentioned, the Speaker is privileged to witness what is happening virtually. So, if these Members say “Aye”, the privilege is only that the Speaker listens to their voice.

THE CHAIRPERSON: The voting is always by Members who are in the House – the voice voting. However, what we are saying is that we have never had a scenario where virtual Members are more than the ones in the House.

MR NAMBESHE: Madam Chairperson, I think the honourable member, has missed a point, when she loads it over you, knowing very well that your lieutenants are the whips, especially in the determination of quorum. It has become extremely difficult – almost impossible – for whips, whose role is to ensure attendance and determine quorum on your behalf, virtually. It could easily be abused if it is not given –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Just a minute before you proceed. Very soon, most of you are going to be away; we will have Bills to pass, and appropriations, yet, you will be the first people to say, “We are in the constituency; I will be online.” Do you want Parliament to stop running because of quorum? In terms of quorum, we are looking at a number, but all of you are going to run away. The heat is going to be too much out there and almost everybody will be away.

MR KAJWENGYE: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I have listened to Hon. Aisha Kabanda. There was logic when they were drafting and these two were put separate. Quorum is quorum, and Rule 93, which concerns voting, is also independent and explicit. The rule we are talking about talks about quorum. Rules could not have meant to disenfranchise. It is all about Rule 93, which even provides for a Member who is on leave of absence to even have a Member vote for him or her.

However, this particular one –

THE CHAIRPERSON: That is called proxy voting. Hon. Moses?

MR WALYOMU: Madam Chairperson, on the virtual voting, I think we have been having instances where Members who are not in the House, vote by the show of hands. Meaning that if somebody is on virtual voting or presence, then he can say, by show of hand, that he/she is either accepting or not.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. LOP?

MR SSENYONYI: Madam Chairperson, I would like to disagree with honourable colleagues who are disconnecting quorum from voting. That is not what the rules are saying.

Rule 24 of the Rules of Procedure states: Quorum of Parliament. Subrule (1). *“The quorum of Parliament shall be one-third of all Members of Parliament entitled to vote. Subrule (2). The quorum prescribed under*

subrule (1) shall only be required at a time when Parliament is voting on any question”.

Even without it being in the rules, it ought to be implied. Quorum is only when you are going to vote on a matter. That is when it becomes critical. Otherwise, even in our committees, you can discuss with whatever bare minimum. However, when it comes to voting, it is critical. So, it is not true that there is quorum on one hand and voting on the other hand.

Otherwise, what is quorum for? Subrule (2) here is making it explicitly clear. *“The quorum prescribed under subrule (1) shall only be required at a time when Parliament is voting on any question”.*

Therefore, we must be able to guide the quorum that is virtually with us because it is required for voting purposes. Madam Chairperson, assuming there are 100 of us here and 100 virtually, we have a quorum. However, when it comes to voting, you cannot say that only the 100 in here are voting because then it is not one third who are voting but rather much less. So, we have got to answer that question and that is why it becomes complex.

Do the ones online vote “Aye” or “Nay”? How do we hear it? But like Hon. Aisha said, we must be able to guide it within the rules because what is clear here is that quorum is numbers that ought to be able to vote.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Chairperson, what is your position?

MR KATUNTU: Madam Chairperson, we heard all these arguments and I wanted to listen more if there is anybody raising any other argument which I have not heard so far. I am trying to – because it was very contentious; let me try to continue listening for any new argument –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Goli, Hon. Esenu, and then Doctor.

MR OGWAL: First, to the chairperson of the committee: Do we define the word “quorum” in

this document? If we defined it, then it would give us guidance.

Secondly, I think that we need to separate this issue of quorum for voting and normal quorum, so that if it is possible, we can isolate all the related issues and Articles related to voting, send them to Rule 93 so that we remove Rules 24(2), 24(3) and send them to Rule 93 only if the definitions are different so that we handle them differently.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Anthony? – I am coming –

MR ESENU: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. When I listened to Hon. Aisha Kabanda’s submission, I saw the point she was making because of the voting issue and I felt sympathy. However, when you go to Rule 96(3), on voting in the House. It says the following; “Subject to Rule 95, every Member in the House at the time of voting shall cast a vote. The voting in the House shall be by;

- a) voice voting
- b) secret voting
- c) electronic voting
- d) division
- e) roll call – which Hon. Aisha is talking about – and then finally,
- f) *show of hands.*”

However, subrule 3 covers Hon. Aisha’s concerns. It says, *“The Speaker may, where necessary, designate a specific voting method for a Member virtually present in the House where the Member is unable to vote through any of the voting methods specified under subrule (2)”*

So, Madam Chairperson, in my view, the concerns of my sister are covered because you have the leeway to decide how the virtually present Members can vote in case they cannot vote by voice.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Doctor?

DR OTAALA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I agree with my brother, Hon.

Anthony Eсенu. I would like to add that if it does not cause harm, we could, at this time, expressly state that in the case of voice voting – which is “Aye” or “Nay” – those attending virtually will vote electronically so that there is an intermarriage whereby in totality, we are catering for all those in attendance because those in attendance include those in the House and virtually.

I, therefore, think that we should make that amendment to provide for “Ayes” and “Nays” for those present here but quickly intermarry it with electronic voting. I so propose. Thank you.

MR KATUNTU: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would like to thank my colleagues. The debate we are having now is actually the same we had in the committee; we had all these arguments and we differed on the interpretation of Rule 96(3) because that is where our interpretation was.

To the majority, we thought that Rule 96(3) provided a cure for the mischief that Hon. Kabanda was afraid of. And this is what it says. *“The Speaker may, where necessary, designate a specific voting method for a Member virtually present,”* meaning that Members virtually present may have a challenge voting in the House – where the Member is unable to vote through any of the voting methods specified in subrule (2).

One of those specified methods is voice voting and to cure that mischief – because we all agree with what she was saying; that people who are not here may have a challenge to vote.

That is why we have Rule 96(3) and we did not see any reason for the amendment. We thought the Speaker just invokes this particular rule and says, “Yes, I have heard this, but this one, let me count. How many are they? They are five. How do they vote?” Then the ruling is made. That was our interpretation and we did not see the necessity for the amendment.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Madam Chairperson, I have attentively listened to colleagues and would like to allay their fears that this amendment puts into perspective Rule 90 on voting. It just puts it into perspective by saying – because the amendment reads, “For the avoidance of doubt...” So, we have noted that the Speaker can put an arrangement for Members in virtual attendance to vote.

We are simply saying that “For the avoidance of doubt, a Member virtually present in the House shall only form part of the quorum if the Speaker puts into place that arrangement”.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Aisha, I do not want people to run away from their responsibility when there is a contentious issue here. Let people be there to vote so that they do not hide. Let them attend, vote and if we are voting for *“togikwatako”* let it be; they should not hide and say, “I am going to vote virtually.” No, let people come and vote.

MSAISHAKABANDA: Madam Chairperson, how do you cure the issue of the minority here in the House, pronouncing themselves over a matter through voice voting, while the number that complements the quorum is not in the House?

To put into effect the rule that colleagues are quoting, that takes care of people in virtual attendance, we need an amendment that says: “For the avoidance of doubt, they constitute part of the quorum if they are going to vote on those specific terms.” Otherwise, if they are not voting on those specific terms, they cannot be part of the quorum.

THE CHAIRPERSON: You know, what you are trying to do is to infringe on the right of Members to vote. That is what you are trying to do. Yes, doctor?

DR BAYIGGA: Thank you very much. Finally –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Now, let me give Hon. Jesca.

DR BAYIGGA: No, I am saying “final submission from me”. *(Laughter)*

Madam Chairperson, it is very difficult and it will be very complicated for the presiding officer to mix the two types of voting; sound and then numbers. How are you going to mix them? The only way those who are attending virtually can be part of those who are voting in-house is when one system of voting is going to be adopted.

THE CHAIRPERSON: So, are you in for the amendment or not?

DR BAYIGGA: No, I am just helping you to discern how Members can bring these ideas of mixing the two ways of determining numbers so that we can know that in the amendment, the presiding officer will need to institute a measure of voting that is universal for those who are attending virtually and those who are attending physically. Otherwise, if we are going for “Ayes” and “Nays”, which Hon. Aisha calls “eyes” and “nays” because the sounds are quite different there, then, it will be difficult to include those attending virtually in that kind of voting.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, Hon. Jesca?

MS ABABIKU: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I have listened attentively. One thing I have noted throughout my stay in Parliament is that the presiding officers try their best to maintain the quorum in the House, whether voting through roll call or in unison when we say “Aye” or “Nay”. So, the issue of quorum is constant.

Secondly, I do not know exactly what Hon. Aisha wishes to cure because, if the quorum is maintained constant, we have never at any one time got more Members on Zoom than in the House. Therefore, Madam Chairperson, I see what she is proposing as redundant because based on the practices through which we have been going, the quorum has been maintained constant. Thank you so much.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Honourable minister?

MSASAMO: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I want to say that the issue of quorum, in my understanding, is numbers and then voting. When we are voting, “Aye” and “Nay”, truth be told, not everybody here shouts it, even if you are in the House. We only listen to the highest and the Speaker says it. However, when something is controversial, usually, the Speaker says we go for roll call. When roll call is done, even people on virtual attendance are allowed to vote.

Madam Chairperson, you vetted me for minister through *Zoom*. I did not appear before you physically. Do you remember? Because of COVID-19, I did it virtually. However, the committee heard me and I answered the questions and everything. For the issue of voting, even during that time of COVID-19, your photo would be displayed when you were saying, “Aye.” Let us not confuse the “Ayes” and “Nays” because even for “Ayes” and “Nays”, I have never tried to count who has said it or not. It becomes hard.

However, for roll call, that is individual. Sometimes we say “Aye” and the other one is saying “Nay” and everybody is shouting. Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: There is a point of information here.

MR ODUR: Thank you, honourable minister. I wanted to give you information that even where the “Ayes” are high –

THE CHAIRPERSON: It is only the Speaker who hears.

MR ODUR: Our presiding officers can hear the “Nays” and declare it. *(Laughter)*

THE CHAIRPERSON: Next item. Hon. Jonathan Odur, Erute South – *Ow’ekitiibwa*. *(Laughter)*

Rule 25

MR KATUNTU: Procedurally, we have to make a decision on Hon. Aisha’s amendment.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I mean, let us maintain it as it is. Part VI

MR KATUNTU: We have to vote on it. The question has to be put. Hadn't she moved it?

THE CHAIRPERSON: We are not amending it. It was not among the amendments. It stands part as it is.

MR KATUNTU: We need to put the question.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Should we vote on her amendment?

MR KATUNTU: We have to.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. I put the question that we amend rule 24(6), as proposed by Hon. Aisha Kalule Kabanda.

(Question put and negatived.)

MR KATUNTU: Thank you very much, Madam Chairperson. That was in accordance with Hon. Odur's advice. *(Laughter)*

THE CHAIRPERSON: Dr Odur *-(Laughter)*

Rule 25

MR KATUNTU: Madam Chairperson, Rule 25 is amended by deleting subrules (3) and (4).

Justification

To place it under the right rule, which is Rule 54. We are just interchanging the places.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Aisha?

MS AISHA KABANDA: No objection, Madam Chairperson.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that Rule 25 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Rule 25, as amended, agreed to.

MR KATUNTU: The rules are amended by substituting for the title of Part VI, the following -
"PAPER AND OTHER ITEMS"

Amendment of Rule 31: Laying

Rule 31 is amended -

i) by substituting for the headnote, the following -
"Laying of Papers and other items"

ii) by substituting for subrule (1), the following-

"(1) A Member may, with the leave of the Speaker, lay a paper or any item on Table in the House."

Justification

1. To provide for laying of other items on the Table; and
2. To require leave of the Speaker to lay paper or any other item on the Table.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Aisha?

MS AISHA KABANDA: No objection, Madam Chairperson.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that the title of Part VI of the Rules of Procedure be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Part VI, as amended, agreed to.

Rule 31

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that Rule 31 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Rule 31, as amended, agreed to.

MSAISHAKABANDA: Madam Chairperson, you skipped Rule 30.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Rule 30.

Rule 30

MS AISHA KABANDA: Rule 30 is amended by substituting for subrule 7 the following:

“The minister or committee in subrule (6) shall report back to Parliament within 14 working days from the date of referral of a petition for an urgent matter.

(2) by substituting for subrule 10 the following: “The report of a committee on a petition shall be placed on the Order Paper within 14 days from the date the report is referred to the committee”.

Justification

1. To prescribe a specific time within which a committee or minister reports back to the House on matters raised in a petition;
2. To give the committee a shorter period of reporting back to the House on a petition; and
3. To give priority to petitions in the House.

This is to separate reports of petitions from other reports because some petitions are of an urgent nature and they cannot wait for 45 days to lapse.

MR KATUNTU: Madam Chairperson, it was our view that – first of all, all the business that comes to this House is important. It is not necessarily true that petitions are more important than other businesses that come to our attention for consideration by the House.

Secondly, if it is that important, the presiding officer may direct that they are given a shorter time. There is no reason to prioritise and say – because we do not determine the petitions. Petitions just come from outside this House. Some could even be frivolous, and we suspend very important or urgent meetings because a frivolous petition has come up.

Therefore, we did not see any need to have that. In any case, we thought that priority of business

has already been given by the Constitution and also, the presiding officer – the Speaker – has discretion. Since the order of business and the Order Paper is a function of –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Aisha, the order of business is under 25. Kindly give the Speaker the discretion. If I know that there is something very important, the Leader of the Opposition can give me a document in the morning and I know it is important and I prioritise it.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Most obliged, Madam Chairperson. I respect the Chair of the Speaker. However, I just noted that by the time people petition Parliament, they have things that they consider very important to them that need to be disposed of. And sometimes, matters are responded to when they have actually expired. I thought it was very important that petitions be given due accord and be disposed of early enough.

Also, proposing that a particular period of time be given to petitions does not take away the Speaker’s power because even in the rules, there is already prescribed time – what should be handled when. I thought it falls there.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Aisha, we shall handle it administratively. Where we feel that this must be handled as fast as possible – if it means handling it directly with the minister responsible even without going to the committee, it shall be done.

MS AISHA KABANDA: I concede, Chairperson.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Next.

Rule 32

MR KATUNTU: Thank you very much, Hon. Kabanda.

Rule 32 is amended by substituting for the headnote the following: *“Mode of laying and presentation of papers”*

The justification is to include a presentation in the headnote so as to align with the contents of the rule; it is about aligning the headnote and the contents of the rule.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Aisha.

MS AISHA KABANDA: No objections here.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that Rule 32 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Rule 32, as amended, agreed to.

Insertion of new rule

MR KATUNTU: Insertion of new rule. Part IV of the rule is amended by inserting immediately after Rule 32, the following: “32A. *Laying of reports of the Auditor-General.*”

- (4) *The Speaker - or in his or her absence, the Clerk, shall receive the report of the Auditor-General submitted in accordance with Clause (4) of Article 143 of the Constitution.*
- (5) *The Speaker shall, as soon as practicable, cause the report to be laid before the House.*
- (6) *Upon the report being laid, the Speaker shall refer the report to the relevant committee for examination.”*

Justification

1. To separate the requirements for laying the Auditor-General’s report from the functions of the public accounts committee under rules 174 and 181;
2. To insert the reports of the Auditor-General, which are laid as papers under the right part; and
3. To align the submission of the Auditor-General’s report with the timeframe in the Constitution.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. The first one, “*the Speaker - or in his or her absence, the*

Clerk - shall receive the report of the Auditor-General submitted in accordance with Clause (4) of Article 163 of the Constitution.” Is this report received in the House or the office?

MR KATUNTU: Madam Chairperson, a report can never be received in the House. It can only be received in the office.

THE CHAIRPERSON: So, it is redundant. Remove it. We know how to receive our reports.

MR KATUNTU: You see, the role – we need to look at the –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Let us deal with the procedure in the House.

MR KATUNTU: Madam Chairperson, when you look at – You have been receiving these reports as – I think it should be under Article 163 and we wanted to empower any other office other than yourself.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Have we complained?

MR KATUNTU: We can concede.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Why are you taking it? There is a Speaker and there is a Deputy Speaker. There are also commissioners “*Ab’ebitiibwa*”. *(Laughter)*

MR KATUNTU: We concede. We can go to another rule.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So, are there amendments there?

MR KATUNTU: No, we have conceded. We can leave that one.

Amendment of the title of Part VII

MR KATUNTU: The rule is amended by substituting for the title of part VII the following: “*Part VII Laying and Presentation of Parliamentary Reports and Reports of Regional Bodies or Organisations*”

The justification is to align the headnote with the content of the rules within the part.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Aisha?

MS AISHA KABANDA: No objection.

THE CHAIRPERSON: “*Presentation of Parliamentary Reports and Reports of Regional Bodies or Organisations*”; why are you only putting regional bodies?

MR KATUNTU: It is just aligning the headnote and the part. The justification is there.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that the title –

MR ODUR: Madam Chairperson, I had informally asked the chairperson to clarify what he means by “parliamentary reports” because a report of Parliament is a report that we have adopted here. If he means a delegation or a committee or whatever, that report cannot be a parliamentary report. I do not know if he meant a delegation because a delegation cannot bring a parliamentary report –

THE CHAIRPERSON: A parliamentary report is what has been adopted in the House.

MR ODUR: So, if you say laying of parliamentary reports, do we lay that report to ourselves?

I would like to move the amendment that reads, “Laying and Presentation of Reports of Parliamentary Delegations.”

THE CHAIRPERSON: Is that okay with you?

MR KATUNTU: We had already discussed it with Hon. Jonathan Odur, and I had conceded.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that the title of Part VII be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

The Title, as amended, agreed to.

Rule 33

MR KATUNTU: Laying of Reports of Parliamentary Delegations Abroad.

Rule 33 is amended in subrule (1) by inserting immediately after the word “abroad” the words “parliamentary delegation”.

The justification is for clarity.

MS AISHA KABANDA: I agree to the amendment.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that Rule 33 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Rule 33, as amended, agreed to.

Rule 40

MR KATUNTU: Rule 40 is amended as follows:

- i) In subrule (1), by substituting for the words “six months”, the words “ninety working days”;
- ii) In subrule (3), by inserting immediately after the word “minister”, the words “responsible for the implementation of the Treaty, Protocol or International Agreement”; and
- iii) In subrule (4) by deleting the words “coordination and.”

Justification:

1. To give a shorter period for a Treaty, Protocol or International Agreement to be laid before Parliament after it is signed or concluded; and
2. To clarify that it is the minister responsible for the Treaty, Protocol, or International Agreement, that shall make a periodic report to Parliament on the implementation of the Treaty, Protocol, or International Agreement.

MS AISHA KABANDA: I agree to the amendment.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that Rule 40 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Rule 40, as amended, agreed to.

New Rule

MR KATUNTU: Insertion of new rule:

The Rules are amended by inserting immediately after Rule 40 the following -

40A, Ratification of treaties

- 1) A Treaty submitted to Parliament for ratification under Section 2(b) of the Ratification of Treaties Act shall be laid in the House, and the Speaker shall refer it to the relevant committee for scrutiny;
- 2) The committee shall examine the Treaty in detail and make all such inquiries in relation to the Treaty, and report to the House;
- 3) The report of the committee to the House shall include a recommendation that the House;
 - i) ratifies the treaty,
 - ii) ratifies the treaty with the reservations,
 - iii) or rejects the ratification of the treaty.
- 4) In ratifying a Treaty with a reservation, the House shall specify the affected provisions of the Treaty and the proposed text of each reservation, which may include a prescription of timelines within which an obligation is to be fulfilled before implementation of the Treaty.
- 5) Upon the resolution of the House on a Treaty, the Clerk shall, within seven working days, notify the minister responsible for foreign affairs to enter the information in the register of treaties.

Justification is to provide for the procedure for ratification of Treaties, in accordance with the

Ratification of Treaties Act.

MR EKANYA: Thank you very much, Madam Chairperson.

The little information I have is that different Protocols have different terms and conditions, as regards to each ratification.

Some Treaties are ratified by the Executive, some by Parliament, and some are ratified by us here, which is mandatory as a result of all regional parliaments ratifying.

Therefore, I seek clarification from Hon. Abdu Katuntu that we need to be specific, otherwise this provision will be redundant.

I am also aware there is an Act regarding ratification of Treaties. I do not know whether you consulted on that.

MR KATUNTU: Why don't I sort out the easier ones? One, this particular proposal is based on the Ratification of the Treaties Act. Whatever we have stated here is provided for within the mother Act that you can reserve the Treaty, ratify with reservations and, reject it altogether.

However, there are Treaties which should make it a conditional precedent to be effective, to be ratified by parliaments. Those are the ones which are relevant to this rule. Those which do not, cannot, certainly, come here because there is no legal requirement for them to be here.

MR BASALIRWA: Madam Chairperson, I need some clarification from the chairperson of the rules committee regarding the role of the committee and Parliament, after a Treaty has been signed – not ratified, but signed, because the two are different under the law of treaties. The proposal is that at ratification, we can examine and the like but ratification of a Treaty is really at the tail end of the process.

Madam Chairperson, wouldn't it be proper for a parliamentary committee to begin considering this treaty in a draft form so that those who negotiate the treaty on behalf of the country do it with the input of Parliament?

To suggest that minister X is in Addis Ababa and the technical team have negotiated the Treaty, signed it, have brought it here for ratification, and at ratification stage, we are making proposals for reservation; in my view, would be making it very cumbersome for our representatives, in the negotiation of these treaties. Wouldn't it be proper that it is considered at that stage?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Asuman Basalirwa, can you look at the Ratification of the Treaties Act, Sections 2 and 4?

Section 2, *“All Treaties shall be ratified as follows: by the Cabinet in the case of any treaty other than a treaty referred to in paragraph (b) of this section; or by Parliament resolution, where the Treaty relates to amnesty, neutrality or peace; or, in the case of a Treaty, in respect to which the Attorney-General has certified in writing that an implementation in Uganda would require an amendment of the Constitution.”*

Then Section 4; treaties to be laid before Parliament. *“All Treaties ratified by the Cabinet shall be laid before Parliament as soon as possible.”*

MR KATUNTU: Madam Chairperson, before I come in, can we have the benefit of someone who has worked in –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, diplomat.

MR KAJWENGYE: I have read the proposal and realised that they have considered the Ratification of Treaties Act and the Constitution. What the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline has done is to re-align the procedure concerning the ratification of treaties in the House. There is apparently nothing deviant of anything. The proposal is crystal clear on whatever Parliament needs to do as far as the Ratification of Treaties Act is concerned. That is the procedure. Thank you.

MR KATUNTU: Let me even answer Hon. Asuman Basalirwa, *Hajji*, with all the two wives -

THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable members, I put the question that a new clause be inserted as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

New clause, agreed to.

THE CHAIRPERSON: The “Ayes” have it, before you start talking about your wives. *(Laughter)*

Rule 41

MR KATUNTU: Madam Chairperson -

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, *Hajji*?

MR KATUNTU: That is what they actually do even during loans.

THE CHAIRPERSON: *Hajji* Asuman has just come in -

MR KATUNTU: Rule 41 is amended by inserting, immediately after subrule (3), the following:

- i) A written or oral question to the Prime Minister shall be precise and concise and shall not address more than one matter of the government policy or the general performance of Government;
- ii) In subrule (4), by substituting for the word, “fifteen”, the word “ten.”;
- iii) By inserting, immediately after subrule 4, the following: “4(a) the Prime Minister shall answer the question in a precise and concise manner;
- iv) In subrule 8(a) in paragraph (a), by substituting for the word “forty”, the word “twenty.”
- v) In paragraph (b), by substituting for the word “twenty”, the word “forty.”

Justification:

1. To discourage argumentative questions and elicit precise and concise responses from the Prime Minister;
2. To allow for interactive debate; and

3. To give more time to oral questions during the Prime Minister's time.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, Hajjat.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I propose that Rule 41 be amended by substituting for Rule 8(a), the following:

1. The 60 minutes referred to under Subrule 8 shall be for responding to oral questions; and
2. By inserting immediately after Subrule 8(a) the following: "Where the Prime Minister does not provide an immediate response to an oral question, the Prime Minister shall provide a response to the oral questions not answered in the next Prime Minister's Time."

The justification is:

1. To restrict the Prime Minister's Time to only oral questions; and
2. To require the Prime Minister's Time to provide for response in the next Prime Minister's Time.

Since we have a debate, I can explain a little. The difference is that the majority is proposing that the time for oral questions be expanded and minimised for written, whereas I am proposing that the Prime Minister's Time entirely should be oral; oral questions, and oral answers. If the Prime Minister is unable to answer the question, she should provide a response to such a question the next time she appears for Prime Minister's Time. I submit.

MR SSEWUNGU: Madam Chairperson, I thank the two Members, but my interest - if Members agree - is on the issue of written questions.

I pray that the Prime Minister comes here and responds to all written questions with no short response from the Member who asked it. I seek an amendment, if passed, that the Prime Minister should only read responses to oral questions from Members who are present in the House. This is because sometimes the Prime Minister comes and responds to oral

questions, but the Members who asked them do not appear and it takes time.

However, if a Member gives an oral question and is around, our rules should give that Member, as by the powers of the Speaker, some time to respond to the Prime Minister as per her response to give us a good debate.

What is happening here is that Members feel so bored when the Prime Minister is responding to written questions; she reads them and goes away. I pray we have a rider of a Member - A Member who is not around and asked an oral question should not be entertained. However, for the Member who asked an oral question and the Prime Minister responds in written form, she gives a rider to move with the prescribed time, as per the powers of the Speaker.

MR ANGURA: Madam Chairperson, I would like to concur with the Hon. Ssewungu Gonzaga *Mukatuliki* - with his rosary because he always speaks his mind.

Many times, the Prime Minister comes and reads responses to the oral questions, and they are always very long. However, it is always also important to give the persons, who have raised those questions, time to raise rejoinders, at least, because at times, the Prime Minister reads on and on.

Let us provide a little time at your discretion and if it should please you, we consider that such that the Prime Minister can harmonise with the person who asked the oral question and have a convenient answer. I thank you.

MS NABAGABE: Thank you very much, Madam Chairperson. I totally agree with Hon. Aisha's recommendation that we only handle oral questions during the Prime Minister's Time.

However, I have an issue with the Prime Minister's Time and I am begging that we reconsider and amend somewhere; that the Prime Minister needs to be giving us feedback on her commitments within a particular range of time. There are incidents where we ask the

Prime Minister questions and she assigns them to particular ministers and those assignments are never catered to. Then you have the same queries, day in and day out.

Therefore, can we designate the Prime Minister to her commitments and her ministers' commitments within a particular period to be worked on and come back and give us feedback on whether they responded to those issues or not? This is so that we avoid Members of Parliament coming here, lamenting all the time that they have raised issues to the Prime Minister during her time but that the ministers never respond, thereby, repeating the same issues during that time. Thank you very much.

MS NALUYIMA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I also concur with Hon. Aisha that let the Prime Minister's Time be for oral questions. However, I also suggest that the written questions be forwarded to the Prime Minister, in a month, she should have responded to those in writing to that very person who asked the questions.

It should be done in a month's time and then forwarded to the Pigeonhole. For instance, the personal assistant can say, "Hon. Naluyima, your response has been delivered to your Pigeonhole so, please pick it from there", so that now it is entirely our time. Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Those are public questions and they should not be private. Yes, Soroti Member of Parliament?

MR ARIKO: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I agree with my colleagues that it is important that the Prime Minister's questions be given so that she can provide written answers. However, the Prime Minister is the Leader of Government Business. She should be understood as the chief minister to know substantially so much that is going on within the sphere of running the Government.

So, it is important, that in certain instances here, questions are asked of the Prime Minister and that they should be able to rise and give spontaneous answers to some of the issues that the members would like to know.

Madam Chairperson, some of the problems we have are that members raise questions that require answers, which are based on the knowledge and wit of the Prime Minister but because they are written so that they are later answered afterward, the technical people go and write generic answers that are supposed to soothe the members of Parliament.

I would like to agree with my colleagues that we have the questions responded to in two spheres: those that require the Prime Minister, just as she is here, to spontaneously get up and tell us what is happening, probably in Karamoja or Isingiro because as the Leader of Government Business, a Prime Minister should have sufficient knowledge of what goes on in the Government. I thank you, Madam Chairperson.

MS NAKADAMA: Madam Chairperson, I agree with what he said but sometimes there are questions that need investigations to get information. That is why we come here and ask for some time. If we go with what the Hon. colleague said, you will end up postponing most of the questions. Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, Hon. Meddie.

MR MUHAMMAD NSEREKO: Madam Chairperson, what the Prime Minister has stated is also an answer. You, rising up and orally responding that "I do not know, I will go and carry out investigations" is an oral answer itself.

Therefore, why are there Prime Minister's questions in a parliamentary democracy - ours is a hybrid - is to check the following:

- 1) The alertness of the Prime Minister and the front bench;
- 2) Coordination; and
- 3) Response to the nation in real time. And that is why it is designated time for you so that you fit the purpose.

That is why when you come to Parliament to be approved in that position, those are some of the considerations we make.

Is she alert? Is she aware? Is she knowledgeable? As the head of Government business, you must be knowledgeable in every corner of every government department. If you are not, then you respond by saying, "Honourable Member, I clearly accept that I am not enlightened on the matter touching this issue, but I will come back with an answer." That is also a response.

However, those that you ought to know, for example, if someone rose and asked: "Rt Hon. Prime Minister, how many referral hospitals do we have?" Do you really need to say, "I will come back with an investigative report" to tell us how many referrals we have? That must be off the cuff.

I am trying to give you the rationale that there are some things people check from the Prime Minister, to see whether she is up to date as the Leader of Government Business with every department, ministry, and the governance of the country.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Jesca.

MS JESCA ABABIKU: Thank you, so much, Madam Chairperson. I put my questions to the Prime Minister, to get an update on actions being taken by the Government; it is not about testing the capacity of the Prime Minister, no.

Therefore, I support the committee's recommendation with an amendment that let there be provision for supplementary questions so that it becomes lively.

Two, Madam Chairperson, there is an avenue that we are not utilising; asking direct questions to ministers. I feel, there are questions that we can straightforwardly present to the ministers. Those are the two proposals I have. Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: We have a provision for supplementary questions under rule 48.

MR MACHO: Madam Chairperson, I would like to agree with what most of my colleagues have said. In most countries, majorly Commonwealth Parliaments, where Uganda is

a sample too, Prime ministers are students of government business. I call it so because they get briefs from ministers daily, on each sector of Government.

Luckily enough in Uganda, they can appoint anybody to be a prime minister; even Hon. Macho. However, in other countries, one's Intelligence Quotient (IQ), must be measured to the capacity that they understand - no, no - *(Interruption)*

THE CHAIRPERSON: My Prime Minister's IQ is very high. *(Applause)* Do you get it? My Prime Minister's IQ is very high.

MR MACHO: Madam Chairperson, I have not attacked anybody. I am just talking -

THE CHAIRPERSON: Can you sit?

MR MACHO: Madam Chairperson, I have not attacked anybody; I am rather saying that even Macho - it is -

THE CHAIRPERSON: Can we get a middle ground?

MSAISHAKABANDA: Madam Chairperson, I want to allay the fears of colleagues that I have heard submitting. The proposal for oral questions actually takes care of the fear that one of the Members talked about; that sometimes the Prime Minister comes and answers questions asked by Members who are not even present.

In the case of oral questions and answers, there is no way a Prime Minister will come to answer a question to someone who is not present. You are asking a question and it is responded to.

To members who want very detailed and well-researched questions, we still provide questions to ministers. Those questions can go to the ministers. This, therefore, takes care of what we want that the Prime Minister's Time should be oral, 60 minutes, lively, and interactive, for us to get spontaneous answers.

MR KATUNTU: Can I clarify?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

MR KATUNTU: Colleagues, the purpose of this Amendment is not to just open up a general debate. Whereas the Commonwealth practice is that the Prime Minister's Time is only oral, in our wisdom, at the beginning of this particular term, there was some innovation to provide for written questions.

What the House did at that time was to provide 40 minutes of the one hour to be dedicated to written questions and all was left with only 20 minutes. That is the hybrid that was introduced in this particular term of Parliament.

However, in the committee's wisdom, we have found that we should change it and have 40 minutes now for oral, the one you are trying to justify. Then for the written, we have reduced the written from 40 to 20, because you will have 60 minutes. That is the purpose of this amendment because it addresses both concerns in our view.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Aisha – Yes, that is a better ground.

MSAISHAKABANDA: Madam Chairperson, we are moving in the right direction. If the Member thinks that swapping minutes is okay, I concede. Otherwise, I would have preferred to have all the 60 minutes.

MR ODUR: Madam Chairperson, I have an amendment to propose in respect of subrules (3) and (4) on the Prime Minister's Time. Subrule (4) says that the Clerk shall enter all the Prime Minister's questions and shall conduct a raffle, selecting only 15.

My amendment is to propose the deletion of that and allow the Clerk to forward all questions to the Prime Minister. Subjecting Members' questions –

THE CHAIRPERSON: According to their amendment, they have reduced them to only 10.

MR ODUR: I am even opposed to that reduction to 10 because that infringes on my right, as a Member of Parliament, to represent my people. I can represent them through a question, which I have written. So, if somebody else is going to sit in the office and then determine or say: "This question should not go to the Prime Minister -"

THE CHAIRPERSON: This is Odur's question -

MR ODUR: Yes, maybe for other reasons, and the following Thursday, another set of questions come in - it is like vetoing on my privilege as a Member of Parliament to ask questions.

Therefore, I propose that it should read thus: "The Clerk shall enter all questions in the Prime Minister's Question Record Book and forward all the questions to the Prime Minister" so that everyone who has asked the question gets an answer.

By the way, Madam Chairperson, when you talk of a raffle, this is now gambling, which is also illegal.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, former Leader of the Opposition.

MS BETTY AOL: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It is only unfortunate that we do not have ministers in this House yet we are deliberating - otherwise, the Prime Minister's Time is supposed to be purely oral. Those written questions should go to the ministers for their response. That was the practice in the 10th, Ninth and even the Eighth parliaments.

If we decide to make those written responses in the Prime Minister's Time, it is going to take a lot of our time. Even when you say 20 minutes, they will extend it to 40 minutes, again. They should give us time to ask as many questions as possible and they should be oral. Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: First of all, we have agreed on the time that has been proposed. Not so? Forty, twenty, and 10, but the mode

of selection is what is yet to be agreed upon. Before the Leader of the Opposition comes, let me have the doctor and then Hon. Acuti.

DR BAYIGGA LULUME: Thank you, Madam Chairperson, for having a good time in order to discuss this. I would rather propose that we even increase the time for the Prime Minister to answer some of these questions – (*Interjections*)- give me just a minute.

I am not for the idea that it is just a ritual that the Prime Minister answers simply because you want to check on their alertness. Rather, it is to get well-researched and substantive responses so that these questions can attract real answers. Those answers can also inform –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Answers and actions.

DR LULUME BAYIGGA: Yes, those answers can inform the kind of actions to be taken. Otherwise, to merely allocate time just because –

THE CHAIRPERSON: If my question has been there with you for over a week and there is a disaster in my village, I expect you to come back and report that, yes, my team went to this village and this is what was done. Report the action.

DR LULUME BAYIGGA: Madam Chairperson, I believe that questions for oral answers are even more than that. Somebody talked about the alertness – well-researched and having information. Sometimes, you may not have this information and you need technical officers to take notes, do the research, and relay this information. I would rather we increase the time from one hour to one-and-a-half hours so that the Prime Minister has sufficient time to answer Parliament. We are very many and this country has a lot of people who want this representation.

THE CHAIRPERSON: We have a lot of business. Yes, Hon. Acuti.

MR OPIO: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On the issue that Hon. Odur has raised, I want

to propose that all the questions be accepted and responded to. However, within the 20 minutes, the Prime Minister can read out the questions but then lay the responses in case they are very many so that all those questions are accommodated within that time. Thank you.

MR NATHAN TWESIGYE: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would like to draw your attention to Rule 50 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament. Specifically, I would like you to look at subrule (3).

My colleague, Dr Bayigga Lulume, is proposing that we should even extend the time for the Prime Minister because we do not use this rule. If the ministers were answering questions on Wednesdays, then, the Prime Minister would have enough time to answer the remaining questions on Thursdays. I think, Madam Chairperson, that you need to consider rule 50(3) and give ministers the chance to answer questions on Wednesdays so that the Prime Minister can have enough time to answer questions on Thursdays. I beg to comment.

MR KATUNTU: Madam Chairperson, my honourable colleague raises an issue, but it looks like many of us are interested in asking questions to the Prime Minister. They rarely ask the ministers the questions under our rules; they rarely. Everybody now wants to run to the Prime Minister and thinks that is where the solution is.

Number two, as we express our discontent about, sometimes, the performance of the Prime Minister, I want to draw your attention to the fact that we are proposing an amendment to read thus: *“A written or oral question to the Prime Minister shall be precise and concise and shall not address more than one matter of Government policy or general performance of Government.”*

When you listen to some of the questions, you notice that they offend this rule. Therefore, if we are to do reforms here, we also need to look at ourselves. What sort of questions are we asking the Prime Minister? Would they

require a response from the Prime Minister or the minister? Under the rules, you can ask a minister a question also –(Interjections)– actually, even in two days, yet for the Prime Minister, you have one day only and one hour only.

Therefore, the challenge is on both sides. I think this should be a learning process for all of us to know that we have 60 minutes only. How do we utilise them?

MR ALERO: Thank you, Madam Chairperson, for giving me a chance. The information I would like to give my colleague is that more often than not, the Prime Minister refers questions to the ministers who are here. She would say: “So and so, can you answer?” That means that the ministers must always be present during Prime Minister’s Time. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, Leader of the Opposition.

MR SSENKYONYI: Madam Chairperson, I think what we are trying to remedy is about two of the four cardinal roles of a Member of Parliament. We are trying to see how we get everybody encapsulated therein.

Number one, oversight and representation. Members are asking for a bit more time to be able to represent their constituents and to put to Government questions that are of concern to them. That way, they will be representing their people. Even rule 50 is rarely followed by the ministers for the obvious time. The Order Paper gets clogged. How about -

—

THE CHAIRPERSON: It is not the Order Paper getting -

MR SSENKYONYI: It is our business, generally.

THE CHAIRPERSON: No, which minister will you ask a question now?

MR SSENKYONYI: We have our most-of-the-time ever-present Deputy Prime Minister, who

is helpful at times but other times, she says, “I will look for the minister.”

Can I suggest an amendment to rule 41? In addition to the Prime Minister’s Time, if it would make sense to look out for a day, maybe in a month, and say, “We are dedicating it to the Prime Minister’s Time.” Then the Prime Minister would make sure she is present with all her ministers, or at least every docket gets to be represented on that particular day so Members can ask questions whether on oversight, representation, or whatever issues there are, so that day, we focus on that business.

MR KATUNTU: Thank you very much, Madam Chairperson. I think what the Leader of the Opposition is suggesting is pertinent. However, the Order Paper is a function of the Speaker. She can dedicate a whole day to the Prime Minister or our business to say this and that. That can happen and it may not be routine but for example, if we had the accumulated number of questions - they could be like 100 written questions - how do you expect the Prime Minister to answer them in an hour? The Speaker at that time can say, if the written questions have over-accumulated -

THE CHAIRPERSON: Can I help you?

MR KATUNTU: Sure!

THE CHAIRPERSON: Much as the Speaker has the powers, let us institutionalise it so that it compels somebody to be here. It should not look like the Speaker is forcing somebody to be here. Let it be an institutional matter.

MSAISHAKABANDA: Madam Chairperson, I have not seen what we are seeking to cure because -

THE CHAIRPERSON: No, we are discussing what he is saying.

MS AISHA KABANDA: That is what I am talking about. It is, we, who have not utilised rule 50, where you write questions, send them to the minister and the minister comes here to answer. If we utilised that rule, we would be answered. But we have utilised it.

THE CHAIRPERSON: The number of Members is big, Hon. Aisha. An hour a week is not enough. The Leader of the Opposition is saying that on top of the one hour in a week, let us have a day in a month and dedicate it to the Prime Minister's Time and ministers.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Would that mean taking away the Thursday or would it be sustained?

THE CHAIRPERSON: No, in addition to that.

MR KATUNTU: In law, we call it "the mischief rule." What is this we are trying to cure? Is it that the question time is limited, and that, many questions have not been answered?

THE CHAIRPERSON: And there are many Members.

MR KATUNTU: If the one hour a week is not enough, then, what are the options? One, we can increase the one hour a week to two or three hours a week – (*Interjections*) - let us have options. We can even have the last day of every calendar month - Thursday or Tuesday, we can dedicate that day to the Prime Minister's Time. It is either a week or a month – (*Interjections*) - I am giving three options before the Prime Minister comes in. We either increase the one hour to a day, meaning that it will be once a week, or we dedicate a whole day once a month.

MR ANGURA: Madam Chairperson, we represent constituencies here. Many times, we have problems, some of which are matters that tend to be of urgent importance, and we want to raise them. How I wish, as the committee chairperson has proposed, the Speaker dedicates a Thursday in a month specifically for Members to raise their concerns. The Prime Minister would come with her whole team and everything would be answered.

However, those answers should be action-oriented. Otherwise, there are some answers that are given here that just pass. If we dedicate time, the Prime Minister would be duty-bound

to give answers for our communities to hold the Government accountable for the answers that will have been given. That one day in a month will be good. Then, there has been a question of how much time –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Before you get there, we accepted the one on Thursdays - we are not changing - with the 40, 20, or 10 questions. That is the accepted one.

MR KATUNTU: Is that the proposed amendment? Or have we gone back to the original one?

THE CHAIRPERSON: We have accepted the proposed amendment. Then, in addition, we have a day in a month that we dedicate to Members to ask oral questions and have the Prime Minister with her ministers - the questions are for the Front Bench. Is that acceptable to Members?

MSAISHAKABANDA: Madam Chairperson, before she comes in, on the first amendment where I conceded to a 40-20 arrangement, there was a question raised by Dr Lulume, where the Prime Minister is unable to give spontaneous answers to those questions, I pray that the amendment I had made on rule 8(b) be sustained, which states thus: "*Where the Prime Minister does not provide an immediate response to an oral question, the Prime Minister shall provide the response to the oral question not answered in the next Prime Minister's Time*". That will take care of his worry. Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: That is okay.

MS ACEN: Madam Chairperson, additionally, I would propose that on the day we are having a whole day for the Prime Minister's Time, we include the backlog of the oral questions, which may have not been answered previously. So, on that day, the Prime Minister -

THE CHAIRPERSON: That is now administrative.

MS ACEN: Agreed!

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. On the same issue?

MS NAKADAMA: Madam Chairperson, I want to get clarification from Members. By nature, some questions are about emergencies that occur. So, how are you going to handle them? Should we wait for that one month to handle them?

THE CHAIRPERSON: We have matters of urgent importance.

MSAISHAKABANDA: Madam Chairperson, on the amendment by the Leader of the Opposition, I pray that we merge it with the matter of Madam teacher, the Hon. Flavia, who was talking about the issue of actions taken.

On that last Thursday of the month that we propose to dedicate time to the Prime Minister, she should provide to the House actions taken to the questions that have been raised during the month. It should be part of the report and then answer other subsequent questions.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Exactly! Honourable members, I put the question that Rule 41 be amended as proposed by the committee and modified by Hon. Aisha Kabanda, and further modified by the Leader of the Opposition and Hon. Jonathan Odur.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(Rule 41, as amended, agreed to.)

Rule 54

MR KATUNTU: Madam Chairperson, we still have a long way to go -

THE CHAIRPERSON: And we need to move now. Hon. Aisha Kabanda, which other rules are for – where are you dissenting? Because you need to move faster.

MR KATUNTU: I want to make a suggestion, Madam Chairperson. Having gone through this exercise for some time, I know at some point you get a little bit clogged. Members are alert

but they are not as alert as when we began. I propose that at this point, we can go and reflect on the remaining amendments so that when we come back tomorrow, we will be fresh.

I think it would do us well – *(Interjections)* - there are very many remaining. At this point, I would move that we adjourn at this particular time and I am moving this because I can see that there is a lot of enrichment to the report and the ongoing discussion and we do not want to lose out.

MOTION FOR THE HOUSE TO RESUME

6.10

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES AND DISCIPLINE (Mr Abdu Katuntu): I, therefore, propose that the House resumes and the Committee of the whole House reports thereto.

THE CHAIRPERSON: You mean this motion is seconded by all these members? I can mention names, Hon. Milton, Hon. Christine – even UPDF – okay, seconded by three-quarters of the House, including Hon. Odur and the Leader of the Opposition.

I now put the question that the House do resume and the Committee of the Whole House reports thereto.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(The House resumed, the Speaker presiding.)

THE SPEAKER: I cannot believe somebody is saying “Nay” *(Laughter)*

REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

6.12

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES AND DISCIPLINE (Mr Abdu Katuntu): Madam Speaker, I beg to report that the Committee of the whole House has considered the Rules of Procedure of Parliament and passed 19 clauses with amendments.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE
WHOLE HOUSE

6.13

**THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON
RULES, PRIVILEGES AND DISCIPLINE**

(Mr Abdu Katuntu): Madam Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the whole House be adopted.

THE SPEAKER: I put the question that the report of the Committee of the whole House be adopted by this honourable House.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, just to reiterate what I said before, Section 4 (1)(b) of the Leadership Code Act, 2002, requires a leader to declare their income, assets, and liabilities to the Inspector General of Government every two years during March, and prescribes penalties for breach of that Leadership Code. That includes, among others, dismissal from office, vacation of office, and confiscation of excess or undeclared property.

Honourable members, I want you to take note of the following:

1. Declaration under the leadership code shall commence on 1 March 2025 close to midnight and it will close at midnight of 31st;
2. Mandatory legal obligation must be complied with to avoid penalties under the law; and
3. Strong advice to prepare records and ensure early filing of electronic forms to avoid last-minute rush because you know very well the system can crash.

The Clerk to Parliament has made arrangements to support the Members using the IGG online declaration system, that is IGODS. The ICT resource centre shall be organised at the foyer to help Members during declaration.

The team is going to be led by one of the assistant directors, Mr Julius Wabwire, and he can be reached on 0772 570366. This kind reminder is that the system will open on the 1st of March and close on the 31st of March. Go and declare to avoid any inconveniences.

I now adjourn the House to 2.00 p.m., tomorrow.

(The House rose at 6.16 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 12 February 2025 at 2.00 p.m.)