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THIRD SESSION - THIRD MEETING

THURSDAY, 29 FEBRUARY 2024



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

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THIRD SESSION - 15TH SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Thursday, 29 February 2024

Parliament met at 2.10 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to today's sitting. I would like to start by congratulating our very own Ronald Rugumayo who became East Africa's finest golfer in the recently concluded Magical Kenya Open 2024. *(Applause)* He is the first Ugandan to achieve that feat and the only East African to make the cut in that tournament.

This has shown how much we have grown as a country in terms of developing sports talent, but it is also a reminder to our Executive; the Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities and the Minister of Education and Sports that golf can market a country in a way you cannot believe, especially with big spenders. This is because research has shown that golfers spend three times the expenditure of other tourists. Statistics has also shown that when they go into a country, they spend more than eight days because when they fall in love with golf, they end up remaining in that country and contribute so much.

Honourable minister, we need an international golf tournament in Uganda *-(Applause)-* because in East Africa, we only have the Magical Kenya. After the Kenya Government spent around \$3 million, the kind of coverage they got on CNN, Sky, BBC and everywhere is worth over \$50 million.

If we are to market our country, let us do it intentionally and strategically because I meet people marketing Uganda, but they do not know what they are marketing. So, we need such interventions.

Honourable colleagues, two days ago, specifically, on Tuesday, I managed to get one conman who wanted to defy our laws. He started by trying to be my girlfriend and sending me pictures of other people. It started around October; so I reported to security and we started looking for the person because he claimed to be a daughter to a minister who is my friend. He said; "I want to be talking to you, but do not tell my dad." *(Laughter)* Immediately, I called the "father". I said to him, "You man, have you failed as a parent? Your daughter is here hunting around for men." The man said; "No, I do not have a daughter called so-and-so." I alerted security and we started hunting for the person.

Thereafter, he used - I have not mentioned the name of the minister because we have not agreed that I should say his name. After that, the conman used a picture of my daughter - Since Kin Kariisa, the Chief Executive Officer of Nile Broadcasting Station is a great friend of

mine, his children are like my children; so he picked a picture of a young girl in secondary school and started using it to approach me.

Honourable members, conmanship means you come and try to do – When you pick someone’s daughter and depict her as a slut or someone “selling” herself around, you are destroying the image of the family and the image of the young person and that is bad.

When we got him, I found out that he had done it to many of you, honourable colleagues, and some of you are seated here. *(Laughter)* Some of you had even sent him money. I see some of the faces around. You fell victim, but you were dying silently. Better report to me to know whether you are on the list of the victims.

Someone died, but she left a note behind with the names of the men she had “slept” with in the village and she instructed that it should be read on the burial. So, men started approaching the family asking, “Am I on the list?” *(Laughter)* – and they were charged. I have a list of victims; so you better approach me.

On a serious note - including three ministers, leaders of political parties, musicians - Some of them did not respond, but the harassment went on. I had to call the Leader of the Opposition to come and witness and the man confessed a lot. He told us that our numbers were put on Google Cloud, so anyone who wants our numbers can just click and access it. That is how we are being harassed left, right and centre.

When you look for a mobile number of a member of congress, you cannot get it. We are being harassed by people using - the man said he uses four lines. Someone may say, “We saw him on television pleading that he wanted money for school fees”, but we got videos from his phone which showed that he used the money he was getting to enjoy life by posting himself on *Tik Tok*, laughing at poor people and saying; *Alumya Abayaaye* - I do not know how to translate that. Yet, this is a person who comes and pleads saying “You see, I am looking for school fees. I needed help that is why I did A,B,C,D.”

Honourable members, I brought this to your attention so that you do not die in silence. If you are being conned or harassed, please, pass it to us. We shall hunt those people. I have given you an example that someone tried it on me, but I was patient and after a few months, I managed to get him.

Honourable colleagues, your numbers are out there - Minister of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance, I do not know how we shall be helped because here, you said all numbers should be registered so that you are able to trace, but people are using phone numbers - they steal people’s money and when telecom companies try to trace them, they cannot.

We need to know who owns these numbers being used in our communities. Yet, you cut off all lines, which are not registered. So, how is it possible that when I report a case, you cannot trace the owner yet the number is active and the person actually took my money?

This is not only about us; it is also about people outside there in the communities who are being cheated. Many are dying in silence. I have brought this to your attention honourable colleagues so that in case anyone of you needs help, report to the Criminal Intelligence and Investigation Department (CIID) in Parliament and then, we shall see how best we can help you.

For those who paid and died in silence, better approach me because I have –*(Laughter)*– I will not read the list here.

Honourable members, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation of head teachers from Ibanda Municipality. They are represented by Hon. Jane Bainomugisha Kabajungu and Hon. Tarsis Rwaburindore Bishanga and they have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please, join me in welcoming them. Stand up for recognition and thank you for coming. *(Applause)*

We also have a delegation of students and student leaders, because there is a speaker,

from Kampala International University from Makindye East Division, Kampala, led by their Guild President. They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Derrick Nyeko and Hon. Shamim Malende. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please, join me in welcoming them. Thank you. I also have good daughters of mine and some of my people from Ruhinda North in Mitooma District. Thank you.

Honourable colleagues, matters of national importance will be handled as we do during the Prime Minister's Time so that we can handle some issues. About my communication, I will start with Hon. Ssewungu, Hon. Kyooma, and the Woman Member of Parliament for Mitooma District should speak for me; sometimes, you know – Hon. Dr Member from Koboko and the victim here, Hon. Macho. Colleagues, I will give you a chance. Let us use a few minutes.

2.22

MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West County, Kalungu): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the communication and I congratulate that Ugandan. Golf land in a number of districts and cities is being grabbed yet golf is one of the major sources of income in Uganda.

As the shadow minister, because of these competitions and interest in games, there is an area we should pay attention to. The Kabaka of Buganda, Ssekabaka Mutesa II offered Ugandans a piece of land to practise scouting at Kaazi, worth 120 acres. Mr Speaker, as we talk now, this land has been grabbed and at an opportune time, I will come to your office with all the details so that I can bring a substantive petition to this Parliament to save land where all Ugandan children were going to practice scouting.

Scouting and Girl-Guiding are some of the areas where we train children to be disciplined - the land is grabbed in connivance with the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports and a number of stakeholders. However, we cannot accept the land that was leased by the Buganda

Kingdom to the Uganda Scouts Association to be given out by someone in the Uganda Land Commission. There are big thieves of land in this country. The perennial thieves are taking land away from our children who were practicing Scouting and Girl-Guiding on a land worth 123 acres.

As I conclude, even golf land – go to Mbale and a number of districts, people are grabbing most of this land to utilise it for construction. Golf needs land, Mr Speaker. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, the uniqueness of golf is that it greens the city. It is difficult to have any other green belt like the one we have down there of 150 acres at Kitante. Therefore, Minister of Education and Sports, this is one sport that we will need to find a way of supporting.

On the issue of Scouts' land, my senior brother, Hon. Bahati, may have some information for us. Is the Scouts' land safe?

MR SSEWUNGU: The lease for this land expired, but the Kingdom was willing to renew it in the interest of the Uganda Scouts and Girl Guides. However, the land is being grabbed at will. At one time, we hosted the International Jamboree at Kaazi and the Chief Guest was Gen. Museveni. How? I am a scout myself –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Hanifa, you have information.

MS NABUKEERA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. As regards that land of Scouts in Kaazi, at the moment, the lease expired. It is under renewal of the lease. The land was taken back to Buganda Land Board at the moment, so I am a lawyer for that part of land. They are not taking it, but we are trying to ask them to formalise –(Interjections)– Yes. No – (Hon. Ssewungu rose)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssewungu, I am the one who called Hon. Hanifa.

MS NABUKEERA: So, we are in negotiations of giving them part of the land and the rest goes back to the Kabaka of Buganda.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Bahati, do you have further information on that? You usually help me with such issues.

2.26

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati): Mr Speaker, I am –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, please, let us listen to Hon. Bahati.

MR BAHATI: I am a scout myself and I was a chairperson of the Uganda Scouts Board. We had a few issues with that land to do with people who wanted to take part of it. As the honourable has said, it is in the process. We are negotiating with Buganda Kingdom to make sure that we take part of it.

Mr Speaker, it will be better, now that Hon. Ssewungu has asked, we can get the proper facts and then inform the House formally in writing on Tuesday -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, one British philosopher said that when you ask a question and there is no answer, that is the answer. When you say, “Order” and there is no response, that is the response. *(Laughter)* Hon. Bahati -

MR BAHATI: Indeed, I am in his support that on Tuesday, we can get all the facts and inform the House with real facts about that land because not all that you hear is what is on the ground. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Kibalya, with a procedural matter.

MR KIBALYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am the Chairperson of the Uganda Parliamentary Scouts Association. The issue of that land is very complicated. Mr Speaker, I request you, as the patron, to invite Gen. Wamala and have a talk because it is a very complicated story.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. On Tuesday, I will have a meeting with some

people that I will invite. Hon. Ssewungu and Hon. Hanifa will be part of these. I say we stop at that because Hon. Ssewungu just gave us a notice and said that in future, you will substantively table the matter, but we are now going into it deeply when you have not substantively tabled, which would be against Rule 80 of our Rules of Procedure, about anticipation.

I say let us, on Tuesday –*(A Member rose)*- to who? No, the minister is not speaking. I called him to help me so we do not want him to be put to task. He is a Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives and not the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development.

MR SSEWUNGU: I request Hon. Bahati that whenever you mention my name, add on the word “honourable”, not Ssewungu because I am an Honourable Member, and that is why I call you “honourable minister”, Sir. Thank you.

MR BAHATI: You know when you have a friend, Mr Speaker – I normally take him as a brother, that is why it is easy, but you are Hon. Ssewungu, Member of Parliament for Kalungu West and a shadow minister.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: He has said you also add on “Counsel”. Please, thank you.

MR BAHATI: The one of Counsel, I am not sure. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Kyooma?

2.30

MR XAVIER KYOOMA (NRM, Ibanda County North, Ibanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to join you to recognise the teachers from Ibanda. During this year’s national assessment, Ibanda District ranked number one in the education sector. *(Interjection)*- Yes. It is on record. In the education sector, Ibanda District was ranked number one.

Isingiro District represented by Hon. Byanyima was number one and Ibanda District was number two.

Mr Speaker, I join you to congratulate our own Mr Ronald Rugumayo for having been the pride of not only Uganda, but also East Africa and Africa in the recent Awards Tour Golf Tournament in Kenya. I liked his courage when he was asked whether he intended to make a cut, he simply said; "It is not only a cut, but rather to be the best overall." We are proud of him as the Uganda Golf Fraternity, and we congratulate him. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, Mr Ronald Rugumayo is from Fort Portal Golf Club. Hon. Alex Ruhunda-

2.31

MR ALEX RUHUNDA (NRM, Fort Portal Central Division, Fort Portal City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. As a person from Fort Portal Tourism City and a lover of golf, Toro Golf Club has produced a star for Africa. I, therefore, add my voice to congratulate Mr Rugumayo Ronald for making us proud. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Acon then Hon. Gilbert Olanya.

2.32

MR JULIUS ACON (NRM, Otuke East County, Otuke): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also would like to add my voice to congratulate our colleagues who won a big championship. Honourable colleagues, when it comes to golf or sports, I look at the cash. There is nothing I look at different in sports.

I would advise colleagues; golf has no age limit. You need to keep the lower hips and upper body strong. When you look at Tiger Woods in the United States of America, the amount of money he gets paid, I think I would urge this country, to put more effort in golf. Let us find a way of laying a strategy of giving more land in different districts in this country.

When you look at the amount of land, which we need for golf, they are a lot of acres. One thing we are not looking at is reserving additional land in the districts to make sure the future sports golfer, or in any sports, even in

athletics, we still need what we call a cross-country. They run at the golf course, which we need to reserve for this country.

I also want to thank our colleague. I do not know how much our country would offer this man, because I know when I set the record, a country like United States offered me a good amount of money and settled me forever. I think I would call upon this country to offer him something. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, we are working on something, honourable. Hon. Olanya-

2.34

MR GILBERT OLANYA (FDC, Kilak South County, Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to congratulate my fellow golfer for making it to the cream. Golf is one of the best games we have on earth. One, it makes you physically fit because you move such a distance. For this, our Golf Course of Gulu was distributed to the leaders and the technical staff of Gulu District Local Government.

We have leaders in this House, who benefited from the land from Gulu Golf Course. Right now, we have nowhere to train from. If we want to train, we normally travel up to Lira. Gulu does not have a golf course, yet it used to be the best golf course in Northern Uganda.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Gilbert, you know whenever you refer to Members or Colleagues in this House being part of something of that nature, you must name them or you withdraw that part.

MR OLANYA: Mr Speaker, if it may not cause problems to me, there is no problem at all in naming them, because they know themselves.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, if you are not courageous enough to say what he wants to say, you withdraw it.

MR OLANYA: Mr Speaker, I would ask the honourable minister to request Hon. Betty Aol Ocan, the Member of Parliament for Gulu City,

to explain the circumstances under which she acquired the gold land from Gulu. I would like also to request that the honourable Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs also explain to the ministry. We have so many technocrats from Gulu.

Golf is very important I pray that the minister should acquire other hectares of land for our golf course of Gulu. The land of Gulu was distributed to our technocrats and the leaders. I beg to request, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let me get information from Hon. Mapenduzi, and then I allow Hon. Betty Aol, who I have been mentioned.

MR MAPENDUZI: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. You are aware that I was Chairman of Gulu District Local Government for 10 years. When I joined that council, I found that the previous council, which was the Sixth Council had taken a decision to dispose of certain land in the district. I am told it was a formal decision of the district council that time and members of the public came to acquire that land.

We tried as a council to find out whether the district would get back, but it was extremely difficult because it was a formal decision of the council and the people who ended up acquiring followed procedures.

The decision we took as a council was to look for alternative land; so we can have a golf course land for the district. It would be very unfair just to accuse an individual leader when a district council took a decision. Gulu District under my leadership, did not- we had a big problem with the past council, but you know when a council takes a decision you cannot blame an individual.

The way forward, as the leaders of Gulu City is that we must work hard and make sure we get land that we can have or develop for the city golf course and land for other development. Otherwise, it would be very unfair for the Hon. Gilbert Olanya to try to blame the Hon. Betty Aol Ocan unfairly. I think that is not fair. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you Hon. Mapenduzi. The good thing is that Hon. Betty Aol is here.

2.39

MS BETTY AOL (FDC, Woman Representative, Gulu City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to explain this. I was given a forest land near North View Hotel when I was not yet a teacher. Those who have been in Gulu know where North View Hotel is situated. The Forestry Department somehow continued to discuss and they said, “No, we are not giving this forest land to a very simple person like that.” I questioned them: “If you gave the proprietor of North View Hotel land, then, why not a teacher like me?” They said that I was too small.

The person who was given land – actually, that person who was given that forest land is my uncle. They said they discussed it in Parliament at that time. They removed me from the forest land and gave me that as an alternative, without me knowing whether it was forest or golf course land. It was very bushy. It was way back in 1990. The home that people go to – where I stay - I was given that land. I almost said “no” to it, but my late husband said: “Let us take it like that.” So, we took it. I did not know. *(Laughter)* Therefore, nobody should accuse me.

Hon. Olanya, stop that. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, you are about to go to the forest. *(Laughter)* A forest is gazetted land; so, you cannot say; “I was given a forest; they chased me and now, you must give me...” It was wrong for them to give you a forest to begin with. It was illegal. No one should be getting land in a forest.

However, putting that aside, honourable colleagues, this is going to divert us. These are issues, which Gulu City should handle. If anyone wants Parliament to get involved, it should come in the form of a petition. Otherwise, any Member who has been mentioned has room, under rule 55. If they want to make any clarification, they are allowed to come and

make a statement of personal explanation on the matter. However, that is voluntary. I do not want to go into issues of how councils operated. The issue of that land is now closed here. I do not want it reopened.

Hon. Macho -

2.43

MR GEOFFREY MACHO (Independent, Busia Municipality, Busia): Mr Speaker, I appreciate your voice concerning fraudsters in this country. I am one of the victims. Many times, people have called me claiming to be my voters, claiming to have patients at Mulago Hospital or claiming to have lost their people, but I have been dying stealthily.

I thank you for being very courageous and coming out boldly to fight this hazard, as a role model. It is my prayer, Mr Speaker, that the telecommunication companies help us. This is because as soon as they take your money, within a minute, those phones get off and they can never be traced.

Therefore, it is my prayer that the money we want to waste on electronic number plates should go to help Ugandans who are being stolen from day and night. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Juliet Bashiisha?

2.44

MS JULIET BASHIISHA (NRM, Woman Representative, Mitooma): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Sometime last year, your Facebook account was hacked into and I fell victim because one of your voters called me that there were jobs here at Parliament. He put me under pressure to bring him to Kampala. At the time, you were out of the country.

I brought that man and even accommodated him at my home. *(Laughter)* At night, there was a lot of pressure because they wanted money for that job – “to be included in the system.” Obviously, I could not accept being conned like that. However, he put me under

pressure and I transferred Shs 1 million to his mobile money account. *(Interjections)* This is because I knew that in the morning, I would come, since the interviews were in Parliament.

In the morning, I came; I had to hide somewhere on the second floor, and I went to the Human Resource Department. When I reached there, I found four people also waiting for the interviews. Surprisingly, there were no interviews at that time.

I tried to check with the Human Resource Department and they told me that there are very many connen here, who tell people that there are jobs here. I do not know whether there is anything that is being done to stop people from conning in the building where, really - this is the House where order should be, but people are still conning many MPs and others. The man and the others obviously left - and the other ones paid Shs 2 million also.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, you became an accomplice to the crime.

MS BASHIISHA: No, my aim was –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am not saying you. I mean that if you are bribing to get a job, you are committing a crime.

MS BASHIISHA: Mr Speaker, mine was to get the person at Parliament, who gets money from people. That is why I had to come and look for that same person. That was my aim.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Did you get the person?

MS BASHIISHA: No, the staff told me that people are usually conned. My aim was to get that same person who conned those who were looking for jobs.

Mr Speaker, secondly, I request that – Hon. Ssewungu is out - when you are calling people for that meeting with Hon. Ssewungu and Hon. Bahati, please, include me. I am the first female scout in Uganda, and it is on record. *(Laughter)*

I know everything that takes place at the Kaazi Scout National Camping Ground. I got that information far back and I even confided in one of our colleagues. I thought that he was going to help me at that time, but the man did not help me. I even talked about it with Hon. Bahati, when he was the board chairman of the Uganda Scouts Association. I was a member representing youth.

I talked to Prof. Mushemeza and he also has all the details. I feel the pain more than anybody else about Kaazi Scout National Camping Ground land because I know what is taking place. It started with sand mining. They took about five acres. We fought that.

Mr Speaker, thank you for interesting yourself in Kaazi land. I have the details. I am even ready to bring more details from our colleagues. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I just want to make a clarification that for someone to con in the name of Parliament, they do not need to be here. They do not need to be in Parliament; they can be anywhere. When you send mobile money, they do not need to receive it when they are here. The person who was trying to con me, saying he was at Makerere, was in Masindi. From Masindi, he moved to Mweya. He spent some days in Mweya, after conning someone who paid the hotel bill for him. People are enjoying life out there, man. *(Laughter)*

When you get them, they start crying – how they were looking for school fees - and they get sympathy from the public. However, the day they use your daughter to go and extort money from people is when you will feel how bad it is.

2.48

DR SHARIFAH AATE-TABAN (NRM, Woman Representative, Koboko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate you for raising the point of conmen because many Members here have fallen victim, me inclusive. Immediately I won elections, an account was created using my name on social media. They have been extorting money from my voters and people that know me.

And it does not only stop on phones; it also goes up to social media. So, we are paying money back to voters because I cannot let my voter be conned; they call me and I do not repay.

I have been repaying money that I did not ask from voters. However much we are talking about phones, when we go to the Criminal Intelligence and Investigations Department (CIID), they should help us via social media because we are paying loans or money that we did not use. I would like to appreciate you so much for raising this point.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, you can see. Hon Aber?

2.50

MS LILIAN ABER (NRM, Woman Representative, Kitgum): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to note the concern on issues of investigations on these matters. Many people get conned, but those who are of a higher status let it go and do not report, sometimes they are blackmailed. Someone noted about being conned by voters; those things happen.

Someone will call you and say, “I have lost a child; please, send money so that we can go and bury.” However, when you investigate, you realise that someone has not died in the actual sense.

Nevertheless, my concern is the local man down there, after being conned, he is even aware about the person who conned him or her, but when the cases are reported to Police, the investigations take forever and no action will take place.

I would like to appeal to the Police, especially, the investigative department. Some of these crimes can be traced when it is reported immediately, but when you again ask for facilitation from someone who has come to report a case, then we cannot fight this.

We need communication and a clear mode of operation between the investigative department of Police and the telecommunication department. Then we can be able to help our people.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, most of this conning is done using mobile money. Whose numbers are they using? That is a very important issue we should be tackling. Opposition Chief Whip-

2.52

MR JOHN BAPTIST NAMBESHE (NUP, Manjiya County, Bududa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to join you to congratulate Ronald Rugumayo for the sterling performance. I used to despise golf until I met the Hon. Kateshumbwa - incidentally, he is not here. I am reliably informed that he is your colleague in that game.

He schooled me on the benefits, but he has not answered one question, which I raised. I have been very sceptical in liking golf because it is very discriminatory in nature; it is very expensive - first of all, to pay membership fees for green.

There are about seven fees, but also, the most expensive is the equipment. You cannot find any, however cheap, below Shs 13 million.

In countries like Ethiopia, I took trouble to do a bit of research. Ethiopia incidentally had also left out that sport. And the whole country, huge as it is, has only two golf courses. But recently - and it is because they realised that it would discriminate against others.

Moreover, any sport;

1. Must have no age limit.
2. Must allow all, irrespective of age, status or affluence.

But after taking a study, this is what they are coming up with, which I would request, since you are very passionate and an ardent promoter of the same, to consider coming up with golf unions. There is a union, which is taking care of the juniors; they are taking girls and boys whom they would want to empower so that they are also part and parcel of the golf sport, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Nambeshe, you will not be an activist on everything.

1. We have the Uganda Golf Union and they are taking care of young people from all backgrounds.
2. Ronald Rugumayo is one person from a very humble background; he is not rich. The best golfers in Uganda are not rich. Deo Akope is from a very humble background. Okay?

Hon. Sarah Opendi used to be the best golfer, the daughter revolted, refused to follow, she keeps saying she will be coming, so we have a champion in waiting here; she went for tug of war.

Honourable colleagues, when we were in Rwanda for games, Hon. James Kakooza who was the chairperson of the disciplinary committee, came with his disciplinary team to receive complaints about golf, but they were chased because in golf, we play without any referee; it is a game of honest people. If you cheat, you are cheating yourself because you mark yourself and submit the results yourself. It is up to you; so, he could not get anything. It is a game, which I would advise -

By the way, on a very serious note, we have *Mzee* Basaliza, who won a tournament at 96 years - Here at Kampala Club. Yes, he plays golf. Golf is like our presidential terms; there is no age limit. You people who want an age limit on everything, on golf, we do not have, but it is also very good for you. It is a game, which can be played by anyone.

My son plays at six years, *Mzee* Basaliza plays at 97 years, but we have not been supporting it under the National Council of Sports (NCS) and it is one game we are going to push for because it helps preserve green belts in most of these cities. If you go to Kabale, Fort Portal and wherever there is a golf course, at least, you have a green area in a city or town, which is very important. Leader of the opposition -

2.58

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. If we are to substantively deal with these crimes that keep morphing and are becoming high-tech, we need to empower the Police to deal with these situations. Investigators will normally grapple with one challenge too many; and yet, they are following guys who have advanced in as far as technology is concerned. That is something we need to deal with critically.

Instead of empowering police to keep buying teargas canisters, *Mambas*, this is a critical area of interest. Let us follow the money. Banks are being robbed. Now members here are complaining because of this situation. Can we empower police to also advance? When the hunter learns to shoot without missing, the birds learn to fly without perching. And that is what is happening. So that is one way we need to deal with this situation.

Away from that, as we sit here right now, there are hundreds of KCCA casual labourers, outside the Parliament Gate protesting. It is just that this place is enclosed and you cannot hear the noise. If you step out, you will hear the protest of these people. These casual labourers have not been paid for over six months. They earn little money, Shs 4,000 a day. The money is too little already, but it is not even being paid.

Mr Speaker, last year, I tabled a report on behalf of the Committee on Public Accounts (Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises) (COSASE) that I was chairing, when we inquired into Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA). Among the issues we raised in that report, which was unanimously adopted by this House was payment of salary arrears and unremitted National Social Security Fund (NSSF) for these ordinary workers to a tune of Shs 4.1 billion. The Government promised to deal with that issue, but to date, they have not. There has been no Treasury Memorandum on that report of Parliament and the casual labourers -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: My brother, LOP you have made it very difficult for me. I had

proposed that we raise those issues with the Prime Minister when she comes and then we just - this was a reaction to my communication.

On the issue of casual labourers, don't you think we can wait for the Prime Minister to come in so that we get an answer? I can also talk to the Government Chief Whip and I think by that time, the Minister of Kampala Capital City and Metropolitan Affairs will be - is holding the Floor.

MR SSENYONYI: Most obliged, Mr Speaker. I have raised it now so that as we wait for that time, it is dealt with because if you have been sent pictures, there are floods of people out there right now as we speak.

In my view, it is something we need to deal with urgently. This is why I am raising it now so that the Government can give an update. Mr Speaker, also, I want to request your indulgence that Government representatives go and talk to those people and give them a response because they are out there.

I appreciate the Uganda Police Force because so far, I have not seen the Police beating people. They are just on guard as people are raising their placards. I hope it continues that way, but they need to get some response. These are mothers and people taking care of families - They have not taken their children back to school because their little money has not been paid.

It is an urgent issue, Mr Speaker, that and these people need to be attended to. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Can I request the Rt Hon. Prime Minister to move out and consult on how best she can handle this issue? May be, talk to the Minister of Kampala Capital City and Metropolitan Affairs to come and talk to these people or even you can take the initiative depending on how you find the situation. If you think it is prudent, Rt Hon. Prime Minister -

3.03

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Mr Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for raising this issue. We are going to handle it. I am going to handle with the Minister of-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Colleagues, please, I have guided her and she has agreed with my guidance.

MS NAKADAMA: Mr Speaker, I will inform you within this week –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: What we are saying is that people are demonstrating outside, so I am requesting you to link with the Minister of Kampala Capital City and Metropolitan Affairs. The Hon. Prime Minister is going to handle as I have guided and as we go into Prime Minister's Time, let her check with the Leader of the Opposition as we continue to handle that matter.

Honourable colleagues, the Leader of the Opposition has raised very critical issues. You are not able - most of these days, if you have issues, you find the CIID is incapacitated.

In fact, I tried to understand, but I was told that the money we send - since CIID has no Vote on its own -Immigration has a Vote and others, but CIID which is very critical depends on subvention from the ministry. I think that the Committee on Budget and the Committee on Internal Affairs should look into this issue.

The CIID should be protected by all means so that they are able to do their work. Once we send money, it should go straight to the CIID vote so they are able to operate. Otherwise, we all need CIID and they are given assignments. I know there are many votes under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, but the CIID specifically has no vote and one way of protecting money. Honourable colleagues how we have managed to save most of the institutions is by them having their own vote.

Honourable Minister of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance -

3.04

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (NATIONAL GUIDANCE) (Mr Godfrey Kabbyanga): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I came in when you were talking about how you were about to be conned. It is very unfortunate that Members of Parliament have fallen victim to this.

I would like to inform honourable Members of Parliament that as we develop and as digital transformation catches fire, even cybercrimes are going to increase.

People are now working smart. They no longer work hard. They think smart and work smart. So, we also have to be very smart and ensure that we attend to every detail when we are communicating on our phones.

Honourable members, our phones are everywhere. If you go to the Parliament of the Republic of Uganda Website, you will meet them there. Every time you enter an office, you register your name and phone contact. Whether you are going to hospitals, there is a card you will fill with your name and phone. Even if you go to a hospital, which is computerised, they will ask for your phone contact and put it there and this data is kept somewhere which these smart people can always access.

What I would like to say is that as cybercrime increases, we are doing everything possible to ensure we put in place measures to fight these crimes. As the Ministry of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance, we are in touch with the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Uganda Communications Commission to ensure we put in place measures which are going to control this. We are also trying to see how we can put an investigative mechanism so that if you are conned, the culprit can easily be caught.

I would like to appeal to Members of Parliament to report that crime. Do not be ashamed to report a crime whether to police or elsewhere. You can even report to the ICT ministry and then we shall use our UCC mechanism to track them.

There are also thieves we have found out recently who have gadgets which can download phone numbers from the network and we are fighting all that. Then-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I do not want this to end up being a statement. This is something you who can think about, come here and update the House. What I asked was very simple: you said, all numbers are registered. Unregistered numbers were cut off. A young man using four numbers from Masindi has conned many people. People report, but they are not helped. Why?

What you need to do is to be strong these telecoms. If someone is conned, money is sent through a telecom and someone successfully withdraws the money so when I have even reported, then the telecom should refund the victim.

We need to be harder.

Honourable minister, you are saying, "I am sorry MPs, you are conned". No. There are people down there - Hon. Aber said there are those who are conned and blackmailed.

Honourable minister, let us stop it here. I will assign this to the Committee on Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance to engage with you and show us what you are doing about it. Next item.

Honourable colleagues, let me first allow the Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities to say something. I have two exceptions.

3.09

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM, WILDLIFE AND ANTIQUITIES (Mr Martin Mugarra): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also congratulate Hon. Rugumayo for having represented Uganda well. It is good that he is from my area in Kabarole.

What you said is important, Mr Speaker, that golf is a big game in Uganda. We have around 18 golf courses so far, with Entebbe being one of the oldest in East Africa. The game started here even before going to Kenya and the rest of the countries.

It is a discussion we are having with the Ministry of Education and Sports. You said it rightly. If you look at how much money Kenya spent in bidding for that event, the fairly \$3 million, but if you look at the advertisement advantage created over just the period the tournament ran, valuation is in the neighbourhood of \$20 million. So, we see the importance of sports. We are engaging with our colleagues to see how we harness this more.

To speak to what Hon. Nambeshe said, the reason why we are also targeting golf like the Kenyans is because it is a game of people that have deep pockets. If it was for the poor, we would not have much interest. So, I pray it stays like that so that we can benefit more.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Honourable colleagues, I have two exceptions on matters of national importance because these colleagues came to office and have some assignments that had earlier on been cleared by the Speaker. I will allow Hon. Mugole and Hon. Sarah Opendi, so that they can travel for other assignments.

3.11

MR STEPHEN MUGOLE (NRM, Kabwari County, Kibuku): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I am raising a matter of national importance due to a trending matter on social media from one of the parishes in my constituency. The matter of national importance is the lack of a Universal Primary Education school in Butoloyi in Kakutu Subcounty.

Whereas this came as a social media matter, the fact is that there is a small community school located in Butoloyi Village, Kakutu Parish in the Kibuku District. This community school has over 375 pupils. Unfortunately, the construction of the school stalled due to lack of money from the community to sustain the project.

The school is now in a deplorable condition without any infrastructure for people to use. As a result, the district leadership recently closed the school, leaving the pupils stranded at home. Mr Speaker, there is no other alternative for the pupils in this parish because currently, they have to move eight kilometres to access the nearest school.

Currently, the Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Education and Sports, is implementing a policy of one primary school per parish and one secondary school per subcounty. It is worth noting that despite this said policy, there is no such school in this parish, despite the surging number.

The community decided to collect available resources and construct its own school, and has since identified a piece of land granted by the Church of Uganda, sufficient to accommodate it. However, the community lacks the resources to effectively put up the school. They ended up approaching me and I provided them with some iron sheets.

My prayers are:

1. That Government is invited to construct a primary school in this parish; and
2. That the Government is also urged to avail requisite funds to complete the community-based school, but in the meantime, avail emergency funds and the Office of the Prime Minister provides more iron sheets to assist in the construction.

I submit. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I saw the Minister of State for Education and Sports, Hon. Muyingo. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you

have heard the plight of the school. I think it is very important, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, that you meet the MPs from the area and look at their plight, as far as the primary school at least for that parish, is concerned.

MR MUGOLE: Mr Speaker, if I may, allow me to lay the petition.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, honourable member; you know the rules of accessing the microphone here. I want that discipline to be maintained. What document are you laying? No, that is not how they bring petitions. I thought you have a document not authored by you, but again, petitions are provided for under our rules. So, do not mind; they will link up with you. Hon. Sarah Opendi –

3.15

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg for your indulgence to recognise that the President of the African Golf Confederation is a Ugandan, Mr Johnson Omolo. We cannot talk about golf without talking about the late Mr Sadi Onito, who was also my father. Also, in the group is *Mzee Emmanuel Basaliza*. Although he is currently unwell, he still remains an active golfer. So, I will be joining the Rt Hon. Speaker very soon, after, of course, handling Tug-of-War as well.

Mr Speaker, the matter that I would like to raise regards the admissions of Technical and Vocational Education and Training Institutes for the 2024 academic year. The Ministry of Education and Sports, in a letter dated 3 November 2023, issued more or less an advert to those who want to join vocational and technical education, and gave a deadline of 9 February 2024. We know that those who enrol for technical education are normally Senior Four leavers while for vocational education, it may be Primary Seven or any other dropout above that.

The matter that I am raising is that Uganda National Examinations Board officially released the Uganda Certificate of Education results on the 15th of February after the closing

date. Actually, this was a concern raised to me by one of the parents because now those who completed Senior Four last year are already cut off by this deadline. So, they have to enrol either as private students and you know the cost of technical education in this country.

Mr Speaker, I would like to bring this to the attention of the minister and this House that the ministry needs to find a way of accommodating those whose results were released after this deadline.

Secondly, the results for technical drawing in this country were released, but most of the students had not performed well. The teachers complained, but to our surprise, after a review, UNEB now released a new set of results, showing that the majority passed with distinction.

Mr Speaker, how can we trust UNEB in the marking of these scripts written by these students? I need an explanation from the minister as to how results can be released after review, then people have distinctions. I find that we may not be able to trust what UNEB is actually releasing. Let me lay this letter from the Ministry of Education and Sports. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I told you earlier on, if you came early, that if you raise something to me and I keep silent, then silence is the answer. Please. Then, you can come and chair the House. *(Laughter)*

I would like to tap into the experience of the Government Chief Whip in such a situation. How do they give a cut-off date for applications before even releasing UCE results? You guide us.

3.19

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Mr Speaker, I know that at the Ministry of Education and Sports, as a former Minister of State there, there are several structured meetings. I would like to persuade you to allow me to consult on this particular

matter such that I can give an accurate answer instead of just guessing, contrary to the practice when I was there. If you could allow me to consult, and I come back.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I would advise that we see how to help these young people who missed out on the deadline without their own making. You are the ones who have not yet released results, but then the issue of marking and the different results which came, I think that is an issue, which the minister can get back to the House on. Next item.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION
AND TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL
GUIDANCE ON ISSUES OF NATIONAL
IMPORTANCE RAISED BY HON.
MUSHEMEZA ELIJAH DICKENS
AGAINST TELECOMMUNICATION
OPERATIONS

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson, ICT –

3.21

MR CUTHBERT ABIGABA (NRM, Kibale County, Kamwenge): Mr Speaker, I have been delegated by the Committee on ICT and National Guidance, to present a report on issues of national importance that were raised by Hon. Prof. Elijah Dickens Mushemeza against telecommunications operations. However, before I proceed, permit me to lay, on the Table, a copy of the report and minutes of the meetings that were conducted as we processed this business.

The Hon. Prof. Elijah Dickens Mushemeza, on 15 July, 2023, raised a matter of national importance seeking an inquiry into complaints by consumers against telecommunication companies, regarding the expiry of internet data bundles, the caller tunes payments to artists, and beneficiaries from mobile money accounts of the deceased persons.

The matter was referred by the Rt Hon. Speaker, in exercise of his general authority, to the Committee on Information Communication, Technology, and National Guidance for Investigation.

Terms of reference

- (i) To appreciate the mandate of the UCC in the regulation of telecommunications services;
- (ii) To examine the process of expiry of data bundles;
- (iii) To analyse the process of CRBTs payments to artists;
- (iv) To examine the process of handling beneficiaries from mobile money accounts of deceased persons; and
- (v) To identify any other issue incidental to the investigation.

Background to the telecommunication sector in Uganda

Uganda, as a country, embraced ICT as part of its economic development strategy, and enhanced investment in the sector, coupled with the entry of new players including: CELTEL (1995), MTN Uganda (1997), UTL (1998), Warid (2007), Orange (2008), Africell (2014), among others, which led to significant improvements in quality of service, increasing access to communication services.

The telecommunication sector in Uganda has seen significant growth with 34 million mobile phone subscribers and 11 million internet users, up from 2.5 million users in 2008, resulting in over Shs 14.2 trillion in direct sector revenue in the past five years.

Relatedly, Shs 2.5 trillion has been invested in the sector over the last four years, attracting other global brands like Seacom, American Tower Company, Eaton Towers, and Google. Mobile money subscriptions have also grown to over \$22.7 million and remain a formidable means to formal banking for more than half of the population.

However, the telecommunications sector has challenges, and over time, numerous concerns and complaints against operators have been raised, and these include:

- (i) Poor quality of service/dropped calls, and high billing practices for voice calls;
- (ii) Perceived high rates on data bundles;
- (iii) Expiry of Internet bundles;
- (iv) Inadequate and non-payment of artists for use of their songs as CRBTs; and
- (v) Difficulties in accessing money from deceased person's mobile lines by survivors.
- (vi) Premised on the above, the committee undertook the investigation and hereby reports.

Findings, observations and recommendations

The mandate of Uganda Communications Commission

In ensuring that consumers of communication services in Uganda receive quality, reliable, and fairly priced communication services, the Commission has undertaken initiatives through the National Brand Policy of 2018 to improve the quality of services provided by operators. UCC has thus created an enabling environment for licensed providers of communication services to effectively serve Ugandans.

However, the committee observes that the National Brand Policy, 2018, has been selectively implemented as strategies highlighted in the policy, including number portability and in-country roaming, have not been implemented.

Committee recommendations

The committee recommends that the UCC should urgently implement the National Broadband Policy, 2018, in its entirety to accommodate strategies like number portability and in-country roaming which will enhance network accessibility and reduce the cost of connectivity that have to date not been implemented.

Expiry of data bundles

The complaint, as stated by Hon. Prof. Mushemeza, was that data bundles expire before they are fully utilised by consumers, which is a violation of their right to access information.

The committee observes as follows:

- (i) Connectivity to the Internet comprises fixed costs, which are shared among the subscribers for various products, including data usage, which is sold in bundles and billed on the volume of data sent. The variable costs of data thus depend on consumer usage;
- (ii) Telecom operators in Uganda buy data capacity from wholesale providers and importers of data in bulk, giving operators the latitude to innovate and come up with different packages;
- (iii) Over time, the cost of telecommunication data bundles has reduced, with UCC promoting local peering of internet service providers and the use of internet exchange point as a technique to achieve this reduction; and
- (iv) There is inadequate sensitisation and education of the public and consumers on the available data bundle products from licensed telecommunication operators, data rollover and freedom bundles, among others, which would inform the customers on the choice of bundles.

As a committee, we recommend as follows:

- (i) The Ministry of ICT and National Guidance should ensure that the ICT services reach and broadband use is deepened by maintaining oversight in the pricing of broadband services with the dual goal of attracting or maintaining the requisite infrastructure investment, while at the same time protecting consumers from exploitative pricing conduct;

(ii) UCC should compel all relevant stakeholders, including the telecommunication operators, to enhance sensitisation and education of the public on the various data facilities, in particular, bundles, which are available for use, while encouraging the friendlier bundle subscriptions; and

(iii) UCC should enhance engagements with the telecommunication operators to develop and provide a broader range of facilities, bundles in this case, that will encourage customers to access internet services and call subscriptions.

The third issue was about caller tunes payment to the artistes.

Mr Speaker, the new trend in music distribution have eroded the traditional revenue streams, such as the sale of physical media like compact discs, and most musicians typically earn from live performances. This is coupled with the growing source of new revenue streams from the digitisation, including from caller tunes and online music streams, which is becoming more viable even as mobile phone penetration in Uganda gets better.

A call tune is an audible indication heard by the calling party while waiting for their call to be answered by the call destination. It can be a song, voice, poem, comedy or any other piece of audio work that is pre-set by a telecom. Telecoms offer to their customers' caller tunes in Uganda at a monthly subscription fee of Shs 700 for MTN Uganda and Shs 1,200 for Airtel.

The committee observes as follows:

- (i) Following the revenue sharing breakdown, artistes are receiving very little - details are in the main report - and their share of revenue payment is also not in a timely manner. Besides, there are no real-time revenue splits for the different rights, that is, the performing and mechanical rights to favour all song owners, including songwriters, publishers, performer and audio producer;

- (ii) The practice is that artistes whose songs are converted into caller tunes do not directly deal with the telecom companies, but aggregators with whom they enter contracts, which present certain challenges;
- (iii) Some of the artistes sold and lost rights to their music to third parties, like producers and music promoters, which has caused the artistes to earn peanuts from the sale of their music, thus opting for live music shows and concerts where they directly earn from;
- (iv) The registration of copyright by URSB under Regulation 3 of the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Regulation, 2010 is quite expensive as each song costs close to Shs 500,000 for registration, gazette and incidental costs. This has led to manipulation and exploitation of the artistes by third parties;
- (v) Whereas pursuing telecommunication companies and aggregators for abuse of copyrights is a remedy under Section 46 and Section 47 of the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act, 2006, this remedy has barely been pursued as the process is very costly and lengthy for artistes. This is further complicated by the nature of some of the contracts that these artistes enter into, which are unfavourable;
- (vi) The foreign-based aggregators are more preferred by telecommunication companies and artistes are hindered from pursuing such aggregators for legal redress as they prefer having their countries' jurisdictions for settlement of disputes. Further to this, some foreign aggregators are known to provide copyright-infringing content;
- (vii) There is lack of transparency in the declaration of revenues from CRBTs, as the artistes are not provided with statements and evidence of frequency of play of their music. Relatedly, the committee could not ascertain the exact annual revenue from CRBTs as the artistes indicated Shs 72 billion as the gross revenue while the telecom companies put it at about Shs 20 billion. Further, the committee was not availed evidence of these payments despite its directive to the telecommunication companies to provide them; and
- (viii) The percentages of sharing of revenue from CRBTs are based on the law of contracts and not backed by a specific law.
- In the process of examining caller tunes payments, the committee observed other incidental issues, which include:
- (i) Over 80 per cent of local broadcasters, that is television and radio, are not paying musicians for their royalties for use of their content even though the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act obliges them to do so through collective management organisation system. Sadly, UCC has not taken steps to address this matter;
- (ii) Section 57 of the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act provides for registration of collecting societies, which are meant to protect interests of copyright owners. The Uganda Performers Rights Society is mandated to play this role for the artistes. However, until recently, concerns of failure by the society to collect and distribute royalties to the artists were reported. The society has also been accused of incompetence, corruption and failure to attract membership from artistes;
- (iii) Expensive internet data is negatively impacting the local streaming and downloading music market;
- (iv) There is no data sharing by telecommunication operators on song downloads, which makes it hard for artistes to assess their real performance;

- (v) Over 50 per cent of Ugandan music is monetised on foreign platforms and artistes face challenges of repatriating payments because of restrictions on the international payment gateways, like PayPal. As a result, artistes are losing substantial amounts of money to commissions, which are paid to third parties to access payments; and
- (vi) On 20 July 2022, one of us, Hon. Hillary Kiyaga, sought leave of the House to introduce a Private Member's Bill entitled "The Copyright and Neighbouring Rights (Amendment) Bill". The Bill seeks to introduce amendments to several provisions in the Act. It was, however, resolved by Hon. Kiyaga and the Government that they work together to come up with a holistic amendment to the Act. According to the Attorney-General's submission to Parliament, dated 18 October 2023, consultations on the Bill are still ongoing.

As a committee, we recommend as follows:

- (i) The Copyright and Neighbouring Rights (Amendment) Bill should be fast-tracked and presented to Parliament for consideration into Law within at least six months from the date of resolution of Parliament;
- (ii) The Ministry of ICT and National Guidance should prevail over telecoms to create the CRBTs monitoring system for purposes of transparency and accountability to the artistes and the sector;
- (iii) The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and Bank of Uganda should revisit regulations of payments by permitting registration and use of locally based payment avenues inclining mobile money as opposed to only international gateways like PayPal;
- (iv) Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) should compel the telecommu-
nication companies to deal directly with the artists and not through middlemen commonly known as aggregators. This will increase the revenue to artists;
- (v) The UCC should cause audit of the CRBTs platforms of copyright infringing content, order take downs and effect compensation of affected rights holders as well as ask telecoms to account for non-remunerated downloads;
- (vi) Government should cut data costs for private citizens just like it was done for Government entities (from \$70 to \$35 per megabyte per month.) Government should do this using the National Information Technology Authority, National Backbone infrastructure. This will accelerate digital transformation to support economic recovery and create unlimited opportunities;
- (vii) The URSB, through the Registrar of Copyrights, should constantly educate and sensitise the artistes on the rights to music and protection of their music;
- (viii) The URSB should enhance the supervision and administration of the Uganda Performing Rights Society, to ensure artistes receive what is owed to them in a transparent and timely manner; and
- (ix) Lastly, UCC should initiate processes to reconsider some of the rates of taxes associated with data services for the goal of reducing this. Priority should be given in terms of reduced data costs for Ugandans uploading, streaming and downloading music from local content delivery networks.

Beneficiaries from mobile money accounts of deceased persons

Mr Speaker, with the coming into force of the National Payment Systems Act, 2020 and implementing Regulations, Bank of Uganda was given the mandate to regulate the payment

service providers, payment system operators and those issuing payment instruments.

Similarly, the mobile money business arm of telecommunications companies was established as separate entities, subject to regulation and supervision by the Bank of Uganda.

Committee made the following observations:

- i. The National Payment Systems Act, 2020 introduces dormant accounts under which category, accounts of deceased persons fall. The nine months' period provided for under Section 57 of the National Payment Systems Act, 2020, within which telephonic money accounts have to register a transaction, upon which it is considered dormant and further blocked six months later, if not reactivated;
- ii. Some mobile money registered lines used are by secondary people who did not register these lines and upon dormancy and blocking of such a line, the process of tracing the owners of these mobile money lines becomes difficult;
- iii. The public is not sensitised about the various ways of obtaining authority over estates of deceased persons and therefore, relatives of deceased persons find the process of securing letters of administration lengthy, tedious and frustrating. This affects the intention to retrieve these funds from telecommunication companies and Bank of Uganda;
- iv. There is no streamlined process of informing the public about the dormant mobile lines to be claimed by the telecommunication companies, which affects follow-up on claims of account dormancy. The public is mostly ignorant of the process of retrieving mobile money funds for deceased telecommunication customers.
- v. This is evidenced by the fact that, of the Shs 69 billion, which has been transferred from Mobile Money accounts to Bank of

Uganda, only Shs 280 million has been paid out to claimants;

- vi. There is limited or no enforceability of the National Payments Systems Act, 2020. The absence of enforceability has affected appropriate regulatory regimes and supervisory oversight which has created opportunities for fraud and other digital financial crimes; and
- vii. The funds held under these dormant electronic accounts are sometimes very meagre and thus not an incentive for the beneficiaries to give up on the process of retrieving these funds. This explains the limited pay out by the Bank of Uganda.

As a committee, we recommend as follows:

- i. There should be awareness creation through increased sensitisation and education of the populace on the processes entailed in accessing the deceased person's mobile money funds.
- ii. The sensitisation should be multi-sectoral to include Bank of Uganda, Uganda Communications Commission, the Administrator-General's office, opinion, cultural, religious leaders and the telecommunication companies using all available public media including; radio, television, digital, print, churches, schools and public spaces;
- iii. The Uganda Communication Commission should ensure that the telecommunication companies disclose information of the dormant electronic accounts every nine months through all the available media platforms;
- iv. Government should ensure enforcement of the National Payments Systems Act, 2020 as enacted; and
- v. The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs should ensure transparency and speedy processes in securing letters of administration to enable access to the money funds of deceased persons.

Other issues incidental to the investigation

1. Levy on Gross Annual Revenues of Licensed Operators

Section 68 of the Uganda Communications Act, 2013, states that the Commission may charge/levy on the gross annual revenues of licensed operators, which forms part of its funding. This revenue is to be shared between ICT developments and rural communication in a ratio of one to one.

Whereas, the law requires 2 per cent to be paid by licensees of UCC, it targets the telecommunication licensees for covering areas that they may not be covering for commercial reasons.

In the interpretation, it ends up including the television and radio broadcasters, yet it has never been collected and consequently a violation of the law.

Further, the resources remitted to the Consolidated Fund by UCC are not directly ploughed back to facilitate ICT development, but rather form part of the national resource envelope.

The committee recommends as follows:

- (i) The provision requiring charging 2 per cent of the gross revenues of radio and television broadcasters should be removed;
- (ii) The levy collected by UCC in this regard, be earmarked and ring-fenced for purposes of ICT development and rural communication as provided for in the Uganda Communications Act, 2013.

2. Establishment of Communications Tribunal

The establishment of the communication's tribunal is long overdue. Once it is set up, the tribunal will handle matters affecting ICT sectors including those against the Minister of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance and the UCC.

Concern has been raised on Government's failure to nominate members to and operationalise the tribunal. The delay in establishing the tribunal has limited the ability of the aggrieved citizens, the media and telecom service providers to contest some of UCC's and Minister of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance pronouncements.

As a committee, we recommend that Cabinet should expedite the setup and approval of the communications tribunal.

In conclusion, the recommendations provided herein will lead to the provision and consumption of quality, reliable and fairly priced services in a well regulate environment, and the attainment of an inclusive digital economy that promotes increased ICT penetration and the use of ICT services for social and economic development.

Further, these recommendations, if implemented, will enable Ugandans and all users of ICT devices derive the best possible value for the services they pay for.

Therefore, I pray that the report of the Committee on Information, Communication Technology and National Guidance on the issues raised by Hon. Prof. Mushemeza Elijah Dickens, on challenges with telecommunication services be considered by this House and recommendations therein be adopted. I beg to submit and report.

Mr Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to appreciate my chairperson who has delegated me to deliver this report, on behalf of the committee. I also thank my colleagues, committee members for a job well done. We did a lot of work to interrogate this matter because we are dealing with very elusive people, that is, the telecommunication operators -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is that part of the report?

MR ABIGABA: It is not part of the report, but I have to appreciate. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Have you concluded the report? Thank you.

MR ABIGABA: Honourable members, I beg to move. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, Hon. Cuthbert is a Telecommunications Engineer who worked for long in MTN and other telecoms; so, he has extensive experience.

Before I open the debate on the matter, I had assigned the Government Chief Whip to look into the issue raised by Hon. Sarah Opendi and he seems to have an update for us. Honourable Government Chief Whip, please -

3.51

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (MR HAMSON OBUA): Mr Speaker, in consultation with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Sports, I beg to report as follows:

In addition to the circular that was issued on 3 November 2023, laid by Hon. Sarah Opendi, there was another circular, which was issued. It has been sent - my office is printing and they will deliver it. I pray you will give me an opportunity to lay.

The fact is that the first circular was issued on the assumption that the ministry knew that the UCE results for 2023 would be released earlier, but it was amended. When the release came slightly late, there was an extension of one week by the Ministry of Education and Sports and that went up to the 23rd February. This was to cater for senior four candidates who sat in 2023.

I have been made to know that on Monday and Tuesday this week, the selection was done for this category in four regional centres namely: Ntinda for central, Kakyeka for Western Region, Bobi for Northern Region and Madera for Eastern Region.

Students responded to the extension and many applied, especially those in cohort 2023. As I speak, the lists highlighting the students who were admitted are out on the notice boards of the various institutions.

In a nutshell, the mischief raised by Hon. Sarah Opendi was cured through an extension by the Ministry of Education and Sports. When that circular comes, I request you allow me to lay it on the Table. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think this is a direct matter. Let us go to the debate. Hon. Ssewungu, what is so pertinent?

3.54

MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West, Kalungu): What is pertinent, Mr Speaker, is that as he has given that communication, which we appreciate, there is still a bigger challenge of children who failed primary seven that we need to address.

Mr Speaker, 1,223 children did not pass and you had requested the Ministry of Education and Sports - *(Interjections)*- yes, I am serious - to set up a programme with modules to give them some training for the future because they cannot go to senior one.

Government Chief Whip, you can deliver that information because it is very important. Otherwise, you will see them hitting you with *katayimbwa*.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. This was just for noting. Hon. Betty Aol was hard on me with a matter of procedure on the same matter. Yes, Hon. Aol -

MS BETTY AOL: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Ministry of Education and Sports is a very critical ministry. Last week, the Government Chief Whip told us that he has a schedule for ministers and there are four Ministers of Education and Sports.

Mr Speaker, on a Thursday when we have questions for the Prime Minister, which sometimes are answered by ministers concerned - we have none of them in the House. Are we proceeding right? That ministry is very big, critical and strategic for us to keep closing our eyes on it.

May I even seek clarification from the Government Chief Whip why none of the four ministers is here, yet they are from a critical ministry? That was my point of procedure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Dr Muyingo entered here and then in a short while, he disappeared. Honourable ministers, because the Rules of Procedure state that on Thursdays we must give priority to Member's issues, I requested you to ensure that each ministry at least has a minister here to support the Prime Minister. I am glad I am seeing many here_

Hon. Dr Muyingo, as the Minister of State for Higher Education should be here. I do not know why he came in and disappeared.

Honourable colleagues, I was going to open the debate starting with Hon. Hillary Kiyaga, but I can see it is already time for Prime Minister's Time so let us handle it first and thereafter debate this issue. Next item? We shall come back to this issue and close it.

PRIME MINISTER'S TIME

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Why don't you start with item four?

STATEMENT ON GOVERNMENT BUSINESS FOR THE SUCCEEDING WEEK (5TH-7TH MARCH 2024)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister –

3.58

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I move under Rule 28 of our Rules of Procedure, to make a statement in this House regarding business for the succeeding week. Below is my statement.

1. The Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development will present a statement on the commemoration of International Women's Day scheduled for 8 March 2024.

2. The Minister for Presidency will present an Action Taken Report on the Investigation of the Intelligence Monitoring System of M/S Joint Stock Company Global Security.
3. The Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs will present an Action Taken Report in accordance with Rule 220 of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Uganda, 2021, S.I No.30 of 2021. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we changed. We no longer present action-taken reports. We lay them on the Table because we found the cycle – we were rotating – action-taken reports are debated then they go to committees. The cycle does not end, so now we lay them on the Table and thereafter they are referred to the committee to use when they are processing ministerial policy statements. Next item.

PRIME MINISTER'S TIME

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister -

4.01

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I got a question from Hon. Nyamutoro Phiona, the National Female Youth Representative. She said that she recently got information about the Government's plan on the replacement and upgrading of Karuma Bridge, which is one of the critical gate-way to Northern Uganda. Her Prayer is that I update the House on the status of the replacement or upgrade of the Karuma Bridge?

My response, Mr Speaker, is that Karuma Bridge is located 270 kilometres north of Kampala on the main Kampala-Gulu Highway. The bridge is the main connection between the Northern and Southern regions of Uganda and is managed by the Ministry of Works and Transport.

The existing bridge was constructed in 1964 and is insufficient to accommodate the increasing levels of traffic on the road. The bridge has also been the scene of several accidents in the recent past.

Mr Speaker, the Government of Uganda recognised the challenges posed by the existing bridge and prioritised its replacement in the National Development Plan (NDP) III period. The new bridge will provide a reliable link between the northern and southern regions and is expected to aid the development of the priority sectors of tourism, culture, oil and gas and industrialisation.

The Ministry of Works and Transport is currently carrying out an engineering assessment of the old bridge to ascertain the remaining life and also determine its load-carrying capacity considering the ever-increasing traffic volume despite old age. The output from the study shall guide the Government on the approach for short term interventions on the bridge during the construction of the replacement. The report is expected in May 2024.

The Government of Uganda contacted the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) on the possibility of partnering in the delivery of this key infrastructure. JICA agreed to consider partnering on the replacement and is currently undertaking a design process which is expected to be completed in the Financial Year 2024/2025 and construction is expected to commence in the Financial Year 2025/2026.

Mr Speaker, the replacement of Karuma Bridge has been prioritised by the National Resistance Movement (NRM) Government and will be undertaken once the financing arrangements are completed.

The second question came from Hon. Emely Kugonza, Member of Parliament, Buyanja East County, Kibaale District. The question was that the Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Water and Environment started implementing the Kasimbi Piped Water Project in Kasimbi Subcounty in Buyanja East County, Kibaale District, in 2018. After

drilling two high-yielding production wells, the implementation of the Project stopped. The communities that were targeted, including the rapidly growing Kasimbi Rural Growth Centre, Kasimbi Seed Secondary School, Kasimbi Health Centre III among others, have a crucial need for water. His question was that when is the Government planning to complete this critical Water Project?

Mr Speaker, my response is that in the Financial Year 2016/2017, the Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Water and Environment, embarked on the implementation of piped water supply systems in several small towns and Rural Growth Centres in Kibaale District. These included Kibaale Town Council, Nyamarunda Town Council, Kasimbi, Kyebando, Kyakatwanga and Nyamarwa. The phased approach was adopted because of the prevailing financial constraints.

I have a table below, which is a summary of the status of implementation of this water supply systems. For example, Nyamarwa and Kyakatwanga, the design population was 5,294, and the cost was Shs 2.1 billion and it was completed in April 2019. Nyamarunda, the target population was 7,783, the cost was Shs 2.4 billion and it was completed in April 2017.

Kasimbi-Kyebando, the target population is 31,394, its cost is Shs 6.6 billion in Phase I and in Phase II, it will be Shs 3.4 billion. The design is complete and that is what he is talking about. Kibaale Town Council, the target population is 52,020, Phase I was Shs 3.9 billion; Phase II Shs 5.8 billion and Phase III Shs 15.5 billion. Phase I was completed in September 2021. Designs for Phase II and III are complete.

Mr Speaker, the proposed Kasimbi Water Supply System was designed and is to be developed together with the Kyebando Water Supply System. The two are located in the subcounties of Kasimbi and Kyebando respectively in Kibaale District. The proposed water supply system was designed to serve a projected population, like I have already told you, of 31,394 people in the year 2045 whose

projected demand is estimated at 1,913,000 litres per day.

Mr Speaker, due to funding constraints, phased implementation of the water supply system was proposed:

Phase I

This phase will target a projected population of 18,907 people who will be living in the targeted water supply area by the year 2035. The scope of works envisaged under this phase includes:

- (i) Construction of three pump stations with a total production capacity of 24,000 litres of water per hour;
- (ii) Construction of two water tanks of capacity 400,000 litres in Kasimbi at Kasozi Hill, and another in Kyebando at Kisalizi Hill of capacity 224,000 litres per day;
- (iii) The construction of two kilometres of transmission pipelines and 20 kilometre of distribution pipeline with related consumer points comprising of 800 households yard taps and at least 10 public stands; and
- (iv) Construction of a water office to support operations and maintenance of the facilities and two public toilets at Kasimbi and Kyebando Markets.

The total cost of the construction works under phase I is Shs 6.6 billion only.

Phase II

Beyond 2025, the population in Kasimbi and Kyebando will have increased, and the adequacy of the infrastructure installed under phase I will cease. In order to meet the projected water demand of 1,913,000 litres per day for the year 2045, another water source will therefore, be required to augment the boreholes.

Water will therefore, be sourced from River Nkusi at Igayaza, treated and pumped to the water tanks at Kisalizi Hill in Kasimbi Sub County and Kisalisa Hill in Kyebando Subcounty.

The total cost of construction works to be undertaken under phase II is Shs 3.4 billion only. It is anticipated that the infrastructure with long life spans installed under phase I will continue to adequately serve up to 2045.

Mr Speaker, the challenge has always been about limited funding. However, the Government is committed to commence implementation of phase I of Kasimbi - Kyebando Water Supply System once funds are available.

The third question came from the Hon. Achayo Julie Lodou, Member of Parliament, Ngora. She said that in order to ensure better access to health services, the Government formulated a policy to the effect that every sub county should have a health centre at level three. However, in Ngora District, three Subcounties are without health centre IIIs. They include: Agirigiroi, Morukakise and Ngora Subcounties.

Her prayer is that the Government constructs health centre IIIs in the affected sub counties to improve health service delivery in the district.

My response, Mr Speaker, is that it is true there is a policy that every subcounty and town council should be provided with a health centre III. Uganda has 2,184 sub counties and town councils out of which, 1,696 (78 per cent) have health centre IIIs, leaving out 488 (22 per cent) Sub-counties and town councils without health centre IIIs

The Government is committed to ensuring every subcounty and town councils without health centre IIIs are provided with the same.

The subcounties of Agirigiroi, Morukakise and Ngora shall be provided with health centre IIIs as and when funds are made available.

It is important to note that in the last five years, the Government has constructed over 412 health centre IIIs in different sub counties across the country. This was based on population, availability of health facilities of any level in the subcounties, hard to reach and hard to leave in areas among other factors.

The fourth question came from the Hon. Victorious Zawedde, District Woman Representative, Nakasongola District.

She said that Nakasongola District has got two constituencies, that is, Budyebo and Nakasongola. However, that Nakasongola District has got only one functional health centre IV, which serves as a district hospital. This health facility handles over 500 mothers for antenatal care, 100 mothers for delivery and 35 mothers for caesarean sections. Sometimes, mothers sleep on the floor while others are discharged before the right time. The newly-born babies end up being infected after being admitted on the floor.

Her prayer, Mr Speaker, is that may she know when the Government will construct a standard and well-equipped maternity ward at Nakasongola Health Centre IV so that it can really serve the available population?

My response, Mr Speaker, is that the bed capacity for a health centre IV, as per the Ministry of Health current standards, is 24 beds. Nakasongola Health Centre IV is however, a 60-bed facility. The existing maternity block was designed for 14 beds as opposed to the standard of eight beds, which is adequate.

Mr Speaker, Nakasongola Health Centre IV requires only minor renovations and remodelling to be able to improve on the working environment. It is worth noting that Nakasongola District was allocated funds in Financial Year 2023 /2024 for the upgrade of Nabiswere Health Centre III to a health centre IV. The funds have already been disbursed to the UPDF Engineering Brigade to start the construction for the upgrade. In addition, the Office of the Prime Minister constructed a new health centre III at Rwampanga using the UPDF Engineering Brigade. This will help to decongest Nakasongola Health Centre IV.

The fifth issue was again from Hon. Achayo Julie Lodou, Member of Parliament, Ngora. She said that NMS, in its wisdom, designed a schedule for delivering medicines and medical supplies to health facilities in two

monthly cycles. She added that this approach is appropriate because it ensures a fairly steady supply of drugs. Of late, however, she said, NMS developed a system of delivering first and second cycle drugs together and the third and fourth cycle medicines are also delivered together, etcetera.

She said that although the drugs eventually become available in sufficient quantities, the approach leads to longer periods of stock-outs and the delivery may come too late to save life.

Her prayer is that NMS should revert to the old system of delivering drugs to the health facilities every two months.

Mr Speaker, my response is that National Medical Stores developed a bi-monthly delivery schedule to ensure there was sufficient time for the facilities to establish their needs for essential medicines and health supplies, and order these items within the available budgets that have been appropriated by Parliament.

The delivery of health commodities in a financial year is meant to commence in the first week of July, to ensure there is no interruption to the commodity supply to health facilities. However, in the Financial Year 2023/2024 operational funds from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to support the distribution of these commodities were received approximately 30 days late.

This delay meant that deliveries to health facilities were delayed and the only remedy available to ensure that health facilities received all the commodities they had ordered for, was to combine the delivery of the cycles, thereby increasing the delivery intervals from every two months to every four months.

Mr Speaker, the impact of the delays in the receipt of the operational funds has been discussed with the finance ministry, under my chair, and they have committed to providing a mechanism to frontload NMS with the operational funds required to distribute these health commodities at the beginning of every financial year.

The combining of cycles is only a temporary catch-up measure to ensure that all essential medicines and health supplies meant for the facilities are delivered within the financial year.

The NMS will receive the operational funds by 1 July 2024, as expected, and there will be no need to apply these catch-up measures. All deliveries will be every two months as per the NMS published delivery schedule.

The next question came from Hon. Dr Florence Asiimwe – also known as Dancing Queen – MP for Masindi District. Her prayer is: when will the remaining tobacco farmers in Bunyoro and the other parts of Uganda, be paid?

Mr Speaker, my response is that following His Excellency, the President's directive to compensate farmers for the crop season of 2018, the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, working with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the Auditors-General's office, undertook the verification and audit of claims for both Bunyoro subregion and West Nile.

As per the verification report by the internal auditors-general, Bunyoro subregion claimed Shs 11.25 billion, which was approved and released to the trade ministry in the Financial Year 2021/2022. A total of 4,727 farmers were verified and paid. For West Nile, the verified claims, as per the internal auditor-general's report, amounted to Shs 9.7 million.

The Government, through the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, has budgeted for these compensation funds to be considered in Financial Year 2024/2025.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Rt Hon. Honourable Prime Minister. Leader of the Opposition, you will come to respond to both written and oral questions. At the top of the hour, I will invite you, as per the Rules of Procedure.

Honourable colleagues, I have two ways. If you know you are going to speak for more than a minute – listen – if your question takes more than a minute, you will wait until after five o'clock. Questions under the Prime Minister's Time are sharp, focused and she also gives a response in one minute, and we have been doing it that way – no, under Prime Minister's Time, it is well-provided for. There are no issues of – so, if you know you want to speak for long – explain matters of national importance, then, you have to wait until after five o'clock. I will start with the Woman Member of Parliament for Buvuma, Hon. Florence Nambozo and Hon. Paul Nsubuga.

4.24

MS SUSAN MUGABI (NUP, Woman Representative, Buvuma): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. My issue is about the silver fish business community in the country. Recently, the ministry in charge of fisheries banned their current methods of fishing and introduced them to another, but which method had also been banned in 2000.

Mr Speaker, this directive did not come up with the proper or clear standards of the gears that would be used in the new method and the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) or the Fisheries Protection Unit has already started enforcing the directive.

Of course, these people were not prepared for the change; they people were not sensitised. You can see how the fishermen have been vulnerable for a long time, including myself. We need the Government's intervention and support.

Under what regulations did the minister give this directive, because it is within the 2023 Aquaculture and Fisheries act – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I am aware. The challenge has been that the method or the fishing gears our mothers and the fishers use

on the lake have been depleting the lakes of all kinds of fish.

We had one meeting, last week, and we intend to have another to concretise how to help those mothers, so that our lakes are not depleted of the fish stocks and our country can continue to enjoy the foreign currency.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Prime Minister. If you can also bring the leaders from the fishing community - the Members - and sensitise them, it will be helpful. Yes, Hon. Nambozo.

4.26

MS FLORENCE NAMBOZO (Independent, Woman Representative, Sironko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question to the Prime Minister is about the Wendi App of Post Bank, which has caused mayhem in the disbursement of the Parish Development Model (PDM) funds. In the district I represent and many others, Wendi App has enabled the bank officials to send bulks of money to the accounts of the PDM leaders. A leader gets about Shs 70 million to disburse to the individual beneficiaries, but these people are not yet ready to hold such large amounts of money.

My question is: how are you helping the individual beneficiaries who have lost a lot of money, especially people in my district, who are in prison because of the hacking that has already taken place? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, it is true that we have experienced some challenges under PDM. It is a new project, which requires concerted efforts from all of us, the leaders.

The *Wendi App* was designed to help our farmers or beneficiaries of PDM to access money on their phones. Some other areas have not had issues, but a few have had. We are having a meeting with the Managing Director of Postbank tomorrow so that we can see how to bridge all these gaps.

Otherwise, *Wendi App* needs to be refined further to avoid these fraudulent people taking advantage of and stealing from our people.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I can also use one minute on this issue of the *Wendi App*. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you have been doing a fantastic job. We agreed that every step you take, update this House so that we also again go to mobilise and engage the community.

I have been seeing it as a rumour and I do not know when they changed to the App - in fact, I am soon going to my constituency, but I am receiving complaints; people saying that money is going to members and who owns *Wendi App*? It was also another issue because someone said that it is an App now registered in Mauritius.

People are saying that there is corruption around it plus many other things. So, let us have a statement on this change of disbursement so that you can bring us on board; we tell you the issues that we faced and heard from our constituencies as leaders.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I want Members to remember how our people used to line up in the banks. There was a time we had to rush to Mbale, when people had lined up for seven days, waiting for banks to help members of the community to access money in the banks and it became tedious.

Then we agreed to look for a way of making sure that our people get money on their phones. Because Shs 1 million can be accessed on phone. That is how the Post Bank came up with that innovation.

Honourable Members, the ministry of Local Government will come here with a statement so that we see how we are moving.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, since it is Postbank, don't you think that Ministry of Finance would do a better job with this? Let it come from the Ministry of Finance, the one supervising Post Bank, who

is handling issues of money. I have seen for the first time, Hon. Musasizi is uncomfortable coming to bring a statement.

4.31

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. To supplement what the Rt Hon. Prime Minister submitted, we decided to quicken the process of transferring money. An App was developed by Postbank called *Wendi*. This App has, to a greater extent, helped us quicken the process of sending money to the beneficiaries.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Procedure-

MR SSEWUNGU: Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you very much. Would it be procedurally okay that we go by your guidance? We have a lot of issues on *Wendi* and it is only that members brought it up during Prime Minister's Question Time, but the issues are bigger than what we shall find.

Would it be a procedurally okay that we go by your guidance? - Because how did they determine Post Bank against Centenary Bank or DFCU? All these are questions we are going to ask when a statement is laid here and we debate this *Wendi* issue.

The Minister of Local Government you are talking about -(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you Hon. Ssewungu. Hon. Musasizi, a statement would be better. We do not need an explanation now. And the major aim of the statement is to bring all us on board so that we go and explain to our people when they complain.

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, we shall bring a statement. The Prime Minister said that tomorrow, we shall have a meeting and if we do not finish there will be other subsequent meetings. However, what the Hon. Ssewungu is saying does not need to wait for a statement.

There is no way we can support other banks when we have our government banks. Therefore, for DFCU and Centenary, Postbank is wholly owned by the Government and we think that we should support our own banks with government business.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, issues of *Wendi* have stopped here. I request you to get feedback from your constituencies so that once the statement is here, we enrich the Prime Minister's plans with information. Okay? So, check with your constituents on how the parish model is working with *Wendi* and we see how best we can support the whole of this system.

On Tuesday, the honourable minister for Finance will bring a statement about *Wendi* and how it is disbursing funds. I had picked Hon. Nsubuga Paul, then Hon. Ariko, Hon. Annet, Hon. Bataringaya, our champion, Dr Anthony. One minute; let us shoot.

4.34

MR PAUL NSUBUGA (NUP, Busiro county North, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mine is a brief one and it is a matter of urgent national importance regarding heavy rainstorm that destroyed homes and property in Busiro North, Wakiso District.

On 27th this very month, heavy rains destroyed property including houses, bananas, coffee plantations and all crops. As I speak now, over 200 homesteads in the villages of Nampunge, Katiti-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question to the Prime Minister?

MR NSUBUGA: My simple prayer is that, let the Minister for Disaster and Preparedness provide some food like posho, milk -(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable wants you to provide the milk to his people, (*Laughter*) you can also add on meat.

MS NABBANJA: Rt Hon. Speaker-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, order.

MS NABBANJA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The procedure is clear. When such a storm or a disaster happens in an area, the area district Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) writes to the Permanent Secretary in the office of the Prime Minister. Then the process of helping those people starts.

It is good that you have informed me and I hope the CAO has already returned to - then the disaster preparedness committee in the district sits. We do not provide milk.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: What about the meat?

MS NABBANJA: We do not have meat or chicken, but we have posho and beans. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon Ariko.

4.37

MR HERBERT ARIKO (NRM, Soroti East division, Soroti City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you have an entity, the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS), which is mandated to test all imports in the country.

When this entity takes packages of imports for testing, they have been known to keep these items that they have taken for testing in large quantities and this is fraud.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, has this been brought to your Knowledge? If so, what are you doing to ensure that Ugandan goods are not defrauded by UNBS, which does not return them, after testing? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister -

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I thank the Member and I have taken note of his concern. Let us get in touch, today, so that he can give me details of the complaints he is talking about, then we shall handle.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Annet -

4.38

MS ANNET KATUSIIME (NRM, Woman Representative, Bushenyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to re-echo two important issues before the Rt Hon. Prime Minister -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Remember, you have one minute.

MS ANNET KATUSIIME: Mr Speaker, this is a pertinent issue. It is affecting the whole country and it is about the -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, I will give you time under matters of national importance because under Prime Ministers' Time, it is strictly one minute.

MS ANNET KATUSIIME: Let me summarise. The issue is about the drastic decline of tea prices. Mr Speaker, farmers are uprooting tea and factories have closed. Much as we have raised these issues on the Floor of Parliament, we never got the position of the Government and its intervention.

The Rt Hon. Prime Minister promised us subsidies fertilisers. She also promised to lower electricity tariffs so that the cost of production can be reduced-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question?

MS ANNET KATUSIIME: Where are we going? I would like to ask -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Where are we going? Rt Hon. Prime Minister. *(Laughter)* Order, honourable colleagues. We are losing time.

MR NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, as I told you, two weeks ago, the Cabinet handled this

matter, chaired by the President, last Monday and a number of issues that she is talking about came up.

I am chairing a subcabinet committee and we have a meeting tomorrow. We were supposed to have that meeting yesterday, however, due to the activities of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) yesterday and we had other visitors from the United Nations. We did not handle it and postponed the meeting to tomorrow.

Mr Speaker, we know where we are going. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: For now, it is a secret.

MS NABBANJA: We have short and long-term interventions. For the short term, they are saying our tea does not have the quality so we are going to see how to subsidise fertilisers such that our farmers can get fertilisers cheaply in the country. That is the remedy.

Tomorrow, we have a meeting with Elite Agro, a United Arab Emirates Government company from Dubai that is going to establish five factories in the areas of Buhweju in Northern Uganda, we have Zombo and three other districts. Others are supposed to be in Kyenjojo, Sheema and others. This is the long term intervention.

We are also establishing an auction market in the country instead of going to Mombasa to be graded the way they want. We want to have an auction market in our country since we have the quantities.

Mr Speaker, the Government of Uganda is concerned and we shall handle this matter, as we have heard.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Anthony Okullo and then Hon. Bataringaya.

4.43

DR ANTHONY OKULLO (NRM, Lamwo County, Lamwo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I stand in Prime Minister's Time to report an incident which has been occurring in my constituency for the last three or four months.

The number of deaths have gone up by a large scale. The District Health Officer of Lamwo agrees with me. I wrote on 21st February, to the Office of the Prime Minister as well as the Speaker's Office indicating the abnormality.

My prayer in the letter was that a team of doctors who are experts should immediately go to Lamwo to do a survey of what could be wrong. It could be a disease because people are drinking which is very bad so they have to determine it. I wonder whether the Prime Minister has received the letter.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, have you received the letter? The answer can be a "Yes" or "No".

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the fact is that I have not seen the letter, but the concern of the Member will be taken care of. I will make sure that by tomorrow or even today, the Ministry of Health is informed about the same so that they can institute a team to go to Lamwo to ensure that our people are safe.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Our colleague is a medical doctor so by the time he comes up, know it is there. Hon. Bataringaya –

4.45

MR BASIL BATARINGAYA (NRM, Kashari North County, Mbarara): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Two issues. One, I have complained about electricity poles without wires, yet electricity is key to the Parish Development Model activities. When will electricity be connected to Kashari North on the poles, which were installed three years ago?

Question two is about Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). When will doses be delivered to Ankole Subregion?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, your response on the Foot and mouth disease vaccine -

MS NABBANJA: The scale-up project, which is being implemented by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development will handle the problem of those poles without wires. I remember we passed a loan for the ministry and that is taken care of. It is a matter of time so his poles will have wires and our people will enjoy electricity.

On Foot and Mouth Disease, the Cabinet came up with some money, which we are going to use to buy vaccines. We are collaborating with the Government of Botswana so that we have these vaccines any time.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kanushu -

4.46

MS LAURA KANUSHU (NRM, PWD Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. There are two laws in this country; the Building Control-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Laura, if you could wait a little. Honourable colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have religious leaders and chairpersons from Ameny Parish, Kamdini Archdeaconry, Oyam District. They are represented by Hon. Dr Apio Eunice, Hon. Amongi Betty and Hon. Alum Sandra. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)* Hon. Laura, continue.

MS KANUSHU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. There are two laws in this country that is, the Building Control Act and the Person with Disabilities Act which say that every public building must have access for persons with disabilities.

My question to the Prime Minister is: who has continued to approve mushrooming buildings that are not accessible and failed to modify them? How are people with disabilities supposed to access services when

they are being technically locked out of these buildings, including police stations, courts of law etcetera? Who is locking persons with disabilities out? Who is not modifying and approving buildings that are not accessible to persons with disabilities, against the laws passed by this Parliament?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister -

MS NABBANJA: It is certainly not you or me, but the Government has a policy, honourable members, and I know we are implementing it. We may have gaps here and there in terms of enforcement. That is why I request Members to join me or the Government in making sure that these policies are enforced. The law is there; it is just a matter of enforcement.

4.48

MR NOAH MUTEBI (NRM, Nakasongola County, Nakasongola): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the Government of Uganda constructed a bridge to connect Nakasongola to Kayunga in 2019. As we talk, five years have elapsed, but the bridge has not been commissioned.

When I went to the Ministry of Works and Transport, they said the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has not released funds to that ministry for two quarters. My question is; when will this bridge be commissioned for use? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister -

MS NABBANJA: I have been to this bridge, Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues. The bridge is almost 99 per cent complete. What remains are these simple patches to connect Kayunga to Nakasongola.

It is true that the Ministry of Works and Transport was not given money when this quarter was beginning, but at least I saw the Investment Project Financing (IPFs) and they are going to complete that bridge. The bridge is almost complete. I know Sezibwa Bridge; I have been there with him.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for Kumi followed by Members from Soroti and Wakiso.

4.51

MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I raised a concern here last time about the issues of sports. The sector is currently helping us in terms of sports tourism and carrying our flag high.

What is happening? When are you releasing money for the National Council of Sports to implement its activities? We also passed the National Sports Act, but we have not started implementing it. Are you going to release the money this afternoon? *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you are moving with your signature; you can release money from here. *(Laughter)*

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I cannot deceive this Parliament that we are releasing money this afternoon. The fact is that once the money is appropriated and is in the budget, they will release that money before the financial year ends. Be patient.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Soroti, then Wakiso. There are no supplementary questions under Rule 41, on Prime Minister's Time.

4.51

MS JOAN ACOM (FDC, Woman Representative, Soroti City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My issue is about the Soroti Blood Bank. Madam Prime Minister, the Government started construction of a blood bank in Soroti, but it has been abandoned. This has left at least six people dying every week at Soroti Regional Referral Hospital because of no blood. People have also abandoned donating because our blood is taken to other places for screening and it comes back when it is less.

My question is; what *–(Interjections)–* yes; leaving people without blood in the hospital.

My question is, when are you finishing construction of the blood bank so that blood distribution is equated to all the other districts so that we become the main supplier and do not lose people in the hospital? Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, that question came here two weeks ago. It is true the contractor had abandoned the site, but we have got another contractor who will complete that blood bank. It is a priority in the Government.

4.53

MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. Last year this House approved the Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area Infrastructure Project by the World Bank. To this day, nothing has been implemented as far as that project is concerned, especially on the several potholes on the roads in this Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area.

My question is, as we advised on timely fulfilment of the conditions of this project, what happened? What is the status; is it still on course? Why are Ugandans still having accidents and traffic jam, yet a solution was planned?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, this is a big question and I request that you allow me to request the Minister for Kampala Capital City and Metropolitan Affairs to come up with a report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Luttamaguzi –

4.54

MR PAULSON LUTTAMAGUZI (DP, Nakaseke South County, Nakaseke): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I am the shadow minister for lands, but when I watch news every day, I see dead bodies in Apaa. I would like to know what is happening in Apaa.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister *–(Hon. Olanya rose)–* No; Rule 41 is

clear. (*Laughter*) Read the rules, honourable member.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, I saw a letter from the President today talking about Apaa. He was replying Gen. Mbadi and gave copies to all Members of Parliament from Acholi and Madi, and I believe they have got them.

Regarding the Apaa question, the President appointed a Commission of Inquiry. He directed that the Commission be provided with funds, which are available and they are going to start work very soon. It also has a component of Zoka Forest. Some people encroached on that forest and according to a preliminary report we have, Zoka Forest is the area where we have these killings.

So, let us wait for the Commission to come up with a report. We shall definitely share it here with you, Members. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Hillary Kiyaga, then Hon. Mwijukye -

4.56

MR HILLARY KIYAGA (NUP, Mawokota County North, Mpigi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, with the numerous accidents on Masaka Road, the Government hospital we have is Mpigi Health Centre IV. When are we getting an ambulance for this facility because with all the numerous accidents, the Government has not gotten the attention to provide us with at least one? How many people do we have to lose, such that the Government pays attention to this?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the Government continues to buy ambulances. A number of hospitals and health centres IV have been provided with ambulances. I promise that Mpigi Health Centre IV will also get an ambulance.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Mwijukye -

4.57

MR FRANCIS MWIJUKYE (FDC, Buhweju County, Buhweju): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. In 2022, the Government, led by the Prime Minister, authorised the people of Buhweju, Kakumiro, Bushenyi, and Zombo; the tea suppliers to supply seedlings on credit in 2022. It is now 2024 and they are choking on loans. I am asking the Prime Minister; when will the Government pay these suppliers?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister -

MS NABBANJA: The nursery operators and farmers of Kakumiro, and even those of Zombo did not supply tea, because they wanted to have the tea planted during the season, so Zombo did not supply, because I have always seen Hon. Kwiyucwiny saying that they also now need to supply.

Remember, when we came up with this strategy, the Government changed the policy. Before, we bought tea seedlings through National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), and we put all the money in one basket, that is the Parish Development Model (PDM), so that farmers can buy the seedlings themselves.

We were here, and we agreed that let these people supply; Government would pay them when we get the money. We have not yet got the money, but when we get it, we shall pay these tea farmers.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, I think Rt Hon. Prime Minister, for the record, it was not when you get the money. The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Hon. Kasaija came here and said in two financial years. I remember very well not when you -

Honourable colleagues, the Prime Minister's time is going to end; then, we open up so that - please, when the Speaker is speaking, you should be seated. By the way, not only the Speaker, when any person is holding the Floor, the rest should be seated.

We are going to close the Prime Minister's time with the Leader of the Opposition giving his comments then we resume with Members' issues where you can ask the ministers directly without going through the Hon. Prime Minister. We shall do one more hour so that I can pick many of you. Leader of the opposition –

5.00

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

(Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Two critical issues as the Prime Minister was responding to questions. I am drawn to questions that are raised by the honourable colleagues Hon. Achayo Juliet, Member of Parliament for Ngora. She was raising the fact that three subcounties do not have Health Centre III in her area, the Hon. Victorious Zawedde, District Woman Member of Parliament for Nakasongola, who raised a concern about only one functional health centre IV that serves as a district hospital.

On Tuesday, I proposed to this House, after we visited Lubowa Specialised Hospital on Monday and were denied access, we asked the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development who updated this House that so far, \$156 million has gone to this project through promissory notes, but we do not know what is happening.

I proposed to this House that we halt any more money going to Lubowa Specialised Hospital. Let us begin to channel this money to health centres in this country. These two honourable colleagues have made their way to this paper. If you ask any Member of Parliament and give them a chance, they will tell you the challenge of health centres in their areas.

I want to remind the House of the proposal that I made. This money we have been channelling to Lubowa Specialised Hospital, which we cannot access- The presiding officer then said that she would request you to go to Lubowa Specialised Hospital, now that we were denied. We did wish you well because in the past, the Minister for Health, Dr Jane Ruth Aceng, together with the permanent secretary, and yourself, you did go to that facility and you were denied access. I

do not know if you went - because the Speaker said you would go yesterday, Wednesday, I do not know if you managed to go and whether you were given access.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, I think let us have the record clear the Speaker said, "The Deputy Speaker will go on Wednesday." The Wednesday, which I will go has not yet reached. When it reaches, I will go –(Laughter)- I read the *Hansard* very well. She never said "yesterday", she said on Wednesday. The Wednesday, which I will go, I will report back to this House. Do not mind.

MR SSENYONYI: Thank you for that update, Mr Speaker. Whenever that Wednesday comes, we wish you success. However, again, I will appeal to the House. There is a problem; there is no scrutiny. It is a mysterious project. Let us re-channel this money. The health centres and referrals are in place. Unlike this one, because when people try to peep, you step atop a car, you do not see anything.

Maybe they are building an underground hospital, I do not know. However, these health centres are in place. Their only challenge is shortages and all these challenges they are grappling with; let us channel the money there and I would like to appeal to the Prime Minister to come on board because this is a worthwhile thing to do.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, a colleague has raised the Apaa land question. The Prime Minister says a commission was put in place about a year or so ago. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, people are being killed now; yesterday, today, we do not know what will happen tomorrow.

We would like something a lot more cogent as a response because this commission should try and identify whatever it needs to get to the bottom of, but people are dying now. I think we need a better response than just the commission. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, LOP. If we could continue with the speed at which you are handled in Prime Minister's time, I

would pick more of you because I usually feel sad when I find I have left behind colleagues. I pick honourable Member for Luweero, Hon. Andrew Ojok, and Hon. Okabe, let me first pick these three.

5.05

MS BRENDA NABUKENYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Luweero): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to ask the Prime Minister when the NRM Government is going to pay for the NRA activities and all they did in the war that led to the loss of lives, animals, and food. When is the NRM government going to compensate the people of Luweero as they have been compensating other regions?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister –

5.06

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, the NRM Government established a full-fledged Luweero-Rwenzori Triangle Ministry, to handle the matters of compensation. Last financial year, we used over Shs 9 billion to compensate the Luweero victims. We shall continue to compensate until we feel everybody is satisfied.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Andrew Ojok –

5.06

MR ANDREW OJOK (NRM, Omoro County, Omoro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question is regarding the new administrative units. Omoro has 15 administrative units, but only five are receiving funds from the road fund. What are the plans from the Government for the new administrative units? Because they are struggling in terms of funding for road maintenance and the like.

Secondly, regarding transitional grants, what is the procedure for receiving funds for transitional grants for new administrative units? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I think the Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development should support the Prime Minister.

5.07

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE PLANNING, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The administrative units which were created in the Financial Year 2020/2021 have not been coded in the system. We have advised them to always share the road fund, which the parent administrative units were getting.

Transitional grant is part of the budget. I will respond to that when I bring the budget to the House.

5.08

MR EMMANUEL OMODING (Independent, Serere County, Serere): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question is to the Rt Hon Prime Minister. The rains are back and schools still have no roofs. I sent a letter, requesting for iron sheets for those schools in Serere. The rains are coming back heavily.

When are we getting those iron sheets? This is affecting the mental health of the teachers and the students and there is a high rate of dropout. Thank you.

5.08

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Iron sheets, iron sheets! *(Laughter)* Mr Speaker, the Office of the Prime Minister, through the ministry for Teso Affairs, will provide iron sheets to the school. Thank you.

5.09

MR DENIS OGUZU (FDC, Maracha County, Maracha): Mr Speaker, this country has borrowed trillions of money to implement projects. In a number of places, the resources are abused. A case in point is that the ACDP project, which should have helped to deal with issues of road chokes by putting bridges,

has stalled in a number of places, including Maracha.

There is a bridge, which works have been abandoned by the contractor. The matter was raised here, the Speaker directed that the report be brought on it, but it is nowhere. Do we still have a responsible and accountable government to the people?

Secondly, the World Bank gave a grant to Uganda to build Koboko-Yumbe-Moyo Road. To date, nobody knows what is happening. Government is quiet. What is happening to these resources? The people are asking if these resources are not being swindled.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, you have very important matters. I would request that we keep the questions focused. Hon. Oguzu Lee has brought a very good issue, but the question you are raising is whether we have a responsible government. If you want someone who wants to dodge you, they can come and say “we have a responsible government”. I think the issue should be: when are they coming to complete this project?

Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

5.11

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, everybody in this House knows that the NRM Government is a responsible government –*(Laughter)*– including Hon. Lee.

About Koboko-Moyo Road, on Monday last week, the Minister of Works and Transport gave a report to the Government. The process of procuring a contractor is almost complete. Therefore, be sure that the responsible Government of NRM will work on that road. *(Applause)*

5.12

DR PATRICK ISINGOMA (Independent, Hoima East Division, Hoima City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Hoima Regional Referral

Hospital continues to grapple with the problem of lack of a radiologist. As you will recall, honourable members, the Government installed CT scans in all regional referral hospitals - about 11.

However, to-date, the Government is yet to deploy a radiologist to Hoima Regional Referral Hospital. The radiographer who is there is incapable, as you all know, of interpreting all the images coming out of the CT scans. Therefore, these images have to be sent to Kampala, privately, to radiologists to interpret and send back, at the cost of the patient.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when are we deploying radiologists to the regional referral hospitals where we have installed CT scans?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

5.13

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, the President has always emphasised science. The reason we do not have radiologists in all our hospitals is basically because we do not have that cadre or discipline in our country. Therefore, I request that we continue to encourage our people to take science courses. Thank you.

We are also looking at the option of digitalising our systems such that even when you are in Hoima and a radiographer takes these images, a consultant, say, in Mulago or any other hospital, can help to read and prescribe for the patient – even when they are in Hoima, Masaka or elsewhere. That is long term. However, in the short term, we continue to advertise to attract that cadre of staff. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: In fact, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you can task your people so that this becomes short term, especially connecting to this project of the fibre – if regional referral hospitals could be connected to strong internet.

Here at Nakasero, they take your MRI pictures and they are read and interpreted from India. Results come from there. So, what about from near here – by the time the pictures take an aeroplane to India and come back? *(Laughter)* You can task them to be quicker.

I had picked Hon. Komakech, the honourable lady for Mbale and then Ssembabule. Honourable members, you are seated four people. I cannot say, “one, two, three” and you follow each other. I have to keep picking from all sides, one by one.

5.15

MR CHRISTOPHER KOMAKECH (Independent, Aruu County, Pader): Madam Prime Minister, with a population of 220,000 people, Pader District scores eighth in HIV prevalence in the country. It also rates number one in having children with Nodding Disease Syndrome and mental health is scorching in the district.

Pader District last received medicine, in all health centres, last year in April. As we speak currently, all health centres do not have medicine to treat children with nodding disease and people with HIV. The district health officer (DHO) and us, as leaders, are lamenting.

My question is: what plan does the Government of Uganda have for the people of Pader to handle chronic diseases? When is medicine going to be supplied to all health centres in Pader District? Thank you.

5.17

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, the report I have is that we no longer have new cases of nodding syndrome. In addition, we were told that the victims are between 20-30 years old and those are being managed in the communities because the centres were closed.

The Office of the Prime Minister has been supporting our youth with food staff so that they can survive. Even the minister was here. The other issue we talked about-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of order-

MR OLANYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The issue of Nodding Syndrome is in between life and death. Rt Hon. Prime Minister stated that the Government has been supporting these children with food, but two months ago, we went to assess the situation.

However, the families told members of Parliament that they last received food last year only once and they were given only 10 kilograms of posho.

Government is not supplying food to these children who are suffering from Nodding Syndrome. Is the Rt Hon. Prime Minister in order to mislead the whole country that the Government is supplying food to these children?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I do not think that the Prime Minister whom we have all been praising here- can come up intentionally to say a, b, c- because even when she was talking about no new cases. The question that came to my mind was; maybe you stopped testing. Have they tested and there are no new cases?

However, this issue of Nodding Disease is item No.9 on the Order Paper, where we have a report of the committee, and we shall get all these issues together.

Therefore, I request that we stop it at this time and when we get to item No.9, we shall be able to address it extensively. However, on medicine, National Medical Stores (NMS)- I do not think that the Prime Minister can leave her office to come with an intention to mislead the country.

5.20

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS – (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Thank you, Mr Speaker. You have guided very well, and I do not want to repeat the issue of Nodding Syndrome. However, I want members to also appreciate that when the Office of the Prime Minister sacrifices-because this was not our role.

We only came in when a Member brought the issue here on the Floor of Parliament. And when we went back to the office, we agreed to support the people suffering from Nodding Syndrome under the Ministry of Northern Uganda.

That is how we started supporting them with food. If they have been delayed, it is another matter. We can always get in touch with our brothers and give more support.

The issue of HIV/AIDS, which the Member is talking about will be handled by the Ministry of Health to find out why the prevalence in Pader is that much.

Lastly, regarding the supply of drugs using my office, I will prevail over NMS to make sure that they supply you with drugs, but I do not think that they last supplied you in April because in the report I have, they last supplied districts in the month of December. For January and February where we are in, the drugs have started moving. I believe your district will also get.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Member from Mbale, followed by Ssembabule.

5.22

MS MIRIAM MUKHAYE (Independent, Woman Representative Mbale): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance in my district, in Wanale Subcounty, one of the hard-to-reach subcounties. There is a school called Bubenze Senior Secondary School that was funded by the Government for construction in 2022.

However, the contractor has since abandoned the construction because the place is hard-to-reach. Some of the walls are falling off so I want to implore the office of the Prime Minister to follow it up because there is a big problem. Soon the walls will fall off and may affect the students who are studying in the other classrooms that were completed.

5.23

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): I request my sister from Mbale to give a comprehensive question so that I can get an answer from the concerned.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

5.23

MS GORRETH NAMUGGA (N U P , Mawogola County South, Ssembabule): Thank you, Mr Speaker. In the times when we got challenges on Masaka Road, Katonga Bridge. Matete-Ssembabule-Mbirizi was an alternative route. Heavy trucks used that road and it was wasted, we can no longer use that road as the citizens of Mawogola.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, what did the people of Ssembabule do to this Government *-(Interruptions)-* yes, I should ask.

I have written so many letters to the Ministry of Works and Transport to at least intervene to allow that road to be used by the people of Mawogola; and it is still being used by heavy trucks.

When do you intend to intervene and rescue the people of Mawogola so that we can also do business, Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the people of Ssembabule voted for you.

5.24

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I sometimes sympathise with my Government. When Katonga Bridge was washed away by floods – all the trucks, including small vehicles, at first, were going through Mpigi, Ssembabule, up to Villa-Masaka, Kalungu. I expected you, Hon. Namugga, to appreciate. It takes a brave Government to have such alternative routes.

She was asking about what the people of Ssembabule did to this Government.

Ssembabule District has been voting for the NRM Government and we appreciate. *(Laughter)* Yes.

They have done something good and that is why they have such alternative routes, unlike other areas where we have not appreciate for once. If it is an alternative in a bad state, honourable members of Parliament, if you have a big question like that, put it in writing so that- for me, I get written questions from the Clerk.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: What we will do is that we shall check with Rt Hon. Prime Minister on the question. *(Member rose)* I had picked Hon. Alyek and Hon. Gabriel.

5.27

MS JUDITH ALYEK (NRM, Woman Representative, Kole): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, two months ago, we were given hand tractors and big tractors. These tractors were given to districts in Northern Uganda. We got one hand tractor per subcounty and one big tractor per district. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries promised to go and train our people on how to use these tractors, but until now, the cooperative societies to whom these tractors were given were not trained; their members were not trained. Also, the accessories of the big tractors like the disc ploughs and the trailers were not given.

Now that rain has started coming back, we want to know if the training will take place because other districts have gone ahead to distribute these tractors without training members of the cooperatives that got these tractors. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, will the training take place? Because they need training.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, it has been the policy of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to train members of communities who receive these tractors. They will definitely be trained, but I only need to find out when and come back and inform the

House or the agriculture minister will come and inform the House. I will even inform the Member.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Okumu Gabriel -

5.29

MR GABRIEL OKUMU (NRM, Okoro County, Zombo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, there is a problem we must solve collectively as the Government.

First of all, I would like to appreciate the Government and the church founded institutions, like schools and health centres. In most instances, the Government has been giving support to church-founded institutions like churches and health centres, but the *wanainchi*, in certain subcounties, have to pay to access these health facilities yet in some rural communities, our people cannot afford Shs 10,000, yet they fall sick.

A case in point is Nyapea Subcounty where there is a missionary health facility. There is no health centre II or III, people are really very poor and they suffer when they are sick.

What strategy does the Government have in order to solve this impasse such that people can access free medical services from the Government?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister -

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the policy of Government is to have health centres III in every subcounty. We have a Memorandum of Understanding with all those health centres which are manned by missions and the Government has been supporting them with drugs and sometimes with medical personnel with a view that they will reduce the cost. Government's policy is to put a health facility at every subcounty and once a chance comes for your subcounty, those people will definitely be served.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Wakayima, the deputy chairperson and then I go to the Member from Maracha.

5.31

MR HANNINGTON WAKAYIMA (NUP, Nansana Municipality, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question is coming from the incident that happened on Sunday where a clan leader was gunned down. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, there was a young man who intercepted those assassins -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we need your attention because there is a question for you.

MR WAKAYIMA: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I am saying that my question is coming from the issue of the clan leader who was assassinated on Sunday.

There was a young man who was able to intercept those gunmen. In other countries, a person like that would be a hero and can even be deployed in the Government, the police or army. What is your Government thinking about that young man? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, basically he is saying that when the head of *Ndiga* Clan was gunned down, the community managed to intercept those people so he is saying the lead person should be recognised and appreciated. *(Applause)*

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, Government has been giving medals so we shall give him the Nalubaale Medal. *(Interruptions)* Yes, we shall give him a medal but I also want to have his contact because as a Prime Minister, I can also do something. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

5.34

MS DORCAS ACEN (NRM, Woman Representative, Alebtong): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Yesterday, the people from Lango Subregion, including Members of Parliament, received very good news in the evening at around 9.00 p.m. concerning the construction

of Akii-Bua Stadium. The news indicated that the funds are already secured and that we have an Egyptian contractor on board.

There was a planned site handover this morning at 11.00 a.m. While this is a very good development, there are so many questions which are not answered, running through the minds of the public in the subregion. One is how the contractor was brought on board. Was there due diligence to ensure that there is technical competence?

The other aspect is about having a signed agreement or contract. Do we have it in place? It will be good for our people to know in order for us to manage expectations. Is there something which spells out a clear scope of work or contract value, the commencement date and the –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Acen. Rt Hon. Prime Minister -

MS NABBANJA: I am happy that she is appreciating. She is only concerned about the way the contractor was got.

Mr Speaker, we have a policy in place. The Government can do direct procurement as long as you are sure the contractor you have will do a good job and that the Government and the public will have value for money.

I request that the Member puts this in writing so that I can get a comprehensive answer. Otherwise, I thought she was happy that the stadium is under construction.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for Maracha -

5.36

MS JENNIFER DRIWARU (NRM, Woman Representative, Maracha): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Maracha District is a border district like any other; we are near DR Congo and we suffer network challenges by these telecom companies.

Whenever you are at the border, especially Oluvu Subcounty, Paranga, Oleba, among

others, you cannot access the network. This is a security issue. I would like to ask the Prime Minister what the telecom communication service providers are doing to upgrade our network services in Maracha District and many other districts in Uganda. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think this is a matter that shall be responded to when we are handling the report because it is one of the issues raised in the report that is coming up next. Hon. Christine Akello – because Hon. Kabbyanga will be responding to issues.

5.37

MS CHRISTINE AKELLO (NRM, Erute County North, Lira): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question goes to the Rt Hon. Prime Minister. First of all, I would like to thank the Government of Uganda for fighting hard to make sure that polio is kicked out of Uganda, for health is wealth.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, from 7th to 9th February, I was in my constituency. I have six health centres and I visited five. I targeted the expectant mothers, but when I interviewed them, they said there is a lack of folic acid. We all know that folic acid plays a great role. The people are getting issues because they lack folic acid. Mothers are giving birth to babies with big heads; I do not know the scientific name. Some of them are disabled because of the lack of folic acid.

When I talked to them, the health workers said that they had taken three months without folic acid. They only press the women's stomachs but with no folic acid being given. The anti-malarial drugs were also not there. In Ogur Health Centre IV, we only had – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your question? You see, you have gone into a long story. Switch on and go straight to the question.

MS CHRISTINE AKELLO: The challenge is that women are not attending antenatal care –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question or –

MS CHRISTINE AKELLO: The question is where and when is folic acid going to be given to – (*Laughter*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Where did you keep the folic acid, Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I think the issue is about the drugs that are being distributed right now and I believe folic acid will also be sent to Arute in the health centres so that our mothers can have normal babies.

Mr Speaker, if they are there, we have CURE Children's Hospital in Mbale that has been helping us to treat these children with such an anomaly. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

5.40

MR ALEX NIYONSABA (NRM, Bufumbira County South, Kisoro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Since 1994, Kisoro District and specifically Bufumbira South has permanently hosted transit refugees from Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. These refugees strain the health, education, food security and the environment to mention, but a few of the requirements for the district. My question to the Rt Hon. Prime Minister is, when will Kisoro and specifically Bufumbira South, be declared a refugee-hosting community or a permanent transit area? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister –

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, Kisoro District is a transit area because that is a holding ground before these refugees are taken to the camps where we have a number of facilities.

Secondly, as you are aware, Kisoro is overpopulated and they do not have land. The fact is, the Office of the Prime Minister, the Uganda Red Cross, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and a number of partners have been supporting Kisoro District to make sure that we look after these refugees in transit. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I have just been reminded by my protocol team that I have another assignment that I must perform at 6.00 p.m., yet when I look at each one of you, I see that you all have urgent issues. The problem is that I do not know where to buy time. I have a matter which I must finish. Let us go back to item three and the debate opens now with Hon. Hillary Kiyaga who I had picked earlier. Honourable colleagues, I started by rotating from here and back. I remember I had picked Hon. Yona, please forgive me. Two minutes each. I will pick five people tentatively.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION
AND TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL
GUIDANCE ON ISSUES OF NATIONAL
IMPORTANCE RAISED BY HON.
MUSHEMEZA ELIJAH DICKENS
AGAINST TELECOMMUNICATION
OPERATIONS

5.42

MR HILLARY KIYAGA (NUP, Mawokota County North, Mpigi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the report. As the shadow Minister of Arts and Culture, we thank you for the representation. We must accept that the telecom companies are doing a disservice to the innovative and creative world, but this can only be cured if we work on the policy which is the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights law.

Mr Speaker, to begin with that, I was granted leave in July 2022. The Government immediately harmonised with me and promised that by December 2022, this Bill would be amended. We took the entire year, but up to now, this Bill has not even been presented to the Executive.

We would like to know what the Government is up to because this is not a technical Bill, unless there is something the Government is hiding. If the Government is to empower innovation and creativity, this is a sector that has been spearheaded by private individuals. It is now

an established industry that calls for no further questioning.

Mr Speaker, I would like to lobby Members and take them to only one item; the caller-back tunes which are the songs you hear when you are called or when you call somebody. They are charged Shs 700 by the telecom companies, particularly MTN-Uganda *—(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, we do not add ourselves time and like I said – Please, I understand your point; it is a very clear one. You have other colleagues and I picked five. Let us yield the Floor for others. Okay, conclude.

MR KIYAGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. On the Shs 700 that the telecom companies charge, 18 per cent VAT is taken away, which is Shs 107; 12 per cent standard excise duty which Shs 64 is also taken away. There is also 19 per cent as platform fees which is Shs 101. Then MTN deemed cost is 20 per cent which is Shs 106 and the remaining fee that the artist has to share with the telecom company is Shs 320 out of the Shs 700.

Out of the remaining revenue, MTN still takes 60 per cent and the artist 40 per cent together with the aggregator. There is a middleman with whom the artist has to share the 40 per cent. You can understand the situation under which the creative world is operating.

With this, Mr Speaker, I beg that we speed up the corporate amendment where we shall stipulate the revenue share between the creators, Government and the aggregators in general. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The point Hon. Hilary Kiyaga is raising - The committee was recommending six months. I remember they said the consultations had been completed so, why don't we have the Bill? Why do we again come to resolve to give a leeway of six months? The Attorney-General's Chambers will be saying, but you gave us six months and we have just started counting.

I think we should reduce on that period to address these concerns. If they do not meet the deadline within that stipulated time then the private Member - Because you see, Honourable colleagues, when you analyse deeply some of these private Members Bills, you find that the implementation aspect has an issue of money. This is limited by Article 93. You rush and enact a Bill and that aspect will remain weak because it is a private Members Bill limited by issues of financing the agencies involved. When you work together with the Government, like Hon. Hillary has done, and I want to commend you for that, you build up a very good Bill.

I am going to ensure that I follow up and this Bill comes quickly. I need an independent Member of Parliament. I am not saying Independent so that you stand up because I am looking for an Independent. You must be ready to speak. Okay? Hon. Byakatonda -

5.49

MR ABDULHU BYAKATONDA (Independent, Workers Representative): Mr Speaker, I want to thank the committee for the report, but basically, we need to consider certain priorities as highlighted in the report. We can have those key takeaways so that at an appropriate time, we consider them and ensure that they are operationalised. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I need a lady, Hon. Faith Nakut -

5.49

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Mr Speaker, it is common for agencies to concentrate on only licensing and once they have been issued, the players of the sector are left to do whatever they can. The other part of the regulation; checking whether the agreement is as per the license or as per what is required of them, is left.

I implore us, the parliamentarians in our committees, that as we verify the reports from these agencies, we should concentrate more on what they are doing to check whether the sector players are doing the right work.

In the report, the committee noted that Uganda Communications Commission did not take 70 per cent action on telecom companies that are not complying. It is also regrettable that the committee was not availed with the required information. That is bad and we should not work like that. If you will allow me, when we are finishing, I have two amendments to the recommendations that I will propose.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Namayingo then Kiryandongo -

5.51

MR PETER OKEYOH (NRM, Bukooli Island County, Namayingo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The committee clearly indicates a levy of two per cent to be levied to help those areas that cannot access network. I want to concur with my colleague from Maracha that areas of Namayingo; Hama, Lolo East and Nampongwe parishes in Sigulu Island as well as Lolo Subcounty cannot get network.

I think the ministry should take a deliberate policy to make sure that those areas that the telecommunications networks feel are not commercially viable are given affirmative action. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Kiryandongo -

5.52

MS HELEN KAHUNDE (NRM, Woman Representative, Kiryandongo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the committee for the report. My voters have complained to me that there are increasing online money lending applications that are working closely with the different telecom companies and that they are charging very high interest rates with a very limited grace payback period. Those online money lending apps are many; I could name a few of them. We have Mangu Cash, Dove Cash and Cash base, among others, that continue to deduct money even when you have completed paying your loan.

MTN also charges a very high interest rate of nine per cent per day. They also continue

deducting money even after you have completed paying your loan. They request that these be regulated. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Kalangala -

5.52

MS HELEN NAKIMULI (NUP, Woman Representative, Kalangala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the committee for the report that well stipulates whatever they have said. Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, that is not how we treat reports of Parliament. It is not that Members have said whatever they have said. Members have presented their views and they are on record.

MS NAKIMULI: I am in support of what they have said. Mr Speaker, I wanted to add my voice, especially to the issue of the artists. When you look at the money that the Government gets annually, it is Shs 75 billion, but when we get down to the calculations, the aggregators get Shs 583.2 billion.

Mr Speaker, like my colleague Hon. Kiyaga stated, the artists are being robbed during broad daylight. They are being exploited. Why? MTN or Airtel put about very many costs and taxes that have not been explained to the committee. We are made to believe that the aggregators are MTN and Airtel or those communication companies, but they purport that these aggregators come from outside. We now want to see if the Government has the spirit to save the artists from these robbers because it takes a bigger share.

The person who has come up to do their creative art is left behind - Just a little more time. Mr Speaker, there are very many brokers. There is also an issue whereby they say an artist is registered to a certain record label. When they leave that record label, this telecom company continues liaising with the record label. When they leave, they are not even assisted. They do not get this money. Therefore, the Government should speed up this Bill for musicians to earn from their sweat. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Aisha Kabanda -

5.55

MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I hope your comment on Hon. Kiyaga's submission will calm down the artist. I must tell you that they have perceived him wrongly and they speak very negatively of him. They think he gave in, but please save our comrade. They did not understand him surrendering his Bill to the Government. You have explained well that sometimes such Bills could have a financial implication.

I was about to suggest that Hon. Kiyaga repossess his Bill and moves on. We shall move as we conclude. We should reduce the time to two months. Since they have done everything, two months will be sufficient for them to bring this Bill and we proceed. Otherwise, our colleague is in trouble.

There is an angle the committee left out; when people buy bundles and you say you have bought so many minutes. I have done it practically and I took a screenshot which I have not been able to bring because of time. I had a conversation for 59 minutes and then on the bundle, it showed that I had utilised one-and-a-half hours. Their minute is not the usual minute. That is cheating people.

Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) that monitors them should go an extra mile to see whether people actually consume what is sold to them. Otherwise, they cheat and lie to people about the amount of time that they have sold to them.

When the calls drop – like when you are utilising your first minute and the call drops – the whole minute will have gone, not the seconds. That is robbery. These telephone communication companies are robbing people on our watch – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, next time we shall ask - because UCC usually does an annual report that looks

at the quality of calls and all that. When that report comes, the committee should analyse it thoroughly because technology has evolved and is moving at a very high speed. I was in that sector; I had a business in that sector so, I know it very well. UCC is working day and night, but these guys are way ahead because they have all the investments.

Every time they drop in money - you know, when we are still negotiating on the budget, saying get this for this, for them once they put in money to help dodge A, B, C and D, they make huge amounts. So, keeping up to speed with them is not easy.

5.58

MR MILTON MUWUMA (NRM, Kigulu County South, Iganga): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Allow me to thank the committee for the good report.

Mr Speaker, I have two issues to raise about mobile money. The report put a lot of emphasis on money in lieu of deceased persons. However, there are those who are alive, but fall prey, either by sending money unintentionally to wrong numbers and recovering that money becomes very difficult. When somebody sends money and misses one digit, they lose it all. We need to advise or give guidance to the telecom companies to find a way or have an app to help Ugandans not to lose these monies.

Secondly, there is an issue to do with people who have not registered some lines and I will quote an example. There is someone who sent Shs 2 million to a parent from MTN to Airtel. This money never reached the recipient. It was supposed to bounce back to the sending number, but the money was never reversed. This person kept oscillating from one customer care point to the other in a vain. The people in rural areas have no one to run to. They end up losing this money without help from the mobile money operators. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The other day, I happened to be with one MTN official and we were talking about this. He told me that reversals can be done via an application. I

found it, you know – Honourable colleagues, we have concluded on this.

Honourable chairperson, there is an important issue that I requested your committee to take interest in sometime: the issue of interconnection fees. Why is it hard for me to call Airtel when I am using MTN? Who benefits from that? That is why we are carrying two or three phones. That is why you have one phone which is harassed more than the others. People say, “No” - some still call it Warid and say, “Give me your Warid.” This is because it used to be very cheap.

Now, you find yourself carrying a phone with an Airtel line and another with MTN. When you want to call MTN, you look for the phone with the MTN line. When you want to call Airtel, you look for the phone with an Airtel line. This is because it is cheaper. You are trying to look for ways of saving.

In many countries, this has been abolished. In fact, in most of the countries, telephone numbers no longer show that this one belongs to MTN – including bank accounts. You just put in the number and it goes straight away. These are things we need to harmonise.

Honourable minister, you have many issues. Do you want to respond to a few of them? Chairperson, did you want to start?

Chairperson, you are biased. You are a person from the sector. I wanted the minister to answer the questions because what has been asked is directed to the minister. You did your part in the report and you did a good job.

Honourable colleagues, I have an appointment at six o'clock and the guests are already in. Honourable minister, strictly two minutes.

6.02

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (NATIONAL GUIDANCE) (Mr Godfrey Kabbyanga): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

First of all, I thank the committee for a very good report and for the recommendations therein. Most of the issues revolve around the artistes. What could solve this is the amendment of the corporate law and we are working with the Attorney-General's office to see how we can conclude whatever is required and then we bring it to Parliament. That is the only medicine that we have. We have looked at the law in Kenya - they amended it recently and it is working very well for the artistes. We are going to handle that, Mr Speaker.

On the issue of lack of network in Namayingo and other places, we now have the licensing condition, Mr Speaker. For us to renew a licence of any service provider, they must have covered at least 90 per cent of the country – all telephone operators and other service providers.

If you look at the loan which we passed recently - Uganda Digital Acceleration Project (UDAP) – we are going to put up masts in areas where the service providers feel are hard to reach, including national parks for tourism. Therefore, that will be sorted out soon. As soon as we start implementing the project, we shall start with those – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Your time is done. I gave you two minutes. Honourable colleagues, amendments? I gave the minister time – I gave you my instructions, but you did not follow them.

MR KABBYANGA: Mr Speaker, I beg for a minute. There is a recommendation on page 17 where the committee says, “Uganda Communications Commission should ensure that telecom companies disclose information on dormant electronic accounts.”

Mr Speaker, on this, you will guide me. It would be Bank of Uganda because there is a law on mobile money and this law is not managed by UCC. I would say we amend it to be Bank of Uganda.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson, do you want to clarify on that?

MR ABIGABA: Mr Speaker, that recommendation is in relation to the dormant accounts on the telephone lines not in the bank. If it is on the telephone line, the dormant account belongs to the telecom operator, which is MTN or Airtel in this case.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you meaning on mobile money?

MR ABIGABA: Yes, but –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is a law under Bank of Uganda. That is why telecom companies no longer own mobile money businesses. Under the law, they had to separate. You had to form a new company that is totally different from the telecoms, but they are working together. So, it is under the Bank of Uganda. But I am interested in dormant phone numbers of people who are dead which are being used by thieves and conmen because they were already registered, but their numbers are being used to commit crimes.

Honourable minister, do you want to move that amendment? It is a direct one.

MR KABBYANGA: Regarding the recommendation on dormant phone lines, we shall have to take it up with the police and telephone companies.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Nakut, on amendment?

MS NAKUT: I propose two amendments on 5.3 CRBT payments. I propose that recommendation No.4 should read as follows: “The Uganda Communications Council (UCC) should compel telecommunications companies to pay the CRBT due to the artistes.

In addition, they should preferably deal directly with the artistes and not through middlemen.” It addresses the issues we have raised. The second amendment -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us start with that one. Honourable, we already have a Member who we allowed to process a Bill and when he came here to seek leave, he attached

a Bill. These are some of the issues they were raising. So, rule 80 will not allow us to make recommendations of that nature around that because that Bill is supposed to - She had the second one?

MS NAKUT: Then it makes (IV) redundant and I propose that we delete it.

The second amendment (ix) "The committee proposes that the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) should consider lowering taxes and aware that taxes come through the Executive and are processed by this Parliament, UCC cannot do that job."

The proposal I make is that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development considers lowering data taxes to widen digital access in our country. UCC cannot do that and it is not achievable if we leave it the way it is.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We can do a general one without referring to the ministry. Hon Magogo, do you need to clarify on that? Let Hon Magogo clarify.

6.09

MR MOSES MAGOGO (NRM, Budiope County East, Buyende): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The recommendation by the Member that the telecoms should pay the artistes directly sounds very good, but practically, it may not be possible.

Our recommendation, if understood, was saying that let there be an online process whereby these artistes submit their works so that if they were to be paid, the telecom company pays it electronically.

However, if you ask a telecom company to deal with 1,000 to 5,000 artistes, practically, the recommendation may be difficult to implement and yet these artistes are also registered with other record labels.

Our recommendation was, let a system be developed - and the telecom companies can do that - where the artistes submit their work electronically and they are paid directly.

We have seen YouTube doing this and it can be done by the telecom companies such that we eliminate the function that takes away part of the money of the applicator.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, can I propose that recommendations to do with CRBTs and the copyrights law that has been presented for amendment be dropped for now, since the observations are also very critical? This is so that we are not biased when we are working on the law, which we have already given the Member. Amendment, Hon. Ssewungu.

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I pray that we put a recommendation asking the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to bring the Bank of Uganda Act and financial institution to cater for the mobile money dormant accounts.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is already there.

MR SSEWUNGU: Then we recommend that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development takes a critical role of looking at the interest of mobile money dealers because as we speak, when I withdraw Shs 1,000,000 they charge me Shs 30,000. But who takes all that money?

The risk of the person running mobile money is higher than the one getting the interest of Shs 30,000 from me. This man at Parliament Avenue here, doing mobile money, is given Shs 1,000. So, who takes that big money that is taken away from the mobile money dealer and I, who has transacted on mobile money? That one was not looked at critically.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, can I request that we first study some of the things deeply, especially the issue to deal with transactional charges from rates of banks, charges and - These are things which can shake an economy from -

I remember when Kenya passed a law that put a cap on interest rates, from nowhere, the

economy nearly collapsed and they had to come back and revise the law. Hon. Ssewungu, this is something you can study very well and bring here your motion.

MR SSEWUNGU: Most obliged Mr Speaker. I said this because it is on record that during the State of the Nation Address in 2011, the President himself stated that he was investigating the telecom companies for stealing over Shs 3 trillion from Government within their transactions every financial year and that was critical.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

6.13

MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I propose to amend page 13, recommendation 1, to read: “The Copyright Enabling Rights (Amendment) Bill should be fast tracked and presented to Parliament for consideration into law within two months from the date of resolution of Parliament.”

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, we agreed on that. We can just pick it so that it is expedited because when a private Member brings a Bill, as Government - I remember how we handled the Bill of Sports; Hon. Magogo had to put up a serious fight. We ended up taking it back then they came in between -

This is a very critical sector. There was a time I was told - I have not looked for Hon. Kiyaga to apologise. He was even annoyed with me when I said that Hon. Nyamutoro should follow-up on this issue because the artistes had petitioned me and I did not know where things had reached, but all of us are working towards having an expeditious law brought here.

A private Member has brought a law, you said that you are going to work with him and the Attorney-General has been - I saw a lot of positivity on both sides. So, what went wrong?

Hon. Kabbyanga, I think the consultations have been concluded by now. Let us have this law. In fact, to me, two months is a long time,

but we can have the two months. However, to me, one month should have been enough.

As we understand that the Attorney-General is busy with the RAPEX laws and then we are going into - In fact, Hon. Aisha, two months might be little. We can say three because you are going into taxation Bills.

The Attorney-General is very busy with taxation Bills; this is the budgeting period. Then we have this RAPEX. We can say in three months - We can have it by around May or June.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. That is acceptable. We can amend it to three months. Thank you.

6.16

MR DENIS OGUZU (FDC, Maracha County, Maracha): Mr Speaker, I would like to move that we include an amendment for the Ministry of ICT to work with Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) to ensure that expired data and airtime bundles are rolled over. This is happening in Kenya and Ghana. It is only our ministry that has failed.

Two, I move that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development brings a law which compressively deals with issues of unclaimed financial assets. That will include airtime, not just mobile money. It will also include money we are losing to Umeme when you do not use their services. It will bring all unclaimed financial assets under the same ambit.

Three, I move that the Ministry of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance through Uganda Communications Commission works with regulators in Democratic Republic of Congo and other areas which suffer from network signal interference to ensure they reconcile their mast powers.

Mr Speaker, what is causing some of our problems is that you find DRC people install a very strong mast near the border which eventually sends its signal to the Ugandan side

and it interferes with ours. You are supposed to reconcile that, as regulators, which you are not doing yet you are asking for more power. Those are my recommendations.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Most parts of Rukiga District are covered by Rwanda, especially MTN-Rwanda. You roam in your own country.

6.18

MR YONA MUSINGUZI (NRM, Ntungamo Municipality, Ntungamo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also want to thank the mover of the Bill. My recommendation is that as we stand here today -

[Text expunged.]

MR YONA MUSINGUZI: Mr Speaker, I have information and I can lay it here.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Yona, on that one, I will request that you substantiate and lay the information.

MR MUSINGUZI: Mr Speaker, I withdraw. I will bring and lay the information when I have it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: For now, he has withdrawn. Expunge that from the record.

MR MUSINGUZI: Mr Speaker, as the dollar rate rises to Shs 4,000, the telecommunication companies that provide us with services are all foreign companies, but we want to thank them for providing us with the service.

Mr Speaker, none of these companies owns a school, a clinic or has built anything in Uganda. They have only repatriated all the money you are talking about here back -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Recommendation -

MR MUSINGUZI: I recommend that - We know these people are making big sums of money as profit -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Yona, there is no way we shall capture that recommendation –(Laughter)- because we are on the report of the committee, so I do not know how the minister will take action on that.

Honourable colleagues, I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Information, Communication Technology and National Guidance on issues of national importance raised by Prof. Mushemeza against telecommunication operations be adopted with proposed amendments.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable ministers, per rule 210, in three months, please, bring an action taken report. I thank the Committee on Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance because this is a highly technical area where people play around to get information and get these good proposals. You have done a good job.

Honourable minister, you had a document to lay on the Table to do with the school admissions.

6.20

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Mr Speaker, as earlier guided, on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Sports, I wish to lay the second circular extending admission into national certificate courses in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions for 2024. This circular is signed by Ms Ketty Lamaro, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Sports. I beg to lay and this circular cures the mischief raised by Hon. Achieng Opendi on the cohort of Uganda Certificate of Education students of 2023. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, House adjourned on Tuesday, 2.00 p.m. Have a good weekend.

(The House rose at 6.21 p.m. and adjourned until Tuesday, 5 March 2024, at 2.00 p.m.)