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**Thursday, 16 March 2017**

*Parliament met at 2.07 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.*

PRAYERS

*(The Speaker, Mr Jacob Oulanyah, in the chair.)*

*The House was called to order.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I welcome you to this sitting. I am advised that the statement we requested for on Tuesday is ready but it is not on the Order Paper. At an appropriate time, I will cause an alteration so that we can receive that statement.

2.09

**MR STEPHEN MUKITALE (Independent, Buliisa County, Buliisa):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I stand to raise a matter of national importance about the interconnection and multi-purpose intention of the oil roads.

Mr Speaker, I would like to thank Government for finally finding money for the oil roads, which we have been awaiting for a long time. However, there are two very important areas, which have been left out. The people of Acholi, Bunyoro and West Nile have for long been relating and living together but the introduction of these roads seems to ignore the fact that these communities once lived together before the national park and the forest separated them.

We request an immediate provision for a connection, because it is only 20 minutes from Tangi to Wanseko but currently, the distance to Buliisa is 275 kilometres because the traffic has to go through Karuma, Kiryandongo, Masindi and Kinyara. Our people from West Nile are dying on the waters because there is no connection.

On the other side, between the Greater Rwenzori - Ntoroko, Bundibugyo, Kibiro Hot Springs, the tourism area - and Butiaba we take 12 hours on road through Hoima. We could have the communities that are now dying on water move on the lake. Even all the oil wells are not above the escarpments but below the rift valley. My prayer is that the oil roads should not be done without this very important aspect, which will save money in terms of logistics for oil production and promotion of tourism in these communities.

Mr Speaker, I, therefore, would like to lay on the Table a letter copied to the President’s office, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Works and Transport and Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA); it is to request that this connection is done immediately, so that this country can not only look at oil but also at other sectors - the post oil economy. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Mukitale, what is the letter you are laying on the Table?

**MR MUKITALE:** The letter is to request for an immediate critical interconnection of oil roads in Bugungu, Buliisa, Albertine Graben, along River Nile and Lake Albert. As I have mentioned, I would like to lay this letter on the Table. I have been distributing these copies differently but I now want it to be captured as laid on the Table so that this requires immediate action. The roads should start in July.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Who is that letter addressed to and who has authored the letter?

**MR MUKITALE**: Mr Speaker, I now lay on the Table a letter, which is an emergency appeal to Government for critical interconnection of oil roads in the Albertine Graben, addressing the Acholi-Bunyoro-West Nile interconnection and the Greater Rwenzori connection. It is copied to the President’s office, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Works and Transport and UNRA. I lay it on the Table.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Okay. Let the records capture that.

2.12

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The resources that we are preparing to construct the oil roads are, according to the plan, to facilitate the production of the oil. That is our priority. The roads that you are talking about will certainly come in the second phase. At the moment, our priority is to make sure that the oil is produced by 2020.

**MR MUKITALE:** Mr Speaker, actually, the minister is now confirming why I brought the letter. I have just said that a trailer takes two days to move from Tangi to Buliisa through Karuma. However, if you put a shortcut, it is a 20-hour journey. Government of Uganda will lose money in terms of recoverable costs because what you are trying to get from the first oil is under a profit sharing agreement. Therefore, if you increase the cost of oil, Uganda will not get a profit.

Equally, on the other side, we are cutting the time from 12 hours to one hour. Therefore, I am providing a logistical solution as an economist and as a logistician. Most importantly, minister in charge of planning, you should be interested in the post-oil economy, tourism, cross-border trade and the interconnectivity of our people beyond just the first oil.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, you are now weakening your argument; the post-oil economy can come in phase 2. I think the earlier part of the argument is the stronger one. These roads are going to be used by the oil people. Honourable minister, would you like to respond to the Member?

**MR BAHATI:** Mr Speaker, we will look at the case brought by hon. Mukitale and see whether it can be incorporated in the current plan. However, the current plan, as I said, is to make sure the oil is produced by 2020. Therefore, we are looking at infrastructure like the Kabale International Airport, which will facilitate the transportation of logistics for the production of oil. However, we will consider that also. Thank you.

2.15

**MR MICHAEL TIMUZIGU (NRM, Kajara County, Ntungamo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance concerning the total breakdown of road equipment in Ntungamo District.

Ntungamo is one of the biggest districts in the country and the kilometrage of the district is one of the longest. However, at the moment, all the road equipment has broken down and the regional workshop has not managed to help us because they claim they have no capacity. We do not know whether it is financial capacity or other constraints.

We are expecting a lot of rain very soon and in some areas, it has started raining. We expect a lot of problems when rains come because roads are going to be destroyed and we are going to lose the money we used to construct and maintain those roads before.

Therefore, my prayer to the Ministry of Works and Transport is that we build the capacity of those people in the regional workshops. If their capacity has been built before and they are playing around, then we pray that you prevail over such cases so that they can give us services and we get our roads in good shape.

I also pray that if the new equipment has already arrived, we get the new equipment so that we can work on our roads. They had been worked on using machines from China but their quality has not been good. Even working on these roads in the mechanical workshop is not simple. Therefore, I pray that the Ministry of Works and Transport acts on that situation as quickly as possible. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Broken-down equipment, rains are expected; what is going to happen in Ntungamo?

2.17

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Ms Ruth Nankabirwa):** Mr Speaker, we expect the new machinery to be in Uganda in April. At the beginning of April, we shall be distributing this machinery throughout the country. We are right now training the drivers. Every district was asked to submit two people to be trained to manage these machines.

2.18

**MS JUDITH NABAKOOBA (NRM, Woman Representative Mityana):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I rise to speak on a matter of national importance.

The recent drought and famine that hit the entire country did not spare Mityana District. Mityana residents are starving due to the effects of drought. In August 2016, I wrote to the Minister of State for Relief and Disaster Preparedness, requesting him to provide relief to the people of Mityana, but we did not get any response from him.

The recent hailstorms have now destroyed some of the schools we have in the area like Namungo R.C. Primary School and Bulera C.U. Primary School. The roofs of these schools were blown off and the pupils are now studying under trees. The residents were also affected in one way or another; their gardens and houses were also swept away. Therefore, people are now desperate for service.

Mr Speaker, my prayer is that the Ministry of Relief and Disaster Preparedness provides relief and materials to the affected communities. I also pray that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries provides seeds for both food and cash crops to the affected subcounties in Mityana District. I beg to submit.

2.19

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Ms Ruth Nankabirwa):** Mr Speaker, the Minister of Relief and Disaster Preparedness gave us a statement here and in that statement, there was also a table that showed the distribution of food we have in the stores. Almost every district was allocated food. I am going to crosscheck with the minister so that we respond to Mityana as quickly as possible.

However, I know that schools have been allocated a minimum of 200 bags of 100 kilogrammes each of maize flour and 100 bags of beans. What we are going to do is to make sure that we respond to the disaster that has just happened in Mityana and then we shall reorganise the allocations for the district.

As for the schools that have been destroyed, I request hon. Nabakooba to bring a report with photographs of the destroyed schools. This is what we have been doing and the Office of the Prime Minister has been responding by providing first for the iron sheets and then subsequently, we see what Ministry of Education and Sports can do.

A report is, therefore, very key. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) in every district is in charge because he or she is the chairperson of the disaster committee in the district. Once disaster hits a place, we must go to the ground, take photographs, make assessments and then submit a report. Therefore, when I receive the report, I will pursue it with the minister who is in charge.

**MR MUKITALE:** Honourable Chief Whip, I would like to give information to corroborate hon. Nabakooba’s contribution. Mr Speaker, you remember hon. Bigirwa and I had a similar challenge when seven UPE schools, one seed school and three health centres were blown off by rain in Buliisa. Actually, we are worried because we gave the photos, it was in the news headlines, the CAO’s office did their part, but we have not yet received anything from the Prime Minister’s office.

The problem at that time was that there were no resources. Now that we seem to have a budget, Madam Chief Whip, I request that the people of Buliisa, who have been waiting for 11 months - the rains will chase them from class - be the number one, since they did not get relief when there was no money. I thank you.

**MS RUTH NANKABIRWA:** Mr Speaker, I thought that he was going to give me further information regarding Mityana. However, he has used this opportunity to remind me about a request for Buliisa. I have taken note.

You are right in saying that by the time you raised this issue in April, we did not have funds. However, I know that the Office of the Prime Minister has procured iron sheets. Therefore, if your school has not been considered, kindly get in touch with me so that we make sure that the permanent secretary considers you, even though we may not be able to handle everything. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**MR ANTHONY OKELLO:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. In 2012, a similar incident happened in Muntu Primary School in Amolatar District. The roof of a classroom block was blown off and we wrote to the Office of the Prime Minister for iron sheets and to revamp the building. It is now five years down the road but no action has been taken.

The building is still on the ground without a roof, which was blown off five years ago. Now that you are willing to take some action in Mityana, can we rewrite our request so that Muntu Primary School can also be considered? Thank you.

**MS RUTH NANKABIRWA:** Mr Speaker and colleagues, you are here as Members of Parliament. There is a popular word we keep on using, and that word is “lobby”. We even have a place designated here for lobbying. If something happened in 2012 and we are in 2017 and this is the first time I am receiving a reminder, then I think –

Maybe because of the campaign period and all that, we can be forgiven for not following it up. However, I am happy that you have reminded us. I am going to add my effort to yours, hon. Anthony Okello, and plead for the people of Amolatar. I pray that we will be able to respond appropriately. Thank you.

2.26

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (AGRICULTURE) (Mr Christopher Kibanzanga):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. As the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, we sincerely sympathise with Mityana. The honourable member from Mityana has requested us to provide seedlings. It is true that we are distributing seeds through the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) and Operation Wealth Creation. Therefore, if the honourable member has not yet picked her three tonnes of maize, she can go to the NAADS Secretariat where she will be able to pick three tonnes of maize for her constituency.

We are also organising beans, groundnuts and cassava cuttings and we shall be informing you by next week where to pick these items from. We are also going to liaise with our officers of Operation Wealth Creation and see the specifics we are carrying out in Mityana. I thank you.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

2.28

**THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS (Mr Frank Tumwebaze):** Mr Speaker, on Tuesday, 14 March 2017, hon. Joy Atim Ongom, Woman Member of Parliament for Lira District, raised a matter of national importance regarding the content that was aired by NBS TV on its weekly programme, the *Frontline,* while hosting Mr Charles Rwomushana. It was alleged that the content in the programme was in breach of the minimum broadcasting standards. The Speaker accordingly requested me to make a statement on this matter to this august House.

Legal and Regulatory Framework

Mr Speaker, I would like to inform the House that the regulator, Uganda Communications Commission, is mandated by the Uganda Communications Act, 2013 to monitor, inspect, license, supervise, control and regulate communications services which include broadcasting.

The Act, under section 5(j), empowers the commission to receive, investigate and arbitrate complaints relating to communication services and take necessary action. Furthermore, under section 5(x) of the Act, the Commission is empowered to set standards, monitor and enforce compliance relating to content.

Section 31 of the Act enjoins broadcasters to comply with the minimum broadcasting standards laid out in Schedule 4 of the Uganda Communications Act, 2013. These standards specifically prohibit the broadcast of content that is contrary to public morality, promote the culture of violence or ethnical prejudice among the public, and noncompliance with the existing laws.

To that effect, the commission has developed several standards and guidelines for proper regulation of the broadcasting sector. These include programming standards, advertising standards, religious programme standards, code of conduct of broadcasters, local content quotas and obligations, best practice guidelines for electronic media broadcasters for coverage and broadcast of live events, among others.

The overarching objective of these standards is to promote responsible broadcasting in which access to information, entertainment and education are enhanced to enable viewers and listeners to hold broadcasters accountable for irresponsible behaviour. The guiding principles behind the standards are: respect for privacy, protection from harm, importance of context, protection of children, protection of the public interest, respect for community standards, respect for persons and groups in society.

Programme on NBS entitled “Frontline”

Fact: Mr Charles Rwomushana was on Thursday, 9 March 2017 at 10.00 p.m. hosted on the above mentioned programme. It is alleged that during this programme, the guest used inappropriate and demeaning language in reference to the female members of this august House. Specifically, it is alleged that he likened them to prostitutes.

The issue in contention is whether or not the language used by the guest contravened any laws governing broadcasting standards in this country and in particular the minimum broadcasting standards.

Action Taken So Far

The regulator, UCC, has independent power under the law to receive, investigate and arbitrate complaints relating to communication services and take necessary action. Upon receipt of this specific complaint, UCC commenced investigations and is currently reviewing the content of this programme against the minimum broadcasting standards and any other applicable laws. The final report and actions taken regarding this investigation will be shared with me as the sector minister soon and I shall accordingly inform Parliament.

It is important to note that section 29 (a) of the Uganda Communications Act, 2013 provides that the holder of a licence or a producer of a broadcasting station shall ensure that what is broadcast is not contrary to public morality. This means that the commission can only take action against the broadcasting entities or licensees and not the guest they host directly. However, any aggrieved party can seek redress in the courts of law against the utterances made by specific guest speakers if deemed defamatory or otherwise.

As I conclude, I would like to say that regulation is very important for every sector, business or profession, so as to protect the rights of operators and consumers. Quite often, freedom of speech and expression are misconstrued to mean freedom to utter anything including vending insults, hate speech, immorality etcetera. This is wrong. In fact, these vices are a threat to the freedom of speech and expression.

Uganda enjoys a highly liberalised media environment with about 250 FM stations and 28 television licensed. This is testimony to the NRM’s Government commitment to have a free press and free society with full access to information.

Mr Speaker, we believe that an informed society is an empowered one. We must, therefore, fight vices that seek to make our platforms of free speech dirty. All broadcasters should know of their obligation in regard to maintaining minimum broadcasting standards such that the consumers of the content are protected.

Honourable members, it is instructive to note that under the Uganda Communications Act, 2013, a serious and repeated breach of licence conditions by any licensee is grounds for either suspension or revocation of a licence issued.

The commission has continuously informed all licensed broadcasters of their obligations and will continue to do so, to fight unprofessionalism in the broadcasting industry and protect consumers of those services. I beg to submit, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. Honourable members, that is where we are on this matter that has disturbed Members of this House, and rightly so. Let us wait for the processes to be completed and then we will take it on from there.

In the public gallery this afternoon, we have students and teachers from Sserwanga Lwanga Memorial Senior Secondary School from Kalangala District. They are represented by hon. Mukasa Julius Opondo and hon. Idah Nabayiga. They are here to observe the proceedings. Please, join me in welcoming them. You are welcome. *(Applause)*

LAYING OF PAPERS

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can we proceed with the ministerial policy statements? We have no particular order, so whichever is ready, please, lay them.

2.37

**THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, ICT AND COMMUNICATION (Mr Frank Tumwebaze):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the ministerial policy statement for the Ministry of Information Communications Technology and National Guidance for the financial year 2017/2018. I beg to lay.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. It is referred to the appropriate committee - the Committee on Information, Communication and Technology - to handle.

2.38

**THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Jane Aceng):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the ministerial policy statement for the Ministry of Health for the financial year 2017/2018. I beg to lay.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. It is referred to the Committee on Health to look at and advise the House. The documents that are laid on the Table should be this side.

2.38

**THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE (Mr Wilson Muruli Mukasa):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the ministerial policy statement of the Ministry of Public Service and the Public Service Commission for the financial year 2017/2018. I beg to lay.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. The committee responsible for the sector will take charge.

The policy statement for agriculture was laid on the Table yesterday.

2.39

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (ENERGY) (Mr Simon D’Ujanga):** Mr Speaker, in keeping with the provisions of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015, I beg to lay on the Table the ministerial statement for the financial year 2017/2018 for the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, vote 017 and Rural Electrification Agency, vote 123. I beg to lay.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. Committee on Natural Resources, please take charge.

2.39

**THE MINISTER OF TOURISM, WILDLIFE AND ANTIQUITIES (Prof. Ephraim Kamuntu):** Mr Speaker, in compliance with the Public Finance Management Act, 2015, section 13, I wish to lay on the Table the ministerial policy statement for the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities - vote 022 and vote 117 - for the financial year 2017/2018. I can only add that the ministry’s target is to attract four million tourists. I hereby lay it on the Table. Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that.

2.40

**THE MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENT (Mr Sam Cheptoris):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the ministerial policy statement for the Ministry of Water and Environment for the financial year 2017/2018.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. The committee responsible for that sector, please take charge.

2.41

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Ms Ruth Nankabirwa):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the ministerial policy statement for the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs for the financial year 2017/2018. I beg to lay.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. The Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, please take charge.

2.41

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Ms Ruth Nankabirwa):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the ministerial policy statement for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, vote 006 and votes 201-236, for the financial year 2017/2018. I beg to lay.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. Committee on Foreign Affairs, please take charge.

2.42

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Ms Ruth Nankabirwa):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the ministerial policy statement for the Ministry of Works and Transport, vote 016; Uganda National Roads Authority, vote 113; Uganda Road Fund, vote 118; and local governments, vote 500 for the financial year 2017/2018. I beg to lay.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. The committee responsible, please take charge.

2.42

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Ms Ruth Nankabirwa):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the ministerial policy statement for the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation for the financial year 2017/2018. This is a baby ministry.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. The committee responsible for the sector, please take charge.

2.43

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Ms Ruth Nankabirwa):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the ministerial policy statement for the Ministry of East African Community Affairs for the financial year 2017/2018. I beg to lay.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. Committee on East African Community Affairs, please take charge.

2.43

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Ms Ruth Nankabirwa):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the ministerial policy statement for the Ministry of Education and Sports for the financial year 2017/2018. I beg to lay.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. Committee on Education and Sports, please take charge.

2.44

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Ms Ruth Nankabirwa):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the ministerial policy statement for the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives for votes 015, 110, 154 and 306 for the financial year 2017/2018. I beg to lay.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. Our Committee on Trade, Tourism and Industry will handle that.

**MS RUTH NANKABIRWA:** Mr Speaker, so far that is what I have and I am expecting – *(Interjections)-* You lay it. *(Laughter)*

2.45

**THE MINISTER OF FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay - on the Table the ministerial policy statement –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Why do you want to disown your own statement, honourable minister? *(Laughter)*

**MR BAHATI:** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the ministerial policy statement for vote 008, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development, take charge.

Have we received all the policy statements?

**MS RUTH NANKABIRWA:** No, Mr Speaker. I am waiting for one from the Minister in charge of KCCA, which is on its way from the KCCA headquarters to here. I believe that –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The minister is here. *(Laughter)*

**MS RUTH NANKABIRWA:** The minister is not the one bringing it. The person in charge of deliveries is the one bringing the policy statement, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** But I would have thought that she should have been the one to tell us. *(Laughter)*

2.46

**THE MINISTER FOR KAMPALA CAPITAL CITY AUTHORITY (Ms Beti Kamya):** Mr Speaker, I am sure that in the next 30 minutes, the policy statement from Kampala Capital City Authority will be presented here.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: It does not come under the Office of the Prime Minister? Is it a separate policy statement? Is that the only policy statement we are waiting for? Have we received one from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development?

**MS RUTH NANKABIRWA:** Mr Speaker, I beg that you allow me to crosscheck with my office to find out whether Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development submitted. However, I was informed this morning that the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development forwarded a copy to the Clerk’s office.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: We have so far received 22 policy statements; we have not received the one from Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and Kampala Capital City Authority should be coming in soon. However, we expect to receive all those today so that I instruct the Clerk to extract those minutes and forward them to the committees so that they can start their work.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE STANDARD GAUGE RAILWAY AND LIGHT RAILWAY TRANSIT

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, you recall that this report was presented but there were some issues that we needed to resolve and indeed, they were resolved. I, therefore, propose the question for debate and the debate should start now so that we conclude this business. However, to kick-off this debate, I had requested that the person who chaired the select committee on that sector in the Ninth Parliament should give us a short brief of what transpired and then we debate and conclude this matter.

2.49

**MR ROBERT KAFEERO (NRM, Nakifuma County, Mukono):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I chaired a select committee of the Ninth Parliament that carried outan investigation in the procurement process of the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) project in Uganda. A report from the select committee was laid on the Table in this august House on 2 July 2015.

Having spearheaded that process, I came across information that could guide this august House as we debate the report of the Committee on Physical infrastructure. With your indulgence therefore, I pray to make the following comments:

Mr Speaker, regarding the class of the SGR network in Uganda, the Committee on Physical Infrastructure reports and talks about the African Union SGR Protocol, which works for South Africa, Morocco, Algeria and Egypt. Honourable colleagues, in Uganda, we have the Northern Corridor Integration Project SGR Protocol and this works for Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and South Sudan.

Mr Speaker, before I lay a copy of this document on the Table, I would like to address my mind to page 2 and page 3 of the protocol. Page 2 talks about development of the SGR in the above countries and one of the objectives of the protocol states thus: “The overall objective of the SGR is to jointly develop and operate a modern, fast, reliable, efficient and high capacity railway transport system as a seamless single railway operation among the party countries.”

Mr Speaker, on page 3 of the protocol, it talks about the scope of the protocol: (1) The provisions of the protocol shall apply to any activity undertaken in cooperation by the parties to achieve the objectives in (2), which I read. Therefore, for purposes of paragraph (1) above, the parties agree to, among other things, adopt agreed common SGR standards, and develop and adopt mechanisms to ensure seamless operations throughout.

Mr Speaker, it is therefore not true that Kenya can construct a different class of railway from the one Uganda is constructing. I thought I should make this record clear. This is because we signed a protocol, which I would like to lay on the Table. This is the Northern Corridor Integration Project Standard Gauge Railway Protocol. I beg to lay.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. Honourable chairperson, you seem to be debating the report of the committee. You did an investigation on the procurement process, so what we would like you to do is to bring us on board so that we know if that process was okay and what your findings were, so that we can move to the next debate.

**MR KAFEERO:** Much obliged, Mr Speaker. However, as I try to throw light onto issues that were in my report that were misrepresented in this report, I am constrained to appear like I am going to again present the report on the standard gauge railway. The motion even suggests a different report to be debated and with your indulgence, Mr Speaker, I beg that –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, chair; the reason I asked you to speak on this is because when this report was presented, a matter was raised that there was an investigation and a report was indeed laid before this House. The issue was: how will we proceed with this one when we do not know about what happened with the other investigation. That is where you should come in. I would, therefore, like you to restrict yourself to that.

Whether there was misrepresentation or whatever it is, your terms were limited to issues of procurement, so restrict yourself to that so that we can have the debate. If you would like to come and debate later, that is okay, but first tell us about your terms of reference and findings very briefly.

**MR KAFEERO:** Much obliged, Mr Speaker. As I mentioned at the beginning, a select committee conducted an investigation into the procurement process of the standard gauge railway. After that, a report was laid on the Table with our findings and recommendations. I am sure that by now, that report has been uploaded on your iPads.

Mr Speaker, we interfaced with quite a number of stakeholders on this subject. Information was got to the effect that whereas some provisions of the PPDA Act were not followed to the letter, we did not face an issue with the cost or any other thing.

Mr Speaker, that is why I thought I would seek some more time to present this report, if that is what this House needs, because the motion stated something different. What I had prepared were talking points for this report on the standard gauge railway.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, can we proceed with the debate on the report of the committee. There was a report of the committee headed by hon. Denis Sabiiti that was presented in this Parliament.

**MR MAGYEZI:** Mr Speaker, whereas we could go ahead to discuss the report of the committee, the fact that we set up a select committee to investigate a specific part of this report, which is procurement, and aware that the chairperson has now said that there was a problem with procurement and costs, I think it would be prudent to first get the report of our select committee and then we discuss the two together. That is when we shall have an informed debate.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member for Igara, you see my practical difficulty. I have asked the chairperson to present that aspect and he is not able to. So I am asking, can we proceed to debate the other report of the committee without the one of the select committee?

**MR ANTHONY OKELLO:** Mr Speaker, I am ready to debate.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Which one?

**MR ANTHONY OKELLO:** The report of the Committee on Physical Infrastructure. I have issues to raise on that report. Can I proceed, Mr Speaker?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, we need to resolve it first. You are ready –

**MR NZOGHU:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. In the Ninth Parliament, a select committee was set up to specifically investigate the costs of the SGR but the Ninth Parliament never received that report. The chairperson of the select committee has just presented highlights, which Members do not have access to.

Mr Speaker, the areas that the Committee on Physical Infrastructure was looking at are almost similar to what the select committee was looking at. However, it would be unfair for this Parliament to have two reports, which do not have areas of convergence. When you read the report of the Committee on Physical Infrastructure, you are not able to harmonise it with what the chairperson of the select committee has presented.

I would propose that it would be in the interest of this House to get access to the report of the select committee first. Thereafter, we can also get the one of the Committee on Physical Infrastructure and compare the two and debate them concurrently. This is better than handling the one of the committee, which does not add up.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, remember I had to give guidance on how we were going to proceed with this particular issue of the select committee. First of all, the work of that select committee was not saved to be handled by this parliament. We said that the principle is that each parliament must complete its work. There must be no work remaining and that is why all work that is pending and is not finished by a particular parliament lapses with that parliament. Therefore, this parliament and any other parliament must strive hard to finish what is on its table.

However, in considering that, there are very exceptional circumstances where we save business of another parliament. Must that exception operate to even include work of select committees? We would be stretching it a bit too far. Therefore, we took a decision that first of all, this work was not saved so this parliament cannot handle it because it lapsed with the other parliament. However, we have the benefit of the information they had obtained because the chairperson of that select committee is present in this parliament. As such, we could benefit from what he picked from that report and in the course of debating this report, he could give us a brief of what transpired and what they were able to pick.

Otherwise, we do not have the locus to debate a matter that lapsed with the Ninth Parliament and was not saved. That is our position now. This was a way of trying to bridge it and that is why I asked the chairperson to give us a brief of what their findings were so that we can go on to debate the rest of this.

**MR ODONGA OTTO:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I do not know what has happened to my good friend in that today, he cannot speak well. *(Laughter)* I was here in the Seventh, Eighth, Ninth and now Tenth Parliament and he has been very audible in the past.

Mr Speaker, with all due respect to your guidance on the issue of saving the work of this House, probably the most important question we should address is whether the status quo then still remains the same, considering the fact that Parliament appointed a select committee. I just heard a minister whispering now that compensation is going on, so you could probably help this House because if the status quo has changed since the last Parliament, it would become immaterial to listen to the chairman of the select committee of the last Parliament. This is because there could be new developments. Therefore, I seek your indulgence in that particular area.

The findings of his committee cannot be in vain. He may read us the findings now when construction has already started. I would also request for some water for the Front Bench because that kind of difficulty in communication is not very healthy for this House. *(Laughter)* Thank you so much, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, we are just trying to find a way of bringing some of the issues that were discussed by the other committee to inform our debate. That is what we are trying to do. We do not have a report from the Ninth Parliament that can competently be discussed by this Parliament. However, the report of the committee of Parliament is comprehensive and covers all those subjects from procurement up to where we are at the moment on the issue of the standard gauge railway. I still seek that the chairperson –

**MR MUGUME:** Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you for asking hon. Ssekitoleko, who was the chairperson of the select committee, to highlight some issues. I remember that by the time the select committee was formed in the Ninth Parliament, we had a lot of issues and we gave them a lot of time to discuss those issues. Therefore, for you, Mr Speaker, to request him to highlight, I think is in order and it is going to help the Members that were not in the Ninth Parliament.

Mr Speaker, I have read the report of the committee and I can assure you that we should expect much from hon. Ssekitoleko’s investigation. As for the committee, they have not done much. I am of the view that it is procedurally right to at least hear from hon. Ssekitoleko, who was the chairperson. I am happy that there are other Members of that select committee who are still here in the Tenth Parliament; let them present and later we can debate the two reports. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Have you already ruled on your procedure? *(Laughter)* Thank you for assisting the Chair because you have given the ruling by yourself.

**MR ABDULATIF SEBAGGALA:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to know whether when the Committee on Physical Infrastructure was carrying out investigations, they did not find it fitting to invite Members who were on the select committee and the honourable member who was the former chairperson.

I thought that the committee, knowing that they were investigating something that the Ninth Parliament had a select committee on, would have invited and interfaced with those who were still around. As such, the views that we are requesting from hon. Ssekitoleko would have been incorporated in that report.

If that was not done, I request that hon. Ssekitoleko, as the chairperson, tells us what he feels were pertinent issues in procurement and what the findings were. I know that he has that information and given time, hon. Ssekitoleko can avail us with that information so that all the Members can be on board.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the challenge we have at the moment is that hon. Ssekitoleko is not prepared to do that. He had prepared his notes to debate the current report. He is, therefore, not prepared to give a summary of their findings in the other report. That is the reason we are saying that if it is necessary that we get what that committee found in order to inform the debate, we cannot proceed with this debate.

We can come back to this when the former chairperson of the select committee is ready and then he kicks off the debate by giving us a full brief of what transpired then. We can then pick the report of hon. Sabiiti and move on. Wouldn’t that be the way to go? *(Applause)* It is so ordered. Hon. Ssekitoleko, this time you need to be –*(Laughter)*

Honourable members, we have altered the Order Paper to accommodate this important statement on sickle cell disease because it is urgent and we need to hear it. We move to the business after that.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE BURDEN OF SICKLE CELL DISEASE IN UGANDA

3.11

**THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Jane Aceng):** Mr Speaker, allow me to thank you for this opportunity to share with the honourable members the burden of sickle cell disease in Uganda.

Sickle cell disease is a genetic disorder affecting red blood cells, making them unable to efficiently carry oxygen around the body cells. People with sickle cell disease have two abnormal genes that we call sickle cell genes, one from each of their parents - while those with sickle cell trait have one normal gene from one parent and one sickle cell gene from the other parent. People with the trait do not suffer from sickle cell disease and its complications but can transmit the sickle cell gene to their children. If both parents carry the trait, the risk of having children with sickle cell disease is very high.

People with sickle cell disease usually suffer from a number of complications including severe anaemia, life threatening bacterial and malaria infections, recurrent body and bone pains, generalised organ failure and many other life threatening conditions. These complications interfere with many aspects of the patient’s life including education, employment and psychosocial development, with dire social and economic implications for the affected children, their families and the country as a whole.

As a result of its high prevalence and devastating effects, the United Nations, the World Health Organisation and the African Union declared this disease a major public health problem contributing substantially to the under-five childhood mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa. The World Health Organisation urged countries with high sickle cell disease prevalence to develop and implement a national sickle cell disease control programme within the context of their national health strategic plans.

In Uganda, it is estimated that 20,000 to 25,000 babies are born annually with sickle cell disease. However, 70 to 80 per cent die before their fifth birthday. Sickle cell disease contributes 15 per cent of the under-five mortality. The under-five mortality currently stands at 64 per 1,000 live births whereas the infant mortality rate stands at 43 per 1,000 live births, as per our Uganda Demographic and Health Survey, 2016.

Given the above, the Ministry of Health in 2014 set out to conduct a nationwide sickle cell survey to understand the national burden and how it is distributed across the country. Results of the survey showed a high burden of the sickle cell disease and trait across the country.

The national disease prevalence stands at 0.73 per cent while the trait prevalence stands at 13.3 per cent. However, the distribution is not uniform across the country. The mid-north, which is Acholi and Lango; east central, which is Busoga, Bugweri, Bukedi and parts of Teso; and Buliisa and Bundibugyo have a trait prevalence of more than 20 per cent and a disease prevalence of more than one per cent.

It is important to note that 49 out of the 116 districts have a trait prevalence of more than 15 per cent. Fourteen districts, including Kampala, Gulu, Lira, Jinja, Tororo, Luweero, Wakiso, Apac, Iganga, Mayuge, Buikwe, Oyam, Masaka and Masindi contribute to 47 per cent of the national disease burden.

Following the survey, the Ministry of Health embarked on a comprehensive programme aimed at reducing the burden of sickle cell disease. Part of this programme is the new-born sickle cell screening, which involves testing of new-born babies and all children below two years from high prevalence districts for sickle cell disease and the trait.

To achieve this, a modern standardised national sickle cell reference laboratory was set up at the Central Public Health Laboratory at Butabika with help from Cincinnati Children’s Hospital based in the USA. The laboratory has capacity to run 8,000 samples weekly, but is currently running only 2,000 samples per week because of the challenges in the districts.

Since April 2015 when the screening commenced, we have screened over 100,000 babies and over 20 sickle cell clinics have been set up in 20 of the high burden districts to manage those found to have the disease and counsel those with the trait. The programme also involves training and mentorships for health workers in the different health facilities and sensitisation and outreaches for people in the different communities.

Mr Speaker, being a genetic disease, sickle cell disease is not curable but is preventable. Therefore, more efforts need to be put on prevention interventions. There is a lot of ignorance about sickle cell disease with many people still believing that it is due to witchcraft or curses. Our interventions are accompanied with sensitisation campaigns to create awareness.

The Ministry of Health, working with various sickle cells non-governmental organisations, has conducted a number of awareness campaigns, especially in the high burden districts but these campaigns are still limited. The ministry has also embarked on making strategic partnerships with cultural, religious and political leaders to sensitise the communities and create awareness. We reached out to the Buganda kingdom, which accepted to collaborate with us in this effort and they also accepted to have sickle cells as the theme of the Kabaka Run for the next three years beginning with the one on 9 April 2017. *(Applause)*

While it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health to ensure control of all diseases, sickle cell disease inclusive, the Ministry of Health cannot do this alone without the help of other stakeholders, especially you, honourable members. It is, therefore, based on this that the Ministry of Health is calling upon all of you, honourable members, to join in the struggle against sickle cell disease through advocacy and creating awareness among your constituents.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, we wish to invite Members of Parliament for a sickle cell sensitisation meeting tomorrow, 17 March 2017 beginning at 9.00 a.m. up to 1.00 p.m. at Imperial Royale Hotel. In this meeting, you will be able to understand the burden of sickle cell disease in your respective districts so that we can plan together on how to adequately respond.

We also request you to join the Kabaka sickle cell run as part of the money that will be collected will be used to support sickle cell efforts in the country. I beg to submit, Mr Speaker. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister, for this information for the Members and how they can help with mobilisation.

3.20

**MR ABDU KATUNTU (FDC, Bugweri County, Iganga):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for her presentation as well as the invitation.

Mr Speaker, I have some information for this House. The other week, the National Medical Stores invited the Speaker and many chairpersons of parliamentary committees to go on a fact finding mission at the National Medical Stores. I happened to be part of that delegation. When this country was having a crisis of hepatitis B, the minister came and gave a speech, which was as wonderful as the one she has just given. Government took steps, because resources were needed, and they presented to this House a supplementary budget of Shs 11 billon, which we passed. However, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has only released Shs 3 billion of the Shs 11 billion, which was passed.

The general manager of the Nation Medical Stores informed us that you need three shots of that vaccine. Because only Shs 3 billion was released, regions that are affected by this disease have got one shot and are remaining with two other shots to complete the dose. However, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has refused to release the money, which we passed. What that translates to is that the Shs 3 billion will be rendered useless if the patients do not get the other two shots.

Therefore, these sorts of speeches that the minister makes *–(Interruption)*

**MR RUHUNDA:** Thank you very much, my senior colleague, for giving way. Mr Speaker, as members of the Budget Committee, we were stunned in the Ninth Parliament when these specialised bodies from the Ministry of Health said that when they submit their budgets, especially when it comes to these scientific requirements that need holistic financing, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development gives half the money. At the end of the day, they cannot even analyse the results that they get from the samples and even make use of those results.

Do we need affirmative action for the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to learn about the importance of respecting science? It is a very big problem *–(Interjections)–* You know this very well as you were there, hon. Bahati. Therefore, they are starving these institutions. They had very big complications, especially with hepatitis B. I still think the same will apply to the sickle cells. That is the information I have.

**MR KATUNTU:** Presenting a document like the honourable minister is doing is wasting our time when we actually appropriate money and Ministry of Finance does not release it. However, that alone is not even the biggest problem; it is the danger and risks that you are subjecting people’s lives to. You come here, present those sorts of speeches, we are convinced that this is a situation which needs money, we pass a supplementary budget and then you do not release the money.

Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, were you conning this House? Did you want us to pass the money and you utilise those resources for some other reasons? Colleagues, especially representatives of areas where this disease is prevalent, there are no vaccines because hon. Bahati has not released the money. The Shs 3 billion­ -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Do you mean the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development?

**MR KATUNTU:** Yes, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has not released the money. The Shs 3 billion is going to turn out into a nugatory expenditure because the vaccines that will have been given will be rendered useless.

Unless the ministry comes up with an explanation, I think you are wasting our time to come and give us invitations to give you money and you do not use that money to buy drugs to treat our own people, thereby risking their lives. This is a matter of life and death and it is not about us making flowery speeches. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I think the matter that is before us now is on sickle cell disease. Therefore, let us restrict ourselves to this, please.

3.26

**MR FELIX OKOT OGONG (NRM, Dokolo County South, Dokolo):** Mr Speaker, as fate may have it, sickle cell disease is more prevalent in the north, east and mid-north, and the prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B, Ebola, nodding disease and goitre are all the same and point to those regions. This speaks volumes. When we think we know everything and yet we are not paying serious attention to those problems, it bothers me.

I have read widely about sickle cells. As a cultural leader, I have also been informed that the prevalence rate of sickle cell disease is more in those areas because of migration interaction. When there is incest, it predisposes the offspring to the strain. That is why in Lango, we have 156 clans and these clans marry within each other and yet they are closely related. This kind of relationship predisposes the population.

Mr Speaker, when we talk about sickle cell disease, we need to focus on research. What I have submitted is research that was carried out. Therefore, when we are doing sensitisation among our people, such information should be given to the people so that we can curb the prevalence rate.

Mr Speaker –(*Interruption)*

**MR ODONGA OTTO:** Thank you very much, honourable colleague, for giving way. Mr Speaker, I am seeking clarification about the statement made by the honourable colleague on incest and the prevalence of sickle cell disease.

What did you mean when you said the disease is common in the north, east and mid-north parts of Uganda and then you said incest is causing the spread of the disease? Marriage among relatives is one of the prohibited degrees of consanguinity by law, so what exactly are you talking about? It does not make some of us very comfortable. (*Laughter*)

**MR OKOT OGONG:** I think that clarification is very important. What I am saying is that we marry from different clans but you will find that clan A is closely related to clan B; for example, I am Araki of Alwala, which is the monkey and we also have the Araki of Ocukuru who are closely related. When you follow the brothers, you will find that one brother went to this side and the other one to the other side.

Mr Speaker, that is why we are trying to talk to the different clans in our area to reduce the number of clans so that we can reduce the prevalence of diseases and also to encourage our people to marry outside in order to curb the prevalence of disease. We are just thinking aloud. These are some of the things that we need to do. It is about research and that is why I am appealing to the ministry to do more research and advise us accordingly so that we can control the prevalence. I thank you.

3.31

**MR JULIUS OCHEN** **(Independent, Kapelebyong County, Amuria**): Mr Speaker, I stand on the Floor of this Parliament on a very important matter, which has been stated by the Minister of Health, and that is sickle cell disease.

Mr Speaker, I do not want this Parliament to limit the matter of sickle cell disease, which has been raised by the Minister of Health on this Floor of Parliament today, to something that should be looked at in the context of the cry of the Minister of Health to the nation. I would like to appeal to this Parliament because the problem of sickle cell disease and all the diseases that have been raised by hon. Okot Ogong are issues that this Parliament must look into.

Mr Speaker, this Parliament approved resources for hepatitis B, which is now a problem in this country, and we are worried about the second and third vaccination. If this Parliament was autonomous, what has stopped the Ministry of Health from getting the balance of the budget to address the specific issue, which is encroaching on the country –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Are you suggesting that this Parliament is not autonomous?

**MR OCHEN:** Mr Speaker, I am responding to that matter. Why has the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development not released resources required by the Ministry of Health, which were passed by this Parliament, and yet people are dying? From the time there was absence of that medicine on the ground, how many Ugandans have died? What does that impute regarding the independence of this Parliament?

Mr Speaker, we have a problem. As much as the law puts us at the centre as an institution of Government that has to check the Executive and that has to prevail in this country and institute order, this Parliament is being undermined. You can see the symptoms of this undermining when other state institutions do not adhere to the decisions taken by Parliament, which impact negatively on the citizens of this country –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, there is a law on relevance in our rules and it restricts us to be relevant to the subject. The subject we are talking about is sickle cell disease. Please, be relevant because if you are not, I am going to ask you to sit. We need to discuss the matter before us and not any other matters.

**MR OCHEN:** Mr Speaker, I make myself relevant on the Floor of Parliament *– (Interruption)*

**MR ANTHONY OKELLO:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Whenever my friend, hon. Ochen, is submitting to this august House, I always find it hard to understand the point he is coming from.

Mr Speaker, I know there are three arms of Government, including the Legislature, to which we belong as Members of Parliament. I know there is the Executive arm of Government and I also know there is the Judiciary. My colleague doubts the independence of this institution of Parliament. This is my second term in this Parliament and in whatever we do, we always strive to defend the independence of this institution. I wonder where my colleague is coming from in doubting the independence of Parliament.

Is hon. Ochen in order to question the autonomy of this institution where he belongs without any proper substantiation? (*Laughter*)

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, we should take counsel from hon. Gonahasa. One day he said, “In debates like this, we should sharpen our ideas not our voices so that you can proceed properly and be heard by all.” (*Laughter*)

Honourable members, this House has only its independence to stand on and nothing else. If you are querying that fundamental fact, then you are querying the very existence of this institution. Being a Member of Parliament, you cannot be in order; you are completely out of order. Having said that and since you are not very comfortable with the state of the independence of this House, you cannot now continue speaking. (*Laughter*)

3.38

**MR ATKINS KATUSABE (FDC, Bukonjo County West, Kasese):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for that valid presentation.

Mr Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of this House to four components. I expected the minister to give a breakdown of the interventions as far as the sickle cell disease burden is concerned. What are your immediate, medium and long term interventions?

Secondly, the minister gave a lot of citations. Could she guide us on the source of those citations? Could this information have been derived from Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), Uganda Demographic Health Survey, Ministry of Health, World Health Organisation or United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)?

One of the reasons as to why we are not making effective interventions as a country is because we ignore the most critical component of research. When the minister gave the way forward, I did not hear “research” anywhere. What has the problem been? You said there is a sickle cell disease burden but what is the scope and range of the problem? Where did it come from?

Lastly, there is the issue of capacity building. Honourable minister, you are aware that your ministry is always going for workshops - I do not mean you as the minister – but workshops do not translate into tangible and practical problem solving. I encourage you to research and see how many species of sickle cells we have. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

3.41

**MS FLORENCE WAMALA (NRM, Woman Representative, Sironko):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for her report.

Honourable minister, you said that Members of Parliament can be relevant stakeholders but we do not have a single detail of the releases of the constituency health assembly funds. How do you expect us to help you? Thank you.

3.41

**MR RAPHAEL MAGYEZI (NRM, Igara County West, Bushenyi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Honourable minister, thank you for your statement. Your figures generally agree with what we have. I would like to quote the following from the internet: “If both parents have the sickle cell trait, there is a 25 per cent chance that the child will pick the trait from both parents.” This is a serious matter, madam minister, and I would like to ask two issues concerning this.

One, could you give us a breakdown of the burden of this disease at district level? Secondly, you require us to assist in mobilisation and sensitisation but there is another role we have, which I believe we could assist with, and that is budgeting and appropriation. One of your colleagues stated that such high statistics call for fast intervention through promoting sickle cell screening at birth and all stages. For this to happen, there is need for procurement of more haemoglobin electrophoresis machines to support the only one at Mulago Hospital.

Madam Minister, we are at the time of budgeting. It is crucial that apart from giving us these figures and raising awareness, which you have done quite well, you tell us what you have prepared in the budget to support interventions to control sickle cell disease. Since the experts are saying that we must have the relevant machines in place at least at each regional centre, I would like to challenge the minister to tell us whether there is something for scanning in the budget so that we support her and procure these machines to help control and alert the parents of this problem. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

3.44

**MR ABACANON GUTOMOI (FDC, Erute County North, Lira):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The information we have been given this afternoon by the Minister of Health is very pertinent. However, I wonder why the minister cannot come out with a supplementary budget to address some of these pertinent issues, well knowing that the Shs 11 billion for hepatitis B is lost.

Secondly, there is now confusion between science and tradition, as hon. Felix Ogong has said. To me, the most serious issue is in our local communities. There are even licensed traditional medicine men who confuse the community that they can cure sickle cell disease. People are rushing to them with no positive results.

Why can’t the ministry investigate some of these cases and make it clear to the people that sickle cell disease is not curable? Why can’t we get money and find out who these local licensed medical men are? Some of them are not even licensed. I remember in Lango where some people were running to Teso believing that there is a local medicine man that can cure sickle cell disease. The results have not been positive and they are going on. This is causing confusion among the communities of Lango, Acholi and others. Therefore, this is a very serious matter.

Now that this information is at hand, why can’t the minister inform the LCIs so that they deliver the message about sickle cell disease and the other diseases we have been talking about to the local communities? This would really help. Tomorrow, there is a workshop but we may not have time to go there and yet if there was something written, then we would deliver them to every LC I in this country. This would be a very good source of communication and information to our community. Otherwise, thank you very much.

3.46

**MR ALEX RUHUNDA (NRM, Fort Portal Municipality Kabarole):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. There are two areas which have come out prominently in the discussion from hon. Okot Ogong. It is not a surprise that the former President, Dr Milton Obote, found a solution by marrying a Muganda. (*Laughter)* Maybe he was sending signals on what to expect. We hope that will in future give us a solution.

Mr Speaker, I usually get very worried about us as a country surrendering our obligations, responsibilities and duties when it comes to the health sector. Much is left to the donors and other self-help organisations. The mentality of the Ministry of Health when it comes to such specific cases like sickle cell disease is that they tend to leave patients at the periphery such that it is a donor affair. I find it very disheartening when we depend on foreigners to cater for our own health more than ourselves.

Mr Speaker, that is why it would be prudent for the Ministry of Health to mainstream these specific health cases into our national budget, so that when we are appropriating funds, we can do so confidently and we can easily predict the problem we are addressing. However, from the report, the mind-set is increasingly leaning towards donors and NGOs, and it actually concludes by saying that they are working with the Kabaka as a means to address this problem. However, you are running away from your main duty of dealing with this problem.

I would wish that in the policy statement that we are about to pass, money be allocated for this particular problem. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

3.46

**MR GORDON BAFAKI (NRM, Kazo County, Kiruhura):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mine is a small clarification arising from hon. Felix Okot Ogong’s submission about incest. I understand that sickle cell disease is genetic. We have had cases of hepatitis B in northern Uganda but sickle cell disease is genetic and it is all over the country. If we are concentrating on sickle cell disease only, should we assume that patients of sickle cell disease cannot contract hepatitis B? If we concentrate on sickle cell disease now, what about those who are suffering from sickle cell disease and hepatitis B? Can’t we have –(*Interruption*)

**MS JOY ATIM**: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I am sorry to raise a point of order against my colleague. However, you realise that the minister said that sickle cell disease is genetic and I know that when a man is carrying these cells - there is that XX and XY - if one is a carrier and also gets to marry a carrier, then it is recessive. That is what I know.

Even if one married from Buganda or from America, as long as they are carriers, then they carry the sickle cell anaemia. This issue raised by hon. Okot Ogong was just a by-the-way. Can we stick to what the minister said? Is he, therefore, in order to dwell on what hon. Okot Ogong said and mislead us when we know what the minister has just said?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Sometimes we run into these difficulties trying to dissect very technical issues and trying to understand them in normal ways. However, they remain technical and we should treat technical issues as they are. The statement of hon. Okot Ogong - Of course, he says he is a cultural leader and is from a cultural background –(*Laughter*)

**MR BAFAKI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your wise ruling. However, the matter still is: how shall we continue bringing piecemeal budgets for different diseases? When there is malaria, you come here and ask for a budget for malaria. When there is typhoid, you come here and ask for a budget for typhoid. There are diseases which you treat when the patient still has another disease. How long shall we be having piecemeal budgets for different dangerous diseases killing Ugandans? Thank you very much.

3.53

**MR SAM BITANGARO (NRM, Bufumbira County South, Kisoro):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to appreciate the statement from the minister. I heard that sickle cell disease is genetic and it is preventable but not curable. I also heard about the prevalence. However, I did not hear how you have managed or how the hospitals are managing people suffering from sickle cell disease. Therefore, I would like you to shed light on that.

It is within my DNA to defend people. I felt that hon. Ochen had a point although he could not put it across. All he was saying is that if we make decisions here that are not honoured, how independent are we? That is the point. Thank you.

3.34

**MR JOHN TWESIGYE (NRM, Bunyaruguru County, Rubirizi):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, and I would to thank the minister for her statement.

Honourable minister, in addition to what my honourable colleagues have said, the issue of sickle cell disease in this country is a very serious one. I would like to state that it is a countrywide problem. I am going to give you an example; in the last two months in my constituency, Bunyaruguru, in Rubirizi District, 194 people were screened and 18 per cent were found sick, 23 per cent had the trait and the rest were neither carriers nor sick.

Honourable minister, it is good you have asked the honourable members to support you and I will do that because of the serious challenge we have in my district. However, I would like to get some statements from you on what plans you have for the people of Rubirizi District in as far as combating this disease is concerned. This is because from the districts you have mentioned, I have not heard about Rubirizi District and yet there is serious problem there.

Secondly, how have you helped the health institution and medical staff tackle this problem not only in Rubirizi District but countrywide? When they were carrying out the screening of the people that were mobilised, it was found that the staff at Rugazi Health Centre IV seemed not to have any knowledge about the problem *–(Interjection)–* Yes, that is very true, honourable minister.

Mr Speaker, I would like the minister to shed more light on this and also be aware that the entire country is affected by this problem. I thank you.

3.56

**MR TONNY AYOO (NRM, Kwania County, Apac):** I would like to thank the Ministry of Health for the concern and the minister for this presentation to the House. However, the statement shows that the commitment in fighting sickle cell disease is minimal.

The one thing that I would like to put forward is that when the minister talks about screening children and other matters, it is almost towards the tail end of her statement. What is most important is screening people who are intending to get married so that if they have the carrier trait, they can be advised on what to do and whether to continue or discontinue their relationship. In case one is a carrier, chances are very high that among the children that you will produce, one, two or three of them are going to be sicklers and to me, that is the most important point.

We should also look at management. How are we going to manage those with sickle cell disease? The most serious problem is that sickle cell disease is so expensive in terms of resources required to manage it, the time required to care for the patients and then the stress. All these become a big problem and Government should take interest in that.

Above all, we do not have the machines for screening. Why doesn’t the minister tell us here that they are now preparing to ensure that district hospitals in the north and east will be supplied with the screening machines? With these machines, people will be able to screen themselves before marriage just like it is done for HIV/AIDS. After the screening, we can see how to manage them. There are people doing bone marrow transplants from abroad. Are we also planning to have the same here so that we can manage the sickle cell disease effectively?

Short of this, this statement about how you are going to partner with the Kabaka and then we talk and leave it there will again end in hon. Ochen’s scenario of doubting whether Parliament has powers. There are some people in the ministries of finance and health who are not committing themselves to implement what Parliament has asked them to do. I would like the minister to come out very clearly on the issues that have been mentioned. Thank you.

3.59

**MR ABDULATIF SEBAGGALA (Independent, Kawempe Division North, Kampala):** I would like to thank the minister for the statement. Sickle cell disease is life threatening for many Ugandans and what we need to do as legislators is to ensure that when the minister presents the budgetary requirements to procure enough drugs that can manage sickle cell disease, the responsibility is shouldered by us to ensure that the budget is approved.

The minister has talked about their relationship with Buganda Kingdom and indeed it is a step in the right direction. However, I would also request that when we use these cultural institutions, we use them effectively as they have done with Buganda Kingdom. I expect the minister to now have a plan to work with other kingdoms because messages through our cultural institutions move faster than any other arrangement.

I would also like to know how the minister has teamed up with religious institutions because they are also very important in as far as disseminating messages is concerned. I would wish to see the ministry teaming up with our religious institutions in regard to creating awareness.

When someone intends to marry, the first thing that they ask is whether they have gone for HIV testing but I have not heard about sickle cell testing. Can we also have that captured so that when people are planning marriage, sickle cell testing should be one of the most important elements that we should think about?

Mr Speaker, I do not know whether the Ministry of Health is teaming up well with the Ministry of Education and Sports to carry out sensitisation in schools. Once we capture the education sector, then we would have captured very many people. I thank you.

4.03

**MR KENNETH LUBOGO (NRM, Bulamogi County, Kaliro):** Thank you, honourable minister, for the statement. The fact that we are losing about 20,000 children every year to this disease shows the magnitude of this matter. We, therefore, must be concerned enough to take action, which is possible within our means.

I would like the minister to elaborate on something which I did not find in the statement. The ministry is doing awareness campaigns especially in the highly affected areas. What is the exact action message you are giving to the society to prevent this disease from spreading further? I ask this because it is a genetic disease which is not like HIV/AIDS where you can tell people to refrain from sex. Are you advising those communities that in case one is a carrier of the disease, they should not marry? Help us and give us the message that we should take to the people.

Finally, I would like to know how you manage the stigmatisation of these people. If somebody is a carrier of the disease, chances are that this person may find it a problem to marry. If, for instance, you ask them to go and test and they discover that they are going to live with the disease, how is this situation of stigma being managed? Thank you.

4.05

**MR JAMES BABA (NRM, Koboko County, Koboko):** Mr Speaker, I heard the minister’s outcry loud and clear, that between 20,000 to 25,000 babies are born every year with the sickle cell disease and more than 80 per cent hardly survive beyond the age of five. This is a serious problem.

The minister is asking for help to first of all, manage this process of those infected. The minister is also asking for help to screen people as these babies are born in high burdened areas, especially the north and east of the country. My question goes to the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. A supplementary budget was passed here to support this process amounting to about Shs 11 billion but only Shs 3 billion was availed. What happened to the balance? Can this House be told where the balance went to, so that the Minister of Health can be assisted to manage this critical process?

Imagine young Ugandans cannot live to the age of five years and beyond because nobody cares to help them manage this disease burden. Can we get clarification from the Ministry of Finance where the balance of this money is and what is being done to make good what was appropriated by this House by way of the supplementary budget? Thank you.

4.07

**MR JAMES WALUSWAKA (NRM, Bunyole West County, Butaleja):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand here with tears because in our village, a poor man’s wealth is his health. Most of our people are poor and the only wealth they have is their health. May I know where the Shs 11 billion went? Does it need to be investigated?

Finally, we are very happy because of the invitation given to us by the Ministry of Health. However, I want to remind this House that one time the Ministry of Health invited Members of Parliament to go to the Butabika laboratory but we were barred – we were not allowed to enter. May I know from the minister whether this time round we shall not be deterred? We went to Butabika and we were treated like peasants! Mr Speaker, can the minister assure the House that when we go tomorrow to the workshop, we shall not be taken as peasants? Thank you.

4.09

**THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON HEALTH (Dr Michael Bukenya):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for having brought the issue of sickle cell anaemia to the forefront. As a positive person, looking forward there is always a starting point and this is a good initiative in giving publicity to sickle cell anaemia. So I thank the minister for that.

To explain the burden of the disease to Members so that they understand, I would like to say that most of the times we hear that there is no blood in Nakasero Blood Bank and it is because we require a lot of blood to support these children who are sicklers. It is a high consumption area and so it is expensive to treat this disease. Therefore, as Parliament, we should support the minister but also encourage her to take it further than this statement, which we have received, and include this in the framework paper and policy statement.

I must agree that there are challenges with the Ministry of Finance but I want to call upon this House – You know, there is what we call “Operation Wealth Creation” and my brother from Butaleja says that health is wealth. Recently, the Shadow Minister of Defence said that health was a security issue because many more people have died of hepatitis and sickle cell anaemia than those that the terrorists have killed. I, therefore, urge this House that in order to manage sickle cell anaemia and other diseases, we need, as a Parliament, to stand together especially during this season of the budget. We need to emphasise to everyone on the Frontbench to take that message to Cabinet and to the Ministry of Finance to prioritise funding for the health sector.

To divert a bit from that, Mr Speaker, a lot has been said about the Shs 8 billion. When the Minister of Finance rose on that issue when it was first raised, it was an issue of accountability. It is unfortunate that hon. Katuntu has gone out but I would like to emphasise that the consuming ministries and agencies failed to account for Shs 3 billion. It means that there are problems in two areas, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Health through the National Medical Stores.

We are going to request the Ministry of Health and the National Medical Stores to account for the money that has been lost. That is also a problem. Much as people are talking about Shs 8 billion now, this financial year Ministry of Finance has been releasing money every quarter to support the hepatitis B programme. However, you will be hard-pressed to get any detail from the ministry on how many people have received the first dose of the vaccine and how many people have received the second dose. Therefore, there are many issues of accountability.

If hon. Katuntu was around, I was going to request, through your office, Mr Speaker, that we do some work on the National Medical Stores as the Committee on Health and COSASE. We can also ask for accountability from the ministry for the vaccines that have been bought so far. This is because we may be asking for more vaccines when we are not getting value for money. Thank you.

4.13

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Mr Speaker, as I said two days ago, it is true that this Parliament approved Shs 11 billion towards addressing the issue of hepatitis B. The ministry, working with the Ministry of Health, released Shs 3 billion and we have so far, this financial year, frontloaded another Shs 10 billion.

We know that the magnitude of the problem requires more than Shs 30 billion. We are working with the Ministry of Health to ensure that within the resources that we have, we at least begin to ensure that those who have received two doses receive a third one so that the first two are not put to waste. Thank you.

4.14

**THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Ruth Aceng):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to thank the honourable members for their overwhelming support for the paper and also for the questions that they have raised.

Mr Speaker, there have been various questions regarding intervention on sickle cell disease. In my statement, I mentioned a number of complications including economic issues. Children with sickle cell disease suffer from what we call “crises”, and there a number of them. There is a painful crisis, where they get bone pain. There is an acute chest syndrome, where they get severe chest pain; that one is very deadly and usually they die within a short time. It may also be a sequestration syndrome where blood collects in the various organs in the abdomen or it may be a stroke. They do get strokes and they suffer for a long time in their life. However, on the whole they are usually anaemic and that is why the chair of the health committee talked about blood.

Now, the various interventions of course require that they are hospitalised and managed in a hospital environment where they can be attended to. As such, Mr Speaker, all these crises can be managed in the facilities that we have currently, and what we require for their management is available. However, there are other items that need to be considered. First, it is important to note that vaccination against pneumonia is very important for these children because of their acute chest syndrome. As you are aware, we have pneumonia vaccines on our schedule, but it is for infants and we definitely need the vaccines for children of two years and above, especially for the sicklers.

Mr Speaker, the other medicine that they do require to improve on their quality of life is hydroxyurea, which in our country has been approved for use in cancer patients but not in sickle cell disease patients. However, research that has been widely carried out internationally recommends it for use in sickle cell patients. Currently, Uganda is conducting a study which will be completed at the end of this year and we shall submit that study together with the other studies to National Drug Authority so as to have the medicine approved for use in our patients. It is available in the Uganda Cancer Institute and parents who can afford it are buying it for their children.

Mr Speaker, on the whole, the majority of the children who suffer from sickle cell disease are on prophylaxis and they do get anti-malarial drugs for the prevention of malaria. They also get folic acid and a number of them are on immune boosting medicine. Therefore, regarding the intervention as asked by the honourable member, it depends on the crisis that any of those children or even adults with sickle cell disease gets.

On the citations, as you heard from my statement, I quoted the World Health Organisation, United Nations and the African Union joining together to urge countries - It is also important that countries carry out a survey and the survey I quoted of 2014 was carried out in Uganda and it was called, “The Sickle Cell Survey, 2014”. That gave us those results, which we are now referring to. However, if you ask about the different *hemoglobinopathies***,** we are able to screen all these in the laboratory that we currently have.

Mr Speaker, regarding the burden of disease at the district levels, I did indicate clearly that when Members come tomorrow, we shall be able to inform them about each of their districts. There are 116 districts in this country; surely, I cannot remember all the figures. That is why we invite them to come tomorrow so that we take them through and also empower them with more information regarding sickle cell disease.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, now that the House will sit tomorrow, I do not know what time this –

**MS ACENG:** It is in the morning at 9.00 a.m. Mr Speaker, we did request the Members to come to support Ministry of Health in mobilization and sensitization because the population listen to them as leaders. Furthermore, when they speak, the population will know that this is information that they need to take. The reason as to why we are calling upon them is to empower them with information about sickle cell disease because what I presented here is just a brief summary, but more information can be given to them.

Mr Speaker, regarding the electrophoresis machine, I did indicate that we have a national reference laboratory and when I talk about a “national reference laboratory”, I mean it is internationally recognised. We have one such laboratory in Butabika and we have been using this system for HIV and hepatitis B. We are able to collect samples from the entire country and bring them to Butabika for screening and give results back within a record time. This machine is able to analyse 800,000 samples in a week; we are therefore underutilising the machine.

However, I also take note that it is important to have some of these in the regional referral hospitals, and it would require money to procure them and human resources to be trained to handle them. We have this in plan and we shall work it out and bring the budget accordingly.

Mr Speaker, regarding information for the local councils, we are already in the process of developing pamphlets. The information is already developed and we are putting it in form of pamphlets. It has taken a little bit of time because we have to translate them into the local languages for all the districts in the country. However, they will be made available and you can assist us to distribute them to the different districts.

On the issue of leaving matters to donors to handle and leaving patients in the periphery, Mr Speaker, the donors in this country are here at the invitation of our Government and they are here to support us. They only go to the districts at our request and we allocate areas where they go according to whatever they have indicated that they are able to do. So we work and plan together and they do this on our behalf.

The major issue regarding sickle cell disease is indeed prevention. If we emphasise prevention, then we will go a long way in reducing the prevalence of sickle cell disease. One of the key messages raised by one honourable member, which is included in our pamphlets, is premarital counselling. This is important but we do not stop people from getting married; they do so from an informed decision. If you so decide, you enter in marriage knowing the consequences of the marriage.

Mr Speaker, that is the main reason why we are linking up with religious and cultural leaders; we want them to help us pass on this information to the people. One of the areas with the highest burden of sickle cell disease is the Buganda Kingdom and, therefore, it is very important that we link up with the Kabaka so that he can deliver this message to his people.

Can children with sickle cell disease get hepatitis B? Yes, because hepatitis B is an infectious disease and all of us are eligible candidates. Furthermore, they also need prevention like any of us does and usually we encourage them to get vaccinated. Those children who were born from the year 2000 to date are already vaccinated against hepatitis B and so they are protected. However, the older people are the ones who need this protection.

Yes, bone marrow transplantation has been used to cure sickle cell disease but it is extremely expensive and it also has its consequences if you do not get the right match. Therefore, we leave this for those who can afford and are willing to undertake the risk.

Regarding staff knowledge, Mr Speaker, sickle cell disease is taught in all medical schools like the nursing schools, allied health professional schools and schools for the medical and dental practitioners as well. The limited staff knowledge may be in management. However, in medicine we work as a team and, therefore, if there is an area where there is lack of knowledge, we are always willing to carry on with mentorship programmes because that is how we renew our knowledge and update ourselves on modern issues.

Have we teamed up with Ministry of Education? Yes; this ministry sits on our national coordination committee for sickle cell disease and they are very much aware and have information that they give to the children.

Mr Speaker, regarding the issue of stigma, yes it exists and it is a difficult issue that requires a lot of counselling, just like the case with HIV/AIDS infected people. The counselling is continuous and we do give it, but sometimes it also depends on how the parents take the information and how they treat each other and the children as well. The challenge becomes worse when the parents do not agree on how the child got the sickle cell disease.

Mr Speaker, neonatal screening is very important and it also affects outcome. When children are identified early and preventive measures are instituted early, the quality of life improves remarkably. It also helps when we introduce hydroxyurea into the system and they start on it early. We have seen children that are doing very well and are living a normal life. That is why we are encouraging all the districts to pass on information that early screening is absolutely important. Mr Speaker, I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, honourable minister and honourable members, for this debate. I am sure the Committee on Health will pick this up and take it further to see what we have discussed and come back to support the whole process of trying to deal with this matter. Thank you.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT FOR PAYMENT OF EMOLUMENTS AND BENEFITS TO MEMBERS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION UNDER SECTION 3 OF THE PARLIAMENT (REMUNERATION OF MEMBERS) ACT, CAP 259

4.28

**MS JOY ATIM Ongom (UPC, Woman Representative, Lira):** Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I beg to move a motion for a resolution of Parliament to pay emoluments and benefits to members of the Presidential Commission under the law. I am moving this under rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament. I lay the -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Proceed with the motion.

**MS JOY ATIM:** “*WHEREAS Legal Notice No.5 of 1980 established in Uganda a three-man Presidential Commission comprising of H.E. Justice Saulo Musoke, H.E. Justice Nyamuconco and H.E. Wacha Olwol as titular head of state…” -* The proclamation legal notice is here.

*“…AND WHEREAS the Presidential commission held the Office of the President of Uganda between 22 May and 15 December 1980;*

*AWARE THAT Parliament enacted the Emoluments and Benefits of the President, Vice-President and Prime Minister Act, 2010 wherein it provided for the salaries, allowances and other benefits of a President, Vice-President and Prime Minister;*

*NOTING THAT section 29 of the Emoluments and Benefits of the President, Vice-President and Prime Minister Act specifically continues the operation of section 3 of the Parliament (Remuneration of Members) Act, Cap 259 as far as it applies to presidents and vice-presidents who ceased to hold that office before the commencement of the 1995 Constitution;*

*FURTHER NOTING that section 3 of the Parliament (Remuneration of Members) Act empowers Parliament by a resolution supported by votes of not less than half of all the Members of Parliament to authorise the payment to a former holder of the Office of the President or Vice-President of an allowance not less than two-thirds of the salary of the President or of the Vice-President;*

*RECOGNISING THAT whereas members of the Presidential Commission held the Office of the President of Uganda and are entitled to the benefits enumerated under the Parliament (Remuneration of Members) Act, no such benefits have been paid, save for ex-gratia payments in 2012;*

*FURTHER RECOGNISING THAT former presidents contributed to the development and social transformation of Uganda and need to be looked after during their retirement*

*NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that this Parliament:*

*a) Requests Government to fulfil its obligation to pay the holders of the Office of the Presidency under the Uganda National Liberation Front (UNLF) Government as prescribed in Section 3 of the Parliament (Remuneration of Members) Act, Cap 259. Those people are:*

1. *H.E. Yoweri Hunter Wacha Olwol*
2. *H.E. Polycarp Nyamuconco (RIP)*
3. *H.E. Saulo Musoke*

*b) Requests Government to make provision in the supplementary appropriation for the financial year 2016/2017 for such payment to the tune of Shs 1,200,000,000 and in the same vein, make a provision in the annual budget estimates for the financial year 2017/2018 for the sum of Shs 1,200,000,000, all being the payment for the emoluments and benefits of the holders of the Office of the Presidency under the Uganda National Liberation Front Government.”*

I beg to move.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Is the motion seconded? It is seconded by Member for Dokolo South, Member for Rukungiri District and hon. Gonahasa - I keep forgetting his constituency. It is Kabweri County. That is one of the new constituencies and that is why I keep forgetting it.

Honourable member, would you like to briefly speak to your motion? Honourable members, this is a motion based on a provision of the law and we will not have too many engagements. Please, proceed with the justification.

**MS JOY ATIM:** Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. This is a historical fact and the fact is that there are some people who did a lot to let Uganda be where we are today. These people need to be cared for, respected and honoured. We do not want the song of Jose Chameleon to be proven right for them when he said, “*Basiima Ogenze*”, meaning that we appreciate people when they are long gone.

Mr Speaker, to do this end, we have a law that I have just quoted. It is section 29 of the Emoluments and Benefits of the President, Vice-President and Prime Minister Act, which imports section 3 of the Parliament (Remuneration of Members) Act, Cap 259.

For avoidance of doubt, we have this proclamation and it reads thus: *“Pursuant to the powers vested in the Military Commission, the Military Commission do hereby proclaim as follows:*

*1. Chapter IV of the Constitution is hereby suspended and all appointments except to public offices immediately before the 12th day of May 1980, pursuant to the powers contained in such chapter and Chapter V of the said Constitution are hereby terminated with effect from that date;*

*2. There shall be a Presidential Commission consisting of three persons appointed by the Military Commission, which in that capacity shall be the titular Head of State;*

*3. Subject to paragraph 4, all privileges, prerogatives, functions and exemptions formerly enjoyed or exercised by the former President of the Republic of Uganda under the Constitution or any other written law are hereby vested in the Presidential Commission with effect from the 12th day of May, 1980.”*

Mr Speaker, these people were three in one and they need to be supported. I, therefore, with great concern, bring to the attention of this House that there was a holder of the Office of the President, who in real terms is a former president, and he is suffering. The person is called Yoweri Hunter Wacha Olwol; the other two are dead but Wacha Olwol is still alive. He was the President and Head of State of the Republic of Uganda from 12 May 1980 until he handed over power to President Milton Obote in 1980. He was in office for six months.

For clarity and also for the benefit of those Ugandans and the entire world that may not know this history, I could briefly state that three eminent Ugandans of good repute were initiated and they were three persons but one presidency. They were two persons from the highest court then - Justice Polycarp Nyamuconco and Justice Saul Musoke - and to avoid it seeming like a forum of the court, in the wisdom of the Military Commission, an ordinary Ugandan was included, and that was Mr Yoweri Hunter Wacha Olwol, who had been the Permanent Secretary in the Office of the President. In law, all the three are one and now that Wacha Olwol is still alive, then the shared presidency is still alive.

These people helped this country for six months. Mr Wacha Olwol was in Parliament yesterday. I, therefore, beg to move that Parliament passes a resolution authorising payment of an allowance to the former holders of the Office of the President. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Is there a seconder of the motion? Make you submission briefly please.

4.39

**MR FELIX OKOT OGONG (NRM, Dokolo County South, Dokolo):** Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the mover of this motion. I rise to support it.

This motion is moved under the provision of the law. There is already a proclamation attached and that is proclamation No. 5 of 1980. There is a law of emoluments and benefits of heads of state – the Presidential Emoluments and Benefits Act, 1998. There is also a law for remuneration of Members – the Parliament (Remuneration of Members) Act, 1981. The motion moved here is supported by the law and, therefore, it is an entitlement that they deserve to be paid.

Mr Speaker, I would like to appeal to Members because these people served the nation during a time of confusion in our country in 1980. The Military Commission, by proclamation, established the Presidential Commission and those people were titular heads of state. According to our law, there are benefits that are already stipulated in the law. It is, therefore, an entitlement that is supported by the law.

Honourable members, I would like to appeal to you all because these are people who served and deserve decency as they live with us. Their families too deserve support; even when they are departed, we need to support the surviving family.

It is provided by the law and the Constitution that it is only by a motion moved in this Parliament and supported by the Members of Parliament that this can be done. I, therefore, would like to appeal to you because this motion is brought in good faith and it is actually an honour to those who served us. It also shows that Parliament is paying respect to them. I would like to appeal to you to fully support this motion. I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can I have the second seconder.

4.44

**MS WINNIE MATSIKO (NRM, Woman Representative, Rukungiri):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I support this motion and I would also like to appeal to honourable members to support this motion. These are great men that served this country and served diligently. They were hard working and they kept peace when there would have been chaos in this country.

Justice Nyamuconco was from Rukungiri District, the district I represent in this august House. He did a lot of work in the Judiciary and even that time when he was in highest office of this land, he worked very hard. Unfortunately, he passed on but what is hurting is the state in which the widow is.

You will all agree with me that besides any successful man is a hardworking woman. The wife of Nyamuconco held her husband together and they served this country. She was a very strong woman and worked very hard. She relentlessly put in all her effort to ensure that the country stays at peace. Unfortunately, for a long time since the husband passed on, she has been moving from office to office and has been promised support but she has not succeeded. She is now sick; she lives in a dilapidated house and has lost several of her children. She is in a state that you would not wish on any leader of that calibre in this country.

I, therefore, request this House to support this motion so that they get what is due to them. We are not asking for anything that is out of the usual process; it is an entitlement that has delayed and as people who come from areas where these great men came from, we are concerned. We are touched to see them in such a sorry state.

Therefore, I request you, honourable members, to support this motion so that these great men get what is due to them. After all, as leaders we need to set a precedent that will also help us in future. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the motion that I now propose for your debate is for a resolution of Parliament for payment of emoluments and benefits to members of the Presidential Commission under the law. To start off the debate, I would like to hear from the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the Minister of Public Service and then we will proceed.

4.44

**THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE (Mr Muruli Mukasa):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Indeed the motion has a lot of merit and the background that the movers have given is actually true. These illustrious gentlemen deserve what they are entitled to by law. Certainly, as minister in charge of public service, I support the resolution. Thank you very much.

4.45

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Mr Speaker, I stand to support the motion and to give Members of this House information. In the financial year 2012/2013, each former president was paid Shs 1 billion as a one-off. For the joint presidency of Mr Wacha, Justice Musoke and Justice Nyamuconco, the Shs 1 billion was divided among them with each getting Shs 330 million.

This motion, as required by law, is appropriate and we look forward to passing it and going to another stage of implementation to assist the former presidents. I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the situation with this particular motion is that it is required by law that it should be done. Section 3 of the Parliament (Remuneration of Members) Act, which is supported by section 29 of the Emoluments and Benefits of the President, Vice-President and Prime Minister’s Act, which were both passed by this Parliament, are synchronised to make this provision. The only challenge that has been put in the way of these people getting their benefits is that every year, they must get a resolution from Parliament in order to be paid. That is burdensome and as a result of that, some years have passed because nobody took the initiate to move this motion so that they could be paid.

Therefore, these Members have now moved this particular motion to support these ones who are still alive. H.E Wacha Olwol was actually physically in Parliament yesterday to see that he can be assisted to receive what is due to him. I do not know whether this kind of motion would attract a debate. Honourable Minister of Finance -

**MR BAHATI:** Mr Speaker, the only thing I would like to suggest to this House, if it is possible, is that probably every financial year, as we appropriate money for the following financial year, we could move a motion during that period so that people do not have to wait until the middle of the financial year. That procedure would be very appropriate for us for purposes of planning.

**MR GONAHASA:** Mr Speaker, I am concerned that we are doing what I consider to be selective justice in this country in the matter of recognising people who have served this country. Some years back, the Minister of Defence ran all over this country, identifying all the veterans from as far back as the Second World War. I was involved because my uncles were there and my dad was a captain in the army *–(Interjection) -* Relevant or not relevant, I am looking at this case.

It is right to support Wacha Olwol; I know him. I also knew Nyamuconco. However, are we procedurally right as Parliament to selectively identify a few of our people who have served this country and leave out the majority of our people who have even given their lives to the cause of this country? Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you very much. Honourable members, this particular motion is housed under section 3 of the Parliament (Remuneration of Members) Act, Cap 259. I can read it: *“Parliament may, by a resolution, authorise the payment to a former holder of the office of President or of Vice President of an allowance not less than two-thirds of the salary of the President or of the vice President, respectively.”* That is what we are doing right now.

I do not know under what procedure you were using doing all those other things *– (Laughter) -* but I am sure there must have been some process and law authorising that. This particular one is not selective. These people were presidents and that is why the motion is coming in the form it is. It is authorised by an Act of Parliament. Can I put the question?

**MR FUNGAROO:** Mr Speaker, the motion has been moved to seek for a resolution of Parliament and the people who have spoken here are only the seconders of the motion. From my analysis and reasoning, these are people who come from the places where the beneficiaries come from. One Member said she is from Rukungiri and one of the beneficiaries is from Rukungiri.

Now, the procedural matter is: doesn’t it add more weight for Members to speak in support of the motion? They can add, ask questions and even amend the motion to remove the burden of coming every year to seek parliamentary approval. Personally, I support the motion but I would like to move to amend the motion so that if it is possible, what we do today here should be able to work for next year so that we do not bother with another motion. I need your guidance, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, that is a legitimate issue being raised but you cannot do it by a resolution of Parliament; it requires amending the law that created this procedure. If we finish with this, this will help the people who are suffering at the moment and then we urge the honourable ministers involved – we had this discussion with the Attorney-General and everybody else – to now bring an amendment so that it can cure all these other challenges that these people have been facing.

However, for now, does this particular motion require a debate? If it does not, can I put a question to this motion? Honourable members, I put the question to this motion for a resolution of Parliament for payment of the emoluments and benefits to members of the Presidential Commission under the law.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The House is properly constituted; let us proceed with the next business.

MOTION SEEKING LEAVE OF THE HOUSE TO INVESTIGATE SERIOUS ALLEGATIONS OF TAX EVASION IN THE STEEL SECTOR IN UGANDA

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, under the item that has just been called, which is on the motion that we had yesterday, I was required to come and propose terms of reference for the investigation to this House so that we can approve them and also determine, by the nature of the terms of reference, which particular committee of the House should do this investigation.

Honourable members, on Wednesday, 15 March 2017, which was yesterday, hon. Gaster Mugoya, the Member of Parliament for Bukooli County North, moved a motion for a resolution of Parliament to investigate serious allegations of tax evasion in the steel sector in Uganda. The motion was debated and Members agreed that the matter be investigated. Further, it was agreed that the terms of reference be developed to guide the committee and its investigation. On the basis of that, I now propose the following terms of reference to guide this particular investigation:

1. Investigate the allegations that companies in the steel sector in Uganda evade taxes and establish any tax revenues lost.

2. Examine the adequacy of the applicable laws and regulations and establish the adequacy of taxation procedures and processes on the steel sector in Uganda.

3. Investigate the operations of companies involved in the steel sector in order to ascertain whether they comply with their tax obligations and other laws.

4. Establish whether companies in the steel sector –

1. import finished products disguised as raw materials;
2. Make accurate declarations of their transactions to Uganda Revenue Authority;
3. Properly invoice sales, exports and imports.

5. Examine the conduct of the Uganda Revenue Authority and any other Government agency connected to the steel industry to ascertain whether they have fulfilled their mandate in so far as the steel sector is concerned.

6. Examine any other matters incidental to and pursuant to the above and make recommendations for the optimisation of tax revenues in the steel sector.

Honourable members, those are the terms that I propose from the Chair, as was agreed yesterday, for your discussion and approval. Can we take them one by one?

**MR NZOGHU:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate your guidance with the clear terms of reference. However, I would like to say that there are also other companies that have come to our attention that are dodging taxes.

Mr Speaker, if given an opportunity, we would like to add them to those being investigated. Therefore, wouldn’t it be right that at this point in time for us to move an amendment to the motion to include those other companies that are dodging taxes so that the committee can do the work comprehensively?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, this motion is based on some document that has been submitted and it is already on the record of Parliament. If we enlarge this beyond what has been presented, I do not know how much time that committee will require to investigate the other things all together in one transaction.

It might be easier for this particular investigation to set the precedent to find out what is going on so that the findings can be applied generally to deal with all that the other sectors which are involved in this particular kind of operation. This might be just one case that can set the standard of what we can do instead of going everywhere and taking all the time without coming to any meaningful conclusion.

Therefore, a sectoral approach on this might be easier to come with recommendations quicker and then those recommendations can be generalised and we see how to move from there. That is what I advise, since you have sought a procedural matter. Otherwise, we will over burden the committee and in the end, it might take too long for any meaningful result to come out.

5.00

**MR JACOB OBOTH (Independent, West Budama South, Tororo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The motion, as you have guided, was carried by the House. What is before us are the specific terms of reference based on the debate and motion that was carried.

I agree with that brilliant guidance and I would like to add that even for the specific terms of reference, you took time to look at what was before the House especially as the presiding officer. Mr Speaker, I would like to move a motion that the question be put to adopt the terms of reference so that the relevant committee begins its work. I beg to move.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, that kind of motion is a specific one. It requires me to put the question to that motion first. I now put the question to the motion that the question be put.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I now put the question that the terms of reference as proposed to the House be adopted as the terms of reference for the investigation of this matter.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the basis of these terms of reference - the length and width - show that the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development can handle the issue comprehensively. Can we refer this matter to that particular committee? It is accordingly referred to the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Thank you.

**MR KATUSABE:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I totally agree and it entirely depends upon your always very wise and valid judgement. My only observation is on the timeframe. The terms of reference are kind of open. I do not know whether it would not be procedurally right for this House to put a timeframe.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, would one month be sufficient for this committee? Is the chairperson of the committee here?

**MR ANTHONY OKELLO:** Mr Speaker, the chairperson is not in the House but I am a member of the committee and also a former chairperson of the committee in the Ninth Parliament –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Are you using the words “former leader” for purposes of what we have just passed? *(Laughter)*

**MR ANTHONY OKELLO:** Mr Speaker, my integrity has to be kept. If it does not bother you, we will go by what is provided in the Rules of Procedure, that is, 45 days. I think that will be sufficient time for the committee to report back to the House.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is one and half months.

**MR ANTHONY OKELLO**: Yes, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Is that okay? Do we go with the provision in the Rules of Procedure of 45 days? Let this committee come back but now, you will focus on this and yet we also have the budget. Anyway, this is related to the budget, so you can interrogate these matters together and come back to the House within the provisions of the rules, which is 45 days. Should there be any need, you will come back to the House.

**MR ANTHONY OKELLO:** Most obliged, Mr Speaker.

**MR LUBOGO:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Yesterday, when this matter came up for debate, one of the Members brought to your notice a precedent which was set sometime before on matters such as this one, which are crosscutting. While we also consider issues of tax, trade and industry to be within the same purview of this subject matter, a proposal was made to you, Mr Speaker, that it would be appropriate for the Committee on Trade, Industry and Cooperatives to be brought on board in considering this matter.

I happen to chair that particular committee. Mr Speaker, I, therefore, would like to propose that some members of the Committee on Trade, Industry and Cooperatives join this committee - not as ex officio members but to participate fully in the investigation of this matter. I request that you put this to your consideration as you constitute the Members that are going to investigate this matter. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, when that was raised, I also said it will depend on the terms of reference. If the terms of reference that are framed cover various subjects, then it would be necessary to constitute a committee that would handle the wide area of investigation. However, for these terms of reference, the committee that I have sent the matter to can competently investigate without any help. However, it is within the right of the committee, under the rules, to co-opt Members who have expertise to come and support the committee so that they can come to some reasonable conclusion on the matter. That is how we will proceed with this matter. Thank you.

**MR NZOGHU:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Around October 2016, this House passed a resolution that a select committee be constituted to investigate the shoddy work at Karuma Hydro Power Project. Thereafter, a select committee on Uganda Telecom Limited (UTL) was constituted and they have already started work and are in the final stages of compiling their report. This happened even with the issue of Kasese.

Mr Speaker, today, we are pronouncing ourselves again on a similar matter where a select committee has been instituted with terms of reference. Would it be procedurally right for us to have select committees that are constituted later commencing work before the ones that were constituted earlier starting their work?

The issue of Karuma is very key to this country because it touches industry, agriculture, education and health. The guidance I seek, Mr Speaker, is: when are we getting the names and terms of reference for that committee so that they can begin their work?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, that is a valid point. The process of consultation is ongoing. The list of the members of that committee will be communicated to Members as soon as it is completed so that the work can commence and we finish this business. Thank you.

Honourable members, this is to inform you that tonight, the vigil and prayers for the late hon. Cyrus Amodoi Imalingat, Member of Parliament for Toroma, Katakwi District, will be at his residence in Kyanja, Wakiso District, from 6.00 p.m. Tomorrow, from 9.00 a.m. to 10.30 a.m., there will be a requiem mass at Christ the King Church in Kampala. At 11.00 a.m., the body will be received in Parliament and from 11.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m., it will lie in state in the front foyer of this House for viewing. From 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m., Members of Parliament will pay tribute to the late hon. Cyrus Amodoi Imalingat in a special sitting that I announced yesterday.

On Saturday, 18 March 2017, the body will leave Kampala for Katakwi at 8.00 a.m. The Katakwi District Local Council will pay tribute to hon. Amodoi Imalingat from 9.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m. They will also stop over at Toroma County Headquarters for public viewing at about 1.00 p.m. At 2.00 p.m., the body will be taken to Kanapa village, Magoro Subcounty. The burial of the late hon. Amodoi Cyrus Imalingat will commence in Magoro Subcounty on Sunday, 19 March at 10.00 a.m. A separate programme for this particular event will be given to you. Honourable members, we urge you to go and bid our fallen colleague a good farewell on Sunday at the time appointed.

There is still pending business that we would like to complete before we adjourn.

LAYING OF PAPERS

5.11

**THE MINISTER FOR THE PRESIDENCY (Ms Esther Mbayo):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the ministerial policy statement for the financial year 2017/2018 for vote 122, Kampala Capital City Authority. I beg to lay.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. It is referred to the Committee on Presidential Affairs to handle.

5.12

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the ministerial policy statement for the financial year 2017/2018 for the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, vote 018.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Let the records capture that. It is referred to the appropriate committee for handling.

**MR NZOGHU:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have seen the Minister of State for Finance, Planning and Economic Development laying the ministerial policy statement for Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development on the Table, but I doubt the quality of that ministerial policy statement. (*Laughter*) It is just like a seminar paper for one presentation.

Mr Speaker, how do you cure our suspicion of the document he has laid on the Table? For the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to have just that small volume is very questionable and we would want to get to the bottom of that.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, that is the document that has been laid on the Table and it is part of the record of this House. All those will be uploaded on your iPads by Monday. If you find that there are issues with it, that is when you will raise them.

How am I going to say that is not the ministerial policy statement? I am not the minister. (*Laughter*) That is what they have laid on the Table as the ministerial policy statement. Let the records capture that and it is referred to the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development for handling.

5.15

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the ministerial policy statement for the Parliamentary Commission, vote 104.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. It stands referred to the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs. Thank you.

Can you now confirm that we have received all the ministerial policy statements, honourable minister?

**MR BAHATI:** Mr Speaker, we have now received all the ministerial policy statements encompassing all the votes under every ministry. All the documents that have been laid here are true documents from those ministries. If there is any mistake, the ministry will be responsible. We have laid real documents. (*Laughter*)

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Clerk, extract the minutes of these proceedings and forward those statements to the chairpersons of the committees for handling. Also, extract and forward formal copies to the shadow ministers so that they can prepare their reports as they have always done. We will give them two weeks to do that and then we will come back.

When we come back, it will also be the time we will receive the budget. Therefore, you might now have to handle all these things completely because the proposed budget, by law, is supposed to be presented by 1st April. However, 1st April being a day that we are not sitting, we will push it to 3rd April and the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development will be able to bring this document before Parliament and we proceed.

**MR KAFUUZI:** Mr Speaker, hon. Nzoghu raised a pertinent matter. While we may accept this as it is and that has been the norm, I feel there is a lacuna that needs to be cured. I pray that you, Mr Speaker, direct the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline to find a way of plugging that gap so that once the papers are laid on the Table or even before, we are able to ascertain that they fit the purpose. Someone can simply bring a file and put it there to beat the deadline and later cures the anomaly.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, these documents that are laid before the House become property of this Parliament. They are property of the House and you can examine them at any time. They are here. People have authored and brought them and they are responsible for their documents. Therefore, it is not as if we found a document without an author and now we are just – Please, let us leave this.

**MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI:** Mr Speaker, with due respect, if I just picked a copy - just get me that lousy one - You are talking about a Government and a document being laid in the august House – the Parliament of the Republic of Uganda. You are speaking about a document that will forever be on the record. To house it in such a fashion as if it is –(*Interjections*)- To house these documents in this kind of fashion in a way that lacks style speaks volumes about the quality of the Government you have - (*Interruption*)

**MR BAHATI:** Mr Speaker, is it in order for hon. Kivumbi to insinuate that this Government, which has served this country for 30 good years, does not have good quality regarding the ministerial policy statement when this very House approved a procedure that all these documents will be uploaded on your iPads?

This House and the rules have no specific procedure on what quality of material we should produce in a policy statement. What is important is content and not the form. So, is he in order to insinuate that this Government is not a strong Government?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The insinuation as to the character of Government, I will speak on that later, but on the suspicion about the quality of the documents that have been laid, the Speaker agrees that the quality is not quite right. (*Laughter*) It is not the kind of document we are used to receiving. However, now that we have adopted this procedure of uploading them on our electronic systems, we will wait and see what comes on our systems and we will proceed from there.

**MR OKUPA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Taking on from where you have stopped, we have been used to a specific colour of the policy statements but when you look at them this time - and I would like to know from the Prime Minister what happened to that colour of the policy statements - the colour is seriously lacking in almost 90 per cent of the policy statements. May they clarify on what happened to the colour? Are you running away from that colour? (*Laughter*)

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, can we conclude business. Is there any other matter we need to deal with now?

**HON. MEMBERS:** No.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, as I said, because of the election of the East African Legislative Assembly members, we were not able to go on recess. That recess should have been for one and a half months but now we do not have that time. The budget is coming on 1st April. Therefore, we are going to break today for a short time to just honour the obligation of having a recess. It will not be a very long one because we should be able to come back and receive the budget and then proceed with business appropriately.

Also, take note that the normal sittings of the House will be adjourned; the House will go on recess today *sine die,* but the special sitting will be tomorrow for the tribute motion to pay respect to our fallen colleague, hon. Amodoi of Toroma County. Let us be here tomorrow.

The body will come here at 11.00 a.m. and the debate will start at 2 o’clock. We should be able to finish by 4 o’clock to allow for time to travel up to Katakwi for those processes to take place there. Therefore, the normal sitting of Parliament is now adjourned for recess, *sine die.*

*(The House rose at 5.22 p.m. and adjourned sine die.*)