



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

FOURTH SESSION - FIRST MEETING

THURSDAY, 1 AUGUST 2024



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FOURTH SESSION - 6TH SITTING - 1ST MEETING

Thursday, 1 August 2024

Parliament met at 2.11 p.m. at Parliament House, Kampala.

(Laughter) So, I hope we can learn one or two tips from them.

PRAYERS

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

In a special way, I thank the Rt Hon. Speaker, honourable ministers, all of you, and our special guests who managed to make it. I thank you wholeheartedly and I will “revenge” - *(Laughter)* - when you also have such functions.

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Clerk. Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to today’s sitting. I thank, wholeheartedly, those of you who managed to make it to Mitooma. *(Applause)* For those who did not manage to make it, most of you reached out to me.

Honourable colleagues, on 24th July, we had a Business Committee meeting where we approved the parliamentary calendar for this Session. The Prime Minister and Leader of Government Business in the House presented the Legislative Agenda of Government. We were able to adopt it and therefore, we shall be following that Legislative Agenda to ensure that we finish most of the business. It is against that, that we are always assessed because it is our work plan, as a House.

I understand the schedules of honourable colleagues. It was on short notice but the solidarity shown towards each other is highly appreciated. My family and I are highly indebted to you, honourable colleagues. *(Applause)*

So, when they are assessing our performance as a Government, they look at how much we have been able to achieve in terms of the Legislative Agenda. I will request the Clerk to upload it on our system so that all of you, honourable colleagues, are able to look at it and schedule your programmes very well. It includes recess, where we have oversight, the Budget and all that.

In a special way, I also thank His Excellency the President who managed to come and join us, visit our family and have time with my dad, who was turning 80 years. It is a blessing for an old man – *(Applause)* - to be visited by people like you and the President.

The Leader of the Opposition had raised the issue of the Legislative Agenda from the Opposition side. I told him to - In our Rules of Procedure, it is not directly provided for but under Rule 53 of our Rules of Procedure,

The old men shared - both of them are still very energetic. They were talking about how they are energetic, giving us tips because some of us young people look more tired than them.

he has all the power and time to present such issues if he wants them to be presented on the Floor.

Honourable colleagues, I have received several complaints from medical intern students. Most of them have bombarded my social media accounts. We also know most of them in the public because some of you pay for some or you at least have people from your areas. They have very many issues but this issue of their delayed deployment is a thorn for us and has been happening year after year.

We ask, “But we have very many professional bodies. How come it is only medical interns who usually have such issues?” What is the problem? Is it the issue of funding? Is it the issue of facilities? It is an issue we need to tackle. We need to come up and work together as a Government to ensure it is sorted.

You are telling these interns that you are giving them another year at home without anything. I have done my part and have finished studying, but you are saying I cannot practise until I do the internship. But then, you are not taking me for the internship. So, what do I do? Most of them, if you remember, lost a lot of time during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I know many colleagues have also raised this issue with me, but I think the right way should be that the Minister of Health brings a statement about this issue on Tuesday. I have forwarded to her some of the issues which they raised in their petition so that we come here, give it enough time and ensure it is sorted once and for all. Like all other professions, the doctors also need to move.

Honourable colleagues, in the VIP gallery this afternoon, we have His Excellency Dr Yonas Tegegn Woldemariam, the outgoing WHO Country Representative to Uganda. *(Applause)* He ended his tour of duty yesterday and he has been in Uganda since 2018.

For those who remember very well, the time when they announced the first case of COVID-19, he stood by the Minister of Health.

During all the COVID-19 briefings and all interventions to do with fighting COVID-19, he was at the centre. He played a very critical role.

He is leaving; he is going to retire. So, Uganda is his last place of deployment by WHO as a Country Representative. He is retiring to his home in Ethiopia, but he told me that part of his heart is still in Uganda. *(Applause)*

He has played a very critical role in supporting our health infrastructure. I had a long chat with him and I will share some of the issues with the Committee on Health on how best we can improve our health sector.

Your Excellency, we thank you so much for the good service you rendered to our people of Uganda and the continent at large. *(Applause)* He fought COVID-19, he fought Ebola, he fought all these pandemics, on top of malaria, HIV and all the other problems.

Honourable colleagues, I know a few colleagues had requested to make a statement or two regarding the doctor’s contribution as he leaves Uganda. I will start with Dr Opio, the Vice Chairperson, Committee on Health.

2.21

THE VICE-CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON HEALTH (Dr Samuel Opio):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. On behalf of the Committee on Health, I rise to pay tribute to Dr Yonas Woldemariam, the outgoing Country Director for the World Health Organisation (WHO), who has been with us for the last six and a half years. These were the most critical six and a half years.

We had the Ebola outbreak in 2019 and he was at the centre, partnering with the Ministry of Health and Uganda was declared Ebola-free. Secondly, he was also at the centre of the COVID-19 outbreak. You all know that whenever Dr Ruth Aceng was making a press briefing, there was always a common face that was next to her; that was Dr Yonas.

In 2022, we also had an Ebola outbreak and within 69 days, Uganda was able to contain the Ebola outbreak and that was the first record set in the whole world in the containment of the Ebola outbreak.

During COVID-19 pandemic, Lancet Laboratory declared Uganda as having the best emergency and pandemic response in containing the COVID-19 virus. So, whereas we were on lockdown, he was able to lock down the virus. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, I come from Lango and when you read about the history of the Lango people, they came from Ethiopia in Abyssinia. In Lango, whenever a visitor comes and is going back, we do not just send them like that; we send them with a name. Allow me to call him Dr Yonas Woldemariam Okello because he brought great things to us in fighting the pandemic. Thank you. May the Lord bless you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Sarah Opendi –

2.23

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I too add my voice to yours to thank Dr Yonas Woldemariam for the great work that he has done in this country.

He came to the country in January 2018 when I was still the Minister of State in the health sector, and we worked closely to ensure that we have in place a strong health system but also, ensured that in looking at the health system, particularly the outbreaks, we strongly took the advice of WHO to improve on the laboratories.

In Luo, Woldemariam means - we can change it into *wodi* Mariam, which means a son of Mariam; that is the Luo name - *(Laughter)*- and I wanted to state that. Generally, WHO is a key partner of the health sector in the country and supports it, particularly by giving technical support.

Dr Yonas, you have not just been a country representative, you have been giving technical

guidance to the Ministry of Health and we thank you for walking with them. Whenever we had issues in the health sector, he was always there by the side of the political leaders and also the technical leaders to give guidance and provide necessary support.

I remember we were together in parts of Bundibugyo, Kasese and Fort Portal at the time when we had the Ebola outbreak together with the Centre for Disease Control, Executive Director who had visited from the United States. He was present.

I pray that the Lord keeps you safe and we wish you the best wherever you will be but please, Uganda remains your second home and I told you this. You cannot be in Uganda and remain the same; it is just a two-hour flight away and there are regular flights from Addis Ababa to this place.

Mr Speaker, I pray that the next country director also walks with the Ministry of Health. Some people are in the country and only give technical advice at a distance, but Dr Yonas traversed this country and I do not know whether there is any part of Uganda that he does not know.

We thank you for that support and I must say that the health sector achievements that have been attained from the time you were here were partially because of the support that you provided. Thank you. May God bless you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Yona – Dr Yonas is accompanied by Dr Andrew Nuwagaba, the county advisor for WHO, Uganda. *(Applause)* Thank you.

2.26

MR YONA MUSINGUZI (NRM, Ntungamo Municipality, Ntungamo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to thank WHO for its presence in Uganda and through the personality of its country director, my namesake, Dr Yonas. *(Laughter)* For that matter, since I am privileged to have some connotation that side, I thank him in his language; Amharic. *“Izīhi bemehono inameseginaleni, Salaam -*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is that parliamentary language, honourable? *(Laughter)*

MR MUSINGUZI: Mr Speaker, I thank the personality of the country director –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, it is very important for you to translate what you have said for the purpose of the *Hansard*.

MR MUSINGUZI: Thank you. “*Salaam*” means, “how are you?” and “*inameseginaleni*” means, “Thank you for being here. Are you okay?” Thank you. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR MUSINGUZI: Mr Speaker, I thank the director for having stood with us at the time we wanted his presence during the Coronavirus. He was vividly seen with our minister and with the guidance of our President to curb this vampire that had come to finish all of us.

We cannot thank you enough and we shall always keep you in our prayers. When you go back home, we shall always be with you. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Dr Yonas. We wish you all the best. We have closed the WHO chapter. Hon. Ssemujju, do you have an issue?

2.28

MR IBRAHIM SSEMUJJU (FDC, Kira Municipality, Wakiso): Mr Speaker, mine is a short reaction to your communication. Since you have closed WHO chapter, I will make my comments when you reopen it. *(Laughter)*

I would like to congratulate you. Last week when you called me the Whip for Katonga, I told honourable colleagues here that since you are an Old Boy (OB), you understand our issues. *(Laughter)* We are happy that you are the Speaker, having gone through our training and we only pray that for what is disturbing Uganda, you use your position to resolve problems, including our grandparents retiring.

The issue of retiring and then they can compare notes, as you said when they are in retirement.

The issue I bring to your attention, using that window of an OB, is that we have 36 Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) leaders who were kidnapped from Kenya by the External Security Organisation (ESO) and the Ugandan military. I do not know whether Uganda simply walks into another country - we nearly had problems here with Rwanda because Rwanda was accused of coming into Uganda and kidnapping refugees. One of the 36 is a registered refugee in Kenya. There was no extradition order, they had gone to attend a leadership training but they were kidnapped and kicked.

The Government will need to listen to their stories. While they were jointly picked by the army here and Kenya, the Kenyans did not beat them; they were only teasing them that they were chasing Uhuru: “You go back to your Museveni”.

The point is that some of them were seriously beaten. We would like the Government to tell us under which arrangement they went to Kenya to kidnap FDC leaders who had gone for leadership training. Why did they beat them? One of the 36 is a refugee who left Uganda and is registered with UNHCR as a refugee.

Mr Speaker, that is my prayer. I thought we should benefit from having an FDC in the Chair to have this matter raised. *(Laughter)* I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Government side, why are you kidnapping my OBs? *(Laughter)* Attorney-General, I think you can - from the words of Hon. Ssemujju.

2.32

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa Kiwanuka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Honourable Member, I am not aware that any people were abducted. What I know is that 36 people who you say are from FDC - I do not know - were charged in court for terrorism – *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Procedure, Hon. Sseggona.

MR SSEGGONA: Mr Speaker, for the last 22 years I have been a lawyer and my learned friend, Hon. Kiryowa Kiwanuka, having been a lawyer even much longer, knows that a lawyer only acts on instruction. The instructions of the Attorney-General are standing instructions under the Constitution; Article 119, and they only relate to matters of law.

Now, we are dealing with matters involving the deployment of forces out of the country who managed to go to Kisumu and get back these Ugandans. I do not want to speculate on how they got them; whether they kidnapped them, used the window of somebody's son who said he can march to Westlands in two weeks or not. And clearly, that is not a matter for the Attorney-General.

The Attorney-General can advise us on matters before court where they were placed under his hands. Issues to do with how they were arrested, abducted or kidnapped are issues to do with the Minister responsible for Security and therefore the docket of External Security Organisation (ESO) or if it was police, the Minister of Internal Affairs and how he managed to cross the borders unnoticed to get these young Ugandans.

I am constrained to seek your procedural guidance and direction because you asked the Government and we have the Prime Minister here but the Attorney-General volunteered, which is very uncommon, professionally.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, the Attorney-General is a Member of the Front Bench. This is the Executive and they work together so, if he finds that it is not okay with him, he can always say it and we cannot force him on the matter.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I thank my learned friend for recognising that I have been at the bar much longer - (*Laughter*)- and thus, more likely to

have more knowledge about the law than he does.

Mr Speaker, these people were charged. They are before court and if there are any issues of them being beaten or wrongly arrested, it can be raised in court at the appropriate time and we have laws that deal with that. In fact, if a person was tortured at the time of his arrest, that case will be dismissed. That is a good defence that you can put before the court. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, what is very important is that there is an acknowledgement from the Government that these people are with them and are already before court. Since they are already before court, Honourable colleagues - Yes, Hon. Ssemujju.

MR SSEMUJJU: Mr Speaker, I have not complained that they were charged. I am talking about bilateral matters; that you can walk into Kenya and kidnap Ugandans. This used to happen under Amin -they were kidnapping people from Kakamega and bringing them back for torture.

That is not a matter of court. Under which arrangement did you go to a Catholic church in Kenya, kidnap people, and bring them without the necessary legal documents?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General -

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Mr Speaker, even the manner in which people are collected, if at all, from a neighbouring country or another country is prescribed by law. And we are saying that these people who are charged are properly before court and if you think that the procedure was not done properly then you can actually be a good witness to support their release. [*Hon. Sseggona rose*]

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no one on the Floor. Honourable colleagues, I am handling all other matters to do with national importance under the Prime Minister's time. Next item -

STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE
OPPOSITION IN RESPONSE TO THE
PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS ON THE STATE
OF THE NATION UNDER RULE 53 OF
THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

2.37

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise today to respond to the State-of-the-Nation Address that was delivered on 6 June 2024 as per Rule 53 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament of Uganda.

The State-of-the-Nation Address is a constitutionally enshrined obligation and an annual tradition meant to provide a clear and comprehensive overview of our nation's progress while unveiling the Government's agenda for the forthcoming year.

Regrettably, the address seems to have deviated from its intended purpose, increasingly resembling a ceremonial ritual rather than a substantive and honest appraisal of our national condition.

The address, while filled with proclamations of progress, appears to lack the depth and sincerity that is necessary to fully capture the complexities and challenges that are facing our nation.

There is a growing dissonance between the rosy picture painted by the address, a copy of which I have, and the harsh realities experienced by many Ugandans daily. Economically – *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sorry, LOP. What is the procedural matter? Because the LOP is making a statement that is provided for under the rules.

MR MACHO: Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Macho, you are protected. Please, honourable colleagues, let us listen.

MR MACHO: Mr Speaker, congratulations for the wonderful function and for hosting us. *(Laughter)* I am happy that the Leader of the Opposition is giving a response to the State-of-the-Nation Address.

His introduction brings a lot of innuendos, being the person who advised the Opposition to boycott the attendance. It really beats my understanding as to whether he is going to give a response with a very positive attitude towards the presidential State-of-the-Nation Address. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. *[Hon. Olanya rose]* Hon. Olanya, there is no one on the Floor. Now, my guidance is, please, let us listen to the Leader of the Opposition in silence.

This statement is delivered under Rule 53 of our Rules of Procedure and Rule 53(2) provides for debate. Now, in case he mentions a statement you do not agree with, during debate, you will have all the time to clarify or to clear the air.

In the public gallery this afternoon, we have students and teachers of Lubani Secondary School, Jinja District, represented by Hon. Moses Muwanika Walyomu and Hon. Joy Katali. They have come to observe proceedings of this House. Please join me in welcoming them. Thank you.

Honourable Leader of the Opposition - *(Hon. Macho rose)*

MR SSENYONYI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Hon. Macho wanted me to take note of his presence and I have taken note.

Mr Speaker, economically, the address fell short of acknowledging the persistent and pervasive economic struggles that many of our citizens endure. Unemployment remains a significant issue, particularly among our youth who are the bedrock of our future. The rising cost of living continues to burden countless families, creating an environment of economic insecurity that was not adequately addressed.

Our healthcare system, a cornerstone of national wellbeing, remains in a precarious state. Despite assertions of improvements, the reality is blatantly different for many Ugandans who face significant challenges in accessing basic health care services. Our hospitals are often underfunded, understaffed and ill-equipped, a situation that the address did not confront with the urgency it deserves. The lack of a clear and actionable plan to rectify these deficiencies is deeply concerning.

Similarly, the education sector, which shapes the future of our nation, faces numerous challenges that were glossed over in the address, the ongoing issues of inadequate funding, poor infrastructure and substandard quality of education in many of our public schools were not sufficiently acknowledged.

Inadequate remedies against corruption, an enduring obstacle to our national progress, reflects a missed opportunity in the State-of-the-Nation Address. While anti-corruption efforts were referenced, mere rhetoric is insufficient. Concrete actions and innovative strategies are imperative to combat this entrenched issue. Without genuine dedication and transparent execution, phrases such as “crashing the corrupt” remain mere slogans.

Furthermore, the address failed to acknowledge the ongoing repression, censorship and harassment faced by Opposition members and civil society organisations. These infringements strike at the core of our democracy and demand immediate attention. Ignoring or downplaying these issues undermines the very foundation of our nation.

To truly move forward, we must confront these issues head-on with a sense of urgency and steady commitment. Our discourse must transcend rhetoric and translate into actionable plans, transparent execution and accountable governance. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that the promises made during the State-of-the-Nation Address are not mere words, but catalysts for real and meaningful change. As representatives of the people, we are duty-bound to hold the Government accountable and

ensure that its promises manifest into tangible improvements in the lives of all Ugandans. Owing to the foregoing, this year’s Opposition response to the State-of-the-Nation Address has been anchored on three pillars namely: service delivery, corruption, and human rights. I will quickly address these issues.

1.0 Urgent economic concerns: a call for reform and accountability

Mr Speaker, our nation stands at a critical juncture, facing profound economic crises that threaten the very fabric of our society and the future of our beloved Uganda. The economic status of Uganda is in a dire state, starkly contradicting the Government’s hollow claims of progress and stability. The harsh reality is undeniable, as every Ugandan feels the deep economic pinch in their pockets. Let me talk about some aspects.

1.1 Over taxation

The burden of over-taxation is a sad reality that cannot be overstated. Our tax system designed to fund public services has unfortunately become a tool that erodes the economic rights of our people. It has stifled the aspirations of small business owners and working families across our land. Businesses close not just in numbers but in droves, each closure a testament to a policy that demands re-evaluation. This is not sustainable, nor is it just.

During the passing of the 2024/2025 tax Bills, we reminded the Government to develop a comprehensive taxation policy for the country such that the imposition of any tax is informed by a well-structured tax framework that does not promote injustice. The Front Bench promised that the comprehensive taxation policy would come to this House before the end of this year. I would like to remind them that they are left with about four months to deliver the comprehensive taxation policy that they promised to this House.

Mr Speaker, the Domestic Revenue Mobilisation Strategy has utterly failed to achieve its core objective. The Government is in desperate need

of more funds for essential service delivery, so it continues to impose levies on a populace that is already suffering from severe economic hardships. This approach is unsustainable and it is unjust, placing an unbearable burden on citizens who are struggling to make ends meet. We must urgently reassess and reform our revenue collection strategies to ensure they are equitable and do not further exacerbate the economic plight of our people.

Mr Speaker, Uganda's approach to taxation has not been balanced by adequate attention to the welfare of our citizens. I am dwelling on this issue because it is important. Ironically, as the Government seeks to raise more revenue through numerous taxes, it simultaneously erodes the very base from which this revenue is meant to be drawn.

You all witnessed the grievances that led to traders striking over the use of Electronic Fiscal Receipting and Invoicing Solutions (EFRIS) by the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA), the *modus operandi* of tax collection and other exorbitant taxes that they have to endure yet, as they say, they do not see value for this tax money. Traders have reached a point where they find it increasingly difficult to continue trading. These traders –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, there are special chairs we have there so kindly create space for them. I can see one of the intended beneficiaries is struggling. I request all of you, honourable colleagues, to leave those seats. Thank you.

MR SSENYONYI: Mr Speaker, this very week, the traders resumed their strike. Yesterday, a couple of them closed their shops and many are saying they will continue to do so. It is not a pleasant situation. They want to work, they want to make money, but they are finding it difficult to operate. The Government promised them meetings, but it is playing hide and seek. We need to listen to these people. We cannot just dismiss them, as I have seen some Government officials dismissing them and saying, "You close if you want. People will go and buy commodities from elsewhere". We

cannot be that callous if we are a Government that claims to care about the people.

Mr Speaker, the state of our nation demands urgent and decisive action. We cannot afford complacency when the stakes are so high.

1.2 Increasing poverty in our country

Poverty in Uganda is a critical and multifaceted issue that affects a significant portion of our population. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) country office annual report of 2023, more than 41.7 per cent of the population of Uganda is living in poverty. Multidimensional child poverty is also high at 44 per cent while monetary child poverty remains at 23 per cent as of 2023.

The multidimensional child poverty that has invaded our homes is tearing the fulcrum around which society is built. In a nation blessed with abundant natural resources and a hardworking population, it is a glaring contradiction that so many should have so little. Vulnerable groups, including children and the elderly, suffer disproportionately with no safety net to catch them as they fall through the cracks widened by economic hardship.

Mr Speaker, you will bear witness, if what I am talking about is not reflected in the pockets of our fellow citizens, in the constituencies where we all come from.

1.3 Youth unemployment

People are struggling to secure the necessities of life due to the rising tide of poverty. This situation demands our urgent attention and action. This is despite the poverty reduction measures like Parish Development Model (PDM), which this Government is implementing without following our well-intentioned advice.

You cannot keep throwing money at people and expect them to get rich. It cannot work. It is no wonder that all the past programmes such as *Emyooga*, Youth Livelihood and others have failed to achieve their intended purposes. It is a

confession of even some Government officials. That is why we keep on bringing out others. The other fails to work, we bring another.

In the case of PDM, it is even more problematic that you will give Shs 100 million to a parish of 1,000 people and the same Shs 100 million to a parish of 40,000 people, as is the case in the heavily-populated urban areas. This skewed mathematics alone should have alerted Government about the inability of this programme to ameliorate the people of Uganda. The math does not work. Again, I have seen many Government officials allude to that fact, but are we listening?

Youth unemployment

This is not just a challenge, Mr Speaker. It is a ticking time bomb. Our young people brimming with potential and ambition are side-lined, their dreams deferred or quashed. We have reached a distressing point where the absence of opportunity drives our youth into terrifying conditions abroad.

Reports of human rights abuses against Ugandans in foreign lands are not just disturbing but are a call to action. It is our duty to respond and to protect our citizens wherever they may be. We all get these calls from Ugandans abroad; we in the Opposition and colleagues in the ruling party. Therefore, it is not something out of our reach.

Furthermore, the plight of our citizens working overseas, particularly in the Arab world, is taken as if it is very normal and okay to mistreat Ugandans in the diaspora. The Government has continuously been urged to take immediate action to recruit labour attachés in major cities and countries where Ugandans are employed.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs must ask these attaches to focus specifically on labour-related issues, provide technical backstopping and consular support in all our foreign Missions. They gave us an update that they did it for some but we want it across.

The Government's role does not stop at levying numerous taxes, but as a sovereign state, it is mandated to negotiate stronger bilateral labour agreements to protect its citizens who are beyond its borders. It is essential to have a bilateral agreement in place before exporting labour to any country.

Mr Speaker, we desire a state that empowers the youth with skills and opportunities here at home, transforming potential energy into kinetic achievements in immediacy. The Government must defend the dignity of every Ugandan at home and abroad and ensure that their labour rights are not violated.

Mr Speaker, let me talk a bit about our worsening public debt. This, coupled with the Government's high appetite for borrowing, poses significant threats to Uganda's economic stability. The situation is exacerbated by rampant corruption and sheer irresponsibility in managing borrowed funds, leading to the payment of commitment fees for unutilised loans.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) report titled, "Uganda's Public Debt Dilemma: What Lies Ahead in 2024," highlights a critical financial issue for Uganda. Interest payments on loans are consuming a significant portion of the country's budget and our domestic revenues, creating a substantial burden.

Additionally, large amounts of borrowed funds are either underutilised or misused. For instance, loans intended for sectors such as health, education, innovation, technology development and transfer, manufacturing, public sector development, regional development, etcetera remain unutilised or poorly managed. This exacerbates the financial challenges faced by our country.

For record purposes, we have provided comprehensive lists of borrowed funds that remain unutilised. This is attached as an appendix so that colleagues can look at it. It is worrying. We borrow this money, it remains idle, and yet we are paying interest on it.

Mr Speaker, it feeds into the narrative that we hear that some public officials do this deliberately; make sure this money comes and then they put it on fixed deposit accounts for their own benefit. Meanwhile, it is not being utilised for the purpose for which it was borrowed. The taxpayer is paying interest. This here goes to feed that narrative.

I provided that list and I would like to request colleagues to take time and read. This is a Government document so you do not assume I am saying this just because I am the Leader of the Opposition. It is a reality that we need to deal with. Let us not borrow money that we are not ready to utilise.

By June 2024, Uganda's public debt had skyrocketed to Shs 97.499 trillion and the Government has continued to borrow even more. This wanton borrowing spree without corresponding value for money undermines the country's fiscal health and burdens future generations with debt repayment obligations.

Not long ago, we had a debate here with the Minister of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development, who was trying to downsize our debt burden. According to them, the obligations we have to Ugandans who have either supplied or done work for the Government and have not been paid should not be considered as debt.

We are saying, when a Ugandan or whoever supplies a service or commodity to you and you take a year, two or three without paying them, first, it is a debt. Secondly, businesses are going to crumble. How do we expect to get taxes from these businesses? Somebody gets a loan from the bank to supply because they have a contract with the Government. Then, the Government takes three, four or five years without paying them. Surely, how do we expect these businesses to survive? It does not make sense at all. We need to prioritise them.

Mr Speaker, in just five years, Uganda's public debt has more than doubled. That is highlighted in the Auditor-General's report of 2024, which indicates that the public debt surged from Shs 46 trillion to Shs 97 trillion.

Disturbingly, there is a lack of a direct correlation between accumulated loans and tangible development. This signals a severe lack of accountability for taxpayers' money. This particularly is unacceptable in the current context where poverty levels are rising and economic hardships are intensifying. The failure to translate borrowed funds into meaningful development projects is a betrayal of public trust, which we have, and a misuse of national resources.

This Government promised to build a specialised hospital at Lubowa. So far, over Shs 600 billion has been sunk into this project. The Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development confirmed that figure here in the House. There is nothing to show for all of that money. No wonder, they cannot give access to us as legislators to see what is happening at the site yet the money is appropriated here. I find that very quixotic.

Government comes to us to appropriate money, we do and when we want to play our oversight role, we cannot. The Committee on Health tried to access that site but they were denied access. I, together with my colleagues, went because our responsibility is to keep the Government in check but we were denied access.

The Rt Hon. Speaker told us that a delegation led by yourself, as Deputy Speaker, would go, check out the site and give us feedback. I am hoping, Mr Speaker, you were also not denied access. *(Laughter)*

You preside over the House that appropriated this money. Why doesn't the Government want to account to us? I made a suggestion here that in our constituencies where we come from, there is a Government health centre that does not have medicine and medical workers. Let us appropriate that money to those health centres because they are operational as opposed to sinking it into something we do not understand.

Mr Speaker, this Government has sunk lots of money into Atiak Sugar Factory without much to show for it. The Parliamentary Budget Committee records reveal that so far, Shs

553.71 billion has been injected in the Atiak Sugar Factory Project but not a single grain of sugar has been produced – *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter. However, Hon. Ssegona, it is wrong to access a microphone before I let you.

MR LUBEGA-SSEGGONA: I apologise. Mr Speaker, the Rt Hon. Leader of the Opposition mentioned that you probably could have accessed Lubowa where the rest of us have not been able to access. We have always been anxious to know - I had thought that you would probably confirm or deny. I seek to be guided procedurally and for you to advise us, if you went, and give us that report. I am sure it will enrich the Leader of the Opposition's statement.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am going there on Wednesday. *(Laughter)* The Speaker told you I would go on Wednesday and I will do so. I am waiting - But Leader of the Opposition, let me guide you this way; you know our rules. When you are reading a statement - in the interest of time because you know we have 30 minutes, I can see you have used 17 - I request you to read the statement, since you submitted it and it is in our system; we are trying to follow it.

MR SSENKYONYI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Actually, what I am reading is in that statement which was uploaded -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you had done that, then my name would not even have come here. *(Laughter)* That is on a light note.

MR SSENKYONYI: Mr Speaker, I just wanted to buttress the point that is uploaded there. However, let me proceed. I was talking about Atiak Sugar Factory before I was interrupted by my learned friend. Shs 553.71 billion has been injected into the Atiak Sugar Factory project but to date, no sugar has come from Atiak. The citizens are asking, "Where is the value for our tax money?"

Mr Speaker, the Government borrowed money in 2021 for the Karamoja-Jinja Expressway to improve the connection between Kampala and Jinja cities and neighbouring countries along the Northern Corridor -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: For the record, it is Kampala-Jinja expressway.

MR SSENKYONYI: I beg your pardon. I meant Kampala, not Karamoja. It is because I was seeing some colleagues here from Karamoja so I got to talk about our good colleagues. It is the Kampala-Jinja expressway to improve the connection between Kampala and Jinja cities. To date, Shs 0.1 per cent of the borrowed money has been utilised. Consequently, we lose 24,000 man-hours every day due to traffic jams. We borrowed money and Shs 0.1 per cent of that has been utilised.

Let me skip some things since I am short of time. Let me talk about corruption, which is a malignant cancer that has got to be urgently dealt with very sternly. It is our considered view that there must be firm commitment to effective and efficient service delivery, accountability and zero tolerance for corruption.

Our alternative budget priorities for the Financial Year 2024/2025 were anchored on the theme, "Fostering Resilient Communities by Combating Corruption and Promoting Efficient Service Delivery." We were deliberate about this. Our alternative policy direction, and more so, the alternative budget, ably articulates our unwavering stance on corruption, which I would like to re-echo very briefly.

Uganda established a comprehensive anti-corruption system to combat the pervasive issue of corruption within the country. However, there is a lack of commitment to this fight. The country continues to be ranked among the most corrupt in the world. This indicates underlying systemic issues that contribute to the persistence of corruption in our country.

Every year, Transparency International Uganda disseminates results for the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI). This CPI highlights

how different countries score in the fight against corruption. According to Transparency International Uganda's report of 2023, Uganda had a score of 26 per cent. When ranked by score, Uganda placed 141st out of 180 nations in the index with the first country having the most honest public sector. You can see where we lie. This is a clear indicator of how badly we are doing in our quest to deal with corruption.

The Executive, Judiciary, and Legislature, the same institutions tasked with safeguarding public funds, have been embroiled in a web of corruption. The Legislature, which we are part of, is embroiled in corruption allegations that span from the distribution of iron sheets meant for Karamoja, the now infamous Budget corruption, payments for war loss compensations to cooperatives, solicitation of funds, to mention a few.

According to a report by the Inspectorate of Government titled, "Cost of Corruption in Uganda", the estimated cost of corruption per year is between Shs 9.1 trillion at the lower end and Shs 20 trillion on the upper end, per year. This is a report of a government entity. This amount represents a significant portion of Uganda's total government revenue and could be saved if corruption was dealt with firmly.

The Head of State's call for caution on lifestyle audits is a slap in the face of every Ugandan who is yearning for a brighter future. We hear slogans of "crushing corruption," but they are not followed by serious action. Mere words, Mr Speaker, will not save the money that is meant to build schools, educate our children or provide the much-needed service delivery. We need results, not rhetoric.

For want of time, I will skip the matter regarding our land sector. The land of Ugandans is being grabbed by the mighty and powerful and our people continue to suffer. For many of them, it is the only asset they have. We must deal with these issues. Let me move to the transport sector.

Our transport sector presents a bleak image characterised by a system that falls short of

meeting the fundamental needs of our citizens. This stifles economic progress. Central to the challenges faced by this neglected sector is the lamentable state of infrastructure, particularly roads, which serve as a vital conduit for both urban and rural connectivity. Failure to maintain roads effectively has resulted in many becoming nearly inaccessible during the rainy season, impeding movement and economic activity.

The dire condition of our road network has far-reaching implications for both urban and rural communities. About 29 per cent of Kampala's road network is in relatively good condition based on the International Roughness Index Road Unevenness, with 71 per cent in fair to poor condition, and yet the bulk of our revenue is collected here in Kampala.

The deteriorating roads in Kampala Metropolitan Area exacerbate traffic congestion, prolong commute times, and raise vehicle operating expenses. Generally, most of the roads in Kampala are in unmaintainable condition and require a complete overhaul. This not only consumes time and resources but also has a negative impact on productivity. For example, in Kampala, traffic jam is a daily ordeal for commuters resulting in loss of hours and decreased efficiency in business.

It is not just Kampala. In rural areas, the poor state of roads poses even greater challenges. Many rural communities rely on roads for access to essential services such as health, education, and markets. However, during the rainy season, impassable roads cut off these communities from vital resources, exacerbating inaccessibility and hindering socio-economic development. For example, farmers struggle to transport their produce to markets leading to losses and reduced income.

Similarly, access to healthcare facilities becomes limited, putting lives at risk, especially in emergencies. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated efforts to streamline fund allocation, enhance procurement processes, and improve infrastructure maintenance capacity at all levels of Government.

Mr Speaker, let me briefly talk about the healthcare system, which is deplorable. The dire state of the healthcare system is glaringly evident in rural areas where hospitals and clinics are often devoid of the most basic necessities. Imagine a mother in a remote village, desperate to find medicine for her sick child, only to discover that the nearest clinic is without essential drugs or even a qualified healthcare worker to offer assistance. This heart-breaking scenario plays out far too often across the country, leaving families devastated and communities vulnerable to the ravages of preventable diseases.

Corruption within the healthcare sector has compounded service delivery challenges, creating a vicious cycle of deprivation and despair. Consider the case of a hospital where funds meant to purchase vital medical supplies mysteriously disappear into the pockets of corrupt officials. As a result, patients are left to suffer needlessly, their lives hanging in balance as they wait in vain for treatment that may never come.

Many of the calls we get from our constituents are to give them some money to go to a private healthcare facility because the Government is not providing that. Meanwhile, those responsible for this embezzlement continue to enjoy lives of luxury, callously indifferent to the suffering they have caused. This is a flagrant violation of the right to health enshrined in both international law and our country's constitution.

Mr Speaker, let me move ahead, again for want of time. Addressing the shortage of qualified healthcare workers, which is another of the challenges that we have, is imperative. Policies should focus on training, recruiting and retaining healthcare professionals. Accordingly, the Government should increase funding for medical education, offer scholarships and incentives for students to study medicine and nursing, and provide competitive salaries and benefits to attract and retain skilled healthcare workers in rural areas and in our country because many of them run away to other countries where they are paid better.

The Government should also prioritize the deployment of medical interns; you did speak about that. The other day, interns were protesting, saying, "We have studied for five years, deploy us so that we can work". Is the Government listening? Let me move ahead to number six; the need to prioritize the agricultural sector.

Agriculture is Uganda's main economic driver, whether we want it or not, and it provides 70 per cent of employment and contributes half of all exports and one-quarter of the Growth Domestic Product (GDP). The agro-industrialization programme received an allocation of Shs 1.6 trillion, representing 4.4 per cent of the total national budget.

This funding is insufficient, with over 54 per cent of the sector's budget coming from external financing. There is an urgent need to increase the budget to at least 10 per cent in alignment with the 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation.

In addition, we must prioritise agricultural mechanisation. Many of our farmers lack access to appropriate technology at various stages of the agricultural value chain. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) must develop and present a national mechanisation strategy and equipment management and utilisation policy to Parliament. This will help address the existing challenges and gaps in the mechanisation strategy.

Furthermore, there is need to allocate a budget for strengthening the public extension system and recruiting more extension workers in areas of high need, and we have many. By doing so, the Government is tasked to facilitate a phased recruitment and deployment of additional extension workers.

Fisheries Sub-Sector

This Parliament has received numerous petitions about the Government's mismanagement of the fisheries sub-sector. The Fish Maws and

Traders Association of Uganda Limited is concerned about the excessive taxes, missing trade agreements, increasing brutality by security personnel, and human rights violations under the disguise of fighting illegal fishing.

Even after this honourable House passed the Fisheries and Aquaculture Act, 2022 to manage the fisheries sub-sector in our country, human rights violations and torture are not accounted for in many of these operations on the lake by security agencies. Parliament has urged the Minister of State for Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries to introduce regulations for the Fisheries and Aquaculture Act, 2022 with no success.

We also call for an investigation into atrocities committed by security personnel for the perpetrators to be brought to justice and for the victims to be compensated. These are Ugandans trying to earn a living.

Challenges in Uganda's Justice System

It is plagued by chronic under-resourcing and inefficiency, leading to substantial delays in adjudicating cases. These delays have severely hindered the ability of the Judiciary to provide timely and effective justice.

For many Ugandans, the lack of affordable legal representation exacerbates the problem, resulting in stark disparities in access to justice. Those unable to afford lawyers often navigate the complex legal system without adequate support, which compromises their right to a fair trial.

Judicial corruption is another significant issue undermining the justice system in Uganda. Reports of judicial officers and court officials taking bribes to influence case outcomes are alarmingly common. This corruption not only skews the administration of justice but also erodes public confidence in the Judiciary.

For instance, individuals with financial means can often secure favourable verdicts through bribery. Even Government officials have talked about this matter that I am addressing,

while those without such resources are left at a disadvantage. This pervasive corruption undermines the rule of law and perpetuates a sense of injustice among the populace.

Mr Speaker, resource constraints, slow case processing and corruption prolong suspect pre-trial detention. This is why many accused persons unlawfully spend months or years in detention before trial. This violates due process and fair trial since it impacts people, families, and communities. Our colleagues who just returned from jail, who were brutally arrested as they were going for a press conference: the Hon. Francis Zaake, Hon. Tebandeke Charles, and Hon. Hassan Kirumira, told us of many inmates they found in police detention facilities, here at Central Police Station who have been there for weeks. It is wrong and we must be able to address these issues.

The other example is, we have so many National Unity Platform and other Opposition supporters languishing in various detention centres on trumped-up charges.

Secondly - including the National Resistance Movement (NRM). There have been cases where suspects of minor offences have been jailed for longer than the maximum sentence they would have received if convicted. This is indicative of a justice system that is not only slow but also indifferent to the plight of the less privileged.

The lack of timely and fair adjudication has fostered a culture of impunity in our country where those with power and resources exploit the system to their advantage.

Furthermore, the Judiciary struggles with severe resource constraints and these have manifested in various forms, such as inadequate court facilities, insufficient staff, limited access to legal databases, and other necessary tools to do their work. These shortcomings have occasioned the challenge of case backlog and overburdened judicial officers who are unable to keep pace with the volume of cases that require adjudication.

According to the Justice, Law, and Order Sector report, courts closed with a pending caseload of 156,349 cases in 2021/2022, of which 42,960 were backlogged. This accounted for 27.48 per cent of the case backlog. It is problematic. These issues have been made worse by the absence of a strong legal aid system, which leaves the most vulnerable segments of society without access to legal assistance. The Government should extend access to legal aid, enhance transparency and accountability, and increase financing of the Judiciary. The justice system can only regain public confidence and maintain the rule of law by implementing such measures.

Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities

This sector is a significant source of foreign exchange for our country and it boasts of high returns on investment. This sector is the most appropriate means to revive our struggling economy, and it should be given the necessary attention and support to raise funds for the protection and enjoyment of other basic rights.

However, it is unfortunate that the Government of Uganda provides insufficient funding for this sector, despite its economic potential. For instance, in 2022, tourism-related revenue and foreign exchange earnings totalled Shs 2.7 trillion, and yet the sector's approved budget has been stagnating between Shs 193 billion and Shs 248 billion in the last five financial years.

This is a very fertile sector because if you can reap Shs 2.7 trillion when you inject about Shs 200 billion, that means when you inject more, you reap a lot more. It is equally important to note that there are historical and cultural heritage sites with over 650 cultural sites that are underserved and underdeveloped for tourism. We need to fix this.

Let me run to education, Mr Speaker. The education sector in Uganda is plagued by severe underfunding, leading to a multitude of challenges, which significantly impede the delivery of quality education. We have got overcrowded classrooms, which are a

common sight, with student-to-teacher ratios far exceeding recommended levels. For example, a recent validation exercise done by the Education Service Commission revealed that the country required an extra workforce of 78,880 primary school teachers to reach the intended target of maintaining a 1:40 teacher-pupil ratio at the basic level.

This, however, is far from being achieved. Overcrowding has not only hampered effective teaching and learning but has also put a strain on the few resources that we have available, such as textbooks, desks and other essential supplies. Many schools, particularly in rural regions, lack appropriate infrastructure, including poor sanitation, which negatively impacts on the learning environment. And that is a sight in all our constituencies.

A major contributing factor to the aforementioned challenges is the chronic shortage of qualified teachers. In many schools, especially those in remote areas, there are not enough teachers to meet the needs of the student population. This shortage forces schools to either combine classes or employ unqualified personnel, both of which negatively impact the quality of education. I would like to skip a bit due to lack of time. I have talked about education and what I believe we need to do to fix it.

Defence and Internal Affairs

The Ministry of Internal Affairs is entrenched in a mire of corruption and inefficiency, failing utterly in its mandate to provide effective policing and public safety services. The high crime rates, coupled with the pervasive lack of trust in law enforcement agencies, expose the ministry's glaring incompetence and systemic failure. The rampant corruption within the Uganda Police Force and other internal affairs departments is a cancer eating away at the very fabric of our society. Bribery and favouritism are not just occasional occurrences; they are the norm, unfortunately and they severely undermine justice and security. There are widespread reports and incidents of excessive use of force, arbitrary arrests and torture.

These abuses are often directed at political opponents and even ordinary citizens. For example, during political gatherings, the police routinely uses excessive force, including firing live ammunition and unnecessary tear gas resulting in injuries and fatalities. Arbitrary arrests and detention are rampant with individuals being held without trial, sometimes for extended periods.

In a number of cases, what we see is the abduction of citizens by plain-clothed, gun-wielding men who take these people to unknown places, and many have since been missing for years. For example, John Bosco Kibalama, has been missing for over four years, yet the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, Ms Robinah Nabbanja, admitted that he was arrested by the State and is in the hands of the state. Of late, the same is happening even to Members of Parliament. We saw what happened in the past to Hon. Ssegirinya, Hon. Ssewanyana, and most recently, to Hon. Paul Akamba, who is one of us and belongs to the NRM but he was abducted for about three or so days no one knew where he was. It is wrong, whether it happens to the Opposition or people from the ruling party.

Mr Speaker, when these practices become normalised, because everyone gets to be a potential victim, that is what happens when we normalise them, as we are witnessing today. What is particularly disturbing is the abdication of duty by the Uganda Human Rights Commission, a body explicitly mandated to safeguard the rights of our citizens. This commission has shamelessly turned a blind eye to these atrocities, failing in its core responsibility to protect the vulnerable and uphold justice. This neglect not only emboldens the perpetrators but also undermines the trust and faith of the people in our institutions that are meant to protect them. I would like to skip a bit, Mr Speaker, for want of time and move to my conclusion.

Mr Speaker, the spirit under which we raise these issues is not just because we are only mandated to do so as per the legal and policy frameworks under which we operate but to a

wider margin, it is a nationalistic one because the concerns I have raised, we see them where we come from, among the people we lead, who keep calling us to fill in the gaps where the Government is meant to be taking action.

When the country is sinking, we cannot all just become spectators, to cheer those who are steering our country to complete destruction as per the examples that I have given. I can see Hon. Magyezi is mad. I have listed the examples, many of which are happening in the constituencies where we come from, including the one, which he used to represent because he does not represent it anymore.

Mr Speaker, we must take a step forward to put up a spirited fight to redeem our country from those who wield power and they are irresponsibly using it contrary to the citizenry's wishes and aspirations.

As a government in waiting, because we are, we shall continue to do whatever is possible within our reach to bring about a positive change aimed at restoring the original glory of our country. I, therefore, implore each one of us, to reflect on these issues and act swiftly on them for the good of all of us and those who shall come after us. I beg to submit. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the Opposition (LOP). Colleagues, under rule 53 we may debate the response of the (LOP) to the State of the Nation Address, or any of his statements, but for us to have a structured debate, I suggest that we also receive the motion that we do have for the State of the Nation Address, and we debate both of them together, so that we have much more time. Next item?

MOTION THAT THANKS OF PARLIAMENT BE RECORDED FOR THE CLEAR AND PRECISE EXPOSITION OF GOVERNMENT POLICY CONTAINED IN THE ADDRESS ON THE STATE OF THE NATION BY H.E. THE PRESIDENT TO PARLIAMENT ON 6 JUNE 2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Emely Kugonza, I want the Order Paper to capture the record very well. The mover is Hon. Emely Kugonza, and not the Rt Hon. Prime Minister. The seconders are Hon. Catherine Lamwaka and Hon. Agnes Kunihira.

3.28

DR EMELY KUGONZA (NRM, Buyanja East County, Kibaale): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Motion that thanks of Parliament be recorded for the clear and precise exposition of Government policy contained in the address on the State of the Nation by H.E. the President to Parliament on Thursday, 6 June 2024.

“WHEREAS Article 101(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda requires the President to deliver to Parliament an address on the State of the Nation at the beginning of each session;

AND WHEREAS His Excellency the President, in compliance with Article 101(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, delivered the State of the Nation Address to the 11th Parliament at Kololo Ceremonial Grounds, on Thursday, 6 June 2024;

AWARE THAT in the address to the nation, the President highlighted the transformation road of Uganda, emphasising the three historical missions of prosperity, security and taking advantage of the brotherhood of the African people, as well as the four principles of the National Resistance Movement of patriotism, Pan-Africanism, socio-economic transformation and democracy;

RECOGNISING THAT His Excellency the President informed the nation that the country has entered the lower middle-income status and is realising social economic transformation and

democracy as a result of the correct philosophy, ideology, strategy of the National Resistance Movement and assertion of patriotism and Pan-Africanism;

FURTHER RECOGNISING THAT His Excellency the President informed the nation that the socio-economic transformation could be attained through education for all and prosperity for all in the four money-making sectors of commercial agriculture, manufacturing, services and ICT, and these are being funded through Parish Development Model, Emyooga, the GROW project and UDB loans;

COGNISANT THAT His Excellency the President called upon Ugandans to desist from corruption, since it is a danger to Uganda’s rapid socio-economic transformation;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that Parliament expresses gratitude to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda for his clear and concise exposition of the State of the Nation in the State of the Nation Address.” I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded? (*Members rose*) Rt Hon. Nakadama, Hon. Magyezi, Hon. Florence Akiiki, Dr Jane Aceng, Attorney-General, Hon. Huda Oleru, Hon. Mateke, Minister for Water and Environment, Minister for Ethics and Integrity, Hon. Lamwaka, Hon. Nandutu, Hon. Manjeri, Hon. Didi- most Members here; Hon. Keefa, Hon. Agnes Kunihira because she is an official seconder. Honourable, would you like to speak to your motion?

DR KUGONZA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In accordance with Article 101(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995, His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni Tibuhaburwa the President of the Republic of Uganda delivered the State-of-the-Nation Address on Thursday 6th June 2024, at the 1st meeting of the 1st sitting of the Fourth session of the 11th Parliament of the Republic of Uganda at Kololo Independence Ceremonial Grounds.

His Excellency the President highlighted the three historical missions for Africa to survive and thrive; and these were prosperity for the African people including the people of Uganda, strategic security for the African people and taking advantage of the brotherhood of the African people.

These historical missions are anchored in the four principles of the National Resistance Movement and these are patriotism, Pan-Africanism, socio-economic transformation and democracy.

These three historical missions will stimulate the four sectors of the economy, namely commercial agriculture, manufacturing, services and information and communication technology.

His Excellency the President informed the country that since 1996, the Ugandan economy has recovered as portrayed in the high production of homegrown and processed agro products, industrial products whose total output has surpassed the internal demand, as I can explain.

For instance, for the case of sugar, we are producing annually 600,000 metric tonnes, and our local demand is only 380,000, and thus generating a surplus of 220 metric tonnes.

For milk, we are producing 5.3 billion litres consuming only 800 million litres thus a surplus of 4.5 billion litres. For cement, we are producing 6.4 million metric tonnes, only consuming 2.4 million metric tonnes and thus generating a surplus of 4 million metric tonnes. The total annual surplus is being traded within the African market and beyond.

The President further informed the nation that through patriotism and Pan-Africanism, the East African community was revived and the common market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) consolidated.

This has expanded the narrow market for Uganda's products. East, Central Africa and the COMESA are buying the surplus goods and

services to a tune, for example, from COMESA of \$2,157 billion. The East African countries are importing from Uganda goods valued at \$2.140 billion.

With a more united African market, through the implementation of the existing common market protocols and the customs Union Protocol, Africa can then be able to negotiate with other countries for market access and these potential markets are the European Union, the United States of America, China, Russia, the Gulf and India.

The President reminded Ugandans about the socio-economic transformation as a key ideology of the National Resistance Movement.

The NRM Government has continuously guided that the socio-economic transformation can be realised through education for all and prosperity for all and joining the four money-making sectors of commercial agriculture, manufacturing, services and ICT.

The Government has set up funds and initiatives for low-income individuals to enable them to attain socio-economic transformation. And these are the Operation Wealth Creation, NAADs, plan for modernisation of agriculture, *Entandikwa* in the past, Parish Development Model as of now, the *Emyooga*, the Youth Livelihood Fund, the Women Fund and funds from the Growth Opportunities and productivity for Women Enterprises (GROW).

The more empowered individuals should borrow from the Uganda Development Bank for agriculture, manufacturing, and some of the services such as tourism.

The President highlighted that Uganda has entered the lower middle-income status with \$1,182 per capita. This has been achieved after embracing the NRM's philosophy, ideology, and strategy of economic recovery through restoring and expanding the production of the traditional cash crops and minerals, diversifying the cash crop with food crop, water, flora and fauna, animal products, palm oil, and fruits; adding value to some of the raw materials and

the knowledge economy, which have enabled the economy to grow from \$1.5 billion in 1986 to the current level of \$55 billion by foreign exchange method or \$180.29 billion by the purchasing power parity method.

The President urged the youth to embrace the ICT sector for enhancement of skills, exposure to more employment opportunities worldwide, and innovation through the purposive use of the Internet.

Information communication and technology are essential in improving national productivity because it has the potential to make Government and business enterprises more efficient, effective, and globally competitive. ICT is a key tool for socio-economic transformation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Procedure -

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am raising on a procedural matter. You see, we are debating the State of the Nation address with the Leader of the Opposition's statement and in debate, we always do not refer to notes.

The Honourable Member attended the State-of-the-Nation Address. He was in the presence of the President but he is reading figures as if he is bringing a new statement on the Floor of Parliament and funny enough he reads with glasses on the head and then sometimes puts them on his eyes, which is his own fashion.

Are we proceeding well with the honourable mover of the motion debating but referring to notes, almost going back to the same? It is also as if he is giving another statement within a statement of the President he is supporting.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: To begin with, the Member is justifying his motion and then, after we shall debate. I think he is giving a true record because Hon. Ssewungu did not attend the State-of-the-Nation Address.

So, for the benefit of people like Hon. Ssewungu, he needed to recap and then they debate from an informed point of view. Resume, maybe you change on how you use your glasses. *(Laughter)*

DR KUGONZA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I know my friend always wants to engage me but we can do it outside this august House. Thank you, for the protection. I was doing this well knowing that we had a team that was not part of us in Kololo, and I need to capture what the President stated accurately. *(Applause)*

The President reminded Ugandans that the NRM Government has put in place the legal and institutional framework to fight corruption, like the Inspectorate of Government, the Anti-Corruption Court, the Anti-Corruption Unit in State House, Criminal Investigations and Intelligence Directorate of the Uganda Police, Whistle Blower Policy, among others.

These institutions need the support of all of us and Parliament should take the lead in the fight against corruption as we are the representatives of the people.

The President reiterated his commitment to fight corruption and reminded us that it is equally the duty of all Ugandans. This is a call for action to all of us to eliminate corruption in public service and from among the political leaders.

The President further identified other actors in corruption who get bribes from foreigners to promote foreign interests and referred to them as both corrupt and traitors, whom he termed as being more dangerous.

The President appreciated the working relationship between the three arms of Government that have continued to steer transparency and harmony in the budget process and implementation of Government programmes to serve the interests of Ugandan citizens.

Mr Speaker, lastly, I would like to thank the President, Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni Tibuhaburwa, for the impressive socio-economic transformation, which has been achieved under the NRM Government since 1986. The wealth and job creation initiatives have enabled low-income earning Ugandans to be part of the money economy, which has

enabled Uganda to attain the lower middle-income status. I beg to move. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Lamwaka. Honourable colleagues, read Rule 76 of our Rules of Procedure with regard to reading statements. I allowed Hon. Kugonza because he was referring to someone's speech; but under our rules of debate and presentation, you should not be reading. You can refer to your notes but you should not be reading. Refer to rule 76.

3.41

MS CATHERINE LAMWAKA (NRM, Woman Representative, Omoro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to second the motion for a resolution of Parliament to appreciate the President of the Republic of Uganda, His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni for the clear and precise exposition of Government policy contained in the State-of-the Nation Address to Parliament on Thursday, 6 June 2024.

The President delivered the State-of-the-Nation Address in accordance with Article 101(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, which the mover of the motion clearly explained. The President's speech was very captivating, thorough and spot-on in respect to Government policy, plans and programmes.

The President's address was not only articulate and firm about the development trajectory of our country but was also elaborate on the accomplishments so far recorded in the historic mission of transforming Uganda.

The President in his address to Parliament, started by highlighting three Africa's historic missions. These missions were, if I could recall, one was on prosperity for the people of Africa, including Uganda. The second one was on strategic security for the African people. The third one, Mr Speaker, was about taking advantage of the brotherhood of African people.

I am here to second the motion that was moved in appreciation of the President's address. The

President gave a detailed account on how the three critical missions are being tackled and the roles of citizens. The President emphasised the need for each adult person to engage in the production of a good or service sustainably and selling it guided by the principle of profit maximisation. I think this is very critical for us as legislators and the people of Uganda.

He further guided that the goods must be produced in sufficient quantities, aware of the fact that we have adequate market – the EAC market and COMESA. The sufficient quantities of goods that the President emphasised that we produce is to guarantee prosperity of Uganda. This is inevitable because it brings in the question of addressing the demand in the market, within the country and in the region.

In light of this, the President delved into explaining about the second NRM ideological principle of Pan-Africanism, regional and continental markets such as the EAC and COMESA, offering greater opportunities for prosperity for countries like Uganda, who are Member States.

The President gave statistics to bring his point home. You all agree with me that according to the statistics of the President, currently, COMESA is buying goods and services worth \$2.157 billion annually, which is something that we need to really appreciate. (*Applause*) EAC countries are importing from Uganda goods worth \$2.140 billion. According to the President, these are statistics that we really have to take keen note of.

Today, Uganda has annual surplus production in sugar of 220,000 metric tonnes, milk 4.5 billion litres. In the absence of the regional and other markets, this would either be wasted or distort local prices, thus undermining the prosperity of Uganda.

In his address, the President covered all four ideological principles of NRM, namely; patriotism, Pan-Africanism, socio-economic transformation, and democracy.

The President informed the nation that the correct philosophy, ideology, and strategy of the NRM Party and Government have enabled the economy to grow at a good rate.

The measures adopted in 1986 have enabled the size of the economy to grow from \$ 1.5 billion to \$55 billion, by the foreign exchange method as the mover of the motion highlighted in his motion; the same \$1,080.29 billion by the purchasing power parity, as the mover of the motion highlighted.

Mr Speaker, this is impressive and commendable growth that we must appreciate as the august House and something good for Uganda as a country. *(Applause)*

The President informed Ugandans that we would have been able to post more growth had it not been for some existing trade barriers in the EAC. On that note, I remember the President implored all the East African countries to work hard towards removing all kinds of trade barriers and bottlenecks for us to benefit as Member States so that we exploit the full potential of the markets that we have.

The President emphasised the subject of wealth creation, which the motion mover elaborated on very clearly. I want to believe that colleagues were able to appreciate that fact. The President said that we should all participate in the four sectors of commercial agriculture, manufacturing, artisan services and ICT, using the many funding opportunities, which the mover of the motion highlighted.

Mr Speaker, I want to emphasise that it is very crucial, as the President highlighted, that as legislators, we embrace this move being advocated for by the President for socio-economic transformation in our community and the country as a whole.

The President highlighted a number of tasks ahead for his government that he will undertake. The President assured Ugandans that after full recovery from the adverse effects of COVID-19, the Government will ensure that it provides completely free education for

the Ugandan children in Government primary and secondary education. This is something that we must appreciate.

I heard the Leader of the Opposition mentioning something to do with education. I am glad that the President, in his address to the nation, mentioned the issue of education as something very critical to this Government.

Mr Speaker, the President also highlighted the elimination of corruption as one of the key tasks to undertake. He pledged to crush the traitors who engage in the vice.

Mr Speaker, I believe strongly in the commitment of the President and the Executive, as I highlighted in his State-of-the-Nation Address. I call upon the House to embrace, accept, and receive the Address of the President in good faith for the good of all Ugandans and to make us move forward.

Mr Speaker, allow me to once again thank His Excellency, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the President of the Republic of Uganda, for fulfilling his constitutional mandate of delivering the State-of-the-Nation Address of 2024. There is no doubt about the President's commitment in his address.

The President's address put forward, as well elaborated by the mover of the motion to this august House, a number of progressive policy options that were elaborated on, which will take our country to a greater height.

Mr Speaker, long live His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. Long live Uganda. I beg to second the motion that was moved. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Agnes Kunihira - Long live all of you honourable colleagues. *(Laughter)*

3.51

MS AGNES KUNIHIRA (NRM, Workers Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to support the motion appreciating His Excellency President Yoweri Kaguta

Museveni, for a clear and concise State-of-the-Nation Address.

Mr Speaker, the President emphasised a better collaboration of the East African countries, in the spirit of the East African Community, to allow fair trade that promotes production. We thank him as he gives us more hope for prosperity for all. The sectors like commercial agriculture will grow and feed into industrialisation.

Mr Speaker, His Excellency, the President emphasised the Government's commitment to the promotion of agro-industrialisation, which aims at enhancing production through value addition. This will improve competitiveness of agricultural products in the subregion and Africa as a whole.

He mentioned areas where we are producing more and exporting; for example, dairy products and sugar, which have contributed towards growth of the agriculture sector to 5.1 from the previous year at 4.5. This has created more jobs and export expansion, in addition to the traditional cash crops.

Mr Speaker, the President implored all Ugandans to engage in wealth creation by taking advantage of Government programmes like *Emyooga*, Parish Development Model (PDM) and GROW, which provide affordable capital and create jobs for youth and women. The Government has continued to release funds for PDM. This will accelerate economic growth as 39 per cent of the households will move into the money economy. As leaders who are here, let us do our part of mobilising the population.

Mr Speaker, His Excellency the President highlighted issues of interest rates charged by the commercial banks and individual lenders. His directive should be implemented by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. It will facilitate individuals to access working capital, more especially those who cannot access the interventions of Uganda Development Bank and agricultural credit

facilities. We look forward to the minister addressing this issue.

Mr Speaker, the President indicated that this time round he will not tolerate corruption within the public sector and also amongst political leaders. We must join him in condemning corruption. We all know a lot of money is lost through corruption, denying the NRM Government the ability to fulfill its mandate of providing better services in terms of good roads, health facilities, and education.

I conclude, Mr Speaker, by appreciating His Excellency the President and the Government for steering this country.

Finally, this was not in his State-of-the-Nation Address, but it is an appeal. I urge the Government, this time round in the next financial year, to consider improving on the issue of the payee to increase the threshold from Shs 235,000 to Shs 500,000. You are aware that the workers are suffering because of this tax and more others. It would be better that in the next State-of-the-Nation Address, the President brings this out. With those few remarks, I thank the President for his State-of-the-Nation Address. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Agnes Kunihira.

The question for debate, honourable colleagues, is that the motion that thanks of Parliament be recorded for the clear and precise exposition of Government policy contained in the Address on the State-of-the-Nation by His Excellency the President to Parliament on 6 June 2024, be adopted. That is the question for debate.

Honourable colleagues we are coming to the Prime Minister's Time; so let us first sort out that, and then we shall resume with the debate later. Let us do item 6. – The Prime Minister's Time is mandatory under the rules. Once it is 4.00 p.m., I have no option, if it is Thursday.

PRIME MINISTER'S TIME

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, I wanted us to first handle item 6. Is it ready?

STATEMENT BY THE RIGHT
HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER ON
GOVERNMENT BUSINESS FOR THE
SUCCEEDING WEEK, 5 TO 8 AUGUST
2024, UNDER RULE 28 OF THE RULES
OF PROCEDURE OF PARLIAMENT

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

3.58

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I am happy to provide a statement of business for the succeeding week, under Rule 28 of the Rules of Procedure, as the Leader of Government Business.

I, therefore, submit the following Government business for the succeeding week, that is from 6 to 8 August 2024.

- i. The Engineering Professionals Bill, 2024
- ii. The National Teachers' Bill, 2024

Mr Speaker, I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Next item.

PRIME MINISTER'S TIME

3.59

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): We got written questions from a number of Members and I want to start with Hon. William Museveni, Member of Parliament for Buwekula South County, Mubende District.

“Mityana-Mubende Highway construction, by Energo Construction Company was supposed to be completed this year, that is 2024, but they

have not reached even halfway. Why is it that the work is too slow? Since the contractual time has elapsed, what is the way forward for this road?”

Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, his prayer is, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, “can you please update the House on the status of this road?”

Here is my response:

The Mityana-Mubende 86-kilometre road is a national road in the central subregion. The road connects the capital city of Kampala to the western region towns of Fort Portal, Kasese, Kagadi, among others. The road is an important international route, used to access Uganda's borders with the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and crucial for agriculture, trade, and security.

The Government of Uganda, through the Uganda National Roads Authority, signed a contract on 4 January 2021 for the reconstruction of the Mityana-Mubende road which is 86 kilometres, as I have already told you, including upgrading the 14 kilometres of towns in Mityana Town or Municipality.

The construction works will improve rebuilding the road, which had deteriorated, and was affecting the traffic flow along the major route, including repairing the drainage facilities, installing new road signs and road markings. The project is fully funded by the Government of Uganda.

The project was originally intended to be completed by 15 April this year. However, the progress of works has been affected by limited resources in the last financial years.

This lack of resources forced the contractor to slow down the implementation of the project. The contractor had implemented 40 per cent of the works when the financial challenges were encountered. Currently, the contractor has completed work worth Shs 32 billion and the project is expected to be completed by the end of this financial year. Government is working

to ensure that resources for the completion of the project are availed to the contractor to enable him or them to complete this important project.

The Mityana-Mubende Road is an important link and was prioritised for reconstruction by Government and Government, therefore, committed to ensuring that the project is completed, as you all know. They will put in place measures to make sure that the contractor is paid on time.

The second question came from Hon. Judith Peace Achan, Member of Parliament, Nwoya District. She asked, "When was the last time NEMA visited Bukona Factory in Nwoya District to ascertain whether they are still complying with environmental regulations?" And address the following concerns:

1. Whether there is proper treatment of factory waste or hazardous waste management.
2. Whether the ministry has enforced the law in place. On several occasions, the community around the factory complained to her over air and water pollution." She is asking, what measures has the line ministry done to save the lives of the people?
3. Whether the management has a waste minimisation plan.
4. Whether there are site interim measures and site remediation."

Prayers are:

1. "Last warning to be given to Bukona Factory to restrain from polluting air and comply with the regulations.
2. For the community around Bukona suffering from this hazardous waste disposal; can management take the lead in ascertaining the health of the people who live there? If found or suspected to be infected because of waste disposal and air pollution, they must be treated and compensated.

3. Compensate those who suffered injuries from the accident that occurred at the site as a result of pipe bursting.
4. The Committee on Climate Change should visit the factory to ascertain whether they are still complying with the regulations."

My response is that it is true that Bukona Factory, a biofuel production factory, using maize, sorghum, cassava, as raw materials has environmental non-compliance issues, which the Government, through NEMA, are handling already.

While the factory was established through due process, with requisite environmental and social impact assessment and water abstraction permits, our recent compliance inspections have confirmed serious issues of non-compliance, especially regarding waste water discharge from the distiller to the waste ponds created 300 metres from the factory.

The distillery discharge to the waste ponds, without adequate treatment, is not in line with the conditions of approval of the environment and social impact assessment certificate issued by NEMA.

Mr Speaker, inspectors have already visited the factory and confirmed that the pungent smell is actually from the waste discharge ponds established by the factory and appropriate compliance assistance and guidance have already been issued to the company.

After inspections by NEMA inspectors, the following actions were taken:

- i. An improvement notice was issued to the factory, guiding them on the process to establish a proper effluent treatment plant for the distillery.
- ii. The factory accepted the guidance issued by NEMA and committed to put in place an engineered effluent treatment plant by September this year.

iii. In the meantime, NEMA suspended the distillery operations, as of April 2024, to avoid the further accumulation of the effluent into the pond.

Although the effluent in the ponds still emits a strong smell, this will be addressed through effluent treatment plant. Our inspectors will continue to monitor the progress made by the factory in rectifying the problem. Failure to adhere to the compliance guidance issued to the factory will result into appropriate actions in line with the provisions of the National Environmental Act, 2019.

This can include suspension of the entire factory operations, prosecution in courts of law and imposition of fines for breach of certificate conditions. The Government will continue to follow up on this matter to its meaningful resolution.

The NEMA team recently visited the factory and is working with the company to convert the waste into organic fertilisers after conducting studies on the chemical composition of the cassava waste.

The third question came from Hon. Isaac, Member of Parliament Padyere County, Nebbi District.

“The number of high-risk depleted bridges in Nebbi District continue to cause increased loss of life through accidents. Nyaravur-Parombo road in Nebbi District has three high-risk bridges and Ayira Bridge has caused over 30 deaths over the years including school pupils on a school trip.

As a result, the district applied to the Ministry of Works and Transport to take the Nyaravur-Parombo Road under the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) but to no avail”. Districts no longer have funds to renovate or build bridges.

His prayer was, what is the way forward in helping districts carry out renovation or reconstruction of high-risk bridges?

Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, this is my response.

The Government has allocated Shs 190.4 billion for District, Urban Community Access Roads (DUCAR) bridges over the past 15 years (2009 to June 2024). These funds were primarily channelled through two project codes: Code 0269 for the construction of selected bridges and Code 1558 for rural bridges and infrastructure development.

The ministry funding for DUCAR bridges has averaged Shs 20 billion annually over the past five years. While this budget allows the construction of about three to five bridges per year, the Government intends to add more money to construct the bridges in a phased manner.

Mr Speaker, on 28 September 2021, the ministry received a request from the Chief Administrative Officer Nebbi District Local Government to take over the maintenance function for Nyaravur-Parombo Road and Wadelai-Kucwiny-Agwok Road.

Subsequently, on 17th November 2021, the Ministry of Works requested the district to provide information regarding the use, function, and administrative purpose of the road, as well as the District Council resolutions to facilitate evaluation of the request and consideration for re-classification.

Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, the Ministry of Works and Transport prepared guidelines for re-classification of the public roads from the community access road to district roads and the district road to national roads or trunk roads.

These Guidelines were circulated to all Chief Administrative Officers and Town Clerks on 3 January 2024. However, the ministry has not yet received any submission from the districts even after the circulation of these guidelines.

Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, the districts are, therefore, requested to re-submit their application in line with the circulated

guidelines to enable the ministry determine whether the roads qualify re -classification or not.

The increased funding for the roads on DUCAR network over the past years has yielded some improvements. However, the network still faces significant challenges due to aging infrastructure and harsh weather conditions that further worsen their conditions.

Mr Speaker, the Government through the Ministry of Works will conduct thorough inspections of the bridges on Nyaravur-Parombo Road including Ayira Bridge to assess their condition for appropriate action.

Mr Speaker, the fourth question came from Hon. Byakatonda Abdul, Workers' Representative. "Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I raise a matter concerning the Government's commitment to promoting silkworm farming in Uganda."

His prayer was, what specific measures are being put in place to operationalise this key investment?

Mr Speaker, the Government proposed to prioritised certain projects both in NDP III and the NRM manifesto. This is in line with the Government's objective for the planning period which includes improving household incomes and generating forex for the country through exports.

Whereas the Government identifies sericulture as a potential area of investment, there was insufficient data available to inform the economic and technical viability, guide the design, and implement full-scale investments in the sericulture industry in Uganda.

Mr Speaker, since 2012, the Government has been engaged in action research using a two-pronged approach to;

1. Support private investors to bring in their capital with standard incentives such as land;
2. Support the public sector investment through the Public-Private Partnership (PPP).

Mr Speaker, in 2012, the Government supported private sector investors by allocating land to establish a silk production and processing facility in Gomba. And in 2017/18, the Government initiated an action research project into the sericulture industry development using the PPP approach.

This was meant to generate information to guide the strategic investment into and adoption of sericulture as a key economic driver in the country should it prove viable.

Mr Speaker, in 2022, the Government initiated a detailed evaluation of the economic viability, technical performance, and implementation efficiency of the sericulture investments in the country.

Several MDAs have participated in these efforts including my office, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the National Planning Authority, Economic Monitoring-Unit Office of the President; and

In addition, multiple committees of Parliament have been involved in monitoring including the committees on Presidential Affairs and Science, Technology, and Innovation whose reports and recommendations have been considered. The reports and recommendations are going through the process of the Government to guide the next steps in sericulture investments in this country.

Prayer number two from Hon. Byakatonda is, "How does the Government plan to ensure the successful establishment of mulberry plantations and silk processing facilities and exports?"

Mr Speaker, information derived from action research should inform meaningful investments into the entire sericulture industry including mulberry plantations, processing facilities, and export activities.

As of June 2023, there is evidence that we had guided some key strategic decisions including the need to have silk-warm egg production in

the country to support those who have already taken initiatives.

The prayer number three from the honourable member is what strategies are in place to ensure that the expansion of silkworm farming and production in Uganda is sustainable and environmentally friendly?"

My response is that the data we have so far collected includes indicators that will provide answers to key questions including;

- (a) The overall economic viability and hence sustainability of the sericulture industry in Uganda.
- (b) Research and technology infrastructure that the country must put up.
- (c) A target market and hence the standards.
- (d) The human capital to sustain the industry.
- (e) Processing infrastructure.
- (f) Strategies for expansion;
- (g) Environmental protection plan (given that both the mulberry and silkworm used in commercial sericulture are foreign varieties and variants respectively), and
- (h) The regulatory framework that must be put in place.

Mr Speaker, it is also at this point that Government will determine the targeted investment, as well as the investment strategy for the industry.

Prayer Four from the honourable member is that can the Government provide more details on the financial appropriation to operationalise this project fully?"

My response is that this will be determined following the completion of the strategy, which we are currently working on, as mentioned above.

Prayer Five from the honourable member is, "How does the Government plan to ensure that potential economic benefits and job creation opportunities from silk farming are maximised and distributed equitably across the targeted districts?"

My response is that it is a Government policy to ensure equitable distribution of economic and job benefits from any industry. However, we are aware that there are multiple factors that impact on the implementation of particular industries in given districts, including climate, land tenure, etcetera.

Currently, there is no information to affirm the number of people and regional distribution of economic and job benefits from the sericulture industry, since the Government has not yet finalised key strategies.

Prayer Six is that what specific trade – *(Interjections)*- yes, what do I do? I am about to conclude. His question is that what specific trade and export policies or agreements are being pursued by the Government to facilitate the global export of Uganda's silk yarn and products, as mentioned in the media?

My response is that the Government is undertaking this exhaustive analysis - that is why this question has not been answered for about two or three months because of this. Now that we are starting our Session, that is why I thought we should answer this question, colleagues. I want you to be patient.

The Government is undertaking this exhaustive analysis of action research findings and laying down strategies. This process is also expected to inform the specific trade and export policies or agreements to be pursued by the Government to facilitate the global export of Ugandan silk yarn and products.

Prayer Seven –*(Interjections)*- that is Hon. Abdul. How can the Government synergise this industry with current interventions like the PDM and others to promote financial inclusion? This is the last response.

Mr Speaker, PDM has principles, which guide the adoption of enterprise on the priority list. It is focused on high productivity and intensive setup to enable households still in the subsistence economy to join the money economy. Whether sericulture enterprise can

be adopted or not, will depend on whether the findings from the action research align with the principles of the PDM priority list.

Question no.5. Hon. Michael Kakembo, Member of Parliament, Entebbe Municipality states that, "I bring to your attention the illegal issuance of land titles in Kitubulu Central Forest Reserve to individuals and companies. The forest reserve, which is about 200 acres, is one of the four important remnants of lowland forests near Lake Victoria that help filter water pollutants and silt that threaten the lake. It also acts as a windbreaker for the forest-adjacent settlements.

Previously the communities lived in harmony with the forest and accessed medicine and firewood. At the moment, they are being restricted from accessing the forest. It is absurd that the encroachment and degradation of Kitubulu Central Forest Reserve is taking place under the watchful eye of the Government.

In 2013, the National Forest Authority sanctioned a private investor to cut down some trees, claiming they had become old and were a danger to the adjacent communities. While trees were harvested, there was no reforestation.

In 2018, part of the forest was fenced off by a private developer, who later constructed cottages and lodges. In 2022, NFA cleared the Fisheries Protection Unit of Uganda People's Defence Forces to occupy part of the Kitubulu Central Reserve.

To date, the following entities/individuals have attained titles in Kitubulu Central Forest Reserve:

1. Megha Industries Uganda Ltd;
2. David Hood, Mpigi;
3. Deborah Mbabazi, Entebbe Wakiso;
4. Megha Industries Uganda Ltd, Entebbe, Wakiso;
5. Mulkin Enterprises Ltd;
6. Megha Industries Uganda Ltd;
7. New Nordic(U)Ltd;
8. Triple Sound Investment Ltd.

Upon receiving the disturbing information pertaining to the grand fraudulent titling of 46.227 hectares, that is freehold land titles of Kitubulu Central Forest Reserve to a private company called Triple Sound Investment Limited, we held a meeting over this fraud. The meeting was attended by officials from NFA and the local leadership.

The NFA officials confirmed that while the title was genuine, it had been obtained through fraudulent means and that this is potentially the final nail in the coffin. We are aware that degazettement of forest land requires that the minister seeks the approval of Parliament, as per Section 8(1), (2a), (3), and (5) of the National Forestry and Tree Planting Act."

His prayer is, "Can you outline any immediate plans or strategies – the other one was a question – that the Government has to protect and restore Kitubulu Central Forest Reserve, including the cancellation of fraudulent titles?"

Mr Speaker, my response is that there have been attempts to encroach on Kitubulu Central Forest Reserve, including forest produce harvesting, illegal construction of settlement and illegal titling of the forest reserve land, which has sometimes culminated into court action against the Government.

The illegal titling of the forest reserve land is done by some wrong elements in the Government or in Uganda Land Commission and Wakiso District Land Board in cohorts with the area land committees and finally, titles issued by the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development.

The Government has encountered seven titles created in Kitubulu Central Forest Reserve and the titles have been submitted to the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development for cancellation.

We shall also continue sensitising the neighbouring communities in the municipality and fishing villages to coexist with the forest reserve. The Government, through the National Forestry Authority (NFA), has actively

involved the local community, leaders, and the district security committee to restore the integrity of the Central Forest Reserves.

Recently, NFA management, working with Hon. Michael Kakembo, Member of Parliament, Entebbe Municipality, encountered an illegal land title in Kitubulu Forest Reserve, measuring 47 hectares, that is 116 acres, and that title has been submitted for cancellation.

Prayer two from the honourable member was for me to clarify the Government's involvement or oversight regarding the activities conducted in Kitubulu Central Forest Reserve, such as the harvesting of trees without re-forestation efforts and the construction of cottages and lodges by private developers.

My response is that the forest reserves are managed under the National Forest and Tree Planting Act, 2003, and Uganda Forest Policy, 2001.

Policy Statement 7 states that the Uganda Forest Biodiversity will be conserved and managed in support of local and national socio-economic development and international obligations.

Strategy No.5 focuses on promoting the development of biodiversity-related tourism to generate income for local and national benefits.

As you are aware, tourism is one of the biggest sources of revenue for the country as we move towards the middle-income status.

The Government has therefore, per the laws, licensed tourism activities within Kitubulu Central Forest Reserve as a low impact activity. This is a good practice not only in the forest reserves but also in national parks and this is a common practice internationally.

The construction of cottages in the forest reserve is, therefore, done lawfully and informed by environment and social impact assessment.

Prayer three was to know whether there were any investigations. My response is that some

of the cases mentioned about Kitubulu Forest Reserve have already been escalated to courts of law including:

- a) Entebbe College School vs NFA;
- b) Namayise Alice and Others vs Entebbe College School and NFA; and
- c) Hudson Mukasa vs NFA and Commissioner, Land Registration.

The case against NFA by Hudson Mukasa has since been judged in favour of the Government.

Prayer four was, "In accordance with the National Forest and Tree Planting Act, 2003 - my response - since I already talked about this - is that the National Forest and Tree Planting Act, 2003, sections 7 and 8 prescribe the procedure for declaring a central forest reserve, as well as the amendment of the order declaring the central forest reserves.

Section 8(5) states that the amendment of an order declaring a central forest reserve shall be approved by Parliament, signified by its resolution.

The mandate to degazette or gazette lies with Parliament and not any other Arm of the Government. This measure was put in place to ensure the double protection of the forest reserves as national assets.

Dr Charles Ayume (NRM, Koboko Municipality, Koboko), asked: "As the country prepares for the Pamoja-Africa Cup of Nations bid (AFCON), some stadiums have already been selected and budgeted for. However, there is a private investor in West Nile, Arua City, who is developing a stadium. He took out a lease from the city authorities and it is a 20,000-seater capacity stadium probably at 40 per cent - and this is the last question - can the Government reach out to this private developer as is the norm when we are hosting international events, to see if they can infuse him with some support and see if this stadium can be completed through maybe buying shares or equity? This is because Arua is only 400 kilometres from where the action will take place."

My response is that the Ministry of Education and Sports, through the National Council of Sports, has planned incentives for private investors in the development of sports facilities. This is among the unfunded priorities as submitted in the Budget Framework Paper of 2024/2025.

When this funding becomes available, we shall be happy to engage investors like the owner of the stadium in Arua to see how best we can work together. I beg to submit. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister. Honourable colleagues, I postponed matters of national importance so that they can be considered as questions during the Prime Minister's time and I hope the ministers will be here to support her, especially for those which are very specific to their sectors.

So, it is no longer a matter of national importance. You can now frame it as a question and we shoot so that we can have as many as possible. I will start with Hon. Balimwezo, then Hon. Muwada, and followed by Hon. Everlyn Chemutai.

4.36

MR RONALD BALIMWEZO (NUP, Nakawa Division West, Kampala): Mr Speaker, thank you for according me an opportunity. My question concerns the eviction and demolition of people's homes and businesses in Greater Kampala by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA).

We have over eight million people living in low-lying areas including wetlands. Uganda has a deficit of 2.4 million houses and if NEMA just demolishes people's houses without a resettlement plan, we are going to have a terrible situation in the country; insecurity.

Just in September last year, NEMA gazetted wetlands but did not open the boundaries and neither did they lay planters or mark stones to separate the wetlands from the dry land.

Considering that recently we had Lake Victoria sagging, there was an increase of about 1.3 metres where water spilled over and encroached on people's land, are you making any plan to resettle the people, considering that the President, when he was launching the sustainable blue economy in Kenya, said that he was not going to forcefully evict people and that he was going to compensate those people - do you have any plan to resettle our people, considering that these are Ugandans that - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, we all have the responsibility to protect our environment.

Secondly, the fact is that the boundaries of our wetlands and the lakes are clear. Recently, the lakes reclaimed their boundaries - *(Interjections)* - yes, they did! So, where it ended, that is the boundary - *(Interjection)* - yes. Mr Speaker, protect me.

Mr Speaker, nature reclaimed its boundaries by replacing a number - including Government facilities. That is why I want to assure you, honourable colleagues, that the Government will protect those boundaries in order to protect the national good for everybody.

As the Leader of Government Business in Parliament, I request honourable colleagues to join in so that we can protect our nature. Uganda is gifted by nature. Those of you who are widely travelled, know what is happening in other countries; the global warming -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, in this session, the answers are equally short as the question so that we accommodate as many as possible.

MS NABBANJA: The challenge I had was that he also took time. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: He was repeating himself. You do not need to repeat yourself.

MS NABBANJA: I believe they have understood. Let us help our people to vacate forests, wetlands, and all those ecosystems of diversity. Nobody will be protected. We shall not resettle people because we do not have that money. Let them leave.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, when we talk about compensation and resettlement, this is not money that comes from the pocket of the President, as an individual. It is money that we pass here. But also we need to ensure that we only compensate lawful practices. If you have any issues to do with people being in wetlands, I do not know how you will bring that money here for appropriation.

Honourable colleagues, if people were in wetlands where they were not supposed to be, those people should be evicted without any single compensation. I think we have to be very clear as a House on that. Yes, Hon. Muwada.

4.42

MR MUWADA NKUNYINGI (NUP, Kyadondo County East, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am rising as a Shadow Minister of Foreign Affairs. In the past few weeks, reports have emerged that the Uganda Consulate in Dubai, which is rented at the expense of a Ugandan taxpayer's money is now housing a casino and gambling equipment. The reports suggest that they were imported into the United Arab Emirates (UAE) by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Gen. Jeje Odongo.

The consulate is ordinarily headed by a consular general. As Parliament, we pushed for this consulate to extend support and services to Ugandans who are very many; in thousands, living in Dubai.

Mr Speaker, turning the consulate into a casino and a gambling house contravenes the laws of the UAE, our laws, and international laws governing diplomatic premises.

Mr Speaker, I now rise as a Shadow Minister of Foreign Affairs, to seek answers from the Government. I pray that the Minister of

Foreign Affairs is summoned to appear to make a statement before this House. Also, we want to learn what administrative, disciplinary, or diplomatic measures have been undertaken - *(Interjection)* - I am still speaking - this is a different government - to address this development.

Lastly, I pray that Parliament institutes an investigation into this matter because the consulate was established in accordance with the law and is expected to be managed in accordance with the law. Establishing a casino caused a diplomatic embarrassment for our country.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, let us first listen to the response from the Prime Minister and then we can say other things. This is because during the Prime Minister's Time, questions are only asked to the Prime Minister. No prayer beyond the Prime Minister.

MR NKUNYINGI: I take your guidance, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable colleague. Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the minister mentioned here, is also a Member of Parliament. Now that you have requested a statement, I will make sure that he comes here to give a statement on the matter.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: On Tuesday, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we shall have the minister on schedule. Can we hear from Hon. Opio Acuti and then Hon. Migadde?

4.46

DR SAMUEL OPIO (Independent, Kole North County, Kole): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question to the Prime Minister is on the huge discrepancies in the cost of first-class marram road construction in this country.

As we speak, there is an oil seed project to which Shs 110 billion has been allocated for 81

districts to construct 15 kilometres of roads at a cost of Shs 90 million per kilometre.

The Ministry of Works and Transport gave in their Budget Framework Paper indicative planning figures for first-class marram road construction of Shs 30 million per kilometre. In my district, we are constructing a first-class marram road contracted out at Shs 15 million per kilometre. Three different ministries or entities with three different rates for the same class of roads in the same district! The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development is also undertaking another road project at Shs 200 million per kilometre.

My question to the Prime Minister is: what intervention can we take? I am asking this because it appears that every ministry that has a road construction project has its own rate of construction yet we can achieve more coverage with the little resources we have. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: That oil seed project is under the Ministry of Local Government. We have already got wind of this and we are doing investigations; we shall come up with an answer.

However, even districts have variations. For us in Kakumiro, we are doing a first-class marram road at Shs 9.8 million. Your district is doing it at Shs 15 million. The Ministry of Works and Transport is doing it at Shs 30 million. I think we need to harmonise. We shall harmonise this. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, this will be helpful because of issues of the terrain and all that but honourable colleagues, I thought this was the aim of the programme-based budgeting so that we have one ministry in charge of roads. That is the argument that was traded. Now you hear local government is in roads, lands ministry is in roads, KCCA is in roads –

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we shall be grateful if you harmonised this. I do not know when you can come back to us on this matter. Otherwise, the honourable colleague is saying, in their area, they are about to conclude the procurement and they are going to procure at such huge sums. So, I think the guidance needed is very urgent.

MS NABBANJA: Honourable members, I believe I have the power to direct. So, I direct the Minister of Local Government to stop that procurement process until we harmonise. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let us hear from Hon. Chemutai and then Hon. Migadde.

4.49

MS EVERLYN CHEMUTAI (Independent, Woman Representative, Bukwo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, in the month of May, Bukwo District Disaster Management Committee wrote a letter to your office about two schools, Aryowet Primary School and Tulel Primary School, that had been blown by storm. As we speak the learners are studying outside, actually under trees. Whenever it rains they stay at home. Madam Prime Minister, what are you doing about this?

Number two –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, we take only one question. Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, we received her issue, and we are handling it. I promise that iron sheets will be given to your schools so that the district can now re-roof those schools' structures. I will get in touch with the Member so that we can move together. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I really love how Hon. Namugga corners the Prime Minister and gets the attention quickly. I had allowed Hon. Migadde, Hon. Pius Wakabi and Hon. Acon.

4.50

MR ROBERT MIGADDE (NRM, Buvuma Islands County, Buvuma): Mr Speaker, last year, senior six students sat the exams and Makerere University published the number of courses available. Several students applied for those courses, including those offered on Government scholarships. 19 students were admitted for a course called Bachelor of Information Systems and Technology.

In January this year, the Academic Registrar of Makerere University again called for applications, and a number of students applied for the same course. As we speak, the university has scrapped this course, with the students already admitted, both on Government and private. The scrapping of the course has started with these students and they have been turned away. What is the Government doing to ensure that these students attain their education?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I know about this and the Minister of Education and Sports is handling the matter. I will inform the Member when they have concluded with their findings and the way forward.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Now, let us hear from Hon. Pius, Hon. Acon and Hon. Naigaga.

4.52

MR PIUS WAKABI (NRM, Bugahya County, Hoima): Thank you, Mr Speaker. In the State-of-the-Nation Address of 2022, the President promised to create centres of excellence by supporting traditional schools. In Bunyoro, Kabalega S.S. was chosen among the schools to be rehabilitated and supported. However, to date, the school is in a sorry state. It needs urgent attention. What plans do you have, Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, in the National Resistance Movement (NRM), once we plan something, we do it. *(Laughter)* That is why I am proud of our Government. My brother, work is in progress.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Acon, then Hon. Naigaga.

4.53

MR JULIUS ACON (NRM, Otuke East County, Otuke): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the question I am raising is: in 2016, I know this country had the opportunity to extend electricity deep into the rural areas, which has been going on, and in Otuke we appreciate what the Government is doing. The problem that we are having is that there are two projects, one is for the World Bank and the other for the sub-counties - the concern is that there are some people who are being compensated in order to allow electricity or electric poles to pass through their land or compound, so it is delaying all these projects.

Hon. Prime Minister, would you clarify to this country, not only for Otuke, so that whenever an electric pole passes through someone's land, it should be very clear whether they should be paid or not, because some people are blocking this development? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, this issue of compensation has truly delayed some of our projects. In other countries, like the neighbouring East African countries, the land belongs to the Government unlike here where land belongs to the people.

I believe people want electricity and I believe our people also need roads for easy communication and development.

We have delayed projects because of compensation issues. Therefore, I request us to copy the example of Tanzania if we are to have these projects run for the benefit of our people. As it is now, because the land belongs to the

people, the Government has to compensate people. That is the law as we stand.

I request that what we did in some of our areas - we want electricity and sometimes when the pole passes through, somebody can still use their land so, I request some of us, the Members of Parliament, to prevail over so that Government programs do not stall.

We have different projects. Some projects have compensation elements. Other projects do not have compensation elements, but people want these services. So, I truly request that we copy the way some of our neighbours are doing their things.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I think, honourable colleagues, this is a common issue in all your areas. I would look at it from a different perspective - from how we negotiate projects and it is going to cause us bigger problems.

In all the projects for electricity that I have done in my constituency, there was no compensation. People gave us land without any problem.

When it comes to the World Bank, the condition is you must first compensate. Now the people who were not compensated on the last one are saying, "No, you must also come back and compensate us because how come you are giving these ones money?" This is causing confusion everywhere.

I think this is a matter of us engaging the World Bank that people want electricity, they want to volunteer to give us land, and we are just passing a distribution pole, we do it cautiously without destroying people's property, please let us implement the project, this money which would be for compensation would even help us to extend electricity to them all.

To me, this is a matter of our people who engage with our development partners, like how it was done for other projects, we request to engage the World Bank so that we can overcome this issue.

Okay, let us hear from Hon. Naigaga, followed by Hon. Nakazibwe, Hon. Okot Peter, and Hon. Sarah Najjuma. Honourable colleagues, do not mind. I do not know why you are panicking. We are still here. *(Laughter)*

I am receiving chits, "I want to speak". You speak, you go and you leave me here. We have to be together here, especially those sending me chits and those I see are showing signs of running away, you will speak last.

4.58

MS MARIAM NAIGAGA (NRM, Woman Representative, Namutumba): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, last month we had a *baraza* by the State House Anti-Corruption Unit in Namutumba District. Unfortunately, from the time they left the district, there have been continuous arrests. We have over 30 people now in Iganga Prison.

When I contacted the CID Department of Namutumba District, they told me that they do not have the capacity. Under which arrangement are these people being arrested since there is not any report incriminating them? These were mere allegations during the *baraza* but those who made those allegations have not gone to the Police to submit facts about what they said. I would like to understand whether there is a different directive as far as this is concerned in Namutumba District. Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the fight against corruption has now gone to Namutumba. *(Laughter)* I will only direct that the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the police expedite the process of investigation, take these people to court and the court process will release them if they are innocent.

5.00

MS HOPE NAKAZIBWE (NRM, Woman Representative, Mubende): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The issue that I brought to your office as a matter of national importance was the very first that the Rt Hon. Prime Minister responded to. It is about the road from Mityana to Mubende.

5.01

MR PETER OKOT (DP, Tochi County, Omoro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the National Medical Stores does deliveries to health facilities on a quarterly basis. In the last deliveries that were made to all the health facilities, at least for the Acholi Subregion, I am aware that they delivered essential drugs minus Coartem. We all know very well that Coartem is the drug needed for the treatment of malaria. What plans does the Government have to mitigate the situation in these three months, moving forward?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister of Health should help the Prime Minister since she is here to back her up.

5.01

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Ruth Aceng): Mr Speaker, most of our Coartem is procured by the Global Fund and so, the supply came in a little late. However, it is now being distributed.

5.02

MR ACROBERT KIIZA (Independent, Bughendera County, Bundibugyo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I rise on the issue of the invasion of my area by elephants where five villages were invaded by these animals from Semuliki National Park and people's crops have greatly been affected.

My prayer is that the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, in collaboration with the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), should send a technical team on the ground to assess the impact of damage. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister for Tourism is here, not so?

5.03

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM, WILDLIFE, AND ANTIQUITIES (Mr Martin Mugarra): I thank Hon. Acrobert, for raising the matter. We discussed it but next week, with the team, we will be there to assess the situation.

5.03

MR DAVID SSERUKENYA (NUP, Mak-indye-Ssabagabo Municipality, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question is about people who are trying to steal people's land in the name of National Environment Management Authority (NEMA).

Recently, my constituency got money from the World Bank to construct the Kaliddubi drainage. It is unfortunate that NEMA is telling people to demolish their houses and go away, yet that place is not gazetted. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, how can you construct drainage in a wetland? I need to be helped.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the question and the answer are the same. You cannot construct a drainage when there is no wetland because it is in wetlands where we get clogged water. We shall investigate that matter, I promise, and come up with a solution.

5.04

MS CHRISTINE KAAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My issue is about the district land boards concerning the leasehold land tenure system. Many of the leases are getting expired yet our people have settled on these not knowing that they have a life span.

Mr Speaker, we are getting many homeless and landless people. When the leases expire, the renewal, in most cases, goes to new faces who do not accommodate the natives at all. Some of those who have leases immediately transform them into freehold land, especially here in Buganda.

I am here to ask if the Prime Minister can direct to, first of all, halt the transfer of leases into freehold titles and also on the renewal of leasehold land titles here, especially in Buganda. Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: Honourable members, the President has, on many occasions, been very clear that the *bibanja* owners - the tenants, the *bona fide* occupants, whatever land that is in question, have a right over the land.

You know that when somebody or a person has been on land for 12 years before the promulgation of our Constitution, 1995, those are referred to as bona fide occupants. Therefore, I think this is just a matter of the law and I will not be the one to curtail it.

Let people seek guidance from the land officers who are in their districts. I definitely know they will guide them. If not, you, the Minister of Lands, Housing, and Urban Development, and I can always come together and see how to help people as issues come along.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, it seems to be a really complicated matter, like you said, which would need a meeting with the Minister for Lands.

I totally agree with the Prime Minister. If this had come as a written question to the Prime Minister, the answer would have been more detailed and would carry more weight. For now, co-ordinate. It seems to be a much deeper problem.

5.08

MR PATRICK ISINGOMA-MWESIGWA (Independent, Hoima East Division, Hoima City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, about two weeks ago, I received a delegation of over 20 members of staff from Hoima Referral Hospital. They reported to me that at the moment, they have about 65 members of staff who have been deleted from the payroll unjustifiably. This happened in March of this year. Since then, these people have not been earning.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you know very well the central role played by this hospital in our region. It is a catchment area for about four hospitals; Kiryandongo, Hoima, Kiboga, Kagadi, and some parts of Mubende. So, I think this kind of dispensation is very unfortunate, and we need to move quickly to address it before it escalates.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The Minister for Public Service is here, she should support the Prime Minister.

5.09

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE (Ms Mary Grace Mugasa): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. And I thank the honourable Member of Parliament from Hoima City for this question.

Since March, the Auditor-General embarked on the validation exercise of our public servants and found out that there were people who were employed in Government but who did not have the required documents, while some of them were ghosts.

They, therefore, ordered for deletion. When they ordered for deletion, the Ministry of Public Service went for the second validation and discovered that some people had documents that were mixed up, which were corrected immediately, and some people have been reinstated on the payroll.

Even yesterday, other people were being reinstated on confirmation from their employers that they were employed by that entity. We are going ahead to do more reinstatement according to what is brought to the Ministry of Public Service. However, around 7,000 people will be deleted from the payroll. That is definite, and that is why the validation exercise was done.

For Hoima Regional Referral Hospital, I personally went there, and we agreed that they should be patient until they are owned by their employers. Some of them will be reinstated but others will not be, according to what was required. Therefore, I beg for patience; we will come and give a report when everything is concluded. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: But, honourable minister, I think it should be the other way around. Because, when every person you suspect you deleted, you disrupt services. Then you go reinstating – wait - be patient. Will patients wait for doctors to be reinstated? I think it should be the other way around, that the only person you delete is someone you are very sure of. You have run around two, or

three scenarios and you are very sure - then you keep checking and removing but not first doing an omnibus removal and then you go through reinstatement. That disrupts services. I thought it should be -

MS MUGASA: Yes, thank you, Mr Speaker. Unfortunately, some people that were invited for validation did not appear. Some had gone out of the country and they were not working for the Government but getting the salary. Some had died but were still on the payroll. That is why the Auditor-General decided to do an omnibus deletion but we continued verifying because the Government was making losses.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable. Please expedite the process - you can categorize; health centres are very critical so that we do not lose people. Yes, Hon. Gilbert Olanya.

5.12

MR GILBERT OLANYA (FDC, Kilak South County, Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister - (*Interruption*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Aisha.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. On the dot for the Prime Minister's Time, you suspended the debate and called in the Prime Minister. Under Rule 41(8), the Prime Minister's Time should not exceed 45 minutes. It is now more than 70 minutes. Would it please you, Mr Speaker, that we go back to the discussion - debate a very important matter that was on the Floor, because time for Prime Minister's Time has surpassed? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Now, honourable colleagues, Rule 25 of our Rules of Procedure - Thursday is Member's day. The issue raised by Members is one of the most critical items. So, while I know the provisions of Rule 41, I want to use my general authority under Rule 7 - (*Laughter*) - to address - Members have many issues. I request that we first comb them through so that they do not accumulate, and then we proceed.

MR OLANYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, Karuma Bridge was closed on the 3rd of May for three months, meaning by the 3rd of August - this coming Saturday - it should be operational. The bridge was closed majorly for buses and heavy trucks.

However, right now the bus owners in Northern Uganda have parked their buses. Some of them have loans and the business in Northern Uganda has gone down completely.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when the Minister went to launch, he promised and stated that the money that would be used is about Shs 7.2 billion. Right now, there is no serious work going on at Karuma Bridge.

I would like to ask: on the 3rd of August, which is tomorrow, shall you open Karuma Bridge for buses and heavy trucks going to Northern Uganda?

Two, will you consider compensating those people who lost, especially those whose buses are on loan?

Finally, will you investigate the Ministry of Works and Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA), because what is going on is not corresponding to the Shs 7.2 billion that they are talking about? I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I will start with the last question. I promise that we shall investigate and that will be next week. I will take the trouble to go to Karuma myself to see what is happening and I will invite you that we go there together so that we do our oversight role.

Honourable colleagues, you are aware that the efficacy of Karuma Bridge was quite difficult and delicate. There were eminent issues that could lead to the collapse of that bridge. And once it collapses, our people in the northern corridor will not have access to this side.

So, we agreed in the Cabinet - I remember we even came here and said "Let the light trucks be the ones to pass because they are not heavy". Then the heavy trucks can see how to navigate - others come and reach Karuma, others to Gulu and these other places. Then others can use the other long route through our park.

Lastly, colleagues, we secured funding through the Government of Japan (Japan International Cooperation Agency- JICA) and we are going to put a new bridge. But as we wait to put up the new bridge, we needed to repair the existing one so that we continue using it until the construction of the new one is completed.

Honourable colleagues, I will also request for patience. The NRM Government is committed. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Now let us listen to Hon. Joyce Acan, Hon. Paska Menya, Hon. Betty Aol, in that order

5.18

MS JOYCE ACAN (NRM, PWD Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My concern is about the distribution of iron sheets through the Office of the Prime Minister. I applied for iron sheets to be given to a special needs School in Vara, the District Union of Persons with Disabilities in Moyo, and the District Union of Persons with Disability in Gulu, Lira, and Apac.

I was promised 540 iron sheets in the first quarter of the last financial year. However, to date, I have not received those iron sheets.

What criteria is being used for the distribution of those iron sheets? I have heard that some Members of Parliament have already distributed these iron sheets in their constituencies. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the Office of the Prime Minister has got other ministries. It is the Minister of Northern Uganda that distributes iron sheets.

So, those that are going to Koboko and these other districts like Pakwach will get iron sheets. However, permit me to say that we also have iron sheets under Luwero-Rwenzori, Busoga, Karamoja, Bunyoro, and Teso.

All these ministries have got an item or an activity to support our vulnerable communities with iron sheets. I will make sure that the iron sheets that are going to those areas are from those ministries; that is Northern Uganda and Teso - because she talked about a district in Teso. You will get the iron sheets. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, this puzzles me. Most of the colleagues who visited my constituency have called me - there is one from Karamoja who told me and said, "I saw some of your parts are worse than mine."

If you visit an area like Buhweju - for us who are disadvantaged and are doing badly, and do not belong under any of those programmes, how shall we - are we under Luwero? No, just go to Kiyanga where some people go and ask - I heard some Members of Parliament who went there last time, like Hon. Reagan Okumu, and asked, "Is this part of Congo or an extension of Congo?" So, where do we fall?

When you read about regions - Bukedi is out - parts of Buganda - I do not know how Mitooma will fall under Luwero. Guide us and then -

MR MACHO: Mr Speaker, even we in Bukedi have been totally forgotten. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, how are these affirmative programmes designed, and where do you put hard-to-reach areas?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, these affirmative action ministries were put in place to make sure that those hard-to-reach areas and those other areas that were believed to have been lagging behind were also equated to other places.

So, Mitooma District, especially Kiyanga - we shall make sure that they - *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can give us a ministry.

MS NABBANJA: No, Mr Speaker, you are under Luwero-Rwenzori. I took iron sheets to Kayungwe under Luwero-Rwenzori, and Kayungwe is in Kanungu District.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, you have heard. I have heard many of you talk about this issue quietly; hard-to-reach areas. If you go to Hon. Kwizera's Rubuguli - it is deep and you really wonder.

Okay, let us hear from Hon. Paska Menya, Hon. Betty Aol, Hon. Oguzu Lee, Hon. Betty Naluyima, Hon. Ndiwalana, Hon. Mourine Osoru, then I continue.

5.23

MS BETTY AOL (FDC, Woman Representative, Gulu City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. We have many issues, but let me raise one of cattle compensation, we call it Acholi War Debt Claimants.

Our people took the Government to court, and the Government decided that this case be settled outside court. But the compensation that has been going on in the Acholi Sub-region - many owners of this cattle have long gone.

If they compensate, they give Shs 300,000. What can Shs 300,000 do? Sometimes they give Shs 200,000, Shs 500,000, and just haphazardly.

We have documents that should be taken seriously. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, can you tell us why our people are being fooled yet they lost their animals in this very regime, and when they went to court, it was the same regime to settle it outside court?

Should we go back to court, tell us. Cattle compensation or Acholi War Debt Claimants went back to court recently and again won the case. You pay us! Thank you. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I rarely see Hon. Betty Aol charged like this. Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I would like Members to know that I knew Hon. Betty Aol when she was a councillor in Gulu. At the time I was also a district councillor in Kibaale. So, we know each other and I give her respect because of that.

Concerning the issue of compensation, I would like to allay the fears of my sister. The National Resistance Movement Government is committed to ensuring that those people who lost cattle during the war - and we regret the war - will be compensated when the funds are available. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is an issue we have followed up so much. If it is an issue to do with the amounts, the committee should interest itself. Where is Hon. Alex Byarugaba? I saw him around.

The committee should interest itself because we budgeted for that money. I do not know - honourable colleagues, the money we appropriate here is the money which the Government will give. So, let us give it serious attention. Yes, Hon. Naluyima -

5.26

MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Last financial year, while we were here and inquired about the then-pending mass renewal of national identity cards, the Minister of Internal Affairs issued a statement.

The Prime Minister comfortably told us that the funds were available and that the Government would soon commence the mass renewal. Unfortunately, up to date, Uganda's first batch of national identity cards is yet to expire on 31st August. Given that we are already in the month of August; can this country be updated on the way forward? How come by this time, mass renewal of national identity cards has not yet commenced? Why is the National

Identification and Registration Authority office failing Ugandans who want to renew their national identity cards? Why are they being failed?

Given that whatever internal arrangements can be made in Uganda, will the same national identity cards be allowed overseas? For instance, when someone goes to Rwanda or Kenya, is there an arrangement? Can the country be updated on the way forward given that mass renewal has not yet commenced? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I have been chairing various meetings, so I am quite updated, and I am going to give you the current stand.

Mr Speaker - *(Interjections)* - yes, the current because I had a meeting yesterday. The Government is almost ready because we were in the process of buying equipment, which we now have. *(Applause)*. I believe we are ready to go. We only - *(Interjections)* - yes, we were purchasing. You know the Government process. Buying equipment and doing preparations is not easy. However, we are now ready to go; we shall give you the date. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I believe this is a project where no one is sleeping because it is tied to the national register. So, I hope we support the Government on this and ensure that, indeed, it moves very quickly. Last time we did whatever they wanted us to do: we approved the money. So, if you have any issues, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, come back and we support you. This project is very critical.

5.29

MS CHRISTINE NANDAGIRE (NUP, Bukomansimbi North County, Bukomansimbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we are faced with a big problem in Bukomansimbi North. In Kigangazzi Town Council, the local leaders are reporting brutal

murders that are taking place due to the increase in the number of prostitutes in the area.

We are having a very good coffee season coffee farmers are now getting some good cash. The prostitutes came to find out and, so, they have invaded the place, from Lukaya and Nyendo. So far, we have lost three young men - one of 28 years, one of 32 years and another of 38 years - who were killed by prostitutes.

The problem is that most farmers do not bank their money; they keep their savings in their pockets. So, when the prostitutes find the money, they just want to kill and go away with the money.

In Bukomansimbi North, at least most men are legally married because we are so religious. However, it has now caused a lot of domestic violence and increase in the HIV infection rate. So, my question is: how fast can you relocate those prostitutes - *(Laughter)* - from Kigangazzi Town Council to any identified place in Masaka City, where buyers can find them? *(Laughter)* Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us listen. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, they have made your work very easy. They have even given you a place where to relocate the prostitutes: Masaka City. *(Laughter)*

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I am happy that the NRM Government has made people rich, including in Bukomansimbi. These issues that have come up because our people are now economically empowered will be handled, including prosecuting those prostitutes. We are going to make sure that we send there - *(Interjections)* - even Busia? -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Macho wants you to send them to Busia. *(Laughter)*

MS NABBANJA: Do you want me to send them to Busia? Mr Speaker, the issue at hand is not a simple matter, because prostitution brings in these communicable diseases. So, we need to help our people. We shall use the LCs, together with the local police, who will be assisted by

people from Kampala – the security people – so that our people can invest their money.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, for the record, prostitution is illegal in Uganda. Therefore, it cannot be this House to say that you transfer an illegality – a crime – from one area to another. So, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, indeed, like you have said, handle it with the Ministry of Internal Affairs so that this issue is sorted out.

5.33

MS MOURINE OSORU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua City): Rt Hon. Prime Minister, my concern is about the confiscation of the National IDs of our women by moneylenders. We have many moneylenders all over Arua City, giving money to our women. As they keep on giving money, they take the original National IDs of these women.

What beats our understanding is that ever since I was born, I have never seen where you are given money in the form of a loan and you start paying it off from that day, upon receiving that money. Every day, you will be paying.

How fast can you help the women of Arua City to get back their original National IDs? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, first of all, it is illegal for any moneylender to confiscate the National ID of any citizen and I condemn it in the strongest terms. Two, the moneylending Act is very clear: moneylending is supposed to be regulated by Bank of Uganda and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

I will get in touch with the Member so that we can help our local people in Arua – (*Interjections*)- it is in the whole country? Then, I will issue a statement. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I remember even the President

touched on this matter. What I have advised the people in my constituency to do is that in case anyone has lent you money against the National ID, come and report to the police how your ID is lost, they give you a new one and, then, he takes “air”. The National ID is a property of the Government of Uganda. So, how can you give property, which is not yours, as collateral?

Our people are being denied Parish Development Model (PDM) and *Emyooga* services because their National IDs are with moneylenders. So, we need to take it up seriously, especially those unregistered moneylenders. It is a national issue and you need to address it seriously.

I am about to finish the Members who registered their issues with my office. Let us have Hon. Tebandeke, Hon. Angura, Hon. Walyomu, Hon. Manjeri, Hon. Mpindi Bumali and then I will pick the rest.

5.36

MR CHARLES TEBANDEKE (NUP, Bbale County, Kayunga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Security agencies, more so the police, are using privately-owned vehicles in operations during enforcement. These vehicles are commonly termed as “drones”. To me, these “drones” are moving torture centres for suspects.

Personally, on Monday, the 21st of last month, I was arrested and “droned” in a drone. When a suspect is “droned” in a “drone”, he lies at the mercy of the officers who are there: he cannot make any alarm to the outsiders because they are enclosed.

In my research, I have not found any so-called drone with a Government number plate. All of them are privately-owned and, at times, even the officers who sit in there hold guns, but in civilian clothes.

My question is: under what circumstances do security officers use privately-owned vehicles vis-à-vis the Government vehicles that are budgeted for?

Secondly, how does the Government ascertain the security of these suspects from torture

by those officers who are in those so-called drones?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister? *(Mr Tebandeke rose)* Honourable member, you know the rules regarding this time.

MS NABBANJA: *(Mr Tebandeke rose)* Give the question to your neighbour. *(Laughter)* Thank you, Mr Speaker. The issue at hand is a security matter. You cannot see crime being committed – like a rat being chased by a cat. There are a lot of things that the security people sometimes do to avert crime. They can camouflage so that they arrest the suspect. However, in this case of the “drone” vehicles, Mr Speaker, I request that you allow us to investigate it and come up with an answer.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let us have Hon. Angura and then Hon. Walyomu.

5.39

MR FREDRICK ANGURA (NRM, Tororo South County, Tororo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. My question to the Prime Minister is: in the country, we have 10,717 registered parishes. However, only 10,585 are the parishes that are receiving the PDM services. In Tororo, we have 17 parishes that are not receiving PDM services. We have so far given close to Shs 200 to 300 million under PDM.

For these parishes that are not receiving, when will they start receiving these funds? The neighbouring parishes that are receiving are now overshadowing those that are not. People are just smelling the PDM funds from a distance. When will they also start receiving that money? In any case, will they receive the arrears that they have not received? I thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister of Local Government?

5.41

THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Mr Raphael Magyezi):

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank Hon. Angura for this very serious and important question.

Mr Speaker, I have seen a situation of administrative units which are not known at the ministry. Let me be clear: in the past, districts had mandate, under the Local Government Act, to create new administrative units up to the level of a parish. However, Parliament changed the law and an administrative unit, even at the village, is not acknowledged until it is gazetted by the Minister of Local Government.

As I speak now, in my custody, I know 10,594 parishes. It is possible that there are some parishes which fall under that category where the district, having passed them, the people know they have a parish. However, every Ugandan who qualifies under subsistence must get his or her share of the PDM revolving fund under the parishes that are known. For those in parishes which are questionable, we always advise that they get their funding under their mother parishes.

I have also heard this question of - allow me, Mr Speaker, to answer it here now – the big parishes. They are saying: “You are giving PDM funds equally to all parishes. When will we get money?”

Mr Speaker, this is a very important question. PDM is not a distribution of money to every Ugandan such that the more people you have, the more money you get. No! PDM is money to subsistence households and we did carry out data collection to confirm which households are in subsistence and we had parameters. We are aware that there are some parishes which, even then, have a lot of households in subsistence.

So, we are working on a robust formula – because we had to start somewhere. We started with what we call pro rata: give everybody Shs 100 million. Where we have reached now - this question was even asked in the census – is that we are able to now develop a more

comprehensive formula depending on the rate of subsistence of the households in the parish, the population, the geography and so on.

Mr Speaker, we should be able to advise Parliament, through Cabinet, that such parishes do qualify to get a little more money than the others instead of having it all at a uniform figure. That will depend on the formula we shall actually develop. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, PDM is one of the core Government programmes that is taking a lot of money and we are counting on it to succeed. Personally, I have been holding meetings, up to parish level, with the beneficiaries and applicants who have not yet received the money and I am finding very many issues. Whenever I call upon the minister – and Hon. Galabuzi – they are very quick to respond.

Honourable minister, this is a critical programme, so, I suggest that you give us a status report, as of now, on how we are doing and then we give you around two to three hours of debate and information here - (*Ms Nabbanja rose*) - yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister. This is a critical programme that we should not pick in questions.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, this is a flagship programme. I have seen very many countries come here to benchmark and I believe they are copying our formula. However, honourable colleagues, we still have issues down there, including in my district and I believe in all your districts.

The other day, when I was in Masaka – Kyanamukaaka, we agreed with members of the community to see the beneficiaries. Do you know what happened? A young man, who is a coffee dealer and many others who are a bit better off, were the ones who came, yet this programme is for the poor.

So, I request Members – irrespective of our political colours, this is our money. Can we go and help our constituencies to own this project? Make sure that you also involve yourself to

see the list of the beneficiaries. You may find that this money is going to waste and the target population may not benefit. Therefore, I request all of you, honourable colleagues, over the weekend, to do some sampling. Go to one parish and say “I want to see all those who benefited the other time; I want to see all those who are about to benefit” and, then, guide as a leader. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I think it would really help. Some of the issues need to be brought to the attention of the minister so that he gives clear guidelines. I can give you just quick examples. Number one, parish chiefs steal money from one parish and then you transfer them to another parish to continue with the stealing. They even confess and accept that they were extorting money from people and you transfer them to another parish!

Number two is the issue of the loan committees. The feedback I got from people is that you should let these loan committees to operate for only one year. These loan committees – I apply for a loan and you do not give me, but someone applies tomorrow and you see him getting the money because they went and negotiated!

What is happening, Rt Hon. Prime Minister – people confess – is that they are paying Shs 200,000 or Shs 300,000 and they are also told: “This is Government money; you do not need to pay it back. So, let us share.” And, they say: “I am the one who will come demanding on behalf of the Government and I am the one who has shared with you. So, you just go and be comfortable.”

The issues are many and they are very deep. Honourable minister, when do you think you will be ready with a statement? The Rt Hon. Prime Minister has guided. Members, we could even have a full-day debate on the Parish Development Model, with the aim of improving it.

MR MAGYEZI: Mr Speaker, I really wanted to thank the Member of Parliament for Bukomansimbi. She rang and gave us a tip

that their people were being told to pay Shs 50,000 for insurance, Shs 100,000 for brokers or commission agents and Shs 10,000 for something.

Today, I have sent a team and I want to assure you and the country that the PDM beneficiaries are not supposed to pay any charge. The Parish Development Committees (PDCs) are given Shs 1 million per year. We are paying this money quarterly at a rate of Shs 250,000. The parish SACCO leaders are paid Shs 500,000 for their administrative costs.

This insurance scheme is not yet approved by the Government. So, honourable colleagues, this is where the Prime Minister said that this is our programme. Let us not allow our people to be cheated. I can confirm –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, your coordination office issued a directive that the third quarter money for PDCs be used for audit. Yes, my district commercial officer brought it out. All of it was taken for audit. The PDCs are crying on the ground and they do not have anything coming from the Centre. What are you auditing?

MR MAGYEZI: Mr Speaker, I am aware of this and we discussed this in the National Policy Coordinating Committee, chaired by the Prime Minister. This was done by officers of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, saying that they have a mandate to audit. However, that was not acceptable because we have auditors at the districts.

Mr Speaker, I will give a report. Actually, the Cabinet has directed me to give a report in two weeks and, immediately after, I will submit the report to Parliament. I thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, we can wait for two weeks. It gives us time to get feedback from our people. Let us inquire from our people and get feedback. Then, once the minister brings an information statement here, I will gazette a whole session to be on Parish Development Model and Emyooga. *(Applause)* This is because we are

putting a lot of money into the programmes. Okay?

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should also prepare so that we handle the Parish Development Model and Emyooga.

Yes, Hon. Walyomu, Hon. Manjeri and Hon. Bumali.

5.51

MR MOSES WALYOMU (Independent, Kagoma County, Jinja): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the parental care you accorded to Lubani Secondary School when they came here today. This is because they had refused them the access, but being that you are a parent and you were once a student, you allowed them to come in. Therefore, thank you for that. *(Applause)*

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, during the State-of-the-Nation Address by His Excellency the President, one of the industries that he praised was the sugar industry. He even gave us the figures. He said sugar is contributing about 600 metric tonnes of export per year to this economy. This means that we are getting sugar out of the sugarcane.

He also brought out other crops that are contributing to this economy. Some of these crops, like coffee, tea and tobacco, get assistance from the Government. When will the sugarcane outgrowers or farmers also benefit or get assistance from the Government?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, fertilisers for sugarcane growers, and any other support?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I have had six to seven meetings with the sugarcane growers. This time around, we were talking about the establishment of factories in Busoga subregion. The Government, through Uganda Development Corporation (UDC), is supporting this cause. Is that what you wanted or you wanted the Government to – like we

have supported other farmers under National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS)? I do not think – because the money we are going to inject in the factories is quite huge and, to me, this is a big support by the Government. Therefore, the Government is supporting the sugarcane growers.

Recently, when the prices of sugar went down, the Government provided money to support you people to take the sugarcane to northern Uganda. So, I feel that the NRM Government has done a lot for that region.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Manjeri and Hon Mpindi Bumali.

5.55

MS MANJERI KYEBAKUTIKA (NUP, Woman Representative, Jinja City): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Recently, the traders in Kampala initiated a strike in response to the enforcement of the Electronic Fiscal Receipting and Invoicing Solution (EFRIS) by Uganda Revenue Authority.

Due to the design and many challenges with the system, this system has faced a lot of resistance from the business community, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises. In May, the President met the traders at Kololo Independence Grounds. It was resolved that the penalties to those who were non-compliant be suspended.

They further resolved that another meeting be held with the traders. However, the President has continued to postpone, hide and dodge meeting the traders. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is the question, honourable member?

MS KYEBAKUTIKA: My question is: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when is the Government giving a conclusive decision on matters concerning the traders in this country? Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can the President hide from his people, Rt Hon. Prime Minister? *(Laughter)*

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I want Members here to note that the Prime Minister is not a sleeping Prime Minister. *(Applause)* And, the President cannot hide from his people.

Let me give you the update. Today, at 10.00 a.m., the President directed that I meet the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives – and the ministers came. We had – you will even see it on TV – the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the traders. I had KACITA – I had that man called Issa Ssekitto. Is he Issa? *(Interjection)* That one. He was in my meeting – you will see him on TV. Yes, let me give you the update. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, honourable colleagues, let us listen to the Prime Minister so that she releases us early to go and watch TV. *(Laughter)*

MS NABBANJA: Now that you are here, let me give you the update. Mr Speaker, we also had an interaction with the owners of the arcades – the likes of Drake Lubega – and they were about 20. We agreed. The President did not meet the traders yesterday because we are still renovating Kololo Independence Grounds. *(Interjections)* That is why even your people and the President of National Unity Platform (NUP) could not access it – and you people complained. Even ours has not accessed Kololo. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, the update is that the President will meet the traders at an appropriate date.

Secondly, we also agreed that the shops be open, starting from tomorrow. We also agreed – *(Interjections)* - yes, these are the updates. We also agreed – that there are people who are known as *Kifeesi*, who have been scaring traders from accessing their shops. We agreed that those ones should be dealt with by the police. I beg to submit.

6.00

MR BUMALI MPINDI (Independent, PWD Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, persons with disability constitute 12.4 per cent of Uganda's population.

However, this information is not captured in the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) database. Now that NIRA is going into the process of giving out new National IDs, can you assure the persons with disabilities that their data is going to be captured by NIRA, and that on the new identity card, a category for the disability is put?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the issue of the Member will be deliberated on with the concerned members and I will invite him for the same meeting, so that we all move together as a team.

6.01

MR CHRISTOPHER KOMAKECH (Independent, Aruu County, Pader): Thank you. Mr Speaker, I thank you for the time you have given us to address the problems in the constituencies. In the same vein, allow me to bring the gratitude from Pader District to the Prime Minister. Ever since the National Resistance Movement (NRM) Government came into power, we have only had one Prime Minister who has taken time off to come to Pader and socialise with the locals. *(Applause)* Thank you so much, Madam Prime Minister, for coming to Pader.

In that same vein, Pader District is Vote 917. Pader District has 1,359 councillors. In the last financial year, we appropriated money for paying these councillors and the LCs I – that is, the ex-gratia money – to a tune of Shs 380,060,000. However, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development released Shs 160 million only.

As I speak, the LCs I and the councillors are up in arms. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when are the LCs I and councillors receiving their ex-gratia payment? Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister of Local Government? And, this is across the country.

6.03

THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Mr Raphael Magyezi): Mr Speaker, last year, we brought a request

and Parliament gave us a supplementary budget to pay the councillors' allowances, honoraria and ex-gratia. We did request the Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) to give us a full update of the requirement per district. Unfortunately, this matter keeps going on, in terms of inadequate release of money to pay the councillors.

Mr Speaker, I request that you allow the sectors of finance and local government to handle this under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister. It is not just a matter of one district; it is cross-cutting. Honourable colleagues, we cannot sit in Parliament when a chairperson who gets Shs 10,000 per month is not paid, an LC III councillor who is supposed to be paid Shs 35,000, is not paid, an LC III chairperson who is supposed to be paid Shs 380,000 is not paid and, worse still, the chairman of the entire district, who gets only Shs 1.7 million, says they are not paid.

Therefore, I request that because of the magnitude of this challenge - we have tried as a sector; we have held consultations but I think we need the big input of the Rt Hon. Prime Minister -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: She has promised that she will do something.

MR MAGYEZI: Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Dr Otaala?

6.04

DR EMMANUEL OTAALA (NRM, West Budama County South, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

The question that I would like to ask the Prime Minister is that at the time of independence, there were 11 subregions in this country –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we need your attention.

DR OTAALA: Honourable Prime Minister, I am this side. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Bring him to the frontbench to make it easier. *(Laughter)*

DR OTAALA: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I was making my case that at the time of independence, there were 11 subregions in this country. I must thank the mighty NRM Government for taking services closer to the people, including the creation of cities in each of those subregions and regional referral hospitals to take specialists closer to the people.

The last one is Bukedi subregion. My direct question to you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, is: when is Bukedi getting its city at Tororo and a regional referral hospital at Tororo? I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister of Local Government, the Prime Minister has requested you to take that on.

6.06

THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Mr Raphael Magyezi): Mr Speaker, this week I got a copy of a letter from the cultural leader of the region, written to His Excellency the President, in which he said the people of Tororo had never requested for a city. He was clear and said they wanted another district, not a city. So, it is unless and until we get a request, in writing, from the district council, having consulted the lower local governments and the cultural institutions. For now, I do not see the issue of Tororo City. Thank you.

6.07

MS HELEN NAKIMULI (NUP, Woman Representative, Kalangala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question to the Prime Minister is on the fisheries sector because I represent a fishing community.

Madam Prime Minister, in 2017, the Government allowed the fishermen and women to use the hurry-up method of fishing for the silver fish. In 2023, Parliament passed a Bill and it was assented to by the President; it is now an Act – the Fisheries and Aquaculture Act, 2023 – but we do not have regulations in place.

A few months ago, the minister for fisheries, Hon. Hellen Adoa, passed a directive that the use of the hurry-up method should be stopped because it is illegal – and, indeed, it is illegal. However, the Government passed it and allowed the people to use it in 2017.

The Act that we passed here allows for the fishermen to use a boat of 28 feet only. The minister says we should use a different method of fishing called *chota-chota*, in the fishing language –

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can you put it in a parliamentary language?

MS NAKIMULI: Mr Speaker, that is the only language I know for the fishing industry. *(Laughter)* Yes, it is called *chota-chota*. If you allow me, I will -

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is a name.

MS NAKIMULI: Mr Speaker -

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just ask the question, honourable colleague.

MS NAKIMULI: If you allow me, I will bring the definition. Madam Prime Minister, please, do not be distracted –

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: We just need the question.

MS NAKIMULI: I need her to understand it because -

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question, honourable colleague?

MS NAKIMULI: Okay. In *chota-chota*, you are supposed to use a small boat, which is not allowed legally. The other boat that is allowed cannot be used for *chota-chota*. So, there is confusion on the lake. The Fisheries Protection Unit is telling these people not to use the small boats as the law says, but, now, *chota-chota* is supposed to be used by these people, using small boats. Can we get some help?

My people are confused and they do not know what to do. There is this fishing going on and this has been stopped, but now the minister is saying they should not use - (*Member timed out.*)

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Right Hon. Prime Minister, do we go *chota-chota* or hurry-up? (*Laughter*)

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the fisheries industry is one of the lucrative businesses we have in the country and we get a lot of revenue and foreign exchange through that industry. So, we agreed to regulate this industry for the benefit of the country.

While the Cabinet was in Kyankwanzi, we discussed this matter extensively. Now that we, in the Cabinet, are at a certain level in terms of knowledge, I request that you allow me to organise a meeting where I would involve all the Members of Parliament from the fishing communities in all those districts so that we update them on the current – because we have to protect the lakes. We have to protect our fish. *Chota-chota* – those boats are dangerous. They have killed many people, are unacceptable and illegal. I doubt whether the minister can really allow that.

I will ask the minister to also come here and talk about the *chota-chota* and the hurry-up.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think the option you had given –

MS NABBANJA: No, the minister should come here and answer that question because, if she is the one who made the statement, let her come and retrieve it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The statement was never made here.

MS NABBANJA: Then, for the other meeting, I promise that I will invite you so that we move together as a team.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we get many issues to do with that

sector. I request that you first meet the MPs from the fishing community.

MS NABBANJA: I will meet them next week.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Very good. Hon. Feta, Hon. Kwizera and, then, Hon. Nyanzi. We are concluding with those.

6.12

MR GEOFFREY FETA (NRM, Ayivu Division East, Arua City): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the Government is undertaking the rehabilitation of Alwi-Nyaravur-Nebbi Road. The work is taking shape and it is very impressive. However, the Nebbi-Madi Okollo-Arua stretch, 93 kilometres, has developed life-threatening potholes and gullies.

My questions are;

1. What is the Government's plan for this road?
2. Wouldn't it be right for you to take time and inspect this road so that you appreciate what we are talking about? The gullies are life-threatening?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I have been to Madi-Okollo, I have been to Nebbi and I have also been to Arua. I request the Member to help me: is Madi-Okollo on the road from Nebbi to Arua? If that is so, that road was contracted and the contractor is on-site? Yes. Is that the stretch that was relatively good before we contracted it?

MR FETA: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I just drove on that road last evening. The stretch from Arua to Madi-Okollo and Nebbi does not have a contractor and the potholes are really life-threatening.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I will cause a meeting with the minister for works and UNRA to see how best we can work on those potholes and maintain that road to a motorable standard.

6.14

MR PATRICK NYANZI (NRM, Butemba County, Kyankwanzi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Madam Prime Minister, my concern is about the increasing cases of impersonation in land transactions and I will use my example to illustrate it. I own a small piece of land and a fraudster had a fake National ID bearing his photograph, but with my name and NIN. He was presenting that ID to a prospective buyer. I proceeded to a registrar and I was told that the search certificate generated by the system does not give enough information – I have a copy of the search certificate from the lands office. You find somewhere down that there is almost a disclaimer that it is up to you to certify that this land is the property of the person and not somebody else.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, isn't it possible to modify the system in the lands office so that a search letter comes with a photograph of the registered proprietor? Why should a prospective buyer be at risk? The ministry for lands has all the information about the registered proprietor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Especially for individuals, unlike companies and all that.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the Member is bringing up a very good and valid point. Now that the ministry for lands is updating the land registry, I believe we shall pick his point so that it can help the whole country. His point is very good. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, we have engaged the Prime Minister for two hours and twenty minutes. She is also a human being. I really feel pain when I see honourable colleagues who have been seated here and I have not given them an opportunity. When I look at colleagues who have been seated here for over two hours and I have not given them an opportunity, I really feel it. However, she is a human being. So, it would be really sad if I do not give her space. Next week, I will push a little bit longer. Otherwise, I should be using one hour.

Leader of the Opposition?

6.18

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. There are two quick issues for follow up. We discussed, a bit, the question of projects and the Rt Hon. Prime Minister encouraged Members to cajole their constituents to avail land for some of these projects, where there is no money for compensation.

I do not know how we can get to deal with that situation and how the contracts are processed by the Government – you have one where there is no compensation and another where there is compensation. Resultantly, what will happen is that these honourable colleagues will be blamed by their voters for having “eaten” their money. We need to balance these things up. We want the projects to take place as much as possible, where people can avail their land. However, when there is this project with no compensation and another project comes with compensation, people will say: “You came and encouraged us to give our land, where is our money?” We need to process it properly and make sure that it is understandable.

Finally, honourable colleagues have raised the issue of “drones” that pick-up people with gun-wielding men in plain clothes. The Prime Minister said that she would go and investigate and come back to the House – those were her words. Can I suggest that we get a proper statement from the Government and, perhaps, the Ministry of Internal Affairs on these “drones” as opposed to - Rt Hon. Prime Minister, it is good you are going to investigate, but can we have something a bit more comprehensive?

Mr Speaker, what is going to happen is that people will begin to defend themselves. If a “drone” comes at you with gun-wielding men in plain clothes, you might assume that they are robbers and use self-defence to fight them off. Will you, then, be charged for assaulting officers on duty?

I would like to give an example. Three years ago, a drone was burnt by the area residents in Kyebando, because it had similar people.

People raided it, the men ran away and the locals burnt this “drone” – because they were defending themselves. I do not think that we should push the citizens to that extent. There is a mode of arrest that is stipulated in the law and I do not know why we do not follow it.

I suggest that the investigation that the Prime Minister is going to conduct should culminate into a statement from the ministry. Is that another mode of arrest that we should know about? Maybe we amend the law. It is happening too much; it is happening to the Opposition, National Resistance Movement members and all over. It is not right and people will begin to fight it off.

If I am raided and I have the capacity to defend myself – *(Interjection)*- you hear what the Prime Minister is saying: “They will kill them.” Is that what we want?

If you have not introduced yourself, that you are a police officer or security officer or whatever, and you have come holding a gun and in plain clothes - there is a lot of robbery happening in the city – I will assume that you are robbers and defend myself. So, if you say that when somebody is defending themselves, they will be killed, is that what we want?

Mr Speaker, I beg that you guide me because the Prime Minister is rebutting, saying that they have to be careful. How?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssenyonyi, the Prime Minister is very conscious; she is not on the record. You are the one picking rumours from the corridors of Parliament and putting them on the record. She is not noted anywhere. *(Laughter)*

MR SSENYONYI: Thank you for the guidance. So, she is out of order. *(Laughter)* However, on a very serious note, I think it would be good to have a statement. Good enough, you are going to conduct an investigation. Can we have a proper statement so that we know? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, these are matters which the sectoral committees can follow up on because they need more attention. Statement after statement here - we have a Committee on Human Rights and the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, do your work and we see how best we can follow up on that matter.

Honourable colleagues, the Leader of the Opposition presented a comprehensive statement and the two will be debated together – the State-of-the Nation Address and the motion which was brought by our honourable colleagues, led by – *(Mr Magyezi rose)*- Hon. Magyezi, wait. I will allow you the opportunity. I think it would be very important for us to read through the alternative statement from the Leader of the Opposition and, then, on Tuesday, we debate from an informed point of view – both statements – since we are considering all of them.

Hon. Magyezi, did you have a point of procedure?

MR MAGYEZI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have a point of procedure which is critical in terms of what we record on the *Hansard*. My dear brother and friend, the Leader of the Opposition, while making his statement – I want to believe it was a mere slip of the tongue – in his conclusion, he read some statements which I did not agree with and I think he saw me shaking my head. He said: “I can see Magyezi is mad.” *(Laughter)* Yes, that is what I heard.

I would like to confirm that I am fully in charge of my faculties and I believe that not agreeing with you must have triggered that as a slip of the tongue. I do not think that the Leader of the Opposition wanted to say that Magyezi was mad and then it is recorded like that on the *Hansard*. *(Laughter)*

I am normal and straightforward, but, of course, I did disagree a little bit and that is why you saw me shaking my head when you said: “When the country is sinking, we cannot all just

become spectators to cheerlead those who are steering our country to complete destruction.”

I thought that was going to the extreme and, therefore, it is not a question of being mad, but a question of –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, at that time, did you behave like a mad person?

MR MAGYEZI: No, at that time I behaved like someone who did not agree.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay. *(Laughter)*

MR MAGYEZI: I thought that should be corrected in the *Hansard*. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssenyonyi?

MR SSENYONYI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. First, my statement clearly stipulated areas that are sinking and that we all need to hold together – areas of corruption and so on, which we must all work on for the good of all of us because when they sink, all of us suffer.

However, when I said, “I can see Hon. Magyezi is mad” – I would like to help my senior that the word “mad” means many things, including “anger”. So, I saw that you were angry. That is really what I meant – because I do not know Hon. Magyezi to be mad in the sense of being mentally ill -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think you saw him as being mad at you.

MR SSENYONYI: That is the point. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay.

MR SSENYONYI: I am glad the Deputy Speaker knows - you see, the Gen Z know these newer English words - *(Laughter)* - so, our senior comrade needs to learn them. However, for clarity, I did not in any way mean that you are mentally disturbed because I do not think that you are and I do not have any facts to that effect. I meant that you were angry and that is what I saw. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The Hansard will capture it well. *(Mr Mugarra rose)* Hon. Martin, what is it? You seem to be mad at me. *(Laughter)*

6:26

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM, WILDLIFE, AND ANTIQUITIES (Mr Martin Mugarra):

No, I am actually happy with you and that is the reason why I thought I should make this remark and appreciate you for being an exemplary leader in marketing Destination Uganda. *(Applause)*

Over the weekend, we saw you in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park with a team of Portuguese, showcasing the beauty of this country. I thank you and pray that other Members or leaders in this House pick a leaf from you. I would be happy to see my brother, Hon. Ssenyonyi, the Leader of the Opposition and the entire National Unity Platform team, for once, putting out a beautiful message about Uganda, not only the bad ones. *(Applause)*

So, as a fraternity, we thought we should appreciate you. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, it is always important to showcase our country. Also, I have seen many of you go on tours abroad, but the places we tour abroad do not even have a quarter of what Uganda has. Uganda is gifted by nature – our climate and all that. So, I urge you, honourable colleagues, to visit our national parks and our national heritage sites.

I went with Hon. Walyomu and we visited Bishop Hannington site. I am yet to go to Kigulu Rock. I want to understand my country very well. I want to go to Kidepo. There are very many places we could go to. You see, you can love your country without agreeing with your Government. So, I urge you, honourable colleagues – and, by the way, it is an awesome experience.

Yesterday, the gorillas came to me - because you are supposed to keep a distance of around

10 metres, but they kept coming. Maybe they thought I was going to hold a parliamentary session –(Laughter)- and wanted to “catch my eye”. It was a very beautiful experience and whoever visits feels great. I interacted with – or I looked like them; we are 98.4 per cent of the same DNA.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I spent time with the tourists and I will share a few issues which they all talked about. They were saying that we need to do A, B, C and D, especially on the telecom network because for these people, the moment they take a picture, they want to share it instantly. So, do we have network in the national parks – before the excitement goes away?

There is also the issue of the roads. It took me two hours on a 23 kilometre-road from Rubanda to Ruhija. Then, on the one which goes to the side of Hon. Kwizera’s place – Rubuguli – you will take around four hours. It is bad.

Honourable Commissioner, I was in your area and I could see that the community is trying to protect these parks. However, when you look at the money we are getting - because we charge these people \$800 for a permit to come and watch gorillas for one hour, but the road is bad. Many of them say: “No, I take a long journey from Entebbe and, then, I add on a very bad road?”

However, I know, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, that as Cabinet, you have focused on tourism roads and we shall support you seriously on it. House adjourned to Tuesday at 2.00 p.m.

(The House rose at 6.30 p.m. and adjourned until Tuesday, 6 August 2024 at 2.00 p.m.)