

**PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA**

**Wednesday, 1 September, 2021**

*Parliament met at 2.08 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.*

PRAYERS

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

*The House was called to order.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I would like to once again welcome you to today’s sitting. As you are aware, a report of the taskforce on COVID-19 that was chaired by the hon. Abdu Katuntu was presented to the House and we were waiting for a response from the Government. Today, the Minister of Health, Dr Aceng, will present her response report to the House; it will then be followed by a debate.

The report and the debate are meant to help the country on how to change the health system. I would like us to debate this report objectively and the Government should also take it seriously that we need some changes.

You are aware that yesterday, I directed the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs to go to Masaka. We will be getting weekly interim reports from there. The team is already set to be in Masaka and together with the whole House, we should be able to overcome the situation in Masaka but we need a united effort, as a House, to overcome that.

I would like to welcome one technical person, Dr Kyoobe. I am told he is in the gallery. Dr Kyoobe is in charge of the COVID-19 ward of Mulago Hospital. Doctor, you are welcome and thank you so much for the good work. *(Applause)*

2.13

**MR ATKINS KATUSABE (FDC, Bukonzo County West, Kasese):** Madam Speaker, thank you very much. You are the head of this institution and that means you have the last word.

Madam Speaker, a while ago, the presiding officer then, directed the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to come and brief this House on why the royal guards continue to be incarcerated in prison without trial.

Madam Speaker, the reason I am responding to your communication is that when positions are taken on the Floor of Parliament, the Government is supposed to take them seriously.

This afternoon, as I walked into this House, I received a distress call from Kirinya Prison that about 50 royal guards incarcerated in there have critical illness issues and are fighting for their lives.

This is something that cannot wait. We have just lost eight royal guards who had been incarcerated in that prison and we continue to lose more untried. I do not think there is anything that is more important on this Order Paper than human life.

Madam Speaker, the community is restless. The king himself needs medical attention yet he is not allowed to leave Muyenga, where he is incarcerated. Surely, do we still qualify to be called a country that focuses on human rights or cares about human life?

Just yesterday, we debated a matter regarding our fellow citizens being butchered in Masaka. But we have fellow citizens in Kirinya who are in pain and need urgent medical attention.

Madam Speaker, if you went to Kirinya Prison, you will find them chained on their hospital beds and I would like to ask you, in response to your communication, that you redirect the Government, including the Minister for Health to pay a visit to those fellow citizens -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Katusabe, I am not sure whether you are reacting to the communication from the chair. Instead, you are smuggling in something that you would like to be handled. That is not a response to the Communication from the Chair as provided for under rule 25(2)(e) on how you should respond to the communication from the chair. Government -

2.17

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Indeed you have guided well. Anyway, I am going to arrange a meeting between the Members of Parliament from Kasese and the Office of the Attorney-General tomorrow for us to discuss this matter comprehensively and to the satisfaction of the Members.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, when such things come – and I am happy with the way the Government has started reacting - it should be handled immediately because it is urgent.

Today I am happy that you handled issues from the flooded areas and whoever has issues on floods, please have those issues handled. We cannot continue coming to the House every time with matters of national importance yet we know where we can have issues resolved.

What you can do is to get the Kasese team and have that issue resolved. It is long overdue. I have a list of people who have issues of national importance and I announced in this House that matters should be brought to my office at least before midday.

2.18

**MR PHILIPHS LOKWANG-ILUKOL (NRM, Napore West County, Karenga):** Madam Speaker, I am very happy and privileged to be given this opportunity. In my constituency and Karamoja in general, the community is bleeding simply because of this problem of animals from the national park. When I was there, over 100 gardens were destroyed. This will subject people to famine, come the next season.

We tried to ask the Uganda Wildlife Authority to help but they promised ‘air’ and have not come. More so, the elephants are on rampage. They slapped some women, who are now hospitalised. Even the councillor was a victim.

The second aspect I would like to bring to the House is the alarming security situation in Karamoja. Last night, there was a lot of raiding taking place. The killings there have become so much that they even knock down a concrete building and pick someone from inside to be killed from outside. There are people in Kaabong who are killed.

The police –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Government Chief Whip, are you listening to what you are being told?

**Mr lokwang:** Now, it leaves me wondering whether there are Government agencies that are responsible for such things. When we try the Uganda Wildlife Authority, they tell us, “We are going to deploy” but at the end of the day, the gardens are finished. We tell the police, “We are there; can you settle this?” At the end of the day, you hear of people who are killed.

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

**Mr lokwang:** My prayer is that Government comes in and fences off these wild animals from destroying crops. Otherwise, even the production target for Government may not be achieved because people there are struggling with wild animals, which are on rampage in my constituency.

For security, if there could be more local deployment in the area to curb this untold suffering. Women and children are dying. I have a report to give later on. I beg to submit.

2.22

**The minister of state for Tourism, Wildlife and antiquities (Mr Martin Mugarra):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to agree that what hon. Lokwang is saying is true. The issue of Karamoja has come up. However, like you directed, we have come up with a movement strategy that we are going to share with Members. We shall be in all these areas assessing and we come up with one way of resolving these matters once and for all.

Therefore, I will be with the Member and tell him when we shall be in his area.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** When do we expect a response?

**Mr mugarra:** It is going to take me around three weeks or two and a half to move throughout the whole country. I am requesting for a month.

**Ms asinansi nyakato:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. In the last sitting, you directed that the Minister for Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities comes to Hoima on a fact-finding mission to see exactly what is happening. I have met him several times and he keeps on telling me that they are organising.

Therefore, I would like the minister to once again assure me when exactly he will come and assess the situation on the ground.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, are you still organising?

**Mr silwany:** Madam Speaker, what I would like the minister to clarify more is that the honourable member says the animals are on rampage, attacking people’s gardens. This is something you cannot say, “one month” because it is urgent. The animals are moving around. Maybe he should tell us what he can do in the very short run and in the long run.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, you need to know that these animals are even killing people. You need immediate action on what is happening. If it means you going to fence off the area so that the animals do not share a compound with the people, you have to do it.

You cannot say that you want two or three weeks for you to do that. How many people shall we have lost? How much food will be lost? Tomorrow, people will come here saying there is hunger. The last time we sent you to the field, did you go?

**Mr mugarra:** Madam Speaker, like I said, you gave your guidance last time and it is what I was going with. Every other day, there is an issue to do with human-wildlife conflict in this House. That is why, like you directed, the suggestion would be that we do one wholesome programme, harmonise with all the Members and come and ask for more funding –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What did you get from the field the last time we sent you there?

**Mr mugarra:** Indeed, what we found was true. For example, where I was with hon. Gilbert Olanya and we have written – we do not give relief food for instance where animals have destroyed crops. It is usually the Ministry of Disaster Preparedness in the Office of the Prime Minister.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Did you go with hon. Olanya to the field?

**Mr mugarra:** Yes, I was with him as well in his area. However, we have been dealing with the Ministry of Disaster Preparedness to come and give some relief in areas where elephants have destroyed –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, it is not about relief but people’s lives. It is about controlling the animals from accessing where lives are. If it is food, anybody can get it anywhere but we need to protect lives.

**Mr mugarra:** Much obliged, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We even told you in this House that if you need money for fencing off, we will provide for it. However, you have not come up with a plan. We need a plan on how we can stop this in all the areas but not only in one area.

2.22

**Mr james kaberuka (NRM, Kinkizi County West, Kanungu):** Madam Speaker, when you check on the Order Paper and the “business to follow”, there are about three items, which concern the wildlife relationship with the human beings, especially in Kasese and Kanungu. Up to now, he is talking of how he met hon. Olanya but I remember that you directed him to get in touch with us. I am happy I have seen him because I did not know him. Even the senior minister has not come to this House. I do not know whether these people should continue.

When a lion died, they brought helicopters and all staff in the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities went to Kanungu. However, when our people’s gardens get depleted, they sit here and wait for people to help themselves.

Madam Speaker, I would like you to direct the honourable minister to at least assure Ugandans that they are in charge and also that human beings are better than animals. We cannot protect animals at the expense of human rights. Thank you.

2.27

**Mr amos okot (NRM, Agago North County, Agago):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am from Agago North and we border Kidepo National Game Park. A month ago, I was engaging the staff of Uganda Wildlife Authority. However much you talk to them, they will keep telling you, “We are coming” to the extent that we are now afraid. Could it be that maybe these people are understaffed or are they are doing it deliberately?

In my area like Laita in Omiya Pachwa, elephants have destroyed crops. They go from garden to garden. People sleep in the bush waiting for the animals. Maybe the minister should come and tell us; do you have enough manpower so that they can help us do this work? If not, let the country know and we come up with a solution on how to control these wild animals. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, can you give us feedback? We sent you to the field and asked you to meet all the Members of Parliament in the affected areas. You were supposed to give a report to this House. To date, you have not. You were even supposed to give us a report about the tunnel but up to today, you have not given us the report. Tell us if you are in control of your ministry.

**MR BAHINDUKA:** Madam Speaker, for the record, we are in control. Like I said, a new matter arises every day. We are aware and we are in coordination with the Government Chief Whip’s Office. We agreed to come up with a concrete programme this week on the movement. Starting tomorrow, I will be sharing with Members, where we shall be each time, as we move around to assess these issues.

As I conclude *-*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Mbwatekamwa, leave the minister to finish making his submission.

**MR BAHINDUKA:** Madam Speaker, I seek your indulgence. Like I said, we took your directive seriously. I would like to tell my colleague that currently, our teams have failed to scare away these animals but the optimum solution to this problem would be fencing out the animals. The manpower we have is not enough and the fencing would be the absolute solution to this problem.

Just like you directed, Madam Speaker, definitely, they will add for us some more funds so that we can concretise *–(Interruption)*

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the attempt he is trying to make.

I see ourselves flogging a dead horse here. I am a Member of the Committee on Appointments, which is chaired by you, Madam Speaker. On several occasions, we have asked the Cabinet ministers whether they will attend plenary to answer Members’ questions. Some of these ministers are new in the ministry. I have always seen the honourable minister on television trying to defend and give the Government’s position but the senior minister does not appear anywhere.

Therefore, the procedural matter I am raising is whether it is procedurally correct to continue flogging this dead horse, which cannot give us a full answer; he cannot even determine the budget. I know he plays some part in the budget but the senior minister, hon. Tom Butime, should appear here, like you have always directed to give us answers, other than leaving his junior minister to suffer with Members on the Floor of this House.

Would it be procedurally right for us to get the senior minister here? Since the Government Chief Whip is around, let him also come and give us a better answer.

I remember asking hon. Matia Kasaija whether he would be attending parliamentary proceedings because he is always nowhere to be seen. Yet, all these issues deal with money; facing the Committee on Public Accounts (PAC) is not simple.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Amos Lugoloobi is in the House.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** He has been unwell and should not stand a lot. *(Laughter)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Mbwatekamwa had something to say.

2.32

**MR GAFFA MBWATEKAMWA (NRM, Igara County West, Bushenyi):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I was perturbed by the minister. He has tried to tell this House that he is fully in charge yet he is living in the book of lamentations.

Despite your guidance that the minister should tell this House the immediate solution, he is only telling us that he is going to sit and call people. My concern is: why shouldn’t a young and vibrant minister be equipped with immediate solutions? With your powers, Madam Speaker, could you compel this vibrant young minister to give answers that can benefit this House?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, let us not take up a lot of time on one issue.

**MR SILWANY:** Madam Speaker, I would like to add that these animals are a source of food. If they are eating people’s crops and the minister has failed to – In fact, we can encourage the communities in those areas to eat these animals –*(Laughter)-* as long as we say that it is not illegal for now so that we solve the problem. We should eat them *–*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Silwany, do not misguide people in this country. Those animals are not to be eaten.

**MR OBOTH:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a procedural matter. I have listened to hon. Joseph Ssewungu, a teacher, lawyer and senior Member of this House. He has brought an analogy for the future readers of this *Hansard,* which might be confused to mean a “dead horse” walked into this Parliament and the House tried to flog it.

Would it be kind enough for the future readers to refer to the minister with either his name or the docket, other than referring to him as a “dead horse”?

We are in a political House, where somebody will pick a statement and say “You have been referred to as a ‘dead horse’.” This is political assassination. Can you be kind?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Martin is not a dead horse. He is the State Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities. Withdraw that statement of a “dead horse”.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Madam Speaker, I am reluctant to withdraw it. This is literature and I am speaking English. I do not know whether -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The language is unparliamentary.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Counsel has used more of those words before yet he does not understand what is meant by flogging a dead horse. Madam Speaker, I will open up the dictionary and get the meaning of that word. Otherwise, it is not abusive.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can you have that word withdrawn?

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Madam Speaker, I am saying we are punishing the minister for nothing. Otherwise, the senior minister is not appearing before the House. That is what I meant by “flogging a dead horse.”

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Ssewungu, can you have the statement withdrawn and we continue.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Madam Speaker, I can see the minister is comfortable with what I said. If he has been a horse, I can withdraw it but – yes, I have done so but I know most of us love horses, which are very expensive by the way. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Ssewungu, I want to refer you to rule 84 of our Rules of Procedure on the use of unparliamentary language. Calling your colleague “a dead horse” is unparliamentary. So, can I have that withdrawn? I would like to have the statement withdrawn.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Madam Speaker, I have already withdrawn the statement but for the purpose of everybody hearing it, we are punishing the minister for nothing and –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, the minister accepted a job. He is not being punished.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Honourable minister, I am sorry, if I called you a “horse” but since you are the Minister for Tourism, we shall meet outside this House and discuss it more. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

**MS ALUM:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Some of us Members from areas affected, by wildlife-human conflict, have a lot of pain in our hearts.

Madam Speaker, you have directed that the minister gets time and meets us; Members that come from such areas. But up to now, the minister has not yet got that time.

Madam Speaker, up to now, the minister has not yet got that time and this is not the first time because even in the last Parliament, we raised these issues many times.

Madam Speaker, would it not be procedurally right for you to direct that the minister gives us a specific date when he is going to meet us as Members of Parliament, and also a time frame when he is going to meet us in the field to help our people get hope in the Government and their elected leaders?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister of state and the Government Chief Whip, I want a work plan that the ministry has for the affected areas. I also want to look at the strategies that you are going to employ to reduce this kind of activity to protect the people in those areas.

That work plan must be presented to this House tomorrow and it must be presented by the senior minister. After you have laid the work plan, we need an immediate action to take place in all the affected areas, not only in Karamoja. *(Applause)*

2.40

**MS JULIET KAKANDE (NUP, Woman Representative, Masaka City):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I rise on a matter of national importance concerning teachers’ salaries in Masaka City.

Ever since the inauguration of cities on 1 July 2020, all civil servants have been receiving their salaries. However, when it came to the month of July 2021, civil servants in Masaka City got their salaries, with the exception of teachers, both at primary and secondary levels.

Madam Speaker, as you are aware, civil servants never got Covid-19 relief and their only source of income is their salary.

It was found out that all other cities got their salaries. We were surprised that even other civil servants in Masaka, apart from the teachers, already had their salaries, including the ones for August.

I pray for the immediate intervention by the concerned ministries - Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Public Service as well as the Ministry of Local Government. The situation has reached where commercial banks have started confiscating money from the accounts of the people who guaranteed these civil servants while they got loans from those banks. I beg to submit, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Juliet. Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, any response?

2.42

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr Amos Lugoloobi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank my colleague for raising this matter. I request that we provide a written response tomorrow.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Okay.

2.43

**MR JAMES KABERUKA (NRM, Kinkizi County West, Kanungu):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of public importance concerning the power outage in Kanungu, specifically in the areas where people are trying to invest in industries.

Madam Speaker, three years ago, the Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited (UEDCL) took over the services from Ferdsult Engineering Services Limited and they promised do better.

However, as we stand, out of 720 hours in a month, power is availed for 200 hours only. That is 80 per cent power outage. Once power goes and comes back – people have lost their property; refrigerators, televisions and other gadgets. A report has already been submitted to the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development.

Madam Speaker, as I stand here today – and the Woman Member of Parliament for Kanungu can bear with me – people have put us on notice that they are going to demonstrate on Friday if they do not get a remedy for the power outage.

I would like to pray that the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development prepares a meeting with the local leaders in Kanungu and investors to chart a way forward on the consistent power supply because the reasons they have been giving are unattainable. At one time they said that Bushenyi power breaks but Bushenyi District gets power supply constantly. We also get power from Buhunga in Kabale but Kabale gets power supply constantly; Kanungu has been victimised. They are asking whether they are being punished for voting the Government by 85 per cent.

Secondly, I would want UEDCL to be compelled by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development to deliver on its mandate – we can have a meeting to harmonise the roles of UEDCL, REA and ERA to sort out that power outage issue in that area once and for all.

Madam Speaker, the investors that had come have run away and even the existing ones have been crippled. I beg to submit, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister for Energy and Mineral Development?

2.46

**THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. We have taken note. I am going to contact the minister concerned and ask them to contact the Members. Soon, I think they are going to have a meeting to answer his request. I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable Prime Minister, what the Member said is that people want to strike on Friday. So “the soon” should be specific: when is it going to be? Is it tomorrow, Thursday? What do we do in the interim?

**MS NAKADAMA:** Madam Speaker, I can fix the meeting between UEDCL, the minister in charge of energy and the Members at 10.00 a.m., tomorrow.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: So, can you have a meeting and report to this House on the outcome of the meeting at 2.00 p.m.?

**MR MACHO:** Madam Speaker, before I go further, I need hon. Mbwatekamwa to withdraw a statement where he said that I am a smuggler. *(Laughter)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** He has not said it.

**MR MACHO:** Madam Speaker, I heard -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** He has not said it.

**MR MACHO:** Madam Speaker, since he is denying by use of signs – hon. Mbwatekamwa, I am a cross-border trader, not a smuggler at all.

Madam Speaker, I have risen on the point of procedure. As I talk, all the shops that import textiles in this country – through the leadership of KACITA – in Kiyembe and Kampala downtown, are closed because the traders are on strike.

Madam Speaker, it is almost a month that unfruitful negotiations have been there between the traders and the Uganda Revenue Authority.

In this time of COVID-19 whereby the business people are battling with paying loans, in this time that our people are suffering because *–(Interjection)–* Madam Speaker, I was trying to build my foundation for the procedural matter.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What is the procedural matter you are raising?

**MR MACHO:** Madam Speaker, since the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is here and he is a very good businessman together with the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, I want him to clarify because this morning, the business people said, in the media, that he is the one who caused the problem by giving a statement that they agreed.

I do not know whether we are proceeding right as the august House when business, which is at the heart of this country, has collapsed. I, therefore, want the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development together with the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives to tell us whether we are proceeding well. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Macho, the matter of the traders has not been raised in this House and we did not know about it. Since we did not know about it, we are proceeding very well. Raise it as a matter and then we will discuss it because it is very bad for the shops to be closed. We need those shops to be opened. Tomorrow, raise that matter and we will need a response to that effect.

2.50

**MR JOEL SSENYONYI (NUP, Nakawa Division West, Kampala):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Government is planning to revamp railway transport in this country. That is commendable and it is a good thing. In fact, it is long overdue as far as some of us are concerned.

However, there is a challenge. As Government plans to do that, there are many project affected persons. In my area, we have people in Banda B1, Banda B2, Banda B3 and it stretches to Kireka, Katoogo, Bweyogerere and many other areas. These project affected persons account for over 30,000 people.

These project affected persons have been given up to 31st of this month to leave those areas along the railway and in the neighbourhood so that Government can revamp the railway transport. The challenge is that many of these project affected persons have been occupying this land for between 20 to 30 years. There are people who have been on that property dating back to 1982.

Government has let these people occupy this land for all these years. In law, we call it acquiescence; that Government has acquiesced. By not bothering them, it has in essence said it is okay, you can be there. In addition, people have, over the years, put up churches, schools, markets and businesses, which businesses Government collects taxes from regularly.

Madam Speaker, my prayers are:

1. For starters, we would like the Ministry of Works and Transport to organise, together with the Uganda Railway Corporation, to go on the ground and interact with these people so that they can hear them out because they have been issuing eviction notices through the newspapers.
2. Some of these occupants are bona fide occupants within the law. The law says for as long as one was in this property 12 years before the coming into effect of the 1995 Constitution, that person is a bona fide occupant and they have interest in this land. Some have been there since 1982 and that is 13 years.

Madam Speaker, even for those who are not bona fide occupants, we believe that before these people can be thrown out, Government should be kind enough to find where to relocate these people because they have built their lives along that place and Government has acquiesced because it allowed them to put up permanent structures and businesses and Government has been collecting taxes from these people.

Therefore, for them to wake up and say by 31st you should have gone and these people do not know where to go - The Government that should be caring for them, now that it has been getting taxes from them, has abandoned them.

Madam Speaker, those are my prayers.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development? The Minister of Works and Transport is not here but it concerns the land.

2.54

**THE MINISTER OF LANDS, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (Ms Judith Nabakooba):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am aware of the issue and I request that you give me more time to get in touch with the Ministry of Works and Transport together with other stakeholders to enable us prepare a report.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, you need to meet the Minister of Works and Transport and report back. You need to go and meet those affected persons and report back on the outcome of your meeting.

2.55

**MR DICKSONS KATESHUMBWA (NRM, Sheema Municipality, Sheema):** Madam Speaker, the matter I wanted to raise is that this morning, I had a meeting with the Government Chief Whip together with representatives from the Ministry of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees. The matter has been taken up and I believe it will be resolved.

2.56

**MS ALED AKUGIZIBWE (Independent, Buruli County, Masindi):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. This is my maiden speech. I present an issue of national importance about the issue of Masindi General Hospital and good enough, the Minister of Health is around.

Masindi General Hospital was constructed in 1922; 99 years ago. Even if it were a human being, at 99 years, he would be complaining. It was constructed with a capacity of 100 beds to handle about 50,000 people. As we talk today, it is handling 350,000 people. The buildings are dilapidated and things are bad.

The maternity ward was constructed to handle 14 mothers but today, we have 60 mothers. Even if you go to this hospital right now, the mothers are sleeping on the ground. It is bad.

I was there over the weekend and these mothers sarcastically told me, “Honourable, just see how we are observing social distance.” It was actually sarcastic and things are bad in Masindi.

The labour ward is too small to even accommodate more than two mothers in labour at the same time. The delivery beds are not in good condition. When you go to the operating theatre, it has only one operating table to handle the C-sections, accidents and other cases. In most cases, emergencies have to wait. Patients, who are in need of theatre services, especially mothers in labour, who have to undergo C-sections make long queues leading to a lot of delays and sometimes, this leads to loss of lives and increase in complications.

Madam Speaker, the hospital has no perimeter wall fence, not even a barbed wire one. Therefore, there is free entry and exit in this hospital. The situation is not good at all.

On a very positive note, Madam Speaker, the hospital is sitted on 9.17 hectares of land that does not have any encumbrances and the land belongs to the Government of the Republic of Uganda.

A total of 60 per cent of this land is empty. Therefore, there is room to construct other buildings.

My prayer is that Government allocates capital development funds to construct a new hospital in Masindi in the next Financial Year 2022/2023. And if possible, a supplementary budget to this effect can be presented to this House and passed since something needs to be done urgently at this hospital for the good of the people.

Relatedly, my constituency of Buruli is one of the oldest constituencies in Uganda. However, up to now, a constituency with six sub-counties and two town councils does not have a health centre IV. We have tried all efforts to have Pakanyi Health Centre III upgraded to a health centre IV but we have not gotten any positive results. I am hopeful this one will.

My prayer is that Pakanyi Health Centre III is upgraded to a health centre IV in the next financial year.

Finally, I would like to know how far the issue of the lunch allowance for the health workers has gone and whether it is going to be taxed or not. I was interacting with some health workers and they were worried that this allowance is going to be taxed. I request the Minister of Health to update us on the progress. Thank you very much. I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, hon. Akugizibwe. We have a pending statement by the minister on the state of healthcare in Uganda plus its financial implication.

Minister, please report issues of Masindi together with that report. What you can report for now – when you are making your response to the Katuntu report – is on the issue of allowances. We need that issue responded to when you are making your submission.

3.00

**THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Jane Ruth Aceng):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will do as you have guided. However, the issue of lunch allowance is not a Ministry of Health issue. It is a Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and Ministry of Public Service issue.

I beg to pass it on.

3.01

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr Amos Lugoloobi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. On the issue of lunch allowances for nurses, the ministry made a provision. I need to check whether a release was made. But as top management of the ministry, we already agreed to release this money for that purpose.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** So, when do you give us a feedback on what was agreed?

**MR LUGOLOOBI:** I can provide feedback tomorrow.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE EFFECTS ON UGANDA OF THE DETERIORATING SECURITY SITUATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN

3.03

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (REGIONAL AFFAIRS) (Mr John Mulimba):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is a statement arising from a question which was posed by hon. Gilbert Olanya and the consequent directive which you gave to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I am pleased to update the House on the current situation of Ugandan traders and truck drivers operating in South Sudan. At the outset, I wish to express my appreciation to you and honourable members of this august House for the interest you have demonstrated in this matter.

You may recall that, in my statement to this House on 25 August 2021, I informed you about the recent spate of attacks, ambushes and incidents of insecurity along the Juba-Nimule Road resulting in the loss of lives and destruction of property in the past few weeks.

Every life lost is precious and this Government takes any Ugandan life lost seriously. The Government received with shock and horror reports of the killings of Ugandans, and the destruction of their property along this stretch of the road and we condemn these attacks.

The Government took immediate steps and my colleague, hon. Okello Henry Oryem, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in charge of International Affairs travelled to Juba where he engaged with his South Sudan counterpart on the security and safety of Ugandans and their goods in that country.

The minister also engaged the Government of South Sudan on the possibility of compensation for the people killed, trucks destroyed and property lost.

During this engagement, he received assurances that the Government of South Sudan-

1. would reinforce security on all major roads including Juba-Nimule Road;
2. would dismantle all illegal roadblocks and ensure no illegal taxes are collected;
3. would provide security convoys to cargo and passenger vehicles;
4. guided that drivers do channel their demands for compensation through the respective country governments.

The information that we have about recent incidents is attached as Annex I. Madam Speaker, since you guided yesterday that you wanted qualified and quantified statements, permit me to take you through this annexure I as attached.

It has dates and incidences that happened.

On 27 September 2020, three Ugandans were kidnapped on Nimule-Juba highway. One Asiimwe Andrew escaped and Ssebagala Ahmed and Mayende Kamadi were killed on 29 September 2020 around Jebelen area.

On 05 January 2021, a Uganda national, Gidudu James from Sironko District was shot dead.

On 03 February 2021, Amandu Fred from Terego District was shot dead.

On 29 March 2021, there were armed attacks by unknown gunmen on four Ugandan nationals travelling from Koboko along Yei-Juba Road. There were Ali Mark Sony, Amati Stephen, Dada Abugo and Sadam Andama who were all killed.

The truck was burnt. Phones, money and clothes were confiscated by the gunmen and they ran into the bushes.

On 31 March 2021, there was another armed attack on five Ugandan truck drivers travelling from Koboko, Oraba and Kaya along Yei-Juba Road.

These were Katongole Hussein, Abdu Makanga, Kuraish Mutebi, Sembusi Kato, all who were killed. Sentongo Asadu survived with bullet wounds.

The truck and timber were all burnt. Phones, money and clothes were confiscated by the gunmen.

On 14 May 2021, Amono Anna Clara, a female from Kitgum District was shot dead.

On the 19 July 2021, there was murder by shooting of Kalyowa Musa of Kayunga District, a Ugandan lorry driver at Nisitu along Nimule-Juba Road.

Madam Speaker, it is important to note that the majority of the ambushes have occurred to vehicles that did not respect the convoy arrangement, as agreed.

Madam Speaker, I request that my honourable colleagues add their voices to that of the Government to urge the travellers to respect and use the convoys as directed.

Otherwise, as Government, we have taken the following steps to address this matter:

1. Whenever attacks and killings against Ugandans occur, we condemn these killings and any other attacks and communicate our concern to the Government of South Sudan.
2. The Government has engaged the Government of South Sudan and other stakeholders, including traders and truck drivers, on several occasions and this continues to ensure that the security of our people who travel to and from South Sudan is guaranteed.
3. Ugandan security officers have advised all Ugandans not to proceed to South Sudan without security guarantees. This advice has been communicated to all border crossings, including those transiting through Busia, Malaba and Mutukula on the way to South Sudan.
4. Whenever Ugandans have been killed, the Government has made arrangements for the recovery and repatriation of their bodies.

Madam Speaker, it is important to note the following too:

1. These attacks happen in the territory of South Sudan;
2. The Government of South Sudan has sovereign authority; and
3. Other nationals have also been victims and so, there has been no targeting of Ugandans per se.

South Sudan is a young brotherly country. We need to work with them and all other relevant stakeholders to guarantee the security of our traders, truck drivers and all travellers to and from South Sudan.

The Government of Uganda remains committed to engaging with the Government of South Sudan on matters of common interest and concern. We shall continue to emphasise, in our engagements, the need to take necessary measures to effectively secure the Juba-Nimule Road.

We believe that restoring security along the routes from the Ugandan border points into Juba is essential to strengthen our bilateral relations with South Sudan and in particular, facilitate the safe movement of persons, goods and services.

Madam Speaker, as I conclude, may I, through you, reiterate it to honourable members of the House that Uganda enjoys a brotherly and cordial relationship with the Government of South Sudan. The murders, killings and any other forms of attacks on persons travelling from Uganda to South Sudan are not per se by the Government of South Sudan. It is only they are taking place within South Sudan.

I would like to urge honourable colleagues that while handling this matter - it is a matter between sister countries - let us handle it with the consciousness it deserves, while respecting the cordiality, which is exists between the two sister countries. Madam Speaker, I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is a point of clarification from the hon. Alex Ruhunda. When you talk about the brotherly relationship, then they should not be killing the other party. It is about life because if they are our brothers, then they should not be killing us.

**MR ALEX RUHUNDA (NRM, Fort Portal Central Division, Fort Portal City):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have listened to the minister. Unfortunately, from his tone, I do not see commitment to protect Ugandans. I only see a statement without serious remorse.

Every country takes the responsibility to protect its citizens worldwide. Even when a country detects danger, they warn and alert their citizens not to go to certain destinations because they have to protect their lives. I do not see this. It is as if Ugandans just move at the mercy of God. So, we really need a responsible Government; people who love their citizens and who have to take action, where it is needed. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker, I feel that we are not doing enough. I know very well that we have expanded our forces; they are in two different countries. This is enough reason for us to be confident and have important information for trade. The losses we have incurred in South Sudan - I cannot believe I have seen the suffering of Ugandans who are venturing to go to South Sudan to do business.

Ugandans want to make money, like any other citizens of the world but our adventurous and enterprising culture is being seriously frustrated because the Government is not walking with us seriously and protecting our interests, when we go to invest in other countries.

Look at the investors who are here and how they are being protected like babies. You find these Chinese and Indians living like kings in our own country yet when we make an attempt to go and also survive elsewhere, we are not given that support. *(Applause)* Madam Speaker, I beg that we urge our leaders to move with us as we build a sustainable economy.

**MS MANENO:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The information I would like to give to the august House is that while the honourable minister has presented the report, the attackers have now entered deep into Uganda.

On 29 August 2021, there were attacks in my district, in Ewafa Parish, Alibabito Subcounty, where two young boys and a girl were shot by unknown gunmen. Where are these guns coming from? I think they are coming from South Sudan, through the porous borders. What is the country doing, as far as the porous borders are concerned? Thank you.

3.16

**MR TOM AZA (NRM, West Moyo County, Moyo):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Honourable minister, as we talk, insecurity is engulfing the whole of Madi subregion. My subregion includes Moyo, Adjumani and Obongi.

As my colleague has alluded, early this year and towards the end of May, in places around the border with South Sudan called Gbari, Arapi, Abaya and Wano, gunmen came and displaced people leaving eight people killed. Like my sister said, when you come from Yumbe up to Adjumani around the border areas, you will notice that there is already insecurity.

Like she said, where are these guns coming from? Because the borders are so porous, there is evidence that gunmen are now moving as they wish; moving freely with both small and big arms without even being arrested. What exactly is happening?

Has the Government sold Moyo, Adjumani and Obongi? Do they want to give us to South Sudan? Please, open us the border to help us know the areas where Uganda stops. Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Of course, the Government has not sold the area; it is still within Uganda.

**MR AZA:** We are crying.

**MR AMOS OKOT:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I rise on a point of clarification. The minister has said the traders who are being attacked are those who are not moving with escorts or the team in the arrangement, when they are travelling.

However, information which is coming in – and which we need the minister to investigate - is that some of those soldiers are trying to solicit money from those traders so that they can move in that kind of convoy. Some traders, who were not in position to give in that kind of money, are trying to adventure and move on their own.

The question to the minister is, what kind of arrangement have you put in place to motivate those soldiers who are escorting the traders on the road? Secondly, have you put them so that they wait for the convoy to come and then they take off or have you just solicited them from wherever they are?

Another piece of information that we have also got is that between the border in Kitgum and South Sudan – just like the honourable member said, these attackers have moved into the country on the Ugandan side. They move to the extent that they even rob the people who go to dig. That is the point I would like the minister to clarify regarding those escort trucks and the soldiers who are moving. I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, when the South Sudanese are coming over to Uganda, do they also need escorts? Are they also killed? Are they attacked? Are we still within the East African Community?

**MS ACEN:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The information I would like to add is that this situation is more serious than what the minister is putting across. The World Food Programme situation report of 31 August 2021 indicates that humanitarian assistance has already been put on halt as a result of insecurity along the routes.

Now, the minister is telling us that some of the killings are happening inside South Sudan and that the government there has sovereign authority. However, we know that for the past years, the state of lawlessness in South Sudan has become really bad that it requires vigilance from other States like Uganda, in terms of how we protect our citizens and also personal vigilance.

Therefore, I request the minister to treat this as a serious matter. Thank you.

3.21

**MS PHYLLIS CHEMUTAI (NRM, Woman Representative, Kapchorwa):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Mine is a concern about the report which the minister has presented to us. He has left out many other people who have died in Kapchorwa.

He has mentioned other places but we have lost many of our people in South Sudan. They have lost property and for some, we have never seen their bodies. We have buried some of them at home because we made our local arrangements and brought them home.

My concern is, why should there be convoys escorting people to South Sudan yet there are no convoys escorting them from South Sudan to Uganda? They have had very good education here and they are living with us very well, yet they are treating us badly; why?

The minister should give us a better solution to the bitter relationship that we have between Uganda and South Sudan. Thank you.

**MR OSEKU:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. We would like to appreciate the statement of the minister. However, listening to the directly affected people, especially the traders and drivers on the news on television, they complained that whereas the Minister of Foreign Affairs has gone to South Sudan to engage with the South Sudanese Government, the Government here has not made efforts to meet and listen to them.

You have heard from here, Madam Speaker, expressions such as attempts to extort or solicit for money from the traders for them to be escorted through the danger areas.

Therefore, the clarification I am seeking from the minister is, what effort have you made to meet the directly affected people and to know and hear from them what exactly they face and also to guide them instead of merely saying that they are supposed to be escorted or do this and that? I thank you, Madam Speaker.

3.24

**MR GAFFA MBWATEKAMWA (NRM, Igara County West, Bushenyi):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I listened to the minister’s statement in pain -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:**  Kindly, use the microphone.

**MR ISINGOMA:** I rise under rule 83(1)(c). I do not know, Madam Speaker, if you have been observing the conduct of hon. Silwany and his colleague next to him. They are busy in deep conversation in this House, when the deliberations are going on *–(Mr Silwany rose\_) –*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Commissioner, hon. Isingoma is on procedure.

**MR ISINGOMA:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I was wondering, therefore, if we are proceeding well when a whole Commissioner, hon. Silwany, is busy in deep conversation in this House right there –*(Interjection) -* I hear, with a General.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:**  Honourable members, let us discuss the issue. I don’t want interruptions in the matter we are discussing now. We are discussing a matter of Ugandans who are being killed. Let us handle this matter with all the seriousness it deserves.

**MR MBWATEKAMWA:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I have listened to the minister’s statement in pain. In his statement, our country, Uganda, prefers to repatriate bodies of the deceased rather than protecting people to ensure that they can get to South Sudan while alive.

Madam Speaker, my biggest concern is that when they are dead, who compensates their families? Again, we have seen here the so-called investors – even those who are selling pancakes here in Uganda – are given security. You find a Chinese being guarded by UPDF soldiers –*(Interjection) –* Everywhere. Do not ask where.

Madam Speaker, we cannot tolerate hon. Silwany’s character.

As I proceed -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable Silwany, behave like a commissioner.

**MR MBATEKAMWA:** Madam Speaker, as I conclude, I expected the minister to tell us how they are going to protect Ugandans as they enter South Sudan. Can we see these redundant UPDF soldiers, who are being used by the so-called investors here, being deployed to escort our Ugandans to make sure that they reach there and do business? Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, one thing I want to find out is, have you ever met the families of the affected persons as a ministry? Secondly, who determines which people should be escorted in a convoy? What safeguards have you put in place?

3.28

**Mr james olobo (NRM, Kioga North County, Amolatar):** Madam Speaker, this issue of traders in South Sudan started 10 years ago. It was discussed in the Ninth and Tenth parliaments and today we are here. We must get serious. People have lost money and lives. I am aware of a friend who is a businessman in Lira City called Okwii Geoffrey. He lost Shs 3 billion 10 years ago. The man has now gone back to Otuke and is a poor man in the village. Government took up this thing and they are playing delaying tactics. They talk of verification but they have not paid these people.

Today, I would like to see this House resolve this issue. These people must be paid. I beg to submit.

3.30

**Mr Stephen kisa (NRM, Luuka South County, Luuka):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is also my maiden speech in this Chamber.

The matter of South Sudan and Uganda has been raging on for a long period of time. This Parliament in the Tenth Parliament instituted a committee that went up to South Sudan, to verify and also discuss matters of compensating Ugandans who had lost property there.

The clarification I am seeking from the honourable minister is, while people die, are you also trying to verify how much property they are losing, in addition to their death?

I had also expected you to submit - because I heard that the Government is compensating affected families, especially those who are attacked. Equally, these particular traders who are attacked in South Sudan require equal treatment in terms of compensation because they are Ugandans.

I would like to add to what the Rt Hon. Speaker has mentioned. There are some things that Ugandans are willing to hear from Parliament and particularly from the minister in regard to what the Government is doing to stop this. Investors in Uganda are treated very well; they are given free land and all the incentives that they deserve. When we move out to do business, we are killed and the minister is here –I saw the minister being more sympathetic to South Sudan than to Ugandans who are dying there. He is talking of “brotherhood” and so on. We are dying and he is just dilly-dallying. Can you be specific, honourable minister, when you are going to deal with Ugandans who are dying? I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Even in the Tenth Parliament there was an issue of South Sudan where people suffered and were supposed to be compensated. Out of the so many people who suffered, only 10 were compensated. To date, nobody has been compensated. Honourable minister, have love for your people of Uganda. As somebody said, the investors here are being escorted and protected. Why can’t we protect our own people?

3.33

**Ms susan amero (Independent, Woman Representative, Amuria):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is also my maiden statement. I would like to join my colleagues on this issue of South Sudan where I happened to be a victim in my first term in this House. As a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, we were arrested in the subcounty of Lefori with hon. Tom Aza who was the host Member of Parliament.

I am very surprised when the minister is very passionate about South Sudan, yet in the Ninth Parliament he was one of those who were very tough on issues of these Sudanese.

Madam Speaker, Sudanese here are bosses; they move freely and go wherever they want to go. They are protected and our people are suffering. I wonder what Government is doing about this.

The taxpayers’ money of Ugandans has been used to secure peace in South Sudan but when it comes to benefiting, other countries benefit more than Uganda. Our people are killed and no one is minding about that.

Apart from the market business of selling *bogoya* that we are doing, a lot of taxpayers’ money has been invested there yet even when it comes to compensation of these people, a few people are compensated. *(Text expunged.)* Our people down there are struggling with the small things that they are doing.

Madam Speaker, I think Government needs to be educated. We, as leaders of the people, are able to mobilise our people to do the same to the Sudanese here. We feel pain for our people. The people who are benefiting from this kind of nonsense are seated with us here. They should be protecting our people instead of coming here to lament with us.

What is even more annoying is, when it comes to compensation the poor people are not compensated. Those who have godfathers are the ones who are compensated. Those are the ones whose bodies can be retrieved. Some of us have lost relatives and cannot bury them decently. It is very painful.

I request that this House stands up to send a message to the South Sudan people that even us here can do the same. Thank you

3.36

**Ms linda auma (Independent, Woman Representative, Lira):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this moment to say something in regard to protecting our people. I am very concerned about South Sudan killings because I happened to be the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) of Amuru that borders South Sudan through Elegu Border.

We held many meetings in South Sudan with the South Sudanese Government in regard to the same. I would like to bring to the attention of this House and the minister that a more deliberate strategic approach has to be put in place to protect Ugandans. Most of the areas where our traders have been ambushed are near the barracks in South Sudan.

When I was still an RDC, I and other people discovered that these same soldiers escorting our traders are the ones who plot these ambushes. The ambush took place near a barracks and we expected the soldiers in there to have responded and rescued these traders but nothing was done –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Linda Auma, are the soldiers escorting the traders from Sudan or Uganda?

**MS AUMA:** They are Ugandans.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** So, the Ugandans are the ones killing –

**MS AUMA:** The Ugandan soldiers escort them to the border. The South Sudanese soldiers then take over from there and continue to the other areas; and they move in shifts. They move from one point and hand them to another group until the traders arrive at Juba. Therefore, this needs a strategic security approach.

The minister and the South Sudanese Government should put stringent measures to ensure our people are protected.

3.39

**MS SHARIFAH AATE-TABAN (NRM, Woman Representative, Koboko):** I represent Koboko District, which forms part of affected districts. This is also my maiden speech.

Madam Speaker, tempers are rising in Koboko District, which is a refugee-hosting district. We are hosting a lot of South Sudanese there. Now, with the current situation, where our people from Koboko are being killed, Ugandans are about to take matters into their own hands.

We are being asked, “When are we going to be compensated?” yet we have no answers to give to our people. I do not know if the minister has answers for us. If he has, that will help us to have something to hold onto because we are preaching peace but what peace are we preaching when the Sudanese are killing our people? Our people that are hosting them are receiving hostility. I would like an answer for my people if that situation is not given today. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

3.41

**MS BETTY AOL (FDC, Woman Representative, Gulu):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. From the Ninth Parliament to date, Ugandans have been suffering in the hands of the South Sudanese Government.

I just would like to tell you that while I did not actually lose a son, I lost my son’s friend in South Sudan, who was already like a son to me. Nothing has been done to address this issue. However, today, when you hear ministers speak, the body language is as if the problem is with Ugandans, and not the South Sudanese. Your body language did not look good to our people.

When we talk about patriotism, it is about the love for your country. You cannot say that you love your country without loving its people. Let us love our people; when one person dies in some other places, it causes chaos but for us here, Ugandans keep dying but nothing happens.

South Sudan has proved to be a big problem. I would like to tell you that this must now stop. I remember we even went and visited Moyo, where South Sudanese attacked our people in Uganda. They were trying to extend their border to Uganda but we keep on pampering them and saying, “The relationship is very good.” How can it be good when our people are dying? It is one-sided. At least if the deaths were on both sides that would make some sense.

Honourable minister, we are not going to accept this. We live with South Sudanese, side by side and we pamper them a lot. Why do they kill our people? We must love *our –(Member timed out.)*

3.43

**MS GORRETH NAMUGGA (NUP, Mawogola County South, Ssembabule):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank God that I made it to the 11th Parliament. I stand as a victim of South Sudanese attacks. My father, Mr Joseph Kasujja, from Ssembabule, worked in South Sudan in 2017. He lost over Shs 10 billion in South Sudan. He is among the group that was supposed to be compensated. My siblings even failed to go to school because of this.

Now, when I see the minister standing in front of us looking as if – and talking about “brotherhood” – what do you mean by “brotherhood” when Ugandans are suffering?

Madam Speaker, I kindly request that among those to be compensated, my good father becomes part, if this House allows. I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Minister of Finance, please make a follow-up on the compensation matter.

3.44

**MR PATRICK OSHABE (NUP, Kassanda County North, Kassanda):** Madam Speaker, we must admit that today, the statement we got from the Minister of State for Regional Corporation is not the right one that this Parliament should have received.

The Minister cannot stand here and tell us about matters of trade and security. There are dockets that can ably tell us what is going on along those lines. I expected the Minister to tell us what regional efforts are going on to solve the impasse in South Sudan.

The Minister should have told us what the Council of Ministers for the East African Community is doing in handling the matter in South Sudan. We needed to hear the Minister tell us about what IGAD and other regional bodies are doing, at least to secure a route for the traders. Is there anything that the Government of Uganda and other governments in the region are doing to handle the matters in South Sudan?

When I heard the minister speak about the “brotherly relationship” and how we took sides – because in South Sudan, there are known conflicting factions. Once we take sides, as Uganda, our people will suffer more because the minister has just indicated that they have a very good brotherly relationship with the Government of South Sudan. That is why Ethiopians and Kenyans are not being killed – because they never took any sides in the matters in South Sudan.

The Minister should handle matters of foreign affairs. We expect the Minister for Security and the Minister of Trade to also come and give guidance on what is going to happen to our traders as they trade around there. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

3.46

**MR DAVID KALWANGA (NUP, Busujju County, Mityana):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. We are here but we are not solving or looking at the gist of this problem. We have colleagues working in South Sudan and the information we are getting is that whenever they are taking products that compete with theirs, problems erupt.

We need the minister to find out whether that is true because at the end of the day, we cannot allow our people to die while we are looking on and singing “brotherhood” like my colleague has said.

Let us look at where the problem is. If it is true that they are competing for the market and that is where the problem is, then, let it be solved. If it means stopping our people from selling our products there, we should do that, rather than losing lives for nothing. Thank you.

3.47

**MR ISAIAS SSASAGA (FDC, Budadiri County East, Sironko):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I come from Sironko and Mr Gidudu, who was killed, comes from my constituency. I participated logistically in his burial.

One thing I noted from the mourners who were there and happened to be part of the traders, who go to Juba, is the complaint on how the Ugandan security does not help them. They said that whenever they face challenges, they get back to security. The Ugandan security even gives them contacts. They tell them, “In case of any challenge, get back to us.”

However, whenever they have tried, security demands money and says, “If you do not pay this, we shall not come to your rescue”. Sometimes, they demand and say, “Send to our mobile telephone numbers before we come”. This is one of the big challenges within the Ugandan security.

In one of the committees this morning, we interacted with the Internal Security Organisation (ISO) and External Security Organisation (ESO). We were informed that they have around 53 border points with staff. We appropriate a lot of money to these organs to collect information, coordinate it, process and even hand it over. They even have an apex body that looks at security issues; Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and JOCV.

One is in charge of a joint inter-security council and the other is a joint operation. As long as they get information, they react.

Madam Speaker, the market for the food and other produce from the people in the Elgon Region is in South Sudan. This is why yesterday, I almost wanted to put hon. Macho to order, when he said we disband them from the East African Community. The market is good for us but we need to see how best the Ugandan Government can engage the Government of *–(Member timed out.)*

3.49

**MS SANTA OKOT (PPP, Aruu North County, Pader):** Thank you, Madam Speaker -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, we have another big report to debate after this. Let us now limit to at least two or three people.

**MS SANTA OKOT:** Madam Speaker, I felt so bad when the minister was making his statement on the issue of killing Ugandans in South Sudan. In the statement, he stated that it is not the people of South Sudan who are killing Ugandans on the road or inside South Sudan. I want to ask the minister to explain who those people are, that are killing Ugandans in the borders of South Sudan.

I happen to be one of the people who did business in South Sudan. Madam Speaker, I lost a lot of money - we were supplying the military. Leave alone that, generally all South Sudanese are bad hearted, from top to bottom; and this is what I would like to state. At one time, I had a lorry and we had taken sorghum. When we stopped to eat something -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Santa, not everyone has a bad heart. Since we have a relationship, could you use better language?

**MS SANTA OKOT:** I am sorry if that is bad language but it is because we are not happy.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We are not and we appreciate it but we have to use parliamentary language. Of course, not everybody is bad and this is why we have a relationship with them. Just like hon. Isaiah said, it is part of our area for business and you cannot say everyone is bad.

**MS SANTA OKOT:** Much obliged but what I was explaining is that we stopped the lorry and we went to eat food in a restaurant. However, when we got out of the restaurant, a South Sudanese *boda boda* came and hit himself on the lorry. After a short time, the police surrounded us. The police made a statement, asking us why we came to South Sudan. They said, “If we had not come to South Sudan, the accident would not have occurred.” This is the reason I said that sometimes all of them are not good.

I would like to propose something: that radical situations need radical steps. I know that Ugandans need money from South Sudan but these South Sudanese need us. They do not have tomatoes and bananas in their homes; so, they also need us.

The radical step I am proposing is that in the interim, as the Ugandan Government sorts out the issues with the South Sudan Government, which I am sure is not going to be done within a short time - this issue has been going on time and again, yet we have continued to lose people. I propose that Uganda should close the border with South Sudan for about two months *–(Member timed out.)*

3.52

**MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yesterday when we raised the matter of insecurity - the killings in South Sudan and the border of South Sudan and Uganda, it was something that needed a very urgent solution.

I remember very well, Madam Speaker, that you directed the Minister of Foreign Affairs to come back today to this Parliament with practical but immediate solutions. Even as we debate, violence is still going on. We are in the East African Community and we have a ministry for the East African Community; we have a relationship with South Sudan. What I expected from the minister is to tell us that the Government has done one, two, three and this is going to reduce by this level at this time.

However, the minister came and seemed a bit casual. He just told us that we are going to sort it out. I think the lives of Ugandans come first, before you even look at trade. You cannot trade when you are dead. Let us have the facts and the minister should give us a clear holistic and eclecticapproach to handle this security issue to a logical conclusion. Otherwise, when it came yesterday, it was very urgent.

We cannot afford to just debate today and then the matter goes back again; we come back another day and debate. We need answers and solutions so that Ugandans who have lost their loved ones know what is going to happen and those who are still moving as traders are provided with security immediately. *(Member timed out.)* Madam Speaker, if this is not handled urgently, I think we shall not be doing the right work.

Then on the issue of compensation, I remember we started that issue in the Tenth Parliament and we brought to the Floor the traders who were supposed to be compensated. There was an ad hoc committee that was formed but this did not happen; it happened haphazardly and very few people were compensated up to now.

Madam Speaker, I have many documents of the traders demanding their money that I will lay on the Table. Up to day, they have not gotten anything. These people have families, some of their children have lost education; they are stuck. A Member has testified here; she talked about her father and she became emotional but this is the truth.

3.55

**MR GILBERT OLANYA** (**FDC, Kilak South County, Amuru**)**:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The matter raised yesterday was not responded to by the honourable minister. Since Monday, Juba is sealed off; people are not being allowed to leave. What we want to hear from the honourable minister is what strategy the Government is putting in place to rescue Ugandans who are in Juba as per now.

Secondly, right now, we have more than 280 trucks parked in my district, Amuru at Elegu Border. Some trucks are carrying perishable goods and they cannot go to South Sudan; they are just stuck. Their properties are being destroyed. What we would like to hear from the honourable minister is what the Government is going to do to rescue those truck drivers.

Madam Speaker, some of us who border South Sudan - these people kill with impunity. There is no law in South Sudan. Therefore, as Ugandans, we need to be more serious. What the honourable minister was giving is just a long-term strategy. Right now, we need an urgent matter: what should be done to rescue the lives of Ugandans who are stuck in Juba today and tomorrow?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** TheLeader of the Opposition.

3.57

**MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, KALUNGU WEST COUNTY, Kalungu):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I know Members think that I have a lead car. No, I am just sitting in for the Leader of the Opposition. *(Laughter)* I can see you are all wondering but I think I am also fit and proper to sit in for the Leader of the Opposition.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank you very much. This is a very strong achievement of having ministers getting issues and bringing responses the following day. I want to commend hon. Mulimba and other ministers, who are attempting to do the same.

However, I think this statement is ripe for rejection. Madam Speaker, there are statements you have to just expunge, if Members agree. On page 3, the honourable minister said: “It is important to note that:

a). These attacks happen in the territory of South Sudan” – So, once they happen in South Sudan, do not mind about that.

“b). The Government of South Sudan –”

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** He is giving the facts of what happens.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Madam Speaker, I am giving something very important. Allow me to conclude and then you direct me, as per your powers.

“b). Government of South Sudan has sovereign authority.” – Even Uganda has sovereign authority.

When we talk about our citizens going to South Sudan, it is not about mere entering without permission. They have got permits from that country to enter South Sudan. Therefore, when you talk of these, it is as if you are saying that the moment Ugandans are there, the Government or people of South Sudan can do whatever they want to our people.

Madam Speaker, this thing is not coming for the first time. We need practical solutions from the ministry. I know hon. Mulimba was on the Committee on Foreign Affairs for some good time and I think he even chaired that committee. You know what we were doing at that time. We have failed to get –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, can you summarise?

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Madam Speaker, I am summarising. On the issue of compensation, honourable members, we are going to get into a situation where Ugandans think of their – yes, we want compensation but it is becoming a culture that “someone has died, who is compensating”? “Our people have died, we need compensation.” Life cannot be compensated. We must see how to save our lives.

When you look at South Sudanese here, they are enjoying in this country. When you go where there are games, they are playing volley ball and renting *–(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Before hon. Kateshumbwa, what the Leader of the Opposition is raising is that Government of South Sudan has sovereign authority; does it mean that they have the authority to kill whoever goes there? That is what you need to interest yourself in.

4.00

**MR DICKSONS KATESHUMBWA (NRM, Sheema Municipality, Sheema):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the statement. I understand the concerns that are being raised by the colleagues.

I think this matter is not just a foreign affairs’ issue. The Government needs to look at this matter holistically. The Minister of East African Community together with the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, the Minister of Internal Affairs and Minister of Security – I think we need to have an inter-ministerial committee. *[Hon. Chemaswet rose\_]*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Chemaswet, we know you are on the Committee on Foreign Affairs so, we are going to give you work.

**MR KATESHUMBWA:** Madam Speaker, we need an inter-ministerial committee that looks at the issues of South Sudan. South Sudan is a strategic partner in the East African Community. Our trade to South Sudan now goes to about Shs 800 billion annually. We cannot afford to continue having these issues that are raising emotive debate.

We have security presence in South Sudan. We expect that the Government should have early warning systems and warn our traders when there is likely to be an outbreak of insecurity so that our people can make rightful decisions. We have not seen that happen.

Madam Speaker, we talked about compensation. However, where is the policy on compensation? It does not appear to be there. It depends on how much noise we make but we need the Government to come out clearly on the policy of compensation, so that it is known and people know their rights.

I would like to say that this matter goes beyond the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The respective ministries should take charge of this issue, discuss and come out with a clear statement on how we are going to manage issues of South Sudan.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Aza, you sit. I know what you want to raise. *(Laughter)*

4.03

**MR ABDU KATUNTU (Independent, Bugweri County, Bugweri):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I remember very well when hon. Hamson Obua, now Minister of State for Education and Sports (Sports), moved a motion in this House many years ago to congratulate the Government of South Sudan upon attaining independence, I did caution at that time that it was not time to celebrate.

To date, my words still ring in my mind. Are we having a failed state in the neighbourhood? Whatever goes wrong in any state is actually wrong in South Sudan. We do not have to lie to ourselves. South Sudan is not any normal country, colleagues. They have many challenges but it is incumbent upon our Government to issue travel advisories to warn our citizens not to travel to South Sudan and if you do, know that it is risky business. We cannot afford to say, “No, do not mind; continue travelling” and people are dying.

Madam Speaker, I am sorry I am going to spoil the party. I disagree strongly with this thing called “compensation”. For how long will the taxpayers be compensating people who are being affected in other countries? Whoever has problems in South Sudan comes to Uganda for compensation. The traders went to South Sudan, they were messed up there and they came back here and we appropriated money. Didn’t we? *–(Interruption)*

**MS AOL:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have been forced to get up and raise a point of order against hon. Katuntu. Very big people were compensated and it is the small ones who have not been compensated. Can’t you be kind to these people who are struggling? Should it always be like in the Bible that those who have, more shall be given to them and those who do not have, nothing is given to them. Is it going to be like that?

Therefore, is it in order for hon. Katuntu, who was in the Tenth Parliament and attended the deliberation about the cry of South Sudan traders, on compensation, to say that people should not be compensated?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You have not understood each other. What hon. Katuntu is saying is that why Uganda is the one to compensate the people of South Sudan every time – remember the money that is paid is from Uganda and not from South Sudan. We are not bankers of South Sudan. We cannot be compensating for the mistakes of South Sudan. That is what hon. Katuntu is saying.

I have also got a complaint from the Government Chief Whip where they claimed he was compensated. It is on record that he has never been compensated. That record should be expunged from the *Hansard*.

**MR KATUNTU:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Sometimes we do not have to rush to “order and procedure” before we hear what our colleague is saying; it does not make sense.

The point, as, Madam Speaker, said, is that the taxpayer of Uganda cannot continue paying compensation yet he is not the cause of the problems. These people go to Sudan, they are killed in Sudan but we come to hon. Lugoloobi and ask him to compensate them. Does that make sense to anybody?

There is a Government in South Sudan. The people who are killing are in South Sudan. They are citizens of South Sudan. Why should a Ugandan taxpayer pay compensation? *(Interruptions)*

**MS ADEKE:** Thank you, hon. Abdu Katuntu. Actually, South Sudan has been compensating other countries for the injustices orchestrated against their citizens. It is on record that South Sudan paid US$ 355 million to American citizens who were injured in South Sudan. It is also on record that it paid victims of the bombings in Kenya and Tanzania for the same.

The point of information I am giving you, honourable, is that South Sudan is very capable to pay compensation.

**MR KATUNTU:** I think countries should carry their own burdens. Primarily, it is their burden to protect every person who enters their country –*(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Please conclude.

**MR KATUNTU:** My senior colleague might have something very urgent. With your permission, I will take it.

**MR OKOT-OGONG:** Madam Speaker, hon. Katuntu was a Member of the 10th Parliament and he has been in Parliament for close to 20 years. He is aware that the Government of Uganda encouraged our people from Uganda to access the new market that was in South Sudan. Our people went there and did good business with the Government of South Sudan and it was not their fault at all. We cannot blame them.

When they suffered there - I would like to inform my brother that the Government of Uganda had a bilateral agreement. The money that is going to be paid does not belong to the Government of Uganda. That money is going to be reimbursed; it will be paid back by the Government of South Sudan.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can I make a correction? I do not want you to mislead this House. The money that is being paid to these traders is money from Government of Uganda, lent at no interest. It is lent to South Sudan at zero interest.

**MR OKOT-OGONG:** But they are going to pay it back.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** When will they pay? I do not think we are a bank to another country.

**MR KATUNTU:** If you are a Government and you have been picking taxes from your people, you do not recklessly spend it. You do not recklessly lend money at zero interest; you do not do that. There are hard working people who wake up every day to pay those taxes. They pay taxes for purposes of getting services yet instead, we are engaged in recklessly expenditure. That is not the point.

The other point, as I take my seat, is that the Government of South Sudan should take over the responsibility of looking after people who go to that country. They should provide security. If anybody is affected, the laws of that country require that they compensate that person other than running to Uganda to ask us to pay and that they will pay us back.

Lastly, the Government of Uganda should take advisory notices to its own citizens. Tell them not to travel to South Sudan however lucrative the business is because they stand a risk of losing their lives. Otherwise, we are going to have the same problem every day.

The honourable members from the UPDF know this. Many Ugandans have lost lives. I would like to ask the honourable minister; since South Sudan got independence, how many Ugandans have lost their lives? Thank you.

4.13

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I join colleagues in appreciating the situation and I thank the minister for the efforts being made.

What I would like to put across as a person who has ever done business in that country is: the problems on that route are very many. Also, inside South Sudan, you will be shocked to find very many Ugandans who are doing extremely well in their businesses.

When you go to a market called Konyo-konyo, the language used is Luganda. When you go to areas in Unity State, in Wawu, in Malidi, you will find Ugandans flourishing.

Whereas we are here looking at the situation of what is going on with the transporting people, the ones that are receiving the goods inside Sudan – I remember there is a time we organised ourselves, as traders, and told our people to get out. Most of them nearly killed us. They asked where they would go when they get out. They asked if we knew the profits they were making.

I think hon. Katuntu’s point is very important that we advise our traders on the dangers. If the minister has said that no moving without a convoy but someone has a deal to deliver a container and make US$ 100,000, he says he would rather take a gamble and such a person meets those guys on the road, he will give them a bit of money. So he tries to escape.

When you stop some of them from the Uganda side, they start entering from the Ethiopia side; they go and get goods from Ethiopia.

I therefore, wouldn’t want us to condemn as if once you are doing business in South Sudan, you are finished. There are Ugandans in South Sudan who are doing extremely well. The problem is with those who are refusing to follow the guidelines as the minister said.

Maybe we should have a clear record. If you want Government of Uganda to be responsible for you then you follow the guidelines it gives. If we say, do not cross with your car if you are not escorted but you cross at midnight and try to go without escorts because you are chasing after money, forgetting your life, if you get a problem, you do not come here to complain because you did not follow the procedure. I beg to submit.

**MS SANTA OKOT:** The clarification I would like to get from the Government Chief Whip is: for how long are we going to escort the business people from Uganda to South Sudan? How much money will Uganda lose by doing that, if you confirm that we should be escorting traders?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yet we need the same security in Masaka. *(Laughter)*

**MR TAYEBWA:** Madam Speaker, the last time I was there, we had over 100,000 Ugandans doing business in South Sudan, when we were in a group.

Madam Speaker, if we are to be honest, the situation in South Sudan is beyond business. There is general insecurity. You know the different rebel groups fighting - I remember when the minister was here the other day, he said that Uganda is trying its level best to ensure that the fighting groups come together.

Honourable members, you have a choice as a Ugandan to either insist or say, “Here is a battlefield; if I pass there with a bottle of water –” *(Interjection)* – Just a minute, hon. Ssewungu. When you are lucky and you manage to cross with a bottle of water, you can sell it at Shs 3,000.

So, you weigh the risk against the profit. Most of the people are weighing risks against the profit. It is very profitable when you get lucky to cross.

Madam Speaker –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Government Chief Whip. What we are mindful of is the lives of our people. Just like the South Sudan people can come to Uganda and move freely everywhere, we also want the safety of our people to be ensured. We should not be subjected to that kind of life - that you must have security. Let us have an agreement with South Sudan and say, “Just like you want to be free in Uganda, we also want to be free in your country.” *(Applause)*

Honourable minister, can you come and summarise your statement? Can you come and summarise your response? Members, when you look at our rules, we are supposed to have debated this in less than one hour but we have taken almost two hours. So, let us conclude with the minister.

**MR MULIMBA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to confirm that Government is extremely concerned about the happenings, especially the murders which are meted out on East Africans, particularly Ugandans, including destruction of their property in South Sudan.

I heard honourable colleagues who said my body posture was one of “I do not care”. That is probably perception but I want to tell you that if there are people in this country who have also suffered personally, I am one of those. *(Laughter)* I want to assure you that when my relative was murdered, we did not even retrieve the body. *(A Member rose\_)*

Madam Speaker, it is not correct to imagine that I am just posturing as a concerned citizen –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Doctor, let him finish his submission. That is maybe how he looks like.

**MR MULIMBA:** Madam Speaker, permit me to go to the issues, as have been raised. Before I go there, I would like to raise the following general issues.

In diplomacy, when somebody says, “You are silly”, you do not respond with the same measure of wording. That is why maybe in my statement, I was not using offensive language that Members who are maybe emotional would have wanted to hear.

I also wanted to make a correction: When dealing with sovereign states, let us try to be as diplomatic as possible, including when you are making reference to South Sudan. I have heard several colleagues refer to South Sudan as “Southern Sudan”.

Madam Speaker, this can also bring about a diplomatic row between the two countries because this is an organ of Government. We should be able to understand that the Republic of South Sudan is a sovereign and independent state. When you refer to it as “Southern Sudan”, you are taking them back to where they came from. I thought I should make that clarification.

There are Members who have raised issues of general concern, not specifically under the docket of foreign affairs. Issues have raged, including compensation and security within our borders.

For example, I heard Members talk about some gunmen coming from South Sudan and attacking our people in Uganda. Some of the South Sudanese within are misbehaving towards Ugandans. I think that is not a matter of the foreign affairs ministry. That is a matter of security and I think the appropriate docket will be able to respond.

In respect to the losses which were suffered and are due for compensation; Madam Speaker, that is not a matter of the foreign affairs ministry as of now. That is a matter of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, working together with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

This is in respect to Members who have raised this, like hon. Alero – the attacks in Gbare, Arapi, Abaya and Obongi. Those are matters security and I hope the concerned dockets will give the necessary answers.

About extortion, Madam Speaker, this is what I said. South Sudan is a sovereign state. We have a bilateral relationship with them but we can do little on issues of internal governance with them. What we require of them is to ensure, as regional partners, that peace prevails.

The Government of Uganda – like I said in my statement – is doing all it takes, including engaging at regional, continental and UN level.

In my statement of the 25th, Madam Speaker, the honourable colleagues, especially the Leader of Government Business, were here. I stated very clearly a number of steps that the Government of Uganda has taken in ensuring that peace prevails.

However, we can only do that at those levels. We cannot go into internal management. Internal management rests with authorities in the Government of South Sudan.

Madam Speaker, I asked a question as to whether the soldiers who misbehave - and I want to confirm maybe we could call them “gunmen” – require escorts when they are coming in here. In our engagements with the Government of South Sudan, we were told the killers are not Government soldiers but they are unknown gunmen.

In my statement here the other day, Madam Speaker, I indicated that we have a number of warring factions. Uganda did a lot of efforts to ensure these factions come together. Recently, under IGAD, these forces went to Rome to sign a peace pact but one faction ran away without signing the peace pact and that is the one which is extremely irate. We cannot confirm, as Government of Uganda, but we can only rely on what we are told by the other State.

Traders within Uganda – unless otherwise informed – have not been attacked. Traders have only been attacked after they have crossed from Uganda to the Republic of South Sudan. Like I have said, honourable colleagues, the attacks which happened there; one, Uganda is not responsible.

When I say that, some Members may say I do not care. We care a great deal and would not want any of them to be attacked. However, it is the responsibility of the Government of South Sudan. Our concerns have been severally, diplomatically and bilaterally put to the Government of South Sudan and to the regional authority.

An honourable member said insecurity has halted humanitarian supplies. I do not know whether he meant insecurity at our borders or within the Republic of South Sudan. However, if he means the Republic of South Sudan, like I have said and I want to reiterate, that is not within our mandate. However, as partner states in the EAC, Government is doing all it takes.

Madam Speaker, only yesterday when you ordered us to make this statement, the head of IGAD on Peace in South Sudan was here holding a meeting with our President, in respect to restoring peace and security in South Sudan.

I have heard Members who have said the minister should have done this and that. I understand your plight honourable colleagues. However, this statement is made in response to a particular question that was raised. I do not know where hon. Gilbert Olanya has gone. I was strictly responding to that and this has limitations. I should not have gone beyond the scope of what I was supposed to say. Madam Speaker, I tried to live within the scope of what the question required of us.

Hon. Mbwatekamwa said that Uganda is only interested in repatriation of bodies. This is not true. I have heard the honourable colleague saying that he has a lot of pain, just like I do, that one of the loved ones was killed but the body was not repatriated. Even when you have lost a loved one, you would really like to bury this person.

Since this happened in the Republic of South Sudan - it is very unfortunate. Therefore, the best the Government of Uganda can do is to negotiate to ensure that this body is retrieved for burial. This is the only consolation you can have. It is not true that the Government of Uganda is only interested in repatriating bodies; there is not much that we can do other than doing that.

A colleague said that the Government has not done much to meet the drivers. This is also not true. It could not have been I or any of the ministers from foreign affairs but we work as teams. The technical staff went and met these traders. However, the traders would like to have a guarantee from the Republic of South Sudan that they are going to be provided with sufficient security and assurance that they will reach their destination before they can leave.

Otherwise, meeting them - and I would like to answer this together with the issue that has been raised by hon. Katuntu and many others, on travel warnings. On page 3, No.3, Uganda security officers have advised all Ugandans not to proceed to South Sudan without security guarantee. This is not the first time the Government of Uganda is doing this; we have done this and we want to reiterate.

We would, therefore, like to call upon colleagues to ask our traders not to move because there is instability and insecurity, where they are going. They should not move until there are security guarantees, especially convoy systems.

Madam Speaker, permit me to summarise. Issues of extortion and gunmen moving into Uganda are a security matter. We have no control over extortion. South Sudan soldiers entering Uganda is also a security matter.

Hon. Chemutai said that there are many who have died. It could be true that there are a number of Ugandans who have died in South Sudan and the Government has not picked the information. We kindly, would like to appeal to you, if you have any information to contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for onward processing. Otherwise, Ugandans enter South Sudan through various ways.

Like you have heard the submission of the honourable Government Chief Whip, other Ugandans go through the border with Kenya, Ethiopia and find themselves there. We may not be everywhere to find all that is happening.

Madam Speaker, I have already touched the issue of compensation and property loss also falls under it. Yes, there has been a general concern that we seem to care much about our relationship with the Republic of South Sudan rather than caring for our people. This is also not true. One, we care for the citizens of Uganda but we also value our relationship from a political, economic and strategic point of view, with the Republic of South Sudan.

Therefore, when we say that we enjoy brotherly and bilateral relations, it does not mean we are happy with the violence that is being mated upon our people. Maybe this is just diplomacy. We are only living in an environment, where we have to apply diplomacy in order to protect our bilateral relationships.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be ready and more than willing to come back here at any time, whenever called upon, or whenever events occur, to submit to this House any event in respect to South Sudan or any of our neighbours in respect to trade, commerce, politics as long as it is outside the borders.

I would like to emphasise on the issue of boundaries. In the statement I made here the other week, I indicated that we have had skirmishes with our neighbours arising from lack of clarity in the boundaries. Now, some little work was done, especially, in the north on the border with South Sudan but it has not been completed. As you may be aware honourable colleagues, this work requires a multi-ministerial approach. It involves the ministry of lands, security, foreign affairs and many others.

The Budget, which was provided, was only for studies and providing boundaries on a few areas. Rwanda was concluded and we still have a lot of work to do with the DRC and the border with South Sudan and Kenya.

The plaster of borders is there and many more borders are porous including Busia Border, Congo; most of these borders are porous. The only thing we can do is to work together as a region to ensure peace so that cordial relationships prevail amongst and within these nations.

There is an honourable member who wanted me to tell this House about all the efforts that the Government is doing, including at regional and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). All those were packaged in the last statement. I would like to confirm that indeed the Government of Uganda has gone a long way into engaging at regional, continental including at UN level.

There was a statement which was made that Uganda has a presence militarily in South Sudan. I would like to confirm that this is not true. In 2020, the United Nations, under Resolution 2577, imposed an arms ban on the Republic of South Sudan. Therefore, if you are going to engage militarily as a region, you must ask for a waiver from the UN Security Council. This is why it is not as easy as we speak. However, the intervention of the UPDF will be called upon and very easily enter the Republic of South Sudan.

Finally, I would like to call upon colleagues - I know we are very emotional about this matter because lives have been lost, property destroyed and it has been going on for some time. I would like to pray that we do not lose heart. Let us hesitate from making haste and undiplomatic statements, which might cause a diplomatic crisis. Like I have said, we need the Republic of South Sudan for political, economic and strategic reasons. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I am asking you to convene an inter-ministerial committee comprising the ministry of foreign affairs, security, defense and trade to devise a tangible action point to ensure that the safety of Ugandans is a priority.

The inter-ministerial committee should consider strengthening the liaison between Uganda and South Sudan. Since we have agreed that they have lucrative business and we need each other - we do not want to do what they are doing. A progress report on the actions that have been taken in this committee should be presented to this House within 21 days, from today. *(Applause)*

**Mr mulimba:** Madam Speaker, I am seeking your guidance on the participation of the Committee on the East African Community Affairs.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Next item.

LAYING OF PAPERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH RULE 31 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

REQUEST TO BORROW 65.6 MILLION SPECIAL DRAWING RIGHTS (SDR) (EQUIVALENT TO $90 MILLION) FROM THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION OF THE UGANDA SECONDARY EDUCATION EXPANSION PROJECT (USEEP)

4.37

**The Minister of state for FINANCE, planning and economic development (PLANNING) (Mr Amos Lugoloobi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I beg to lay on the Table a proposal to borrow 65.6 million Special Drawing Rights (SDR), equivalent to $90 million, from the International Development Association of the World Bank Group, to finance the Uganda Secondary Education Expansion Project. I beg to lay.

**The deputy speaker:** The loan request is referred to the Committee on National Economy for consideration and report back to this House.

LAYING OF PAPERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH RULE 31 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

REPORTS OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**The deputy speaker:** Honourable Commissioner, please lay all the reports before we will refer them to the relevant committees.

4.38

**MR SOLOMON SILWANY (Bukooli Central County, Bugiri):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I beg to lay the reports of:

1. West Division, Fort Portal Municipal Council for the year that ended 30 June 2015;
2. Nyamwamba Division, Kasese Municipal Council for the year that ended 30 June 2015;
3. Central Division, Kasese Municipal Council for the year that ended 30 June 2016;
4. Bulembia Division, Kasese Municipal Council for the year that ended 30 June 2016;
5. Kibiito Subcounty, Bunyangabu District for the year that ended 30 June 2017;
6. Bihanga Subcounty, Kamwenge District for the year that ended 30 June 2017;
7. Kisomoro Subcounty, Bunyangabu District for the year that ended 30 June 2017;
8. Kateebwa Subcounty, Bunyangabu;
9. Nombe Subcounty, Ntoroko District for the year that ended 30 June 2017;
10. Hakibaale Subcounty, Kabarole District for the year that ended 30 June 2017;
11. Butiiti Subcounty, Kyenjojo District for the year that ended 30 June 2017;
12. Biguli Subcounty, Kamwenge District for the year that ended 30 June 2017;
13. Buhuhira Subcounty, Kasese District for the year ended 30 June 2017;
14. Hakibaale Subcounty, Kabarole District for the year that ended 30 June 2017;
15. Rwebisengo Subcounty, Ntoroko District for the year that ended 30 June 2017; and
16. Nature: Research Training and Mentoring Programme for Career Development to Faculty in Medical Education Partnership Initiative Institutions (Mepi) at Makerere University College of Health Sciences for the years that ended 31 July 2017 and 2018.

I beg to lay all these reports.

**The deputy speaker:** Thank you. The reports of the Auditor-General on the subcounties are referred to the Committee on Public Accounts Committee (Local Governments) while that on Nature: Research Training for Career Development is referred to the Committee on Public Accounts (Central Government).

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY TASKFORCE ON THE NATIONAL COVID-19 RESPONSE

**The deputy speaker:** Honourable members, as you recall, we adjourned the debate on this matter, pending a response from the Government. I have been informed that the Minister of Health is ready with her response to the report of the taskforce. I will, therefore, invite her to present the report.

However, before she presents it, hon. Katuntu had asked for 10 minutes to make a summary. I do not know if he still needs the 10 minutes. If he does not, the honourable minister can proceed.

**Mr katuntu:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. We are ready to listen to the response of the minister.

**The deputy speaker:** After the honourable minister has presented, we will put the report to debate. Honourable Minister of Health, we are anxiously waiting to hear from you.

4.45

**The Minister of Health (Ms Jane Aceng):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. This response covers the issues/concerns raised by the Parliamentary Taskforce on COVID-19 which, from now on, I will be referring to as “the taskforce.” The issues covered mainly the following areas:

1. Matters of budget, expenditure, COVID-19 plan and accountability;
2. Procurement and distribution of community fabric masks,
3. Human resources for COVID-19 response;
4. Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) for health workers;
5. Payment of allowances;
6. COVID-19 donations;
7. COVID-19 management;
8. Oxygen availability and functionality of Intensive Care Units (ICUs);
9. Health infrastructure in the country,
10. Vaccination;
11. Research and indigenous therapeutics; and
12. Modalities and enforcement of the lockdown, among others.

Madam Speaker and honourable members, it is imperative –*(Interruption)*

**MS NALUYIMA:** Madam Speaker, I request that we get the minister’s response uploaded on our forum or on the general methods used because a few of us have got hard copies but we do not have the soft copies. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Madam Speaker, I think the minister only availed a copy of the report to the Leader of the Opposition. The chairman of our taskforce has just got it because I helped him get a copy –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I have been informed that it was uploaded. We could just crosscheck.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** It is not there and we need to have these copies because we are also supposed to respond. For the record, the chairman has just got a copy. I asked him whether he had read the report and he said he hadn’t. I also got it from here. Honourable members, I do not know whether you have this report on your iPads.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Chief Whip has just said that the Wi-Fi is off. Members, the honourable minister gave the document to our secretariat and I think data and the Wi-Fi are the problem. She could go ahead and read.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Madam Speaker, with your indulgence, we need copies of this report for Members. I have it here but I have not read it. That is what the rules say. We can do other business –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I appreciate what the rules say. However, it is not the minister’s mistake. It is our internal mistake.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Madam Speaker, the minister is not new in this House. Let us follow the rules.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** By the way, we can debate this motion even without this response. It is just a response and it is helping us to understand what was raised. The motion can be debated.

**MR MACHO:** Madam Speaker, Ugandans are eagerly waiting for this response from the minister. Sometimes it is very difficult to find her. Let her present her submission so that we can debate it. As I talk, there is a promise of an ambulance to a stop-border point in Busia where they are testing the truck drivers coming in. She might not come back again.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, let us not waste time. I would like the Minister of Health, Dr Jane Aceng, to read the response herself. I do not want her to end up sending somebody else tomorrow.

**DR ACENG:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is imperative to note that the taskforce report does not carry any commendations for the good work and the ongoing efforts by the Government in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic and the successes registered that have won Uganda recognition globally. For example, the Lancet COVID-19 Commission classified Uganda’s response as the best in Africa and the 10th best globally.

The Lancet COVID Commission is a global interdisciplinary initiative on COVID-19 encompassing the fields of health sciences, business, finance and public policy.

The report also falls short of recognising that while other countries are experiencing their third and fourth waves, Uganda has just gone through the second wave. These achievements are a result of purposeful, dedicated and concerted efforts by the Government and not a mere chance.

I will now go straight to responses to the issues.

1. The first issue was on lack of transparency in accessing the economic stimulus package.

 The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development will ably respond to this issue. I was not in position to respond for them. They have a paper and the minister is available.

1. The taskforce requested the Government to submit detailed accountability to Parliament for the Shs 22.18 billion appropriated to facilitate establishment of 20 isolation centres per district indicating the location in each district where such centres were established.

We appreciate the taskforce for the observation. The Ministry of Health did not plan to set up 20 isolation centres per district. However, we repurposed mental health units into isolation or treatment centres in the 15 regional referral hospitals at that time.

At the beginning of the pandemic, most returning Ugandans were quarantined at the Government’s expense. The breakdown of the Shs 22.1 billion is as follows:

1. Shs 1.9 billion was functionalisation of Namboole for isolation and quarantine.
2. Shs 3.8 billion to procure 20 sleeper tents that have been deployed to regional referral hospitals.
3. Shs 250 million – Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital for completion of the isolation centre.
4. Shs 4.61 billion for quarantine centres. This covered meals, cleaning, security and mattresses in institutional quarantines in Nsamizi, Kabanyoro and Mulago Paramedical School.
5. Shs 11.56 billion paid for hotel quarantines for returnees who were unable to meet quarantine bills.
6. Discrepancies in COVID-19 expenditure

The taskforce noted a discrepancy of Shs 4.881 billion between the appropriated amount of Shs 94.188 billion and the reported expenditure of Shs 99.06 billion. The ministry should explain.

During the Financial Year 2019/2020, the ministry received a supplementary budget allocation of Shs 96.744 billion for various COVID-19 response activities under the Ministry of Health for Financial Year 2019/2020. By closure of the financial year, Shs 94.799 billion had been spent on various activities and this is attached as annex 1(a). The unspent balance of Shs 1.944 billion was returned to the Consolidated Fund.

The discrepancy, as noted by the taskforce, is correct and the ministry has reconciled its position to reflect the actual expenditure, as attached in annex 1 (b).

1. Discrepancy in purchase and nationwide distribution of public masks

The minister should explain the observed discrepancy arising from her report titled, “Update to the Parliamentary Taskforce on COVID-19 in Uganda” dated 7 July 2021 and the one titled, “Accountability for the Government of Uganda COVID-19 funding to the Ministry of Health” dated March 2020 to June 2021.

Madam Speaker, it is indeed true the Ministry of Health spent Shs 90,999,000,000 to procure the 37,916,250 masks.

The observed shortfall of 1,214,202 masks was due to additional masks distributed to districts due to discrepancies in the projected population figures from UBOS and the actual figures. And this is attached as Annex 2.

5. Donations towards COVID-l9 Response

The Task Force raised concern over the insistence by Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development that tax obligations relating to the 282 pick-up vehicles procured out of cash donations from the public be met by the Ministry of Health. They recommended to Government to urgently resolve the matter.

Madam Speaker, I am happy to report that the taxes have been cleared and vehicles have been released for distribution.

6. Budget for COVID-19 Resurgence Plan

Ministry of Health acknowledges the recommendation and will work with the Ministry of Finance and other stakeholders to harmonise and come up with a realistic COVID-l9 Plan as recommended in the report.

7. External Financing to Ministry of Health for COVID-l9 Response

The Task Force asserted that there is a likelihood that funds from partners and those from Government could have been used to fund same activities.

Madam Speaker, the Parliamentary Committee on COVID-l9 response observation that partners supported the response is true. The COVID-19 response plans were developed and implemented jointly with partners hence there is no room for duplication. Support from partners is largely in-kind/off-budget support and we remain grateful. Therefore, it is not true that the Ministry of Health applied the partners' resources and those from the Government of Uganda to fund the same items and activities.

8. Human Resources for COVID-19 Management

Ministry of Health to expedite hiring of adequately trained personnel to manage the Covid treatment units and testing centres as a matter of urgency and revisit the staffing structure for health facilities.

Madam Speaker, it has been very difficult to attract some critical staff such as intensivists, anaesthesiologists and critical care nurses because they are not readily available in the country and the few who are available are not willing to work for the Government because of the low pay. Government has prioritised training of these specialists in its costed 10-year specialist-training plan.

However, this has not yet been fully funded. This financial year, Ministry of Health has allocated Shs 403 million for scholarships to facilitate training of critical cadres targeting 10 anaesthesiologists, 12 intensivists, 400 critical care nurses and other cadres in the country. It is worth noting that the above numbers remain very few compared to the country’s needs.

It is, therefore, important that more resources are committed to train specialists in the subsequent years. Ministry of Health has requested Ministry of Education and Sports to provide scholarships to support training of 546 specialists and super specialists over the next five years.

Regarding low pay for the health workers, Cabinet is currently reviewing salary enhancement for scientists including health workers. Let me say here that the discussion was concluded and it will be implemented accordingly.

9. Payment of risk allowances for frontline staff

All arrears for health workers to be paid in two months, introduce a flat risk allowance at a high risk level not low, medium and high-risk categorisation, exempt taxing health workers’ risk allowances. Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to compensate the health workers who have died or are infected in the line of duty.

Madam Speaker, it is true that a number of health workers had not been paid fully by the time of the task force visit. However, all submissions with complete information and justification have been paid up to end of June, 2021.

Effective Financial Year 2021/2022, direct releases have been made to regional referral hospitals, part of which is to pay hardship allowance for their Covid treatment unit staff.

It is true that health workers have complained of taxation of their hardship allowance. We, therefore, welcome this recommendation of waiving taxes on the COVID-19 hardship allowance. It is important to note that tax waiver is a matter of legislation. The Ministry of Health had already engaged Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development on this matter through a letter dated 09 February 2021. We request Parliament to revisit the law so that hardship allowances are not taxed.

10. Recommendation for a single spine hardship allowance

Hardship allowance was not part of the duty facilitating allowances in the Public Service until when COVID-l9 struck the country. The Ministry of Health together with Ministry of Public Service worked out a minimum allowance payable based on the available resources and level of risk (Low-risk Shs 50,000, Moderate – Shs 60,000 and High - Shs 80,000). The variations in payment of hardship allowance were based on level of risk as stipulated in letter dated 23 April 2020 from the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Public Service. It is, therefore, not justified to pay all staff a flat rate.

11. Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) and Infection Control

The Task Force noted inadequate supply of PPEs at health facilities, hence, causing infection among health workers.

Madam Speaker, it should be noted that the pandemic significantly increased the demand for PPEs (gloves, coveralls, masks, goggles, face shields, head caps, gumboots, aprons and gowns). Government and partners have continuously provided PPEs for daily use to all health facilities.

The National Medical Stores delivers PPEs to all DHOs offices, health centres II, health centres III, health centres IV, and general hospitals in a two-month cycle. Supplies are also distributed directly to the regional and national referral hospitals.

Each level of service delivery requires different kinds of PPEs depending on the level of risk of infection and quantification is done accordingly. At lower levels (health centre III, health centre IV and general hospitals) gloves, masks and aprons are required. Only the isolation facilities in the regional and national referral hospitals for treatment of the severe and critically ill patients, laboratory and ambulance staff require the full set of PPE (gloves, coveralls, masks, goggles, face shields, head caps, gumboots, aprons and gowns. Health workers carrying out surveillance and sample removal, require goggles**,** face shields, aprons, gloves and masks.

A summary of the quantifications of the PPE required on a monthly basis, during the COVID-19 response is as shown in the table below.

Madam Speaker, I request that I do not go through the table since it is provided. It is important to note that PPEs are consumable items *–(Interruption)*

**MR BATUWA:** Madam Speaker, the honourable minister knows that we do not have copies –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can you put on your mask? Check your email because I am also reading from my email.

**MR BATUWA:** I was not informed that the copy has been sent on our emails. I was speaking from that point –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** They were uploaded three hours ago.

**DR ACENG**: Madam Speaker, may I proceed?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Please do.

**DR ACENG:** It is important to note that PPEs are consumable items that require continuous replenishment. The PPEs are distributed together with essential medicines and supplies every two months. However, during the COVID-l9 waves, the ministry, together with National Medical Stores (NMS), adopted emergency quantifications and deliveries to the districts and referral hospitals based on the needs.

In the same vein, responsible officers in the facilities are required to order and make correct projections in a timely manner.

Madam Speaker, I wish to further inform the House that PPEs worth Shs 108 billion have been procured while orders for those worth Shs 187.8 billion are in the pipeline.

The Ministry of Health will continue to support the district and city health teams to improve on quantification, timely ordering and proper utilisation of the PPEs to mitigate shortage and stock outs.

Regarding the pull system, the Ministry of Health has built capacity for health facilities to pull commodities and make orders every month. This is being carried out by facilities from Health Centre IV and above.

The E-Logistic Management Information System is in use and the Ministry of Health and NMS will continue to promote its use to enable districts requisition their supplies directly.

The reported delivery of one packet of masks at Bukedea Health Centre IV is not true. On the contrary, NMS delivered 30 boxes (1,500 pieces) of surgical masks and 20 packets (300 pieces) of KN95 masks during that cycle. See copy of delivery note in Annex three.

Given the high consumption rate of PPEs, there is need to increase their budget and I, therefore, request Parliament to appropriate more funding to that effect.

12. Cost, availability and reliability of COVID-19 test kits

The ministry to cascade COVID-19 testing to lower levels, conduct random sampling and testing in the community and conduct border entry testing and mass testing.

Madam Speaker, all incoming and outgoing travellers are required to present a negative COVID- 19 certificate at the points of entry. So, it’s only those that have no certificates
who are tested. This is an international and East African regional protocol based on agreements between the countries.

In regard to inadequacy of test kits, the ministry has distributed Antigen Rapid Diagnostic Tests (RDTs) to all health facilities up to Health Centre IIIs, to test all suspected and asymptomatic cases. The RDTs are distributed by NMS and the health facilities are encouraged to requisition whenever they require additional supplies.

The PCR test kits are not distributed to the districts except designated COVID-19 testing laboratories. When districts collect samples that require confirmatory tests, the samples are sent to the designated testing laboratories. In our testing protocol, the RDT test is used for only symptomatic persons. When the RDT test is positive for COVID-19, the person is actually positive and managed accordingly.

However, when the RDT test is negative for a symptomatic person, they are required to undergo a confirmatory PCR test. It is possible that one can be negative at RDT but positive with PCR.

The antigen RDTs used in Uganda are approved by WHO, validated by Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI) and are the most sensitive on the market.

The Ministry of Health, together with Makerere University, will conduct another nationwide rapid assessment for COVID-l9. This will be the fourth assessment in the 17 months of the pandemic in Uganda.

The proposal on mass testing by the taskforce is not scientifically rational because it is required to be done every 14 days and a negative test results do not mean one cannot get infected the next day. It is also not economically feasible because it is very expensive and would divert resources from where they are needed most.

13: COVID-l9 treatment units in district hospitals and health centres

The taskforce recommended the urgent establishment of COVID-19 treatment centres at the districts/general hospitals and lower health facilities.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Health designated COVID-l9 treatment units in regional and national referral hospitals and Namboole Stadium and not general hospitals, in order not to interrupt essential services at those levels. Further, general hospitals and lower health centres do not have adequate infrastructure and staffing to take care of general patients and isolate COVID-l9 patients at the same time.

The lower-level facilities screen, isolate and refer COVID-l9 patients to the designated COVID-19 Treatment units (CTUs) or recommend home-based care. These lower-level facilities
have been preserved for the continuity of the essential health services as the rest of the population needs other medical services.

14. Intensive Care Units (ICUs) and High Dependency Units (HDUs) for severe COVID-19 case management

The taskforce observed that all regional referral hospitals were in dire need of both ICU space and functional assorted equipment, crucial in critical care (ICU beds, medical oxygen, oxygen cylinders, oxygen concentrators, oximeters, and nasal masks).

Madam Speaker, the Government has provided a budget for the procurement of oxygen plants and maintenance of the existing plants at the regional and national referral hospitals.

The Ministry of Health will procure 18 pressure swing adsorptions, which are the gaseous plants for 15 regional referral hospitals at Bombo Military Hospital and two, to be installed at Wabigalo to supply Mulago, Kawempe, Naguru and Kiruddu national referral hospitals.

Additionally, three cryogenic liquid oxygen plants will be procured and installed in three different regions across the country. The cryogenic oxygen will supplement the gaseous oxygen. This installation will cover the country’s peak demand of 24,800 cylinders of oxygen per day.

ICU beds

Regarding ICU beds, according to the World Health Organisation, an intensive care unit bed is required for every 100,000 persons. Therefore, Uganda would require 420 ICU beds for the 42 million population.

By March 2020, we had 137 ICU beds in the public hospitals. To address the high need of ICU bed requirement for COVID-l9 severe cases, additional 143 ICU beds with accessories were procured and installed in all regional referral hospitals. This brings the total ICU bed capacity to 280, which is only 66 per cent of the need.

However, some of the ICU beds are not fully functional due to lack of space and specialists. Funds have now been provided for remodelling Masaka, Mbale, Jinja, Mubende regional referral hospitals and Bombo Military Hospital ICUs and works are on-going.

Further, the Ministry of Health budgeted for construction of intensive care buildings in the rest of the regional referral hospitals. Funds will be released in Quarter Two this financial year.

In addition, the ministry will continue to support the training of *anaesthesiologists*, intensivists and intensive care nurses to fully functionalise the ICUs.

In the interim, the ministry has conducted in-service training for 402 nurses in critical care to support ICUs in the country. In order to attract and retain these critical cadres, the Government has approved enhanced salaries for scientists.

15. The ambulance system

The taskforce recommended the functionalisation of the ambulance system in the county within six months of the adoption of this report.

Madam Speaker, in order to fully functionalise the coordination and management of ambulances, the Ministry of Health is putting in place a call and dispatch system. The ministry is setting up 14 ambulance stations for effective patient response and referral.

One call and dispatch centre has already been set up at Naguru Regional Referral Hospital with support from Uganda Police Force.

The Ministry of Health has secured funding from Global Fund to set up the communication system for three out of the 14 call and dispatch centres, that is, one national and two regional referrals.

The Ministry of Health has set the standard for one Type B Ambulance per 100,000 population – that is at a constituency and one Type C Ambulance – that is intensive care ambulance per 2,000,000 population.

A total of 14 boat ambulances have been ordered and seven have been received. The remaining seven will arrive at the end of September 2021.

The long-term plan is to procure five Aeromedical Type C Ambulances.

The country requires 460 ambulances – 430 Type B and 30 Type C as is indicated in the table below. Madam Speaker, I request not to go through the table, to save time.

Between 2019 and 2021, the country acquired 116 ambulances – 101 Type B and five Type C and plans to acquire another 33 Type B Ambulances in the 2021/2022 financial year, leaving a deficit of 311 ambulances.

The list down there is a distribution list of boat ambulances: seven that are in the country and seven to be delivered by September 2021. The beneficiaries include:

1. Kalangala District

2. Buvuma District

3. Amolatar District

4. Jinja District

5. Mayuge District

6. Mukono District

7. Namayingo District

8. Serere District

9. Kumi District

10. Buliisa District

11. Kikuube District

12. Moyo District

13. Kabale District

14. National Medical Stores for distribution of essential medicines and supplies

The emergency medical services strategy is not fully funded and the ministry has submitted the funding gap of Shs 22 billion required for a phased establishment of the National Ambulance Service System in the Ministerial Policy Statement for Financial Year 2021/2022. It was taken as an unfunded priority.

The ministry has developed ambulance standards, which have been issued to guide operationalisation of both public and private ambulances.

Funds to support purchase of fuel, servicing and repair of ambulances across the country

The Government has in Quarter One of this financial year allocated Shs 6.8 billion from the COVID-l9 supplementary budget to run the ambulances. This will cover fuel, service, repair, decontamination and allowances for ambulance teams.

16. Home-Based Care (HBC) strategy for case management

The taskforce noted that mechanisms of facilitating follow-ups on patients under HBC by health workers was hampered by lack of transport allowances, inadequate PPEs and lack of drugs recommended for treatment of COVID-19 such as Vitamin C, Zinc, Azithromycin and Vitamin D.

The ministry is implementing a community engagement strategy and HBC guidelines for care of asymptomatic and mild patients at community level and referral of severe cases to established treatment centres.

To support the VHTs in this intervention, an HBC tool kit will be provided to each village for monitoring patients. The components of the kit include; thermometer, timer, gumboots, gloves, masks, pulse oximeter, register and a bag.

The Government has released Shs 20 billion in Quarter One for procurement of the HBC tool kit and the process is ongoing.

17. Availability of drugs for treatment of COVID-19

The taskforce recommends that the Ministry of Health provides medicines, including COVIDEX, to home-based care patients.

The district local governments have assigned one HBC coordinator, who is responsible for ensuring that all patients under HBC access Panadol, Vitamin D and Zinc from the nearest health facility, through the VHTs.

COVIDEX is still undergoing clinical trials before approval for inclusion on the list of drugs for COVID-19 provided by the Ministry of Health for home-based care. As soon as it is approved, this will be included in the home-based care kit. This is being done in line with the international protocols under the National Drug Authority supervision and guidance.

18. Performance of the COVID-19 vaccination drive

The taskforce recommends that the Government should provide adequate vaccines to address the growing public demand and achieve herd immunity.

The Government of Uganda’s strategy is mass vaccination of the eligible population as a means of optimal control of the pandemic and full opening up of the economy. The eligible population are all those 18 years and above.

The Government has received offers of vaccines as follows:

1. 18 million doses of Sinopharm vaccines for nine million people from China to be procured through the COVAX facility. It is expected in the country by October 202l.
2. 9 million doses of Johnson and Johnson vaccines for nine million people to be procured through the African Union. This is expected in the country in phases beginning this month; September, 2021.
3. 18 million doses of vaccines to be donated through the COVAX facility to cover nine million people.

These developments will cover the target population plus any additional persons. In other words, Madam Speaker, we have vaccines enough for 27 million people. I have also attached an annex to show costs of vaccines and vaccination of the target population and the funding gaps.

The cumulative number of people vaccinated with at least one dose is 977,889 and the table shows the uptake of vaccines as of 30 August 2021. I will not go through the table.

Issue 19: Impact of COVID-19 on other essential health services The taskforce recommended that mental health services should be reinstated at the regional referral hospitals and provide resources for construction of isolation centres at regional referral hospitals, general hospitals and health centres IV.

Madam Speaker, mental health services are amongst the essential health services prioritised during the COVID-19 response and psycho-social support and counselling is ongoing for those affected. The Ministry of Health designated the mental health units as COVID-19 isolation facilities, at the regional referral hospitals as a temporary measure since they had the most appropriate infrastructure for the purpose at that time.

All regional referral hospitals were directed to identify an alternative space to ensure continuity of mental health services, as it was envisaged that the pandemic was going to be controlled within a short time.

Gulu, Mbarara and Fort Portal Regional Referral Hospitals did not use their mental health units as Covid-19 treatment units. The other regional referral hospitals found alternative spaces to ensure continuity of provision of mental health services.

The construction of the stand-alone isolation facilities will be considered in the long run as funds become available. The national isolation facility at Entebbe is complete and ready for use while the one at Mulago is near completion.

20. Utilisation of the resources appropriated for COVID-19 response in the first wave

The taskforce recommended that allocation of resources for management of COVID-19 to districts should be based on their peculiarity for equity.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Health agrees with the recommendation from the taskforce. Indeed, the ministry provided guidance to the Ministry of Local Government to this effect. Guidance was based on the district size, location of districts at the border, population size and burden of disease.

21. Complimentary role of the private sector

The taskforce recommended that Government should support rural Private-Not-For-Profit facilities in the fight against COVID-19 with human resource and consumables.

As Government policy and strategy, Ministry of Health supports the PNFPs with essential medicines and supplies and Primary Health Care grants. In addition, Ministry of Health seconds human resources to the Private-Not-For-Profit facilities.

22. Little attention accorded to the islands

The taskforce recommended setting up of COVID-19 treatment units at islands since they cannot easily travel to the regional referral hospitals. Plans are underway to set up Covid-19 treatment units in the districts of Buvuma and Kalangala.

In conclusion, the ministry would like to appreciate the Parliamentary Task Force on COVID-19 for the observations and recommendations. Through a multi-sectoral approach, recommendations are being reviewed and will be addressed accordingly. I thank you and beg to submit. *(Applause)*

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

**MR AKOL:** Madam Speaker, allow me to thank the minister and hon. Katuntu for the good work done. It is the first of its kind for me to appreciate the Minister of Health to this extent. *(Applause)*

I am excited that if what she has been reading is put into practice then we are okay. We are going to win the fight. I take this opportunity to request Members that at this time, we do not discuss to pollute the response plan that the minister has.

I think, if Members could accept, that we adopt the report and then request the minister to report quarterly to Parliament on those good plans she has other than taking our time to discuss this report. That is my view. I thought I should stand up for this.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, we will make a decision on that but we could have a recap from hon. Katuntu. Let us first have a recap then we make a decision on that.

5.53

**MR ABDU KATUNTU (Independent, Bugweri County, Bugweri):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. When we were given this assignment – for which we thank you – my colleagues and I took a deliberate decision that we are not fault finding. We did not embark on this process to look for faults. We embarked on this assignment to be part of the solution. That is the attitude with which we embarked on this assignment. Whatever we did, we tried to provide what we would think was a recommendation.

Whatever we found out, Madam Speaker, this is what is happening in your constituencies; in your health facilities. We had absolutely no reason to exaggerate or even misreport. I would really like to thank Members of this taskforce for the dedication and time they put in. *(Applause)*

Honourable minister – I am going to have a short recap - whatever we pointed out is for the benefit of your sector. If you took it in good faith, that is good enough for this country. There is no need to be defensive; absolutely no need. These are challenges which the sector has.

Madam Speaker, as we now all know, when the health sector is in trouble, do not even talk about your economics. It will blow up in flames; it is just a powder keg. With this pandemic, schools were closed, businesses were closed. Until we have enough resources and make correct investments, we will soon be in another problem and yet, Madam Speaker, we cannot say that the pandemic is over.

Let me now do a short recap. The first was on accountability yet the minister did not dwell so much on it. We pointed out that we have so far spent close to Shs 4.3 trillion. You just tell me, you are Ugandans, when did we ever, as a country, spend that sort of money in 15 months? This is the first time.

Therefore, if we have spent it - we pointed out five areas; honourable minister. The first was that there was a discrepancy of almost Shs 4.8 billion. Why did it arise?

Madam Speaker, a review of the accountability submitted in the honourable minister’s response is different from the one, which was submitted to the Committee on National Economy, Committee on Health and to the task force. And when you have differences in accountability, what does this call for?

Honourable colleagues, we were very conscious; we did not give any blame or say that money had been swindled. It is nowhere in our report. However, we said that there is a discrepancy here in four accounts, which are different but explaining the same thing. What solution do we have? We call for a forensic audit because that is the only way you can handle it to find out what the problem could be.

If you have given me Shs 50 and I account to two persons differently- I account the same money to another person differently and to another person differently, it would call for some other person to look at these accountabilities.

We would like a professional - and not even politicians like us - to go into the nitty-gritty and do a forensic audit, meaning you audit shilling by shilling. That is what we recommended. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker, there was also another issue on accountability. It was about the discrepancy in the figures for the purchase of masks. True, we again had different accountabilities and one aspect was missing in some other accountability.

The minister notes that the discrepancy exists; how do we resolve it other than doing a forensic audit? The minister says that what the committee noted was correct; there was a discrepancy.

On matters of accountability, once there is a discrepancy, it goes for an audit. We did not say we are right but we noted the differences on what the minister gave in different places. And it goes on and on. Therefore, I do think that we all take the issue of audit in good faith.

Indeed, honourable minister, we all read the press. There are wild allegations, some from people who are not informed - some from people in bad faith - that so-and-so are thieves and so on. The only way to sort out this mess is by having a proper forensic audit. That will help us to put this issue to rest.

Therefore, I would like to request the honourable minister to agree with the committee - indeed she has agreed with the committee on many other aspects - to have a forensic audit.

Let us go to issues like - honourable minister, some of what you are raising are details which you never gave us; we are only seeing them here for the first time. What we did, after we came out with the report, was to invite the minister and said t5his to her: “This is what we found out. What do you say?” And she gave a response - some of what we are seeing now was never given us; we are seeing them for the first time. We do not want to go into the debate and so on. What we think, if it is in good faith - we do to have any problem because there is some progress.

Let me talk about the issues to do with the intensive care units. When you read the minister’s statement, you realise that it sort of shows that everything is okay but which is not true. How many ICUs are functional? They are not functional for two reasons: one - and honourable minister, we are trying to help you to have functional ICUs - there are no staff - therefore, even if you have an ICU without staff, that is no ICU; it is some white elephant because it is not operational.

Some were bought but there is no physical structure where to install them. Instead, they are working as HDUs. These days I now know these terms of ICUs, HDUs (the “high dependency units” for colleagues who are the “other doctors”; we used to call ourselves the “other doctors” and not the medical doctors).

Therefore, some of the ICUs, which are very expensive, are lying unused. Why? It is because we do not specialists. That is why hon. Lugoloobi - he has even walked away. He should be here to say “We want money to have these ICUs operationalised,” because we have already spent money.

On the ICUs alone, honourable colleagues, I think you spent close to Shs 38-56 billion yet they are not operational. There are things - Madam Speaker, in the whole of Northern Uganda, you only have one facility with a CT scan. It was just even being installed in a place called Atapara in Oyam District.

Therefore, just imagine if one had an accident today and the first thing they should be going through is a CT scan and we have an entire region - you people from Northern Uganda - an entire region without a CT scan.

Therefore, what we are raising are issues affecting our own people and honourable Aceng’s sector. She should take the report in good faith. Do not mind about the praises; in your opening statement, you want to be praised. We shall praise you later but let us sort out the problems. You want praise? Yes, we will praise you; when? Later and not now. Let us sort out the challenges facing the sector because they are affecting all our people equally, irrespective of where they come from.

Look at the issue concerning the specialist staff - intensivists, critical care nurses and so on, you do not have them. How many do we need in the country and how many do we have?

Look at the ambulance system, which we pointed out. You need 460 but you have 120 or 130. And now, Members of Parliament are busy buying ambulances. By the way, they are not ambulances; some of you are buying Hiace cars - those that carry dead bodies - and you put a siren and the light on and you say it is an “ambulance.” Some of them are cargo, the only things “ambulance” about it are the words written on, the siren and the lights.

Then you say you are developing the guidelines - we did point out that we want public-developed guidelines by the ministry, which will govern both public and private ambulances.

Therefore, when you read your statement, it is like everything is okay. However, I think that there is a big problem. Let us not sugar-coat anything but put it as bluntly as it is such that our people can be helped. I imagined that was the reason the Speaker set this taskforce up and that is how we took the assignment.

I know most of this money was not spent by the Ministry of Health. Colleagues, listen to this. Not all this money was spent by the ministry. This is why we need to do a forensic audit. The Ministry of Health should not explain to us that they spent all the money. There are people who took it, including the Local Governments.

Let me tell you, honourable colleagues, as I cap up, like the example you have heard about *Emyooga*, I am sure you have been there; was it a successful story? [Hon. Members: No.]

**MR KATUNTU:** *Emyooga* was part of the stimulus package.

When you talk about the isolation units, you are giving another example of what you intended to do or did with it. When the money was being requisitioned for appropriation, it was supposed to be for 20 isolation centres. We picked your request for this money from the Committee on Budget and it was appropriated for that purpose. Now, I can see it was meant for another purpose for which it was utilised. That is why we queried it.

When we reached the ground, we did not see them yet the record showed that money had been appropriated for that purpose. Now, I can see you are giving another expenditure line. The record Parliament has is that this money was for the 20 isolation centres. This is why we are saying that we should have a forensic audit. I think everybody acting in good faith would have no objections to having a forensic audit. *(Applause)*

I do not want to debate my own report. I hope that is enough recast. Thank you, Rt Hon. Speaker and the minister for her response.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I can see Members are ready for a debate. You have been waiting for it. Nobody should talk about the time.

5.48

**DR TIMOTHY BATUWA (FDC, Jinja South Division West, Jinja City):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. After listening to the humble statement made by the honourable Minister of Health, I right away consulted the World Health Organisation (WHO) site to know the position of Uganda in relation to other countries –*(Interruption)*

**MR CHEMASWET:** Madam Speaker, the honourable member was a member to the taskforce committee yet he is now debating his own report.

**MR BATUWA:** I am speaking as Shadow Minister of Health.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Chemaswet, he is speaking as Shadow Minister of Health.

**DR BATUWA:** Honourable members, I am interested in visiting the WHO site. It gives you a comparative knowledge of how African countries are faring in COVID-19. Against that, we can easily tell whether we have managed it well and need to praise the people who are ahead of us in this fight or not.

There is what they call the Case Fatality Rate (CFR). It indicates how many people, out of the 100 people testing positive, have passed on. Uganda has a CFR of 3.03 per cent, as per that site’s dashboard. When you compare this with the countries that are around us like Burundi, it is 0.08 per cent. It means that in Burundi, for every 100 people getting sick, hardly one dies. Eritrea is at 0.8 per cent. We only compare with countries like Tanzania, which is at 3.6 and Zimbabwe, which is at 3.5.

Truthfully, we need to open up the discussion on COVID-19 management. At the moment, we do not need to praise anybody. Kenya is at two per cent and Rwanda 1.2 per cent. The Central African Republic with the security issues that we do hear is at 0.9 per cent. Even South Sudan is at one per cent. This prompts us to make inquiries into some of the things that are indicated in the report.

About home-based care, the report indicated to us at that time that patients under home-based care are not receiving treatment. No wonder, we are losing many of the patients who are testing positive in comparison to countries around us. I have only seen two countries that we are doing better than. I have seen Zimbabwe and Tanzania. Otherwise, the rest of the countries are largely doing better than us.

Regarding Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), the report indicated that these are very few in the facilities. As such, medics are contracting the disease. The report indicated how in a health centre IV in Serere, all the midwives had contracted COVID-19 –*(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I am giving each one two minutes and only 10 people will talk since we have agreed that we must do a forensic audit. The discrepancies where the minister does not agree with the report, we will extract what is in the minister’s response to be sent to the sectoral Committee on Health.

**MR MACHO:** Madam Speaker –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Macho, you have spoken. Give your neighbour a chance.

**MR MACHO:** I am from the border, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Member behind. I am only giving those who have not spoken.

5.53

**MS LILLIAN PAPARU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to appreciate the Minister of Health for the report and also the team that went to discover facts. I would like to bring up two issues; one is on the complementary role of the private hospitals in our localities.

I come from Arua District, which does not have a hospital now. We have a private hospital that is faith based. I would like to report here that the hospital does not have staff deployed by the Ministry of Health. Staff were deployed to that hospital but they were withdrawn two years ago. This is a district that does not even have a Health Centre IV.

On that note, I request the ministry to check case by case that not all these private hospitals are supported by the ministry.

One other thing is about the referral hospitals. We realised that the regional referral hospitals have very much allegiance to the ministry and so, monitoring by the local structures is very difficult. Therefore, when you see the realities in the regional referral hospitals, things go wrong. When the LCV Chairperson or Resident District Commissioner (RDC) tries to question, you find that the head of the referral hospital is answerable to the ministry. Thank you.

5.55

**MS AGNES ACIBU (NRM, Woman Representative, Nebbi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to congratulate you upon assuming this office. This is my maiden speech.

First of all, I would like to thank everybody for the collective effort to fight COVID-19 in the country. I heard very well the report by the minister and in particular, I am referring to the allocation of funds to the regional referral hospitals.

Madam Speaker, we are aware that when we were at the peak of the Covid-19 infections, even the regional referral hospitals were overwhelmed. When we look at the distance of some of these regional hospitals, we find that they are far apart from other areas or districts. We found that these Covid-19 cases were being handled in other hospitals. Even health centres III and IV had Covid-19 patients.

I, therefore, appeal to the relevant ministry to give some little money to these hospitals that are also trying to handle Covid-19 cases in the region. In Arua, I saw that some of the patients that were referred to these regional hospitals preferred to die in their home hospitals. I submit.

5.56

**MS FORTUNATE NANTONGO (DP, Woman Representative, Kyotera):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am the Shadow Minister for Gender, Labour and Social Development. I have carefully listened to the report of the health minister and we are all aware that if the country is to be hit by another Covid-19 wave, the regional referral hospitals may not have the capacity to handle all of us.

The issue of home-based care is very pertinent. The honourable minister has not indicated facilitation for VHTs. We are well aware that VHTs have been given Shs 150,000 for three months. However, she has not indicated whether this is the facilitation meant to handle Covid-19 cases, more so under home-based care.

Secondly, they have indicated that water ambulances have been allocated to the islands. However, in Kyotera, we have a subcounty called Nangoma. It is totally isolated because it is beyond the waters. There are no means of transport to help them cross to Kasensero. Therefore, we request the minister to consider Nangoma because they have been totally isolated and they have no health facilities to help them access the health care. Thank you.

5.58

**MR ATKINS KATUSABE (FDC, Bukonjo County West, Kasese):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. First of all, I would like to thank you for deploying the committee and I also thank them for doing a good job.

My only challenge is with the minister’s report. I think let us face it. When somebody says, “the praise should go to the Government of Uganda for the job well done”, I totally disagree.

We have a population of 44 million people and we have only one million vaccinated. Do you think we are surviving today because of your good job? No, Madam. It is because of the grace of God. I want to believe that. We are at the mercy of God, not the Government of Uganda because we would now have 44 million Ugandans already vaccinated. Ask our brothers and sisters in India, where we get the vaccines from. There are mass graves. We do not have the mass graves here, yet we have no vaccine here. What does that mean? It is the grace of God, not you -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Atkins, if hon. Ssemujju was here, he would tell you that Mulago is the best hospital. It was not God that saved his patient but Mulago - of course with God.

**MR KATUSABE**: Madam Speaker, I am making my observation. We have a country that suddenly wakes up - you find yourself in a hospital and there is not enough oxygen. That is the mercy of God and his grace.

My point is that I totally agree with the committee that you put in place. We need thorough and in-depth accountability for these funds. I wonder why we are restricting ourselves to donations. Can we look at grants, loans and the supplementary budget? I wonder why we are not troubled, as the Parliament of Uganda, to *–(Member timed out.)*

6.01

**MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. We appreciate the minister’s response. Allow me to make these inquiries. First of all, what happened to those ambulances, as per issue 15, that were at Entebbe? The people of Entebbe thought that since they have a very big part of the waters, they were going to have one constant ambulance there as earlier on the ministry informed us that three ambulances were stationed at Entebbe.

As a ministry, what plan do you have to remove the remaining patients from Namboole so that the national stadium can return to its normal use?

It is true that the resource allocation under issue 20 was based on the villages because if it was not so, the funds Wakiso would have got would have been appropriate to its geographical size and population.

Finally, can the ministry also explain to us what the National Medical Stores depends on? Who has the contract? This is because after distribution, a district like Wakiso takes over three weeks for the health centres II or III to get that bimonthly allocation. Ministry, please consider that and let us have it sorted because on many occasions, the health centres II and III do not get those drugs in time. I submit. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

6.03

**MR ELIJAH OKUPA (Independent, Kasilo County, Serere):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to appeal to the colleagues that let us debate the report and stop importing things from outside the report.

Two, I would like the minister to take note of this; I attended one of the meetings when they appeared before the committee and submitted a report of the ambulances that have been distributed. I took interest in Soroti and Jinja but let me specifically talk about the Teso subregion. On that list of ambulances that you submitted for Teso subregion, two of them were not part of the Covid-19 money. Your team gave a wrong report on the ambulances supplied to Teso. Two of them were supplied in Financial Year 2017/2018 by the minister for Teso affairs; one for Ngora and another for Soroti District.

These discrepancies should be crosschecked. Otherwise, people want to account for things they did not supply. I want you to take note of that.

Jinja also had eight ambulances but I think two of them had been supplied much earlier in 2018, even before Covid-19. I need you to take note of that and have that corrected. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Maybe when these people are doing accountability – like they say they are doing accountability for fuel and repair of ambulances. They did accountability for Bukedea but the ambulances were all mine and they were not repaired and fueled, yet the money was allocated. You need to take note of some of these things, where they account for what they have not done. That is why we need a forensic audit on most of these things. Hon. Mapenduzi, I will send your issue to the minister because you were part of the committee and so, you cannot be allowed to debate.

6.05

**MR ASUMAN BASALIRWA (JEEMA, Bugiri Municipality, Bugiri):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for this opportunity to the only president in the House. I would like to refer to page 21 of the minister’s response; issue 18.

The minister talks about mass vaccination in response to the report by hon. Abdu Katuntu. I would like to find out from you the concern that AstraZeneca from India is facing challenges.

As we speak, those of us who have taken both jabs cannot be granted entry to Europe because of the challenges related to recognition of AstraZeneca. In that response of mass vaccination, are you going to consider bringing AstraZeneca as part of the process for the *–(Interruption)*

**MS NKUNDA:** I think that is not true. Europeans can allow you entry because I was in Europe recently – *(Interjection)–* I was in Italy and I came back last night. Therefore, you can enter Europe whether you took AstraZeneca or not. Thank you.

**MR BASALIRWA:** Well, I had not conceded to the information but all the same, it is useful and I want the minister to put that on record.

Secondly, on the issue of testing, the Test and Fly Laboratory at Entebbe Airport seems to be the only laboratory contracted to provide tests at the airport. I would like the minister to clarify on why it is only Test and Fly Laboratory and to respond to the allegations that this specific laboratory belongs to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health *–(Interjections)–* yes, clarify on that allegation. You are not allowing any other laboratories to do tests at the airport; it is only Test and Fly. How was it procured? How come others are not being allowed to provide that service and because of the monopoly, it is very expensive. How are you going to handle this?

Finally, you did respond on the issue of taxes for the cars to the effect that they have been addressed. What assurance are you giving the county that such an unfortunate scenario will not happen again? That we procure vehicles to provide a specific service but such vehicles cannot be availed to the public because the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has not cleared them because taxes have not been cleared yet people are dying.

Madam Speaker, it is not enough for the minister to say the problem has been sorted. We also need assurance to confirm that, that problem will not happen again because it was an embarrassment for the vehicles to come but couldn’t do their work. *(Member timed out.)*

6.10

**MR GEOFFREY MACHO (Independent, Busia Municipality, Busia):** Madam Speaker, as I talk, every truck driver who comes in from Kenya and is tested must wait for 48 hours to get their COVID-19 results.

When the minister’s team came to Busia Border, we told them we need PCR testing machines. These people refused and now the send samples to Kampala because there is a company procured to supply fuel to the vehicle that carries the said samples. This is hampering quick movement of business.

At the same time, our COVID-19 vaccination cards have been rejected in Kenya because they have no stamps. We need authentic vaccination cards like the ones of Kenya and Tanzania -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, you need to be vigilant to have your card stamped.

**MR MACHO**: Yes, Madam Speaker. It forced me to bring it here to be stamped. I do not know where the Parliament doctor got a stamp to put on my card.

Madam Speaker, the cards for the cars that were donated by the people are still held by the ministry - *(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: That is part of what is going to be audited.

6.11

**MR MAPENDUZI OJARA (Independent, Bardege-Layibi Division, Gulu City):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank hon. Abdu Katuntu, for the good job but also thank the honourable minister for providing those responses.

As part of the efforts by Government to deal with the second wave of COVID-19, a supplementary budget was provided. As part of that, about Shs 371.7 billion was provided to help in the first quarter in the different areas of interventions. Part of this supplementary budget was sent to local government entities and there is proof that these entities and other ministries and agencies of Government received this money.

However, I would like to direct this to the honourable minister and it concerns the cities. Much as other local government entities received what was meant for them to help during the difficult period in the first quarter, the cities - and I want to be specific - for example, Arua City, received Shs 338.4 million and Gulu City received Shs 201.2 million.

Unfortunately, the cities have failed to access this money. The funds are lying on their accounts simply because there are technicalities involved. The technicalities relate to aspects of operationalisation of the cities.

Madam Speaker, this is a disservice. The cities are not functioning because they do not know where to go. Every time we try to find why they are not executing their mandate, they say, “we cannot access funds, we cannot access the systems.” We have repeatedly expressed this to the Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Public Service to provide what it takes for the cities to be fully operational but to avail.

Madam Speaker, how will the cities then respond? The honourable minister has consistently provided statistics and updates on the rate of infections. It is clear that the cities and major urban centres have higher rates of infections, which means they need to get what it takes to effectively manage the situation.

This is quite absurd and I do not think the cities should be treated that way. An explanation should be given though it should not just be an explanation; there should be action. We need to have the cities operational so that they can serve the citizens of this country. Thank you, Madam Speaker. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Local Government together with the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, we need that acted upon immediately. You cannot continue keeping money as if sickness can wait for your operationalisation.

6.15

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Ms Victoria Businge):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Ministry of Local Government in conjunction with –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Why don’t you wait and respond together with the other minister?

**MS VICTORIA BUSINGE:** I just wanted to say that we are about to table a supplementary budget for all the 10 cities –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Wait and respond at once.

**MS VICTORIA BUSINGE:** Okay, Madam Speaker.

6.16

**MR JULIUS TUSIIME (Independent, Rwampara East County, Rwampara):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the effort to respond to the well-thought report by the task force. In the same vein, I commend the task force for the patriotic work they did.

Uganda, as a country, did a commendable job in the first wave because our strategy was based on the preventive approach. As we went to the second wave, for example in Rwampara District, it was severe and we had about 22 deaths unlike in the first wave, where we had only one case. Partly, this was because of lack of space to provide emergency care for these cases at the referral hospitals.

I rise on issue 13 in the report that the minister responded to, and also in relation to the task force’s recommendation that we need to set up isolation centres at the lower health centres, especially the health centres IV. I think that is a noble recommendation because for the case of Rwampara, out of the 22 deaths, it was as a result of inaccessible space at the referral centres, including where *–(Member timed out.)*

6.18

**MR IBRAHIM KYOTO (NRM, Budiope West County, Buyende):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. My issue is with the minister’s report is on page 18, regarding the distribution of boat ambulances. I want to know the criteria used in selection of the beneficiaries.

If we look at Buyende District, almost 90 per cent of the land area is bordered by water bodies. In this regard, we were not considered in this. I wanted the minister to clarify on that. Thank you.

6.19

**MS CHRISTINE APOLOT (NRM, Woman Representative, Kumi):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am only giving people who have not spoken. If you have said a word, do not stand up.

**MS APOLOT:** I would like to appreciate the minister for this presentation, especially in the area, where you talked about the supply of Covidex and other reagents in health facilities. It has been the cry of our people that if this could be done urgently, it would help to rescue the situation in Teso sub-region. In Teso sub-region, Kumi District is leading in terms of infections.

Unfortunately – I was there over the weekend – when it comes to burial of a COVID-19 case, the Soroti team seems to be overwhelmed and yet the team from Kumi does not have adequate PPEs to facilitate burials.

On the issue of the ambulance interventions, I am very happy to hear that Kumi District is benefiting. Kumi has one of the oldest ambulances in this country. The one that has been there in Atutur Hospital is right now in the ministry and has not been repaired.

Madam Speaker, how I request that the honourable minister urgently looks into the issue of the ambulance of Atutur Hospital because across the district, there is dire need.

Finally, this money that has been sent to local governments to facilitate the fight against COVID-19; in Kumi District, 57 villages do not have facilitation for the LCIs and VHTs. Recently, I attended one of the COVID-19 meetings and it was not easy *–(Member timed out.)*

6.21

**MR DAVID LAGEN (NRM, Agago County, Agago):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me the opportunity, to give my submission.

First of all, I thank the minister for giving us the report. I also thank hon. Katuntu for opening our eyes on the report of the minister. I have three issues to present:

1. I do support the idea of the forensic audit, which is very important in reference to the issue of accountability on the COVID-19 money.
2. In northern Uganda, as earlier mentioned, surely, we have only one CT Scan, which is a very big challenge. In most cases, when patients are referred from the hospital, they have to look for alternatives and find a way to get a CT scan. Some of them travel up to Mbale or Kampala here, which is very expensive. It is my prayer that the ministry looks into this and provides five CT scans to northern Uganda and that would be very useful.
3. On the issue of the ICU equipment, as earlier mentioned by hon. Katuntu, I was surprised and very ashamed to hear that the ICU equipment is lying idle and is not installed. I asked myself a question; what is the purpose of procurement of this ICU, and yet we have many people dying?

Secondly, isn’t there any premise in this country where this ICU equipment could be installed? I would like to ask the minister to do her best and make sure that this equipment can be installed to help and support our people.

I beg to submit.

6.24

**MR DONALD KATALIHWA (NRM, Mwenge County South, Kyenjojo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am a man of research and I believe in research. One disclaimer I have to give the minister today is that if you did research in Uganda today, she is one of the most popular and loved ministers even in my constituency.

After giving that disclaimer, I have to also give her a task – *(Interjection)* – she is not complaining – that she has a very big responsibility to protect that by taking the report of the COVID-19 Task Force in good faith so that at some point, our people who love her very much are not disappointed.

Madam Speaker, when I read the report especially on issue of the CT scan – I know hon. Linda wanted to raise that and I know the Minister of Local Government is also from Kabarole and she has been raising it several times. I am speaking on behalf of Rwenzori and we do not have anything like a CT scan in the whole of Rwenzori region.

A lot of conversations have been done on that and the Minister of Local Government, together with hon. Linda, have done that.

However, what we need to recommend to the Minister of Health is to do a deliberate comprehensive health sector improvement emergency plan as fast as possible, so that we do not have to complain about these things in the next one or two years.

I used to be a board member of a district hospital before I joined politics. When you go to that facility, you will find equipment but with no staff to operate the equipment. No radiographers, no theatre attendants.

We need to have a comprehensive plan to ensure that all the health services are given to people comprehensively. Not to firefight or defend ourselves but to protect our integrity and have the facilities delivered. Thank you.

6.25

**MS PATIENCE NKUNDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kanungu):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. We have a major problem in Kanungu with our hospitals. We have Kambuga Hospital, which is a district hospital. If you go there today, you can shed tears.

In the 10th Parliament, the honourable minister visited the hospital. She saw it and it is in a sorry state. We do not have a mere generator. And yet you have heard that we have a major problem with electricity in Kanungu.

Most women are dying on the operating table because of electricity. I do not know whether I should cry. I feel very bad that this country cannot provide a generator for a whole district.

In about three months, we have spent Shs 37 million fixing the generator that has been there for many years. Madam Speaker, I now ask the Minister of Health to help Kanungu District to acquire a generator so that women stop dying when they are being operated on during childbirth. We really need this generator.

In these times of COVID-19, we have only 31 small oxygen cylinders. Most of the time, we use oxygen concentrators. Since we do not have electricity, many people are dying because they cannot get oxygen. I appeal to this Government to help us and fix our structures in the hospital.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, please help those people. At least give them a generator.

6.27

**MR JOEL LEKU (NRM, Terego West County, Terego):** Honourable minister, I have been looking through your report from pages 27-to 32, where you indicated delivery of community masks and Terego is not on the list.

I would like to inform you that in Terego, we got your masks but they are very few. I am bringing this up because the name Terego misses in every sector. There is a district called Terego. When the ambulances come tomorrow, please do not forget us.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, let us debate the report. Let us not look at district level.

6.29

**MS IRENE LINDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Fort Portal City):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would also like to appreciate the response by the Minister of Health and for the great work she is doing in the country. We truly appreciate and we are proud of you as women.

My request is: when you are distributing these 282 pickups, think about the newly created administrative units, the cities and districts. Mother districts have refused to share assets with them. Take an example of Fort Portal City. It has nine health centres but they neither have an ambulance or any means of transport that the health workers are using in the city. My request is that Fort Portal City should be considered. Thank you.

6.30

**MR WILSON KAJWENGYE (NRM, Nyabushozi County, Kiruhura):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I congratulate the minister for a very wonderful statement and the committee for a job well done.

I am rising on issue 18, which is mass vaccination. It has taken the Republic of Uganda four complete months to administer 1.3 million doses of vaccine. We seem to have gone around the vaccine apartheid and gotten vaccine. I congratulate the minister and the country.

My question to the minister and the team is on this strategy that she alluded to in the report. We need to see an elaborate – very well laid out strategy for mass vaccination. It is the only field this country is left with. If we are going to have 27 million doses of vaccine in the next one month, how ready are we to roll out this vaccination?

What do you need, honourable minister from this Parliament, logistic wise. How ready are you? Why don’t you tell us now so that we come to your rescue so that tomorrow you do not have to come and tell us that you lack this and that. I submit, Madam Speaker.

6.31

**MR GYAVIRA SSEMWANGA (NRM, Buyamba County, Rakai):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Allow me to thank you for the wisdom you applied to select a special committee on COVID-19. Indeed, allow me to thank the committee for doing its work diligently.

Whenever we talk about COVID-19, people think of health alone. But COVD-19 is no longer merely a health issue; it has cross-cut all sectors of the economy. Perhaps, this is why the budget of 2021/2022 was cut by 40 per cent.

I have stood here to request that you implore the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to use our planning experts to tell us the future prospects of Uganda. We have strategic documents that we follow as a country, for example, the National Development Plan III. We would like to know, as the House, are we still in line with it? Are we still following the NDP III?

Today, business people are crying. They would like to hear from the finance ministry about its monetary and fiscal interventions in this matter. I beg to submit.

6.33

**MR EDSON RUGUMAYO (NRM, Youth Representative, Western):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister of Health, as far as the mass vaccination drive is concerned.

These days, when you tune on your radio, in a car or anywhere, you hear voice clips of opinion leaders and community leaders, all of them urging the population to go ahead, change their mind set and appreciate the essence of vaccination. I would like to commend that effort, minister.

However, when you note on –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, do not go and leave us here. We all want to go. Hon. Tusiime come back. *(Laughter*) You cannot speak and leave the rest here. Let us finish the report.

**MR RUGUMAYO:** Madam Speaker, as of 17 August 2021, the Ministry of Health had vaccinated 1,248,000 Ugandans. As of 30 August 2021, they had only administered 1,376,000 doses.

If you extrapolate, this would mean that we have reached a rate where we are vaccinating 9,151 people every day.

Madam Speaker, if you extrapolate again and see how many doses we shall be able to administer, you realize that it will take us six years to administer these doses to cover the target population of 22 million Ugandans.

This is too much of a slow pace. I assume this is because when you note the minister’s report, you realize that she emphasizes that we shall receive “donations,” “donations” and “donations” of these doses. I would like you to direct, Madam Speaker, that as we budgeted -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Point of procedure?

**MR RUGUMAYO:** We should relieve ourselves of reliance on donations and focus on procuring the doses. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

6.35

**MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I want to appreciate you for putting this Covid-19 taskforce in place. I recall it was during that time, while our health workers had abandoned the health facilities because of lack of PPEs, the General Manager, National Medical Stores came out, when he was interfacing with the committee and said he had PPEs in the stores but lacked transport. He said he had adequate supply.

Secondly, I appreciate the minister for her report. However, I want to state that there is no way we can have the health workers motivated without motivating them. It is not enough to increase the lunch allowances and give them the hardship allowance when not all of them are receiving this money, by the way.

It is not enough to have those allowances increased when they are being taxed. You have heard, Madam Speaker, that this is a tax matter. The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is here: why give me and then tax it?

I think the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should come here with the necessary amendments to help us remove that tax on this small allowance that we give to the health workers.

Thirdly, the honourable minister has talked about having treatment centres in Buvuma and Kalangala. Please, do not forget the people of Sigulu Islands because it is a whole island and constituency. So, do not forget those people.

Madam Speaker, I also want to suggest something. We have been having a challenge of health workers - Busitema University started a course for *anaesthetists*. However, when you look at even the students’ loan scheme that we put in place - we need more health workers. We need more specialists and without ring-fencing funding for training of these health workers, we are just going to talk and talk and talk here.

In the Tenth Parliament, I was here although I was on the other side. I was seated there -*(Laughter)* - but I was busy pleading for just Shs 5 billion so that the Higher Education Students’ Financing Board could increase the number of those that they take by 1,000 – Shs 5 billion and we could not.

Can we ring-fence funding from this students’ loan scheme so that we can have more of these scientists, not only at degree but even at diploma levels? Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

6.39

**MS HELEN KAHUNDE (NRM, Woman Representative, Kiryandongo):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I thank the minister for the response and I also thank the taskforce for a job well done.

Honourable minister, on your first issue, especially where you talked about the Shs 3.8 billion for procuring and installing tents to work as isolation centres at regional referral hospitals, I want to bring it to your attention that the one that you installed at Hoima Regional Referral Hospital is not functioning; it is completely empty. There are no seats, no beddings, no toilets and no mattresses. It is just lying there, even with no concrete floor.

It was just either dumped there – I really do not know. And so, it is not serving the purpose for which it was meant. I do not know what is happening in other regional referral hospitals but that is what is happening at Hoima Regional Referral Hospital.

Honourable minister, on issue 17, much as you said that Covidex is still undergoing clinical trials and you are not recommending yet it for home-based care treatment, it is true that we have received very many reports and feedbacks that it is doing a tremendous job, in as far as the management of Covid-19 is concerned. I think that is why NDA went ahead to recommend it also to be used.

However, the challenge is that it is very expensive and also not available in very many health centres. My request is that the Government finds a way of subsidising it and making it available at a very affordable price for our people to use it because you also know that indeed it is doing a tremendous job, in as far as management of Covid-19 is concerned.

Madam Speaker, on the issue of home-based care strategy in as far as management of Covid-19 is concerned, it would have been one of the best methods to use. However, the challenge – as we are all aware – is that all our health centres or hospitals are already understaffed. Approving this home-based care –*(Member timed out.)*

**MS ALUM:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Before I raise the procedural issue, allow me to start by thanking you for the directive that saw this wonderful committee constituted. Allow me to thank the chairperson and members of this committee, for giving us a comprehensive report and the Minister of Health, for giving us a very good response.

Madam Speaker, the procedural matter I am rising on is: both the minister and the committee are agreeing on many of these issues. The only exception is on the issue of the forensic audit, to which I also agree that, given the discrepancies in the accountability, that report must be adopted.

We all need a good health care system in this country. Hearing submissions from honourable members from both sides, you realise we are all speaking the same language.

Therefore, given the mood in the House, I want to know whether it is not procedurally right for us, at this point in time, to:

1. Make sure that the implementation of the recommendations and responses that the minister has given us forms part of the way forward; and
2. Given the mood in the House, this Parliament also has a duty to make sure that the minister has the budget.

The procedural issue is whether it is not right for us to end this debate and adopt the report and the response of the minister so that we give ourselves time to have the minister return to this Parliament within maybe four months, so that at least we now –*(Interjections)*– if four months is too long, then it can be one or two months because we need resources to implement some of these recommendations.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is a procedural matter. There is a proposal which must either be seconded or not.

**MR AKOL:** Madam Speaker, you will remember that at the beginning, I saw how important the response from the minister is and how important the report of the committee is to this House.

At the beginning, I thought that by debating, we are even diluting - there are implementation issues that came from the minister. It is important for us to even say that one, we accept that a forensic audit should go on. Secondly, we accept all the responses and action points the minister would like to do. Thirdly, I would like the Committee on Health to make a follow up and make sure those issues are implemented and report back to the House. That would be my recommendation on that issue.

**MR BASALIRWA:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to associate myself with the proposal on the Floor that we adopt the hon. Abdu Katuntu report.

I would like to add that on the issue of the forensic audit by the Auditor-General, it should be given a timeline not exceeding 60 days, for purposes of ensuring that the issues are brought to Table. Otherwise, I propose that we adopt the report. *[Members rose\_]*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is a motion to be ruled on. Honourable members, I put the question that the report of the taskforce on the national COVID-19 response, presented by hon. Katuntu, be adopted.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

*Report adopted.*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The report is adopted with the following recommendations:

1. The Auditor-General carries out a forensic audit on the funds appropriated to fight COVID-19 and reports back in two months.
2. The Auditor-General carries out an audit on the funds that were given as donations for the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. A sectoral committee closely follows on the recommendations that have been made on both reports, and the variance of the reports in doing their oversight role.
4. The Minister of Health should exercise a greater proactivity, updating of this House on the status of COVID-19 with the mind of helping the country because you will be talking to the leaders who can take information back to the communities.
5. Members of Parliament should regularly report back to the House on what is happening in their communities in regard to the issue of COVID-19.
6. The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should closely work with the Ministry of Health during the budgeting time to ensure that the ministry has sufficient money to avoid cut-offs from other ministries. COVID-19 has shown you that you can have a pandemic any time. Therefore, during your budgeting, you should exercise prudent forecasting and planning.
7. The Health committee, which is an oversight committee - I know it is a very busy committee - will be assisted by the HIV/ AIDS committee. They will work together in making a follow up on what is happening in the country.
8. Lastly, the report should be given to this House on actions that have been taken by the Government, especially where there are irregularities on vaccination. For example, the Ministry of Education is describing a particular age on vaccination and the Minister of Health is also describing a particular age.

Honourable members, I would like to thank you so much for adopting this report with recommendations. Whatever has been done is in good faith and for the good of our country. Honourable minister, it is to help your ministry.

I wish we could continue having these kinds of committees. The committee members, thank you so much. You have done a great job. *(Applause)* You mean a lot to this country. Honourable minister, thank you for taking time to respond to this. What we need now is action on whatever was raised.

**MR OKUPA:** Madam Speaker, I would like the Minister of Health to clarify. A wild allegation was made here about the ownership of Test and Fly -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, I have made resolutions. Do not bring that.

**MR MUWUMA:** Madam Speaker, hon. Mapenduzi raised an issue that you had referred to the Minister of Local Government and she was providing information then you guided that she comes in at the last minute. Therefore -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** All that has been discussed is adopted. Therefore, they must act. All Ministers of Finance, Health, and Local Government must act.

Honourable members, you are aware of the issue I told you about regarding *Emyooga*. Tomorrow, we are starting the debate on it. The only thing we will have tomorrow is *Emyooga*. Therefore, those Members who have not got their reports at subregional level, please have them and present the *Emyooga* reports tomorrow.

I would like to thank you for coming and the House is adjourned to tomorrow at 2.00 p.m.

*(The House rose at 6.54 p.m. and adjourned until Thursday, 2 September 2021 at 2.00 p.m.)*