



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

THIRD SESSION - FIRST MEETING

THURSDAY, 22 JUNE 2023



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IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

THIRD SESSION - 4TH SITTING - FIRST MEETING

Thursday, 22 June 2023

Parliament met at 1.59 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

without blood. So, we need immediate action on that.

PRAYERS

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

People are dying - a doctor told us how he was looking for just one litre of blood and it took him about three hours to get it. We need a healthy nation and to have a healthy nation, we need the health sector in good position.

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I welcome you to this afternoon sitting. I can see that out of the 83 ministers, we only have two ministers in this House. Congratulations!

They also talked about the issue of the interns; the 1,900 interns that the Government promised to deploy. I requesting that these interns that we promised, on Budget Day, to deploy, should be paid and deployed. I am yet to hear from the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development on how far they have gone with this deployment. *(Applause)*

Honourable members, I would like to remind you that tomorrow, Friday 23 June 2023, we will have a Business Committee meeting at 10.00 a.m. in the Conference Hall. I am informing the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of Government Business, the Chief Opposition Whip, the Government Chief Whip, and all the whips from different political parties. The meeting will be at 10.00 a.m. One thing I promised myself is to keep time.

Once we have these interns - and I have kept reminding you that these interns are your brothers, daughters and sons. If you pay school fees for someone for four years to do medicine, and he does not undertake internship, that person cannot practice as a doctor. Let us help these people. Even if we do not have where to place them, they should be able to do their private business, as long as they have qualified. They need to do internship. We need to hear from the minister. *(Applause)*

Yesterday, I met a team of health professionals - the Uganda Healthcare Federation - and I received a petition from them. In their petition, one of the pertinent issues they raised was the lack of blood in the blood bank. That is very dangerous and I talked about it yesterday. I expected the Minister of Health to be here to report on the status. We cannot have a country without blood. We cannot have hospitals

As you plan for the 1,900, we also have the accumulated 4,000 interns. We also need a plan for the 4,000 that are incoming. As leaders of this country, I believe you are working for your people out there. It is those doctors and nurses supporting our people in terms of health. We

need a healthy nation. Yet, to have a healthy nation, we need people who are healthy.

Prime Minister, the National Health Insurance Bill was withdrawn. We want that Bill back in the House. Tell us why it was withdrawn. Can we have that Bill back in the House and legislate on it? We had actually finished it. We need reasons why it was withdrawn. Why we should not pass it?

We also need an update on what plans you have, as Government, on the 4,000 incoming interns. I need an immediate response from the finance minister, who is here, on the promise that you made on Budget Day, as far as the 1,900 interns are concerned. Has the money been paid? Now that we are crossing to the next financial year, we do not want the money to be returned to the Consolidated Fund. Can we get an update from the minister?

2.06

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES)

(Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, on the 15th of June, we made a pronouncement that we had fulfilled our obligation this Financial Year, 2022/2023, of Shs 22 billion, which was the funding gap.

I confirm that the cash limit was issued to the Ministry of Health –(Interjection)– cash has also been given.

I am very happy to inform this House that we now have all the money to close the financial year. It has come late; so, this implies that we shall not close until the 30th of June. Entities have up to the 30th of June to clear all the outstanding invoices in our system.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, you and I are both accountants; we believe in seeing. Can I have evidence to the effect that the money has been forwarded? This will enable us know who is responsible. Is it the Ministry of Health or the finance ministry? Can you give me that evidence tomorrow as we go to the Business Committee meeting? Please, give me evidence that the money has been transferred.

MR MUSASIZI: Much obliged, Madam Speaker. I am sure my team at the ministry is listening. Even now, before you adjourn the House, we should be able to provide you with evidence.

THE SPEAKER: Please do. Give us evidence that the money has been taken to the health ministry. Is that for the 1,900 interns?

MR MUSASIZI: Madam Speaker, yes. The issue at hand, which we addressed with the Committee on Health, was in regard to the outstanding figures for this financial year, which involves the 1,900 interns. We noted that the number of interns keeps growing every year. That is why in the Budget Speech, we said that we have paid Shs 22 billion, and going forward, we want to agree with the stakeholders to see how to manage this issue of interns.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I think it would be prudent for the Executive to have a stakeholder's engagement on this matter. These people need to know where we are coming from, where we are, and where we want to go. We are encouraging people to do sciences, so they are all piling there. As you encourage people to do sciences, you must have a provision for monies to pay these scientists. Therefore, you need to call for a stakeholder's meeting and then agree on what should be done as we plan for those people who are already out there. Yes, Commissioner.

MR SILWANY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I remember very well when -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, as you enter, please log in and as you go out, clock out. If it is not functional, check which side is functional.

MR SILWANY: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for that information. It is now about two months since the medical interns brought their petition. I remember that on that day, you delegated me to receive that petition on behalf of the Parliamentary Commission.

Madam Speaker, the information I would like to give to this House is that unless what the minister is saying was done today, as of yesterday, the intern doctors that I met had not been handled. No money has been paid and no interns have been placed. These people are calling me because I received their petition on your behalf. Between one and 10 minutes, I receive about 20 calls from these interns.

Madam Speaker, I request that since you started with this in your communication, we sort out this matter. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance are here. The Minister of Health can be summoned to come to this House so that we sort out this matter since the Minister of Finance has already said that money is available.

Let us sort out this so that when we go back, the students are settled and back to their hospitals working. Otherwise, as of yesterday, there was totally nothing; these people have not been handled.

THE SPEAKER: They are not students, they are doctors.

MR SILWANY: They are doctors; I beg your pardon.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Finance, can we give you five minutes to give us that evidence of payment? Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we have four ministers in Health. Can we have a Minister of Health in the House?

Yesterday, I said we needed a statement in this House from Health, but the ministers did not take that seriously. We need a Minister of Health in the House and we need evidence of payment to the Ministry of Health in the next 10 minutes.

Hon. Christine.

2.13

MS CHRISTINE KAAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am reacting to your communication relating to the blood gap within the country. Most of the Members of Parliament -

THE SPEAKER: I had not finished my communication; can I finish? Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when will we get the National Health Insurance Bill back in the House?

2.13

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Madam Speaker, now that we are calling the Minister of Health in charge of the Insurance Bill, she will take it up and give us the actual day when she will bring it because she is the one who withdrew it. She has to tell us if it is ready so that it can be brought back. I want to go out and contact her.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Christine. Members, let us wait for an answer on the payment of interns. We cannot comfortably sit here when people are dying in hospitals because there are no doctors. *(Applause)* We need an answer on the Health Insurance Bill and an answer on the blood bank.

MS KAAYA: Madam Speaker, concerning the blood bank, most of the Members of Parliament had volunteered to mobilise their electorates to donate blood, but the challenge was the blood collection equipment and kits. You would mobilise over 500 people, but the ministry comes up with only 100 kits and you send away other willing people who would have donated blood.

We should get a response from the minister on the blood collection kits because people are willing to donate blood. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. We need to find out why they were not able to collect all the blood.

2.15

MR NATHAN BYANYIMA (NRM, Bukanga North County, Isingiro): Thank you, Madam Speaker. About one month ago, the Deputy Speaker mentioned here that we would have a Malaria Walk where we would even give blood. We walked all the way, but when we reached here, there were only three beds where one could go and donate blood.

There was not a single minister from the Ministry of Health - are they four or five? There was nobody. You have walked for about 15 kilometres and you are tired. You would want to have somebody receive you and lead you to the bed to give blood - I gave blood because I was a committed person, but I did not find a single minister to advertise or popularise - I think we have a dead ministry and they must wake up. The minister is supposed to talk to Members of Parliament. We were walking with the Deputy Speaker, but there was not a single minister or political head. Solidarity is really important.

THE SPEAKER: That still relates to what Hon. Christine is saying. People are willing to give blood, but there are no people to collect the blood and yet there is no blood in the blood bank. Do you want us to provide money for this so that you divert that money?

2.17

MS JUDITH ACHAN (NRM, Woman Representative Nwoya): Thank you, Madam Speaker. On the same note, I mobilised the community to donate blood in Nwoya District; we have a hospital called Anaka Hospital. I derived that from the challenge that my people are facing in the constituency because I believe it is a national issue.

Madam Speaker, we have a category of children with sickle cells and Members of Parliament, including myself, are receiving phone calls every day to support the parents who are running around with their children to look for where they can access blood. Sometimes we are even forced to run to hospitals and give in our blood to be tested to see whether it matches with the patient so that we can donate.

I have a hospital in Nwoya District that does not have a cold room to keep the blood yet the community is willing to donate blood. Children are supposed to be taken to Lacor Hospital or Gulu Regional Referral Hospital. We are losing children with sickle cells every month. I feel that pain as a mother.

Today, we are celebrating and commemorating the children who died because of sickle cells. Madam Speaker, what is the Ministry of Health's plan? I have written a proposal to one of the embassies to help us donate or purchase one of those cold machines to Anaka Hospital, but up to now, I have not received it.

THE SPEAKER: Since we have asked the minister to come, we could raise issues of blood when the minister is here so that she responds. Otherwise, we are only talking to ourselves now.

2.19

MR IBRAHIM SSEMUJJU (FDC, Kira Municipality, Wakiso): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Minister of Finance, Hon. Musasizi, is celebrating that with eight days remaining to close the financial year, we now have the money.

Knowing how Government systems work – in fact, Mr Musasizi should be in Luzira Prison. Eight days to close the financial year and he is celebrating that we now have the money!

The second point, Madam Speaker -

THE SPEAKER: What should he be doing in Luzira? What crime has he committed? *(Laughter)*

MR SSEMUJJU: When you present a budget, Madam Speaker, you show the source of funding. It is on the basis of that, that Parliament approves the budget.

Hon. Musasizi and his group brought a budget here and presented the sources of funding. We have now run the full-scale of the financial year and at the end, he says he now has the money. That is criminal.

Madam Speaker, the second point -

THE SPEAKER: What Hon. Musasizi said is that the collections have been got and that even defaulters, like you, have been able to pay. So, the collections are high and the money is now

available. The interns and all those people that are demanding the Government are going to be paid.

Hon. Musasizi, can you give us evidence of the payment?

MR MUSASIZI: I rise on a point of order.

THE SPEAKER: No, you are beyond that.

MR SSEMUJJU: Madam Speaker, the second point is that I want to go and donate blood, but I want assurance from Government that these ministers who stole *Mabaati* will not steal blood. *(Laughter)* I am available to go and give blood, even today.

THE SPEAKER: You are talking about *Mabaati* like it is the first thing that has ever been stolen in Uganda. Many things have been stolen. The people who stole the *Mabaati* are in court. So, it should not be an issue or an excuse. If you want to give blood, give blood. Do not talk – you have kept boring us with the issue of *Mabaati*. I am bored of it. There are other important things that we should talk about. We are talking about blood, but you are talking about *Mabaati*!

Honourable members, can I have order in the House? In the public gallery this afternoon, we have students from Nakanyonyi Girls' Secondary School from Jinja City. You are most welcome. *(Applause)* Hon. Manjeri is a product of that school. Hon. Manjeri, thank you. They are represented by Hon. Manjeri and Hon. Aga Isabirye. You are most welcome. This is your Parliament.

Honourable members, when debating, be mindful that there are kids up there that you need to inspire. Honourable members, we are now going to look at matters of national importance.

MR ANGURA: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. You may recall that on 19 May 2023, we did pass the Appropriation Bill. During that debate, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development was deprived of Shs 100 billion that was supposed to be for rural electrification.

Aware that the Parish Development Model has now been rolled out and money has been given, we would desire that that resource is availed.

The reason that was advanced for depriving the ministry of that money was that during the time of the rationalisation of Rural Electrification Agency (REA), we did authorise a transfer of funds that were in REA, totalling billions of shillings – Shs 500 billion-plus. The ministry had not absorbed or accounted for that money.

I recall that you requested the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development to come here -

THE SPEAKER: Are you saying that the ministry has not absorbed and accounted for the money?

MR ANGURA: Yes. You requested that before we can consider even a supplementary in the near future, the minister should come here and tell us what happened with the resources that were taken together with REA as they were transferred to the ministry.

Also, Madam Speaker, you are aware of the Electricity Connection Policy (ECP) where the Government came up with a plan to support our communities to get connected to power at a cheaper rate. We were informed that the resources were available. So, that would also call for the minister to come.

Therefore, the procedural matter I am raising, Madam Speaker, is: wouldn't it be procedurally right that you request the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development to come and inform us and the nation at large about what happened to the resources that REA moved with to the ministry?

Also, what is available in stock for us for the ECP since our people are waiting for the free connection that the Government pledged?

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, I had already asked you to come with accountability for the money. Can we have that accountability and the report?

2.26

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (ENERGY) (Mr Sidronius Okaasai): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, that question was asked the day we were passing the Appropriation Bill. My team is preparing the accountability for the money, which this Parliament transferred from REA to the ministry.

The money is actually being used for implementing donor projects. The Shs 500 billion was not money for one financial year. It is being spent according to the work plans, which were approved by Parliament when we were approving the support that we got from development partners.

We shall provide information on how that money is being used over time. We shall prepare that report and bring it to Parliament in the next two weeks. I pray.

THE SPEAKER: Before you bring the report, is it also true that there was under-absorption of that money?

MR OKAASAI: Madam Speaker, it is not true because as I said, this money was planned to be used over time. Some of the projects are for three years while some are for five years. We have followed –

THE SPEAKER: When making a budget, do you make it for three years or for one financial year?

MR OKAASAI: Madam Speaker, when you were transferring the money, you were transferring the projects, which already had work plans over time. It was not for one financial year. So, this money was to be spent -

THE SPEAKER: When money is released for a project, it must be released for a financial year. We budget per financial year. This goes to people who know accounts: assuming you have that money, isn't it rolled back at the end of the financial year?

MR OKAASAI: I wish to make it clear that the money which was transferred from REA was the total provision for - at that time - a programme, which was being implemented. It was for an agency. So, all that money had to be transferred, in bulk, to the ministry. It was not for one financial year *-(Interjection)*

MS KINYAMATAMA: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The clarification I am seeking is: where are those projects? This is because that money was specifically meant for rural electrification and we do not see any new projects in our constituencies. So, where are those projects? Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Chairperson Committee on Budget?

MR WAMAKUYU: Madam Speaker, I would like to inform the minister that when we collapsed the REA Vote, the money which was transferred was Shs 527 billion and it was for one financial year. That is what we transferred and not for the entire project.

THE SPEAKER: And it was not absorbed. Was it absorbed within the financial year? Chairperson, Committee on Budget, was the Shs 527 billion absorbed within the financial year?

MR WAMAKUYU: Madam Speaker, we normally see the absorption at fiscal progress, but we have not seen these projects, the money was not absorbed; it has been sent back to the Treasury.

THE SPEAKER: In the circumstance that there is low absorption, what do you do as a Budget Committee?

MR WAMAKUYU: We normally look for those idle resources and utilise them.

THE SPEAKER: Now that the idle resources were taken, can you give us – Honourable minister, just bring your report and it will be debated upon. We even want to understand whether it was a good decision for you to take Rural Electrification Agency (REA) because it

used to be more active when it was operating on its own. *(Applause)*

So, come back with a report.

MR OKAASAI: Most obliged. I will come back with a report and clarify on those matters. Number two –

THE SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter from Hon. Aisha Kabanda.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. In the Financial Year 2020/2021, electric poles were spread all over, and up to now, there are many poles standing without wires connected to them. Is it not procedurally right, that you direct the minister to also report on those poles which are standing with no connection?

THE SPEAKER: Some people have even used them for firewood. *(Laughter)*

MR OKAASAI: That would be criminal.

THE SPEAKER: It is not criminal, it is trespass; you have put your pole in my garden and you are not making use of it, and you now say that it is criminal; for all those years? Anyway, bring us a report.

MR OKAASAI: I will bring that report including what she has asked for. However, on tampering with electricity infrastructure, this Parliament passed a punitive measure on it and we shall implement it in case you are caught.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, what you are saying is different from the poles that you dump anywhere. So, we will wait for your report.

MR OKAASAI: Secondly, about the ECP policy on free connection, which you passed –*(Interjection)*– this one is different.

THE SPEAKER: Bring a report. Thank you.

2.33

MR ALLAN MAYANJA (NUP, Nakaseke Central County, Nakaseke): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I am raising a matter of national concern. Whereas Article 26(1) and (2) of our Constitution talks about protection from deprivation of property, many people across the country where road projects are taking place have not been compensated and their land titles have not been returned.

For instance, in Nakaseke District, over 200 “bibanja” holders and 50 land titles for residents along Luweero-Kiwoko-Butalangu road have not yet been returned and compensated by the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA).

This is also happening in other parts of the country such as Bujuuko, Mpigi District, Northern bypass, and Kampala, and Wakiso districts, to mention, but a few. Construction of the Luweero-Kiwoko-Butalangu Road has commenced, but my people are worried that UNRA may not compensate them as well as return their land titles. And they are planning to drag this Government to courts of law.

My prayers:

1. With your indulgence, Madam Speaker, may the Minister of Works and Transport present a statement and the status of those who have been compensated and their land titles returned with a focus on the ongoing road projects across the country; and
2. The minister should explain why some people missed out on compensation and yet their land titles have not been returned to them. Thank you for the opportunity.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, very much. That question will go to the General, but there is one more question that is still pending and so that you answer them at ago.

2.35

MR OJARA MAPENDUZI (Independent, Bardege-Layibi Division, Gulu City): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. On the 20th of this month at around 2.00 p.m., a truck with registration No. UAT –

THE SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter. Honourable members, we have free sitting. *(Laughter)*

MR SSEMURUJU: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The sitting is provided for in the rules and I do not want to protest against the Speaker. Maybe upon a motion, it can change.

However, if a Member has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the NRM, that Member ceases being part of us. When I say “us” except if you are blind - the rules say NRM should sit on the right-hand side of the Speaker and you are asking who, and yet you are the Members of Parliament with rules.

Madam Speaker, if a Member has voluntarily signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the NRM, wouldn't it be procedurally right for that Member of Parliament to go and sit where his heart and body belong? *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, we get our votes differently. Some of us get our votes by talking about anything we want to say on the microphone. I said free sitting and I maintain it; it is in the Rules of Procedure.

Nobody is going to deprive anybody who is a Member of Parliament to sit on any side of the House and you will not be deprived from speaking from any side of the House. Hon. Mapenduzi? The only one I can protect is this one. *(Applause)* This one is only for two people; Hon. Thomas Tayebwa and Hon. Anita Annet Among.

MR MAPENDUZI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. On the 20th of this month at around 2.00 p.m., a truck Registration No. UAT 113F veered and plunged into River Nile at Karuma Bridge. This truck had two occupants; Mr Tumusime, the driver and a turn man, and goods worth several millions.

On 25 April 2021, a fuel truck with Registration Number UAS 337M, belonging to Energy Petrol Station in Lira City also plunged into River Nile at the same bridge and was equally never recovered, including the bodies of two occupants, Mr Alex Ogwal, the driver and Howard Obaro.

According to police in Aswa Region, over 25 trucks have so far plunged into River Nile from the same spot since 2011. All have never been recovered, including the bodies of the victims in those accidents.

Madam Speaker, this bridge has become the most dangerous in the country, leading to the loss of several lives and goods worth billions of shillings. You are aware that this bridge was built in 1963, a year after Uganda attained independence and a lot has changed since then.

I, therefore, pray that Government makes urgent and proper rehabilitation works on this bridge to save the lives and properties of the citizens. *(Applause)*

A new bridge needs to be designed and constructed to fit the current demands and challenges, so we can allow the country to move freely. Otherwise, we run the risk of cutting off access of one part of the country if we do not act immediately. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Hon. Mapenduzi. In the public gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation of prefects from Central College School, Nateete, and Wakiso District. You are most welcome. *(Applause)* They are represented by Hon. Ethel Naluyima and Hon. Medard Sseggon. You are most welcome. Thank you for coming to Parliament. Please have a seat. Join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

2.42

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT (Gen. Katumba Wamala): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Article 26 of the Constitution provides that nobody should be deprived of his property and we do not do that.

What happens is when a project is going to be implemented, we do what we call “alignment of the road” and in that process, definitely, there are some properties, which should be affected. We assess, evaluate and use the valuation given to us by the Chief Government Valuer. It is the last valuation that is given for any property and that is disclosed to the property owner.

I am sure the people the honourable member is referring to have been given their evaluation. We do that through disclosure. Every person is given the amount of money that will be compensated according to the properties and value of the land in that particular area. This has been done for all the people along the Luweero-Butalangu Road.

The challenge sometimes comes in two forms. One, you find that we may have the money, but then there may be conflict of interest on the property. Sometimes, people do not agree on who should receive the money and that takes time. This has happened even on the Northern Bypass project.

We have people who have, up to now, failed to agree on who should take the money in a certain family, but we have that money. Many times, because we need the project to proceed, we put that money in court so that when they sort themselves out, then they can go to court and get their money.

The other challenge is the amount of money we get for compensation in the budget, which in many cases does not match the amount of money we require. This is known very well in the Committee on Physical Infrastructure and within the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. However, we may delay to compensate, but definitely, we shall compensate.

Once we sever off the part we are going to use from whatever document we take, including the land titles, the land title will be given back to the owner. This has happened. Although some of the people on the Northern Bypass have not yet gotten their severed titles; some

of them do not want to get them until they get the compensation. We have the documents; we have everybody’s records. Therefore, please inform the people and give them confidence that they shall be paid and their land titles will be returned to them –(*Interruption*)

MR MAYANJA: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. The minister should be specific on the time because the Uganda National Roads Authority has been with these land titles for close to five years. When will they be paid? People are worried because construction has started and it is going to take two years. They are very worried; they need assurance on the time.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The law talks of adequate and prompt compensation. The money for compensation is embedded within the project. Why should we delay? In his own words here, the minister said, “We may delay”. Why should we delay the compensation of people, when the money for compensation is actually embedded within the project yet the law talks of adequate and prompt payment to people? Can the minister clarify?

2.47

MR ASUMAN BASALIRWA (JEEMA, Bugiri Municipality, Bugiri): Madam Speaker, the biggest mistake the minister and UNRA is making is to defy the guidance of the court on matters of compensation. The Constitutional Court said that you do not utilise land in cases of these projects until people have been fully compensated. That is a decision of the court.

What has been happening is that UNRA and your ministry go into negotiation with the people. Sometimes, you negotiate; in other instances, you do not and that is where the problem comes from. Moving forward, it is important that you follow the guidance given by the courts. You may want the land - We may want the property and facilities, but the idea of compensation before utilising the land remains critical. (*Applause*)

GEN. KATUMBA: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. (*Hon. Ssemujju rose.*)

THE SPEAKER: Still on the same?

MR SSEMUJJU: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The General said at the beginning that their Government does not want to deprive people of their property.

We have had meetings as MPs in Kampala and Wakiso with even ministers, about people who live along the railway line. The other day, we met Hon. Ecweru. Before compensation, the minister brought bulldozers and started almost destroying lives. I do not know whether that was by a different government.

The clarification I am seeking is whether the standards changed when it came to those who live along the railway line whose houses you are demolishing as if they are not human beings. You concluded in my constituency and now, you are in Nakawa.

THE SPEAKER: In that case, who has encroached? Is it Uganda Railways Corporation or the people? (*Laughter*) I just want to find out who has encroached. (*Laughter*)

MR SSEMUJJU: Madam Speaker, the Land Act, which this Government has been waving in our faces for many years, creates a category of bona fide occupants. In fact, on private land, you will never evict people when it comes to the Government; but in the particular case I am talking about, this matter has been discussed and Hon. Katumba Wamala knows about it and the decision was to compensate people. I am asking why they are not compensating them and instead demolishing their houses.

THE SPEAKER: Compensate people for encroaching on the right of the railway.

GEN. KATUMBA WAMALA: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the guidance. Encroachers are not bona fide occupants and this Parliament actually, at one time, made a pronouncement and said we should not compensate encroachers on Government property and land.

On the issue of the requirement to bring a report, yes I can bring a report on how much money we need to compensate for all the ongoing projects. It will be availed.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The General is going to bring a report and we will reconcile it.

GEN. KATUMBA WAMALA: On the issue of Karuma, Madam Speaker, Karuma – (*Interruption*)

MR SSEMUJJU: Madam Speaker, the Minister for Works knows that he has been compensating people in Bukasa who are in the same conditions and circumstances as the ones along the railway. Is he in order to mislead Parliament that compensation has not been made to those classes when he has just completed compensating Bukasa? Is he in order?

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Ssemujju, the minister did not say that the Government will not compensate. They look at things case by case; they do not have similar facts. The minister is in order to give you information that is available. You are the ones who passed it in this House.

GEN. KATUMBA WAMALA: Madam Speaker, on the issue of Karuma Bridge, I totally appreciate the concerns of Hon. Mapenzi. First of all, this bridge has outlived its usefulness, even in terms of location and approach. That is why we reinforced the approach in terms of control of the speed with humps and rumble stripes, but also put some soldiers and police traffic control elements on one side.

It is true that this bridge is going to be redesigned; we are already in the process of redesigning it. We are only challenged with the funds. If we had the funds, we would have started the construction, but we are in discussions with some development partners to see that we redesign and reposition this bridge to meet the challenges of the increasing traffic on that road.

It is very unfortunate that a number of accidents have happened, but we are going to increase reinforcement as of now so that if a truck hits, it does not topple over. Thank you very much.

MR TINKASIIMIRE: Madam Speaker, before the minister takes leave of the issue of Karuma, they said trucks with cargo worth a lot of money are plunging into that river and lives are being lost. So far, on average, 25 trucks have gone in. If each truck has a driver and turn boy, those are 50 people. The minister comfortably sits when he talks about redesigning the road without talking about the human beings. I feel disturbed -

THE SPEAKER: It is the way the road is designed that is causing accidents. Did you want him to stand?

MR TINKASIIMIRE: What I am asking the minister –

THE SPEAKER: Listen, just hold on. The minister has given you an appropriate answer; that it is something that Government is concerned about. We need to redesign the road as it has outlived its lifetime. What did you want the minister to do? To stand because lives have been lost? What he is saying is, we need to redesign the road. Raise your issue; that has been answered. If you wanted to raise it, you would have done so. Bring your issue.

MR TINKASIIMIRE: I only talked about human beings and I wanted the minister -

THE SPEAKER: By the way, it is not animals that drive those vehicles. It is human beings.

MR TINKASIIMIRE: I wanted the minister to tell the country whether every person who will drown in that river will ever be recovered.

THE SPEAKER: Okay, let's go to the next person. Hon. Suubi, bring your issue since yours is covered.

2.55

MS JULIET SUUBI (Independent, Woman Representative, Rakai): Thank you for the opportunity, Madam Speaker. My issue is about URA's notice to all businessmen in this country to stop the storage of goods in warehouses and pay their taxes immediately on arrival at the neighbouring ports, mostly Kenya and Tanzania.

Madam Speaker, this is very unfair because it is ad hoc. These businessmen were not mobilised and they were not sensitised about this programme. They have already paid for their goods and they are going to lose a lot of money to the warehouses. It is also very expensive for the business community in this country because imagine the money you have to put in to deal with Kenya instead of doing it at the Ugandan border. Money will be lost if this continues.

Ugandans will be deprived of business opportunities on the Ugandan side because this means that business activities are going to shift to Kenya and Tanzania. How about those businesses that have been operating at the border with the high unemployment rates that we have in this country? My prayer is that this should be halted with immediate effect.

Secondly, this is going to cause a high rise in the prices of goods that we are importing. Most unfortunately, wheat and foodstuffs are among them and we are going into the dry season and we had bad rains. Our people, who are the final consumers of these goods, are going to face a problem of inflated rates or rise in prices of these goods.

Madam Speaker, my prayer is that the trade minister should stop with immediate effect. Thank you.

2.57

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Lukia Nakadama): Madam Speaker, the traders were briefed about that programme, but I think the Minister of Trade will come and give a statement about that. Maybe those who

were not aware were not around and did not get the information, but the Minister of Trade will come here and give a statement.

THE SPEAKER: What is your response to her?

MS NAKADAMA: Madam Speaker, the Member is raising the issue of goods being halted at the border.

THE SPEAKER: It is not at the border. You take back the goods to be cleared from the other side and the cost is borne by the trader. What you need to do is to ask the Minister of Trade to come and report and also give information to those traders about what is pre-empting them to do that.

MS NAKADAMA: Madam Speaker, that is what I said at the beginning; that the traders were sensitised about that programme. However, in case there are those who did not get the information, the minister for trade will come here and give a statement to that effect.

THE SPEAKER: We do not need a statement per se in this House. The people who need that statement are outside there - the traders. Give them information on what you have agreed to because everything is being done in anticipation. We need that minister in the House.

2.59

MR BARNABAS TINKASIMIRE (NRM, Buyaga West County, Kagadi): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for this wonderful opportunity to, once again, represent my people.

I am raising a petition, which is already in your office. It is a petition by the people of Ndaiga Subcounty against land grabbers who have invaded their area.

The petitioners are:

1. Mr Samuel Baluku
2. Mr Gordon Nyareba
3. Mr Katongo Bugembe
4. Ms Scovia Birabo

5. Mr William Sanyu
6. Mr Rubangirana
7. Mr Bagonza
8. Pr Ephraim
9. Pr Sabiiti; and others.

Madam Speaker, the petitioners said they had been occupying this land for a long period, spanning 30 to 40 years, but all of a sudden, some people emerged with land titles.

This matter was brought to the attention of the President, who agreed, in principle, to negotiate – for political reasons – to cure the problem. However, the land titleholders could not be patient. They decided to sell the land titles to some powerful and rich people in this country.

Madam Speaker, these powerful and rich people are wreaking havoc by evicting the people of Ndaiga to a level that, in the process, we lost a life on the 4th of May. A woman was shot in the back as she was running away from the land grabbers. The picture is here. It is very sad.

THE SPEAKER: Lay the picture and the petition on the Table. I refer the petition to the Committee on Physical Infrastructure – they will report back to this House. I want the committee to go to the locus.

MR TINKASIMIRE: Thank you very much. I beg to lay it on the Table.

STATEMENT BY MINISTERS ON:

I) THE SUPPLY OF BLOOD IN BLOOD BANKS

THE SPEAKER: Can we hear from the Government?

3.04

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Madam Speaker, I am waiting for the minister who is not here now, but she communicated that she would be coming in.

THE SPEAKER: Do we have only one minister in health? Aren't they aware that we start the House at 2.00 o'clock?

MS NAKADAMA: Madam Speaker, one minister is sick and one is away. We have only one minister, who was held up in a certain conference, but is coming.

MR TINKASIMIRE: Madam Speaker, we are talking about a serious ministry – concerning the lives of people. I am glad that constantly, you are on this matter. However, you are breaking down because of this ministry. The President needs to know that he put in this ministry a category of people – he is aware that they have health problems. *(Laughter)* It is from the Prime Minister's mouth.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, having a health problem is not by choice.

MR TINKASIMIRE: You have to be honest to Ugandans –

THE SPEAKER: No. It is not by choice. Anytime, you can also have health problems. Last week you were sick, didn't we treat you? *(Laughter)*

Hon. Tinkasiimire, I want you to withdraw that statement.

MR TINKASIMIRE: Madam Speaker, I withdraw the statement that one of the honourable ministers does not have a back problem –

THE SPEAKER: The ministers in that sector have health problems.

MR TINKASIMIRE: Madam Speaker, I have evidence. If given time, I would lay it on the Table. However, in the absence of time, allow me to withdraw –

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Tinkasiimire, unconditionally, withdraw it.

MR TINKASIIMIRE: Allow me to withdraw the statement that the ministers in the

Ministry of Health are very healthy, but have refused to come and answer the questions of Ugandans. *(Laughter)*

STATEMENT BY MINISTERS ON:

II) THE ATTACK ON LHUBIRIHA SECONDARY SCHOOL IN MPONDWE, KASESE DISTRICT, ALLEGEDLY BY THE ALLIED DEFENCE FORCES (ADF), ON FRIDAY, 16 JUNE 2023

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the other day we heard the information about the attack on the children. We asked the minister to come up with a comprehensive report. I hope it has been uploaded.

I thank the Holy Father for having had prayers for those children. There were prayers in the Vatican for the children who were burnt in Kasese. *(Applause)*

MR ABDALLAH KIWANUKA: Madam Speaker, as the House prorogued on the 25th of last month, on the 26th, our forces were attacked by Al-Shabaab. We lost about 50 soldiers, as was reported by the President.

Isn't it procedurally right that since the minister for defence is here, he compiles a comprehensive report for the House to know the status of the people we lost, how they are going to be compensated and where the bodies are to ensure a decent burial?

The whole country is in the dark. They want to know what is happening. Isn't it procedurally right that the minister be directed to produce a comprehensive report about what transpired in Somalia? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, what Hon. Kiwanuka is raising is pertinent. After the killing of the soldiers in Somalia, we remained in the dark because the House was not sitting. We are only hearing statements out there.

So, we will also require a statement on that. Which people were killed? Were the bodies brought back? What is the way forward? That

still brings you back to the corruption that the President talked about; you are taking people who are not experienced enough.

Honourable, somebody raised an issue on recruitment. You are recruiting because somebody is a relative to someone and because you feel there is money in Somalia, you are sending people who have just been recruited. Honourable minister, you will come with that report in two weeks' time.

MR SSEMPIJJA: Much obliged, Madam Speaker. The statement on Somalia with those details – I request that you give me three weeks because there is also an on-going investigation. The President ordered for an inquiry, which is still going on. I know by that time, we would have got that report and most of these answers will be given, as you rightly put it.

MR SILWANY: Madam Speaker, I rise on a procedural matter related to the same issue. It is basically on the illegal use of the gun that has become so rampant in the country.

As we are talking about the Kasese issue, killings have increased. The other day in Mayuge, they murdered a businessman. Just early morning, they shot and killed him. Every day, there is somebody being killed with an illegal gun that is being misused. That incident happened in Bukatube, and the Prime Minister present here was around.

The community overran the small police post and started killing others; they killed everyone they suspected. Wouldn't it be procedurally right for the minister to come here and also tell us about this gun misuse and the killings that are happening rampantly every day? What is the problem? What is not being done because it is continuous -

THE SPEAKER: Yesterday, I talked about the mobile money operators.

MR SILWANY: Exactly.

THE SPEAKER: They are killing them and yet that is how these people earn their living;

they rob them. So, honourable minister, as you come back, we need a statement on what is happening because people are dying.

Today it might be you, but tomorrow it is somebody else. We lost that Hajji in Mayuge. Now, you are making locals take the law into their hands because when they suspected another person, they also beat up that person to death. Do they still keep law and order? They wanted to lynch the police as well. Honourable minister, we need a statement on that.

3.14

MR IDDI ISABIRYE (NRM, Bunya County South, Mayuge): Thank you, Madam Speaker. In line with the same, what happened in Mayuge is really very embarrassing. Hajji Hamza, a very prominent businessman, was gunned down and yet he was neighbouring the police.

On the right-hand side of his home is the Marine Police and on the left-hand side of his home is a police post, just 50 metres away. However, someone came and fired very many bullets, but there was no response.

Madam Speaker, as we talk about the Kasese issues, there are even more issues within our homes, villages and communities that go undetected. Something wrong is actually not being fixed.

The Minister of Defence and Internal Affairs should come up with a comprehensive report. Otherwise, our people are not secure, and yet the obligation of Government is to keep people with their property. It is in the hands of the police, which is their cardinal role.

I beg that the Minister of Defence and Internal Affairs comes up with a report for us to debate and find out exactly what happened. Is it about money? Corruption? Welfare? Deployment?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, we are going to get that report. However, Ministry of Internal Affairs, and Ministry Defence and Security, maybe we need to have a stakeholder's meeting. You need to meet these juniors. Talk

to them and find out what the problem is. You will find that some of them have mental health issues.

Some of them are frustrated; it could be welfare issues. It is good for you to create time and talk to these people and understand what they are going through. It is not until you get to understand what they are going through that you will get to know the problem. I wish you could create time for that.

I remember when Gen. Katumba Wamala used to be the Inspector General of Police, you would find him talking to those juniors and getting their views. It is also good for you to get the views of those people. Generally, you need to talk to them.

MR SSEMPIJJA: Madam Speaker, we do that. We recently intensified this programme to meet –

THE SPEAKER: When you do that, report to Parliament what problems you found with these people so that we plan together.

MR SSEMPIJJA: We are going to do that. On the second question, we are going to organise it with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and together, we will present a security report to the Parliament – (*Interjections*) – the one on Kasese is here -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, listen to the Kasese report.

MR SSEMPIJJA: Out of what I am going to present now, Parliament has found it right that we have a report on Somalia. And also, another report on the rampant misuse of guns-

THE SPEAKER: The state of security in the country and the rampant usage of guns.

MR SSEMPIJJA: Much obliged, Madam Speaker. We are going to do exactly that.

THE SPEAKER: Gen. Charity, you are welcome.

MR SSEMPIJJA: Madam Speaker, have you allowed us four weeks?

THE SPEAKER: You asked for three weeks and I have given you the three weeks.

MR SSEMPIJJA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is a statement by the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs to Parliament regarding the attack on Peter Hunter Secondary School Nyabigando, also known as Lhubiriha Mpondwe Secondary School.

At the Third Sitting of the Parliament of Uganda held on Tuesday, 20 June 2023, Parliament directed the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs to issue a statement about the Kasese killings by the ADF yesterday, 21 June 2023, but because of the circumstances entailed here, I am presenting it today, 22 June 2023.

I would like to thank you, Madam Speaker, for according the Government this opportunity to make this statement. Allow me to bring up to date all Members about what has been happening, briefly, so that we are together and share knowledge about these terrorist attacks.

On 13 November 1996, ADF 1200 strong, all armed by President Mobutu of DRC and President Bashir of Sudan attacked Mpondwe and occupied it for four days. The plan of Bashir was, as he was already supporting LRA in Northern Uganda, to be able to flank us from behind by capturing Kasese Airstrip for their groups' supply of arms/weapons to collapse the NRM Government.

We mobilised and in four days, we killed 400 of them. Therefore, we failed their plan as they only managed to just occupy Mpondwe in Kasese for the four days I have mentioned, as they were blocked by a small force there. When we mobilised ourselves, they gave up their mission of capturing Kasese Town and Airstrip and resorted to turning to terrorism by killing people and forcing them into Internally Displaced Camps (IDPs). They also disappeared and occupied the mountain areas of Kasese and Kabarole.

Between 1996 and 2007, they were in those mountain/rural areas where we fought them, but they tried running to Kibaale and Bunyaruguru. By 2007, we had defeated them completely. They then resorted to bombing towns and adopting guerrilla tactics. The city and town bombings also quickly got controlled and they all retreated to the DRC where they were allowed by the Government of President Kabila.

A team of 100 strong tried to enter and disorganise CHOGM, but of the 100, 87 were put out of ction and only 13 went back. They had come as civilians and assembled bombs locally -(*Interruption*).

THE SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter.

MR SSEMUJJU: Madam Speaker, I know Hon. Ssempijja is two years old in that ministry. He may know that several statements about Kasese and the ADF have been presented to Parliament with a history that he is repeating.

The procedural issue I am raising is whether the minister, who was instructed to present a statement on the attack in Kasese, should lecture this Parliament as if we are in Kyankwanzi about the history that has already been presented by Hon. Kiyonga, Hon. Mbabazi? All subsequent Ministers of Defense and Veteran Affairs have given that information. Instead of giving us knowledge we do not have, he is taking us back and supplying what we already have.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, it is a fact that 85 per cent of the Members of this House have just been here for two years. (*Applause*) They do not have the prior information that you heard. Since you have lived and grown up in this House, for the benefit of the people who have been here for two years, please go on.

MR SSEMPIJJA: Much obliged, Madam Speaker, I will be faster this time. I would like to inform Members of Parliament that at that time, the group that wanted to disorganise CHOGM came as civilians, combined when they reached here and assembled bombs locally, within and around Kampala.

They had split up and attempted - what we did was to organise intelligence because when had split up and had started moving in small groups of one or two people. This was fought by intelligence that is, knowing and arresting them after follow up.

The ADF is a weak force. Since the days of President Mobutu, it would have grown into a massive force. It has an anti-people philosophy and does anti-people actions. During the regime of President Kabila, these ADF were given liberty to stay in the Congo. Since then, 20 years plus, they have remained weak and 20 years is really a lot of time. It is the current regime of H.E Tshisekedi which has helped us and accepted to work with us to enter Congo under Operation *Shujaa* to attack ADF from their safe haven in the DRC. (*Applause*)

The joint UPDF/FARDC Operation Shujaa in Eastern DRC has been a success. Since its inception in November 2021, over 500 terrorists have been killed, including foreign fighters affiliated to other terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda, Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State Central Africa Province (ISCAP). Over 50 have been captured, about 30 have surrendered on their own and over 100 former abductees rescued. Various types and calibres of arms, ammunitions, Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and IED making material have been recovered. A number of terror cells and collaborator networks both within Uganda and in DRC have also been destroyed.

I would like to inform you, Madam Speaker, that life has returned to normalcy in the areas of operation of the joint forces. Former abductees have returned to their homes, schools, places of worship and businesses have re-opened and abductions of the local people have been curtailed.

Infrastructure, especially roads, have been either put in place or rehabilitated, which has eased movement of troops and supplies, and goods and services for local business communities and so on. The local communities in the Democratic Republic Congo (DRC) are appreciative of the joint UPDF/FARDC forces that have enabled this return to normalcy.

I have organised a small map there, but you can see –(Laughter) We are showing only that part around the Rwenzori from Kibale National Park down up to Queen Elizabeth National Park, Lake Edward and when you enter Congo, we are showing from Bulibo through Virunga National Park, Kasindi, Mpondwe - We had this problem in Mpondwe and I am going to talk about it. You will know about Butembo, Butwe and Beni and those mountains after Rwenzori National Park.

Madam Speaker, the ADF is mostly in the northern parts of the road from Kasindi to Beni. You can see Kasindi and Beni on the north-west. Kasindi is in the middle near Mpondwe and then Beni. The northern parts of that road and south of the road are occupied by UPDF and where the UPDF is operating from, life has come back to normal with the population settling back to economic production. For example, they have gone back to cocoa and coffee farming, shops are open and schools are running. All the shops, if I have to volunteer some information, are full of Ugandan goods. When you go to all these towns from Beni, Bunia, Masindi – but that is something else.

In the DRC, where Congo allowed us to operate, the ADF could not go to camp there; they only remained in small groups. I used a Luganda word - *bukunkumuka* – When you have dry cow dung and you remove the lump, what remains is little. These remaining *bukunkumuka*; small, scattered remnants that cannot attack barracks and police stations - But why do they attack civilians and schools, killing innocent people?

We are very sure that they do this:

1. To give themselves publicity.
2. To make the world know that they are still there.
3. To detract us (UPDF) back from attacking them in Congo in their main camps.

We have denied them space locally, but we also need to finish them from their perennial hideouts in Congo and this country should not remain in this panic forever.

What the ADF is doing is not a sign of strength, but of weakness. Otherwise, why don't they attack military and police barracks or ambush army vehicles? As you know, Madam Speaker, when you burn a log, even the ash that we call *evvu* in Luganda, can get into your eyes and cause pain. The *bukunkumuka* should be wiped out or *evvu* well swept because all these can cause damage.

They tried this in Ntoroko on 13 December 2022 and they were planning to do exactly what they did to this school recently. They were 51 when they attacked; out of the 51, 26 were put out of action. (Interjection) Yes, we counted them. When fighting, you are not blind. We counted them and 26 were put out of action and their bodies remained there. The remaining 25 were captured and we have them in prison. When we capture them, we do not kill them; we put them in prison. This was a bigger and well-armed group than that one of Lhubiriha, the recent Kasese group, which were less than 10 terrorists.

We are carrying out investigations to establish and get answers to some pertinent questions, which everyone, including honourable Members, are asking:

1. Why didn't people, both security and civilians, see them?
2. Why were there no identification or suspicion of new or strange faces?

All these will be answered by all the investigations that are going on and the findings will avail these answers. We have already removed the logs, but we now need to remove the ash.

Regarding this instant case, on 16 June 2023, at around 2300 hours (11.00 p.m.), suspected ADF rebels, numbering between five to 10, attacked Peter Hunter Secondary School, Nyabigando also known as Lhubiriha Mpondwe Secondary School in Kasese District. Following the attack, 37 students, one security guard who challenged the attackers and four other civilians were killed. That made it 41 lives lost, but we have

lost another person who was under medical care.

The first information to the nearby UPDF deployment was received at around 2330hrs (11.30 p.m.) from civilians, to the effect that students were on strike and had set the school on fire.

This information was quickly shared with police deployed at Bwera and, subsequently, a joint UPDF and police force, on wheels, was dispatched to the scene. Routine foot patrols also joined the dispatched joint force to the scene of crime.

Unfortunately, the attackers had retreated towards River Semliki inside the DRC – exactly below Mpondwe – and eventually towards Virunga National Park. This Virunga National Park is an area that is not inhabited by human beings and, therefore, has no security deployment. However, the UPDF forces pursued the attackers southwards to River Lhubiriha because they were expected to cross there, around three kilometres from the scene of crime.

Despite that, Madam Speaker, the pursuit continued and on 19 June 2023, at around 14.30hrs (2.30 p.m.), towards the confluence of River Semliki and River Talia in the DRC, the attackers, who had made a hasty defensive position, were attacked by UPDF mobile squad, where three enemies were killed, one submachine gun was captured and one woman and three children were rescued. In the initial planning at the start of Operation Shujaa, such diversionary acts by the ADF enemy were anticipated and taken care of.

That is why rear deployments in the entire Rwenzori subregion were maintained. For instance, when the same ADF group attempted to infiltrate Ntoroko District in December last year, even in bigger numbers as mentioned above, the whole group was annihilated, owing to timely information from the civilian population.

Unfortunately, in this case of Kasese, the information was late, inaccurate and the small group was able to infiltrate with the assistance of some collaborators. That is why some of them have already been arrested to help in the investigations.

Operation Shujaa was initiated, partly, to arrest the ADF terrorism from its source in DRC. The bombings in Kampala, for example, in November 2021, were organised from DRC. Had we not deployed in time, the situation would have been worse. This particular incident was an isolated one and highly regrettable. However, it does not and will not deter our resolve and commitment to execute our constitutional mandate of defending the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Uganda in general and Kasese and the Rwenzori subregion in particular.

The pursuit for these criminals continues by the UPDF in the DRC. We will also continue with deep investigations in order to understand the nitty-gritty aspects of this incident. Our forces, together with other security forces, are going on with the process of investigating these occurrences. Any elements found to have been an accomplice will be arrested and prosecuted as per the laws of the country.

We are also doing community sensitisation and mobilisation for vigilance, collaboration with security forces and working with security forces to make sure that the population is more vigilant in this affected area. As I speak now, the general situation has returned to normalcy.

We appeal for calmness, vigilance and cooperation from all citizens of good will in Rwenzori subregion and the country at large, as we continue to deliver on our constitutional mandate of preserving peace and security for person and property within this country.

The country will be informed on any other developments regarding this incident and the situation in general.

I thank you, Madam Speaker. For God and My Country.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, honourable minister. Honourable members, you have heard the statement on what happened in Kasese. It was a very unfortunate incident and, of course, at the end of the day, you cannot blame anybody. It happened and our security forces need to become more vigilant.

Let me start with the Members from Kasese District and then we go to the in-laws and relatives. *(Laughter)* Let us not take a lot of time because we are about to go to Prime Minister's Time.

I wish you could give us a way forward as you discuss: what do we do?

3.45

MR ATKINS KATUSABE (FDC, Bukonzo County West, Kasese): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. To begin with, I thank you, Madam Speaker, because immediately I received the tragic news, I contacted you and everybody in the security system, including the President.

I thank you that not only did you receive my call, but you even opened your home for us to have a meeting on a way forward. I am meant to understand that we almost lost you because your pressure went up when you saw innocent citizens – school children; our future engineers, our doctors, our priests and our judges – murdered and had their lives brutally terminated in cold blood. We really appreciate you for the support you gave us. We also appreciate the support of the colleagues in the House. Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

I thank the minister for the comprehensive report. Madam Speaker, you have just guided that we should not blame anybody. However, I think it is very important for us to say: "Never again."

Honourable minister, you indicated in your report that out of the 51 attackers in Ntoroko, 26 were put out of action and 25 have been taken captive by our forces. I wish the same really happened in Kasese.

My prayers are:

1. We have about five people still in hospital. My estimation, Madam Speaker, is that where a hospital cannot manage their condition. It is no wonder that yesterday, we lost another life that was being managed in the ICU at Bwera Hospital.

My prayer right now, because this cannot wait, is that the Government evacuates the five people and they are taken to better equipped hospitals, specifically Mbarara Hospital, which is not really very far from Kasese. We cannot afford to lose another life.

It pains me because the woman that died yesterday had lost a husband. So, what are we going to tell these orphaned children? The only hope that they had was maybe the mother surviving to look after them. I think we have gone through enough as a community.

Madam Speaker, through your directive, I am asking the Ministry of Health or ministers of health, that these citizens still fighting for their lives in Bwera Hospital should immediately be evacuated to Mbarara Hospital for further and better management.

Two, my prayer, as I conclude, is on a way forward. The President responded to our requests as leaders from Kasese. Five million shillings was given to each bereaved family and we are really thankful to the President and the Commander of Defence Forces.

However, we are asking for presence and deployment. The entire Kasese is insecure; the lake communities, the mountainous communities, the urban and village communities. We are asking that deployment that relates to the threat should be scaled up, and both soft and hardware capabilities should be scaled up in the community.

Lastly, instead of our sons and daughters going back to their homes because that is what the parents ask for - this Parliament should direct the Ministers of Defence, Internal Affairs and Security to ensure that security, specifically in

the boarding schools, should be beefed up, both day and night, so that we do not have students going back to their homes. They should be guarded securely in their homes.

I would like to thank the entire Government, the entire security and yourself, Madam Speaker, for a collective thought and action. We have had enough as a community. We want to tell a better story and it is only you to help us tell that better story. It is much appreciated.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, very much. Prime Minister, I think that is not asking for too much for those people to be evacuated to a better hospital.

MR SSEMPIJJA: Madam Speaker, regarding the one who died, she could not be airlifted due to her condition, but the others were airlifted, not even to Mbarara, but Kampala.

THE SPEAKER: So, are they here?

MR SSEMPIJJA: They are here. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Atkins Katusabe, I will assign you people to go and check on those patients tomorrow. Minister, you will tell us-for security reasons, we do not have to say it out loud.

3.52

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Health was on the ground and assessed the patients who were admitted in Bwera Hospital. Some of them, like the minister has said, were evacuated to Kampala.

Regarding the specific patient who died, she was in critical condition and the doctors did not advise that she should be evacuated because she would have died immediately. That is why they treated the patient there. Unfortunately, she passed on. So, I just want to confirm what the Minister of Defence has just given us.

THE SPEAKER: He is making a confirmation as a doctor; he is not a journalist. *(Laughter)* He is a doctor; he is just making a professional conformation. So, honourable minister, we need to know where those patients are so that we visit them to see how best they can be supported.

Hon. Atkins Katusabe is asking about deployment. The whole of Kasese is not safe. That is not too much for us- Members, you will speak.

MR SSEMPIJJA: Madam Speaker, his submission was wonderful. I would like to thank him for the support. We are going together with him to the area.

However, we do not have to say everything here. Regarding the capabilities he is talking about, it is with Parliament. We can monitor every inch of the border if we had the means and nobody could have entered even with a panga. However, the rest is for another day when we are making the Budget. So, support us more.

THE SPEAKER: When you are talking about security matters, there is what is classified. You cannot speak everything.

3.54

MS FLORENCE KABUGHO (NRM, Woman Representative, Kasese): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for this opportunity. It is unfortunate that we lost our young ones at such a tender age in cold blood.

Kasese being at the border, it is very impossible for one to cross from the Democratic Republic of Congo with a small smuggled item without being detected, followed and arrested. Rebels crossed from Congo to Uganda and killed our young ones without being detected. *(Applause)*

The minister just told us that these people attacked the school at 11.30 p.m. He has not told us what time his security forces reached the school. He is aware and everyone is aware that the rebels came, took their time to kill these

students, who were making noise and shouting: “We are being killed. People are killing us.”

One student called Kato managed to escape and ran to a police station, which is 800 metres away from the school. He reported thus: “Unidentified people have come to our school and have started killing students. I managed to escape and I am reporting this”. The police did not respond.

According to the students who survived, they told us that the killers spent about one hour killing them. They even spent some time monitoring if they had all died and burnt the dead bodies to ensure that they were all dead.

They did not stop there. They moved to a nearby trading centre and looted the –

THE SPEAKER: Switch it on.

MS KABUGHO: Thank you. They broke into the shops, looted and went away with their stuff without being intercepted. Honestly, where were the security forces? Remember, when they reached the school, they first shot dead the askari. I want to believe they heard the bullets.

They heard the sound of the bomb that they used to burn the bodies - about 17 were burnt; you cannot recognise them. The security officers did not respond. When we asked these questions, they were like, “This one is against us”. It is very shameful.

If you can respond to issues of smuggled items, why can't you respond when it comes to issues of human life? *(Applause)* Is it that money is more important than the lives of the people? We have people who collect information on your behalf.

We have the Village Internal Security Officers (VISOs), Parish Internal Security Officers (PISOs), Ward Internal Security Officers (WISOs), Gombolola Internal Security Officers (GISOs), but where were they? Where were the DISOs? They are supposed to collect information on your behalf yet you were arresting civilians. The actual culprits have

not been arrested. Why are you hiding them? *(Applause)*

I respect the minister, but the report you have presented has made me ask: what is this? We do not need to cover these issues. If you love your country, speak the truth so that your juniors can learn that they have been sleeping on duty. If you lie to the country, what will the juniors think? They will think you are praising what they were doing. You have just said you cannot allow an enemy to cross the border, but how did the enemy cross?

Two weeks ago, Kasindi Village, which is next to the Ugandan Border, was attacked by rebels; people were killed and others abducted. It should have been a warning that the border is not safe. When we talked about it, you said, “No, you people in Kasese, there is no need for panic. We are going to boost security at the border”. Yet, just two weeks down the road, we were attacked. Where was the deployment?

I would like to thank you for the support you gave for burials; the Shs 5 million helped, but how about those whose children were abducted? People are flooding their homes; they are feeding them. The parents are dishing a lot of money. Everyone who dies at the hands of Government is given Shs 5 million, but what is it for? What does it do? All we need is the protection of our people and not the Shs 5 million you are giving. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. That still takes you to the question the minister asked: Why didn't the people - both security and civilians - see these attackers? That is what is being investigated and that question has to be answered. Why did they not see the attackers? There is another question - why was there no identification or suspicion of new or strange faces that came inside the country? That is what the minister is saying is being investigated.

4.01

MR FERIGO KAMBALE (NRM, Kasese Municipality, Kasese): Madam Speaker, as leaders from Kasese, we are grateful for the sympathies and condolences to our people-

THE SPEAKER: Members, listen to Hon. Ferigo.

MR KAMBALE: Immediately after the attack, the Minister of State for Education and Sports, Hon. Muyingo, the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and the Commander Land Forces came to mourn with us.

Madam Speaker, we received Shs 5 million for every family that lost a student and we are grateful as leaders.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Charity, I think you are on high demand this side. These people are calling you.

MR KAMBALE: Madam Speaker, I want to agree with the presentation of my colleagues, the Member for Bukonzo West County and the Woman Representative for Kasese District. It is true, we who were at the scene realised there was thin deployment. Why? It is because the Major General who is commanding our forces in Congo informed us that they heard about the attack when they were in Congo. They attempted to come from Congo to rescue our people, but the Congo border could not allow them to quickly cross to the Uganda side. That is what the Major General confessed.

Madam Speaker, this meant that we were relying on a force that had already crossed to Congo to come and rescue a situation in Uganda. That confirms there was thin deployment.

What happened at the scene was terrible. By the time our students died, they had cried for help. One of the girls who died is my cousin's daughter. These people cried, but got no help. It was terrible.

Our students were butchered; they were slaughtered like goats. It took over an hour as our students were being butchered. It is, therefore, my request that the UPDF considers serious deployment on the ground. This is very serious. Our people died badly. If you reached the scene, you would feel pity.

The boys who resisted being stormed into the dormitory were burnt beyond recognition.

When we were removing the bodies, we could not recognise any of them until they carried out the DNA tests.

The way forward is that the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs should work closely with us, the leaders from Kasese. Let us also use the media to call upon our people who have been diverted into rebel work to come home. We are lucky our king has been released and we are grateful to the President. So, let us work closely with him to mobilise our people to leave this rebel work.

We have vigilantes in Kasese who are trained at the village level. I would like to recommend that since we have a thin deployment, let us reinforce deployment by involving our vigilantes on the ground. They should be armed so that in case we are attacked, our local people who are trained participate in defending themselves. If we had such an arrangement, there would have been some prior preliminary self-defence.

I conclude by thanking you, Madam Speaker and every Member, for the concern about the killing of our people in the Rwenzori Region. Thank you, for listening to me.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Ferigo. Honourable members, everyone's cry is deployment. We need to increase deployment and train the vigilantes to be able to protect people. I am not saying arm them; I am saying train them. Some areas have had the same scenario. In Teso, we had the arrow boys, Lango had Amuka, and I remember Hon. Amero was one of the arrow girls. *(Laughter)*

4.06

MR ACROBERT KIIZA (Independent, Bughendera County, Bundibugyo): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I would like to join my colleagues from Kasese to condole with the parents who lost their dear ones.

The issue of massacring our children is becoming too much in this country. If I may recall, in Kasese, at St Johns, the same

happened. We had a similar massacre in Kichwamba Technical College, just like the recent one. My plea to the Ministry of Defense and Veteran Affairs, as my friends have alluded to, is that we need serious deployment and combing the entire mountain.

Madam Speaker, an attack on Kasese is not only for the people of Kasese, but the entire sub-region and country. Look at the mountain stretch from Kasese through Bunyangabo, Ntoroko up to Bundibugyo. Therefore, when the people of Kasese are in agony, the people across the mountain are all in pain.

Madam Speaker, last weekend in Bundibugyo, security personnel arrested three ADF terrorists and it is on record. I would like to make an appeal that the combing should not only be done in Kasese, but also across the whole mountain because you are aware that it is hard to reach.

In addition, the roads in that area are impassable. Like the minister alluded, security roads in the Congo have been worked upon. If they have been worked on, why not our roads on the mountain slopes? I so pray. Thank you.

4.09

MR HAROLD MUHINDO (FDC, Bukonzo County East, Kasese): Thank you, Madam Speaker and the minister for your statement. I would like to say that the right word to use should be “laxity” in the forces that were within the country. While the rebels were advancing to the school, they met a *boda boda* rider and tried to shoot him. They shot two bullets at him. He left the *boda boda*, ran to police and reported that he had met attackers. The police at the customs post asked him to go and report at Mpondwe Police Post. A civilian who has managed to reach the police post is asked to go to another police post.

The scene of crime is not more than a kilometre southwards from the UPDF detach. They did not come to rescue the children that were killed after the burning, the bullets and the heavy crying.

With all due respect, from the minister’s report, he indicates that the attack was at 11.00 pm and the response at 11.30 p.m. I would like to request that you revisit the source of information because it is not true.

THE SPEAKER: What is true? What was the right time?

MR MUHINDO: What is true is that there was no response until after beyond an hour because the attack took more than an hour before these people left.

Madam Speaker, I also want to report that people in our community have been left in suspense. We expected that Government should have directed on what should be done, for example in schools. Parents are reaching out to their children and withdrawing them from schools without Government direction on how they are going to protect children in other schools. It has been left to, “To Whom it may Concern”. I hope that action is taken in protecting our people.

Two days ago, a community member from Kajwenge, another sub-county in Bukonzo East, not Bukonzo West where the attack happened - reported, “I have seen five people walking downstream in a river. Two of them are armed and the other three have bags on their backs.” The member reported to the UPDF and up to today, their whereabouts are not clear.

This still makes the community live in a state of fear; people are no longer sleeping in their homes. I think it is important that at this point, we take this as a serious attack.

I was surprised to see a government representative mention that what happened was not anything related to the ADF, but rather a conflict over ownership of the school. This was very unfortunate. I am happy that the minister has clearly communicated that it was an attack by the rebels, but that was a misleading statement – actually it was from an RDC. I would like to report what I heard from church because it was the RDC that mentioned it in church.

Madam Speaker, we have survivors; they have been affected by trauma. I know two of them who are always on the watch. At some point, I think out of hallucinations, they keep running away and they are left unattended.

I would like to thank Government for the gesture of feelings, responsibility and condolences; they gave Shs 5 million and Shs 2 million to those that were hospitalised. However, those that survived were given Shs 150,000. To me, Shs 150,000 to somebody who has survived - I think this one needs more support.

I would like it to be on record that Government has sent Shs 150,000. I believe it is not yet late. Let Government commit to rehabilitate these survivors so that their future is not written on the bad side of life.

As I wind up, we need to intensify our efforts in regularising the schools that are established in our communities. First of all, from the statement of the minister, he indicated that he is reporting about Peter Hunter Secondary School, which is also known as Lhubiriha Secondary School. I think this is not true because at registration of an institution, it should be able to give a clear name so that we know which school we are talking about. From the ground, when you asked, they gave you three different names of the school. I wish you would interest yourself in seeing who the director of the school is.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, you are now slightly bringing in the wrangles. Talk about what you had started. You are now accepting that there are wrangles in the school. Leave alone the registration of the name of the school; let us now talk about the way forward. Honourable minister, what are you promising this country?

MR MUHINDO: Madam Speaker, I would like to finalise this point because it has some very important aspect, which I want to bring out.

THE SPEAKER: Can we look at what the way forward is to protect the people of Kasese? Honourable minister -

MR SSEMPIJJA: Madam Speaker, I would like to first of all thank the honourable members who have spoken here, especially those from Kasese and Bundibugyo. However, I would like to say that the UPDF, which I oversee, is usually committed. And when you look at how these people are suffering - the UPDF are also suffering to ensure that there is peace.

Anyhow, that aside, I would like to assure the Members here that we are doing - even before I came, the President had already given us orders to beef up and add to the numbers as well as the technologies at the border. So, I assure the Members that -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, why didn't the security agencies respond when the first report was made?

MR SSEMPIJJA: That is exactly my second point. These are the questions that I have posed in my report. We have already put up a very serious investigation on why all these people couldn't - of course, we are getting preliminary answers that these people did not come in a group. They even took days to converge there. One would come and cross the border and send information. It was done in an organised way, but we are investigating the matter. Even when I come back, I will give you a -

THE SPEAKER: So, when they were crossing from DRC to Uganda, was there no way for you to notice that these were rebels or not?

MR SSEMPIJJA: Yes, that is the preliminary information we have because they did not come in a group; they were assisted. When they were coming - *(Interruption)*

MR NAMBESHE: I am seeking clarification from the minister. Honourable minister, in your statement, you have clearly put it that the ADF is a very weak force. I would be persuaded to agree with you if you clarify this.

With all the intelligence gathering, even following the United States Government's Level Three Travel Advisory, warning their citizens not to travel to Uganda because there

was a looming terrorist attack, don't you think this weak ADF force has beaten the UPDF intelligence hands down?

Two, this attack, coupled with the previous spate of insecurity in the same Rwenzori region, has had a very serious toll on the tourism and trade sectors. In fact, as we talk, this is one of the sectors - if it is a weak force - and that is my one-million-dollar question - supposing the ADF, which you have despised as a weak force, has a military strategic plan to hit Uganda hard via its economic side, haven't they succeeded? That economy is already grappling with the other shocks and now, the sector, which was potential, and which would attract and help to boost the economy - is hit hardest by the weak force called "ADF."

Let me conclude with this, Madam Speaker. Where are the UPDF and the Government of Uganda's priorities? This force could be overstretched. We have deployed it in five countries and the motive is to pacify those countries, a. And it seems we have succeeded, although recently, we have lost our sons and daughters in Somalia.

Back home, we are losing defenceless students. This is not the first time and it does not seem to be - from the signs - the last time. Would we say that the priority of the UPDF and the NRM regime is to protect neighbours, and they do not seem to be bothered about the protection of the lives, security and property of Ugandans?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, let us not speak politics here. It is about our children. Yes, the UPDF has been taken out. What we are mindful of is that you must deploy to protect our children and Ugandans irrespective of whether it is the NRM or whichever party. What is important is that we want deployment. You lose out on your point when you bring in politics because those children that you are talking about could be for an NRM, NUP or UPC member.

We are looking at how best we can protect our children, Ugandans and our property. We want deployment in the area. The ADF is not

as weak as you have said. If they were weak, we would not be having 43 bodies. If they were weak, we would not be having business failing in that area. Honourable members, let us look for a plan. What is the way forward?

We have a procedural matter.

MR SSEMUJJU: Madam Speaker, I am moving under Rule 52 of the Rules of Procedure - and I thank you because, until your intervention, this matter had been handled casually. The Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs is here to present a statement because of your guidance.

At the beginning -

THE SPEAKER: So, who else did you want to guide them to give a statement?

MR SSEMUJJU: That is why I am thanking you. *(Laughter)* At the beginning, this Government had sent a junior minister for education and sports to address these complex matters. That is reflective of their response when they received reports the way the Members from Kasese have described.

Rule 52, under which the minister has moved this statement, should be utilised to provide Parliament with information so they can seek help, not propaganda.

I have known Hon. Ssempijja since his time as Masaka District LC V Chairman. I do not know why, especially ministers from Buganda, allow to carry statements that are a shame. You come to Parliament to lie to us and you want us to -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member -

MR SSEMUJJU: I am raising a procedural matter -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, the statement is not a shame. His presentation is not a lie. It is a fact that there were deaths and an attack. So, where is the lie there? It is also a fact that the Government is looking towards making sure that we solve this problem.

Now, you are resorting to diversionary tactics instead of us looking for a solution. I am not going to allow your cheap politics in this thing. It is about our children who died. *(Applause)*

I ask you, honourable minister, together with a team - all of you should sit - the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs should go down there and see what is happening. I want a fresh statement from the Minister on what has been done, a statement on how many children were captured and the status of those children.

I want a statement on the patients and the Government must look after them; not giving just Shs 150,000 the way you are thinking.

Honourable members, we need a statement from the Minister of Education. I wish you people could listen to me. We need to know the status of the students because now, we are hearing that parents are taking back their children. How ready are you to secure these children in the school? These children should continue being at school, but you must provide security.

Honourable members, the trauma and stigma these people are going through is not easy. We need counseling services for them. *(Applause)*

You want to come and do politics here in the House when people's children are dying somewhere? We want to protect lives. The role of security is to make sure that the lives of people and property are protected.

Honourable ministers, this is not a matter for one minister; it is a multi-sectoral approach and so, all of you must go to the locus and bring a proper statement and action taken. Next item.

PRIME MINISTER'S TIME

THE SPEAKER: Meanwhile Hon. Dr Aceng is here; we want to know the status. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, bear with us. We love you so much and love your statement and we know you are our *majegerere*, but we want a statement about the blood bank.

We wanted a statement on the money for the intern doctors, but she has brought a document showing the cash limit. So, we want you to confirm whether your ministry has got the money as he alleged, and then a brief statement on the blood bank because they said there is completely no blood.

4.31

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Ruth Aceng): Madam Speaker, allow me to start by apologising; today, we were commemorating World Sickle Cell Day.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Okwalinga, can we have order?

DR ACENG: I am sorry that I could not be in the House on time. And I will try to be as brief as possible.

Madam Speaker, kindly allow me to start with the issue of blood. Honourable members, you are aware that from time to time we continue to have challenges of blood availability because we need over 400,000 units of blood on an annual basis, but we are not yet able to collect that amount. The highest we have collected is 300,000.

Madam Speaker, we still have blood in our blood banks. And I have statistics in regard to that that I will quickly read. We have:

Nakasero - 2,400 units;
 Masaka - 535 units;
 Mbarara - 390 units;
 Hoima - 200 units;
 Jinja - 150 units;
 Mbale - 400 units;
 Gulu - 250 units;
 Mengo - 100 units;
 Lira - 300 units;
 Soroti - 300 units;
 Arua - 200 units;
 Nebbi - 50 units;
 Kabale - 270 units;
 Rukungiri - 172 units;
 Fort Portal - 317 units; and
 Kitovu - 350 units, giving us a total of 6,284 units available at this point in time.

However, we must take note that there are areas that may go under stress very soon and Nakasero Blood Bank will be able to redistribute the 2,400 it has, and currently, they are collecting blood as well. That is in relation to blood.

In regard to the intern doctors, Madam Speaker, we received Shs 22.9 billion, but that is not for deployment of the current intern doctors. It is to pay arrears of intern doctors who completed the internship and have not been paid.

THE SPEAKER: Is that the 1,900 interns?

DR ACENG: No, Madam Speaker. Those are the 935 intern doctors who completed their internship in April this year before they had gotten their payments, and also the continuing Senior House Officers who had not been paid for a period of four months. So, the Shs 22.9 billion is to pay for their arrears.

Now for the 1,901 intern doctors, we require Shs 80.4 billion to deploy them. And out of that money, the Ministry of Finance gave us Shs 8 billion for intern doctors and Shs 2 billion for Senior House Officers. So, we are not able to deploy until we are sure that the Shs 80.4 billion will be provided. That is the correct position.

The last question was about the National Health Insurance Scheme Bill, which was returned. I would like to report that we have concluded discussions with all the stakeholders; we only had one issue that the Attorney-General had to settle and that is between the Insurance Regulatory Authority and us on the regulation.

After that - and I believe by the end of this week, we will have concluded - we shall take the paper back to the Cabinet and I am hopeful that by the end of July, we should be able to lay it on the Table here in Parliament. I thank you, Madam Speaker, and I once again request that you forgive me for coming late.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. We want that Bill in the House. I am happy you are about to complete it. Two, on the issue of - you have heard the issue of the intern doctors?

HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

THE SPEAKER: On the issue of intern doctors, let us first get to Prime Minister's Time. I am happy you have the information, and that is what I would like you to ask the Prime Minister. Let the Prime Minister first provide her answers and then you can ask her about that too.

4.36

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Madam Speaker, I would like to inform the House that we have taken some time without answering some questions, but I have been updating the questions as time went on.

On the 25th of April, Hon. Rwemulikya Ibanda, MP Ntoroko, raised a concern regarding the delay by the Ministry of Public Service to recruit critical staff for Ntoroko District Local Government. His question was: "Why has the Ministry of Public Service delayed to approve the recruitment of critical staff for Ntoroko District Local Government?"

My response is that Ntoroko District Local Government undertook recruitment without clearance by the Ministry of Public Service. They did not follow the laid-down recruitment procedures and the relevant appointing authority, the District Service Commission. As a result, a number of people who were recruited were eventually deactivated from the payroll, a matter which is before the court.

The wage, which the district indicated to be in excess, therefore, includes wage for positions that were contested. Additionally, whereas some payroll categories are indicated to have excess wage, other categories have a deficit.

The above situation of excess wage in the payroll category and deficit in the other category is the situation in most local governments. It is for this reason that a tripartite meeting was held between the Ministry of Public Service, the Ministry of Local Government, and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development on votes and wage

harmonisation and budgeting for the Financial Year 2023/2024.

The meeting agreed to undertake a comprehensive audit of the payroll by the Auditor-General and stay clearance for recruitment, until completion of the Audit, which has since commenced.

Hon. Locap Peterkhen, the MP, Bokora East County said that in September 2022, the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development held a press briefing on the externalisation of labour. However, that they have been waiting for an update on the plight of migrant workers from Uganda to Saudi Arabia, especially domestic workers whose human rights are often violated.

His question was: "Can the Government update the House on the steps it has taken to address the plight of Ugandans who migrate to Saudi Arabia for work?"

My response is that the Government of the Republic of Uganda and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have historically enjoyed cordial relations. As a result, over 150,000 Ugandans earn a living from working in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Ugandans living in Saudi Arabia remit about \$700 million annually, out of the \$1 billion remitted from the entire Gulf Cooperation countries.

Since 2015, Ugandans have been travelling to Saudi Arabia to work under either the Bilateral Labour Agreement on General Workers, which is still valid or an agreement for domestic workers which expired on 23 February 2023. Consequently, the Government of the Republic of Uganda had negotiations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, resulting into the signing of the revised Bilateral Labour Agreement on the recruitment of domestic workers on 29 March 2023.

Madam Speaker, the following are some of the areas that were successfully negotiated in the Bilateral Agreement:

1. Both parties are obliged to establish a mechanism for deliberating on and resolving emerging issues on the welfare and rights of domestic workers. This is in (Article 2(2) of the Bilateral Agreement);
2. Both parties are to regulate and control recruitment costs. This is in (Article 3(6));
3. Deductions on salary are prohibited. This is in Article 3 (7) and paragraph 10(1);
4. Both parties are to ensure that workers have recourse to competent authorities in cases of contractual disputes. This is found in Article 3(8)];
5. Both parties are to take legal measures against employers and recruitment agencies for any violation of laws, rules and regulations in either country, which is in Article 3(9);
6. The Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is to ensure that employers respect the terms and conditions of the employment contract. This is covered under Articles 4(5) and (6)];
7. An employer wishing to transfer the services of an employee is obligated to inform the Ugandan and Saudi recruitment agencies before the transfer;
8. An employee wishing to renew his or her contract must inform the Saudi and Ugandan recruitment agencies and also seek the approval of the Embassy of Uganda in Riyadh;
9. The Saudi Arabian online recruitment system (MUSANED) will be integrated with Uganda's External Employment Management System (EEMIS) [Article 3(11)]. This will strengthen migration data management and monitoring of migrant workers; and
10. A Joint Technical Committee for monitoring the implementation of the

Bilateral Labour Agreement will be constituted within two months of signing.

The new agreement will go a long way in addressing the human rights issues that arose in the past and enable our people to safely migrate and work in Saudi Arabia.

Ugandans wishing to seek employment abroad are advised to always use only licensed recruitment agencies. This is because the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and the embassies maintain a record of migrant workers placed abroad through a licensed agency and this makes it easy for our embassies to trace them if necessary.

I also call upon licensed recruitment agencies to operate ethically and in accordance with the law.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development embarked on a process to extend the external employment prospects by exploring opportunities in other countries such as Canada, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

The Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, is committed to the entertainment of safe, orderly and decent migration for all Ugandans.

Hon. Aled Akugizibwe, Member of Parliament for Buruli County, Masindi District, said that in March the heads of Primary School Teachers' Colleges received communication from the Ministry of Education and Sports that the 46 Primary Teachers' Colleges (PTCs) were going to be rationalised. Apparently, it was decided that only 23 core PTCs should be maintained. His question was, "What is the Government's plan for the remaining 23 core PTCs and their staff?"

My response is that on 21 February this year, the Ministry of Education and Sports passed a resolution to rationalise and repurpose the 46 Primary Teachers' Colleges for the effective utilisation of the available resources.

It was decided that the 23 core PTCs should be maintained and the 23 remaining non-core PTCs be repurposed for other education functions.

The changes are in line with the key reforms being implemented by the Ministry of Education and Sports to transit the Primary Teachers' Colleges from certificate to diploma, and later to degree-awarding institutions.

Madam Speaker, the National Teachers' Policy approved by Cabinet in 2019 stipulates that a teacher should have a minimum education level of a bachelor's degree by 2031.

Once the policy is implemented, the existing National Teachers' and Primary Teachers' colleges that are currently awarding diplomas and certificates will start teaching degree courses. The Ministry of Education and Sports will then start phasing out the current diploma and certificate courses and this will be done fully in 10 years.

The core PTCs are going to continue offering diplomas alongside the National Teachers' Colleges until they transit into degree-awarding institutions as planned.

Madam Speaker, during this process, Shimoni Core Primary Teachers' College will be repurposed into the main campus for the proposed Uganda National Institute for Teachers' Education. Sancta Maria Primary Teachers' College, Nkonkonjeru will be repurposed into a core Primary Teachers' College (PTC).

The option to repurpose the remaining non-core Primary Teachers' Colleges will be agreed upon with the relevant authorities. All the substantive staff of the non-core PTCs will be redeployed to the core PTCs and other education institutions.

Hon. Moses Kamuntu, Member of Parliament, Rubanda County West said Rubanda District faces delays in service delivery due to the shortage of teachers and health workers. He further said that there is a need to categorise the

district as a hard-to-reach area so as to benefit from funds earmarked for such areas.

His questions are:

- a) What criteria is used to determine hard-to-reach areas?
- b) What is the possibility of including other areas in the hard-to-reach areas category?
- c) Which areas are categorised as hard-to-reach?

My response is that the Ministry of Public Service observed that there were areas in some local governments that had consistently failed to attract and retain skilled and capable human resource, leading to inadequacies and gaps in the delivery of services. This was observed through inspection reports, support supervision exercises and payroll status reports. These areas were, therefore, defined as hard to reach.

Hard-to-reach areas are defined as remote or insecure areas that are unable to attract and retain sufficient numbers of motivated staff because of difficult living conditions. They are, therefore, "hard to work in and hard to stay in." These areas are characterised by remoteness, insecurity and poor infrastructure, among others.

In the Financial Year 2010-2011, Government approved payment of hardship allowances of 30 per cent of the basic monthly salary for public officers working in the local governments defined as hard to reach. The following 24 areas are categorised as hard-to-reach: Kotido, Nakapiripirit, Abim, Moroto, Kaabong, Pader, Kitgum, Nwoya, Amuru, Kalangala, Gulu, Bundibugyo, Adjumani, Kisoro, Kanungu, Bukwo, Ntoroko, Buvuma, Lamwo, Namayingo, Napak, Mayuge (specifically Malonge Island), Bugiri (specifically Sigulu Island), and Mukono (specifically Koome Islands).

Over the years, the Ministry of Public Service has received requests from various local governments to be considered hard-to-reach areas. Consequently, the ministry carried out a study, in the year 2020, in order to review

the hard-to-reach and hard-to-stay areas in the country based on the criteria of remoteness, insecurity and poor infrastructure.

Out of the 63 districts that had requested to be considered, 54 were found to have hard-to-reach and hard-to-stay spots eligible for payment of the hard-to-reach allowance. In total, 340 hard-to-reach spots were identified as the qualifying localities within the 54 districts.

Madam Speaker, allow me to lay, on the Table, a full list of the hard-to-reach and hard-to-stay areas in the country. In the interest of time, Members can access it.

Madam Speaker, based on the criteria used, I would like to inform the honourable member that Rubanda was not categorised as a hard-to-reach and hard-to-stay district.

It is also important to note that the Ministry of Public Service has not yet implemented the revised Hard-to-Reach Framework. The current priority of the Government is the salary enhancement of all public officers in a phased approach.

Madam Speaker, I got another question from Hon. Francis Adome, MP for Moroto Municipality. His question was to know the Government's plan to rehabilitate government-aided schools in Karamoja.

My response is that the Government of Uganda, in collaboration with education development partners, has been providing infrastructure support to both primary and post-primary institutions in the Karamoja subregion. All the post-primary institutions (11 secondary schools and two PTCs) benefitted from infrastructure support under the Irish Aid.

All secondary schools in the Karamoja subregion implementing Universal Secondary Education were provided with additional infrastructure under the World Bank support and were provided with additional classrooms to attain the recommended classroom-student ratio of 1:60.

Additional support has also been provided under the Transitional Development Grant and constructed phase one of Ik Secondary School in Kaabong, Katikekile Seed Secondary School in Moroto District, and Nadunget Seed Secondary School in Napak District.

Furthermore, Karamoja is a beneficiary of the UGIFT Project, where 16 seed secondary schools are being constructed.

Madam Speaker, Hon. Alyek Judith, Kole District said that there is a problem, according to her, of rampant illegal commercial production of charcoal across the country, which is a danger to the environment. She said that we are losing important forest cover, including trees of great medicinal and commercial value like the Shea Butter Nut tree in Northern Uganda.

Her question was: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, what measures has the Government put in place to control charcoal burning and its effects?

My response, Madam Speaker, is that Schedule 5 of the National Environment Act, No. 5 of 2019 lists commercial charcoal production as an activity that requires mandatory environmental and social impact assessment.

It is an offence, under section 157 of the Act, to commence an activity, which requires an environmental and social impact assessment before obtaining a certificate of approval from the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA). This offence, upon conviction, attracts penalties for both individuals and corporate bodies.

Anybody interested in commercial charcoal production must have a sustainable source of charcoal wood with mechanisms for sustainability, as opposed to uncontrolled clearing of land. This can only be ascertained through an environmental and social impact assessment, as required by the law. It does not matter if the land is private or public, and gazetted or not gazetted.

As of now, the National Environment Management Authority has not issued any

environmental and social impact assessment for any commercial charcoal production. As such, the ongoing commercial charcoal production across the country is illegal.

Therefore, the Uganda Police Force, district local governments, the National Forestry Authority and all other law enforcement agencies can apprehend, for prosecution, anybody found engaging in the commercial production of charcoal without an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Certificate from NEMA.

Furthermore, the Government, through the Ministry of Water and Environment, put a ban on commercial inter-district trade in forest products in Acholi subregion, which had stood out as a hub for illegal sources of wood.

His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Uganda, under Article 99(2) of the 1995 Constitution, has issued an Executive Order No.3 of 2023, putting a ban on charcoal burning in northern and north-eastern Uganda, except with permission from the Ministry of Water and Environment.

Madam Speaker, in 2022, the Government launched a pilot project to promote the use of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) as an alternative to charcoal use. Liquefied Petroleum Gas can protect forests from being depleted for charcoal and firewood production and use, hence contributing to the preservation of the environment.

The Government, through the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, is implementing a mitigation measure to curb the high demand for charcoal. The ministry has already distributed 10,000 LPG cylinders to households in the urban areas in central Uganda, where there is high demand for charcoal. The Government has budgeted for funds to roll out the same intervention in other parts of the country in the next financial year.

Madam Speaker, Hon. Peter Okeyoh, MP for Bukooli Island, stated that the Association of Fishers –(Interjections)- it is “fishers”. Madam Speaker, I beg for your protection. (Laughter) These are fishers.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, please listen.

MS NABBANJA: Madam Speaker, he said the Association of Fishers and Lake Users of Uganda –

THE SPEAKER: The Prime Minister is reading the question as it was and it this body is called the Association of Fishers and Lake Users of Uganda.

MS NABBANJA: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The Association of Fishers and Lake Users of Uganda had asked for an extension of the deadline for the licensing of fisheries from 31 March 2023, due to insufficient funds as a result of dwindling stocks. His prayer was that I update the House on the fate of the fishermen who were not able to meet the deadline.

Madam Speaker, this is my response. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries had earlier set 31 March 2023 as the deadline for issuing new licences this year. Non-compliant fishermen risked being denied access to the water bodies after the deadline.

After receiving numerous complaints from sector players including the fishers, processors, transporters, and boat makers, the ministry found it imperative to extend the deadline and allow them time to look for money to pay for the license.

The ministry, therefore, extended the deadline for licensing fisheries activities for two months. Madam Speaker and Members, the fishers without valid fishing licenses will not be allowed to operate effectively this month.

Those who fail to utilise the two-month grace period to clear the license fees will not access the water bodies. After the deadline, the ministry will focus on compliance and enforcement on all water bodies. Therefore, I urge the fishers to take advantage of the grace period.

Hon. Anne Mary Tumwine Woman MP for Ntoroko said that Ntoroko District lacks a standard livestock market; the livestock traders operate in an open space without any friendly user facility and have, for so long, decried the lack of a loading bay and conducive working environment. (*Interjections*) This is the last question, brother.

Her question is: “What is the Government’s plan for livestock farmers in Ntoroko District?”

My response is that in February this year, the Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Local Government under the Local Economic Growth Support (LEGS) programme launched the construction of projects worth Shs 2 Billion in Ntoroko District.

The project includes the construction of the Butungama Livestock Market and the Nyakakote Water Gravity Flow Scheme. The infrastructure will enable the Ntoroko community to participate in the economy and the Country’s development agenda.

Once the livestock market is completed, it will go a long way in boosting the district’s local revenue and also provide a favourable environment for the livestock farmers to carry out trade without any hindrances.

Madam Speaker, I beg to submit. (*Applause*)

5.10

MR ELIJAH OKUPA (Independent, Kasilo County, Serere): Thank you, Madam Speaker. For us to have a correct record - because when I listen to the Prime Minister, I think those who will be reading this *Hansard* will find it difficult. When you look at the definition of a fisher, you notice that it means a small carnivorous mammal native to North America, a forest-dwelling creature whose range covers much of the coral forest in Canada. So, we need to correct the record so that those reading the record -

THE SPEAKER: The Prime Minister was talking about fishers. The definition of a fisher is a person who catches fish for a living. This

time we are not talking about fisherwomen; we are talking about a person, and that person can either be a woman or a man. So, the word “fishers” is correct.

5.11

MS JULIET SUUBI (Independent, Woman Representative, Rakai): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to appreciate the Prime Minister for the answers. Honourable members, you have been in the House and heard of the inconsistency of the payments for intern doctors. What is the fate -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Health, we are helping you to help your Ministry.

MS JULIET SUUBI: What is the fate of the 1,900 intern doctors who are not being paid? They are not deployed and are not being paid. What is their fate?

Secondly, there is an issue of depletion of forests in the country and the Prime Minister talks about Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), but this is not even affordable to the working class of this country. It is expensive, yet we have our oil.

What is the Government’s plan for utilising our oil to produce LPG in the Country instead of importing it? (Interjection) - the Prime Minister will tell us where the oil is.

Thirdly, there has been a problem the whole of this financial year -

THE SPEAKER: Can we have one question at a go? Let us handle your first question about the intern doctors.

MS NABBANJA: Madam Speaker, using the powers given to me by the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, I constituted -

THE SPEAKER: I want you to listen very well, Minister of Finance.

MS NABBANJA: I constituted an inter-ministerial committee this month and we are handling the issue of intern doctors. So, I

request for some time.

THE SPEAKER: Prime Minister, for us to be able to work together and in harmony, how much time do we give you?

MS NABBANJA: I think two weeks are enough.

THE SPEAKER: Two weeks, very good. We should be able to accept two weeks for that.

5.14

DR EMMANUEL OTAALA (NRM, West Budama County South, Tororo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, asbestos that is still littering the whole country is a known carcinogen and specifically, known to be responsible for causing small-cell lung cancer and asbestosis. It is not -

THE SPEAKER: Dr Otaala, that is a good question. I suggest that you put it down in writing for the benefit of the whole House and the whole country because that way, enough research will be done and you will have all you need out of that.

DR OTAALA: Thank you. May I now ask a question that relates to the submission of the Prime Minister because I thought I would start with another question -?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I adjourn the House to Tuesday, 27 June 2023, at 2 o’clock.

(The House rose at 5.15 p.m. and adjourned until Tuesday, 27 June 2023 at 2.00 p.m.)