



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

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SECOND SESSION - FIRST MEETING

THURSDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER 2022



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

SECOND SESSION - 30TH SITTING - FIRST MEETING

Thursday, 15 September 2022

Parliament met at 2.18 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: Thank you. Colleagues, I welcome you. I can see the front bench today is full to capacity. *(Laughter)*

Hon. Bahati, I know you are standing in for the Government Chief Whip; you better do something about it, because we have issues for which Members need answers. So, better ensure that, indeed, our colleagues come and attend to Members' issues. Colleagues, we have committees that have business assigned by this House; you need to expedite the process because you have to be cognisant of the calendar of this House.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has already started the budgeting process for the Financial Year 2023/2024. So, we have to move quickly. We do not want to be hindered in any way. Nevertheless, your performance has been very good in terms of processing the business for the House. *(Applause)*

Colleagues, I followed the proceedings of the European Parliament and something really concerned me. I decided to talk about this issue before this House because to some extent, their resolutions question our resolutions here. It is as if the resolutions we make are not well thought out; it is as if we do not feel for our people.

So, today afternoon, I prepared this statement so that it can go on record:

“The European Parliament passed a resolution - Resolution No.22/28/26RSP – which has been brought to the attention of my office.

Wherein, the European Parliament advises the Governments of Uganda and Tanzania not to develop the Tilenga, Kingfisher, and the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) projects.

The same motion equally advises the EU members not to render any diplomatic, financial or other support to our oil and gas projects.

The motion seems premised on allegations of potential environmental impacts, human rights abuses and climate change targets.

I believe formal communication of this motion by the European Parliament will be made and a formal response by Government will be made. However, I felt I should make the following comments because these are projects, which were approved by the Parliament of Uganda, a Parliament of a sovereign country.

In addition, anything to do with challenging their approval, including some, which are embedded in laws that were passed by this House, is an affront to the independence of this House, and we cannot take it lying low. (Applause)

I condemn this motion and the resolution that was passed, which calls on Uganda and Tanzania to stop the development of the oil and gas project in the East African region.

The resolution, which I will ask the Clerk to share with Members on our Alfresco platform, is based on misinformation and deliberate misrepresentation of key facts on the environment and human rights protection.

It represents the highest level, to me, of neo-colonialism and imperialism against the sovereignty of Uganda and Tanzania. (Applause)

The motion and the resolution seek to curtail the progress of Uganda's oil and gas development, and by extension, the country's socio-economic growth and development.

It also seeks to deny Ugandans and East Africans the benefits and opportunities from the oil and gas sector.

This represents the highest form of economic sabotage against developing countries, given that;

- i) Various member states in the European Union continue exploring, developing and have increased the production and use of fossil fuels in recent months.*
- ii) There are over 9,000 oil and gas production licences in the USA, including plans to drill in Alaska and the Arctic Sea.*
- iii) 53 licences have recently been issued in the North Sea and Germany has also revived its coal plants. In addition, Western countries are seeking to import gas from African countries. And, this is in a bid to ensure energy security in their respective states.*

Is energy security a preserve for only the European Union? Doesn't Uganda have the same right to have energy security?

The propaganda that has been consistently going on largely targets the 1,445-kilometre East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP), which will run for 296 kilometres in Uganda.

The EACOP represents less than 0.1 per cent of the operation of global pipeline network of 1.18 million kilometres.

It is prudent to say that Uganda's oil project will exacerbate climate change, yet it is a fact that the EU bloc with only 10 per cent of the world's population is responsible for 20 per cent of global emissions. Africa with 20 per cent of the world's population is only responsible for 3 per cent of global emissions.

The European Union and other Western countries are historically responsible for climate change - not Africa, not Uganda, not East Africa. (Applause)

So, when such a thing happens, who should slow down? Them or us? That is the question.

Over 70 per cent of the persons affected by land acquisition for the projects, as has been reported severally to our Parliament, have already been compensated, resettled or are undergoing livelihood improvement projects in agriculture, financial literacy, vocational skills, among others.

Efforts to fully compensate the project-affected persons are on-going and this House is continuing to monitor; and, the MPs from project-affected areas have been consistently reporting to this House and ensuring that indeed, their people are fully compensated.

Land is not utilised by the projects before the compensation processes are concluded and any related grievances are addressed through a participatory process.

In case there is any grievance from the project-affected areas, MPs, please, reach out to our

office; we shall give you a platform and you raise these issues here. These are not issues for discussion in the European Parliament; they are issues for discussion in the Ugandan and Tanzanian Parliaments. (Applause)

Colleagues, we are all aware that our country has been gifted with sizeable oil and gas resources that are already generating and creating value for our people in terms of employment, provision of services and goods, technical and other skilling.

These resources will also generate significant revenues for the State, support petrochemical industrialisation and the development of other sectors of the economy such as agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, and health, among others.

Also, aware that this House has approved significant investment in oil roads and other infrastructure to support the development, it is pertinent that as we have done in the past, we address efforts that aim at frustrating the sovereign right to exploit our resources. Like many other African countries, Uganda is a developing country and a sovereign State that has its unique development needs and priorities.

I, therefore, call upon the European Parliament to withdraw the motion for a resolution that is against the UN Charter that provides for Uganda's right to self-determination and sovereignty over its natural resources.

This House, through responsible committees, will continue providing oversight to the oil and gas sector. As such, there is no justifiable basis for the European Union Parliament or any other institution to recommend that we leave our resources in the ground based on hearsay."

I thank you, colleagues. Yes, Hon. Christine.

2.30

MS CHRISTINE KAAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. As Uganda, we have agreed to go ahead with the extraction of oil and we are

talking about carbon neutralisation. This is a resource, which Uganda is happy to extract, to generate income, but as we talk about carbon neutralisation, we must be cognisant of the effects of oil extraction and we should be ready by what we set ourselves to do.

We have come up with the environmental and social impact assessments of these programmes. What is bothering us is that the related regulations are not yet in place. But we are set to extract our oil and be able to develop our country, and at the same time, be cognisant of the effects that may come out of this.

The other worry is the price of our oil because the investment is high and probably, we expected some of the market from the European Union. Now, if they say "Stop it", we are just worried about the cost of our oil; but we are set to go for it.

Mr Speaker, Uganda has not signed the Energy Charter. I am beginning to think that, maybe, that is what is annoying them - where we needed to provide special attention to these investors, especially from Europe. We need to relate well and see whether, if we sign the Charter, we shall develop our relationship with these people and be able to secure a very good market for oil.

As of now, we are not informed about how much our oil is going to cost, but globally, the phasing out of fossil fuels is increasing. So, we just pray that the oil comes out very fast and we are able to offset some of these threats. Thank you, Mr Speaker. *(Ms. Sarah Opendi rose)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Procedure -

MS OPENDI: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to appreciate and thank you for giving us that information. We all know that the European Union is one of our key development partners that supports this country in different sectors but also supports the refugee population in this country.

Aware that the funding that comes to this country is managed by the Executive, and

aware of the diplomatic issues around this particular issue, wouldn't, it be procedurally right for us to ask the Leader of Government Business to bring a statement to this House and thereafter, debate and formally, pass our resolutions. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable, whereas I agree, the people who brought the resolution and the motion in the European Parliament are the ones who should have taken that route because we have EU officers here; we have diplomatic relations, and the companies with the tenders are theirs – not even Ugandan or African companies – they are the ones going to take the profits.

That is why I brought it under my communication. After picking a few reactions, I want to guide the Minister of Foreign Affairs on what to do next. Hon. Teira -

2.34

MR JOHN TEIRA (NRM, Bugabula County North, Kamuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The signing of the Final Investment Decision for the oil and gas - the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development with Total Energies signed a Memorandum of Understanding, to promote and upscale the use of fossil energy in Uganda.

It is, of course, on record that our colleagues are just being overzealous. There are already measures in this country, given the number of contracts, which have been signed, to do the waste management in a very technical manner with support from foreign companies that are highly experienced in this arena. There is totally nothing to fear when it comes to environmental issues, but we know very well, historically, that several cities of Europe are built on the blood and sweat of the Africans.

This is our time also to elevate ourselves from the neocolonialism status that we were left in. Nobody should touch the oil project because we are talking about an investment of over \$20 billion. No one inside or outside of this Parliament should entertain any discussion that frustrates the extraction of our oil and gas. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Chemaswet and Hon. Silas -

2.36

MR ABDI CHEMASWET (NRM, Soi County, Kween): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for raising this issue. Yesterday, we were paying tribute to the Queen. It was a very good idea but we forgot mentioning colonialism and neocolonialism.

Uganda is not part of the European Parliament. Uganda is part of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA). If it would be EALA discussing this, we would not have a problem. We do not need even to bother ourselves with them; they are nothing to us. *(Laughter)*

We defeated them in 1962 when we got our independence. So, we do not need to bother ourselves with them. We are a sovereign country; we need to proceed with our development. We do not need to bother ourselves with them. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Chemaswet, Hon. Silas, then Hon. Basalirwa. We are concluding. I will conclude with our elder who is our representative in the Pan-African Parliament.

2.37

MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi): Mr Speaker, I am happy that we have had this debate when our EALA and Pan-African Parliament representatives are around.

First of all, I want to express my dismay that another Parliament somewhere can rise up to take a decision on behalf of our Parliament. I thought this was the right Parliament because these are the right issues for us to discuss.

Mr Speaker, there are two issues that those people can do:

The first is for them to come and help us deal with issues that they feel we have not dealt with, in terms of managing the environment because it needs money. By the time we go for

the Fund for Innovation in Development (FID), the process should have already dealt with all those concerns of the environment.

What is left with any other Government to do, probably, is to compensate us for the full figure plus the additions; then, we say, "Let us leave the oil to rest." That, we shall admit.

Therefore, it is the House that should take decisions. Uganda is a sovereign State. Yes, we work with the people, but let us work with care. You cannot just go and dictate who does what. Let us work together and respect one another; we deserve respect.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

2.39

MR ASUMAN BASALIRWA (JEEMA, Bugiri Municipality, Bugiri): Mr Speaker, thank you for your communication. We have a European Union Ambassador in Uganda. Your communication raises legitimate concerns. I propose that the Executive summons the EU Ambassador and formally expresses the concerns of this House. I do not want us to appear as if we want to go into unnecessary battles with the EU or in any other Parliament. I am aware that this is not the first time the EU is making a motion on Uganda. They have done so on issues of human rights. I know they have raised concerns about our own human rights record in that Parliament.

At that time, you heard the responses from Government. This is equally another serious issue. I would rather that the Executive, since we have a representative here, engages with them.

There are two issues – the first is that some of the companies from those countries engaged in oil exploration are their own companies. We need to understand that some of the money used in these processes is from them. Do they have information that we do not have? Are they more knowledgeable about what is happening here than we are? Is it something that we should take interest in? Are there serious environmental concerns that they have that

we - that is information we can easily get if the Executive engages their representative and maybe, the Executive will come here to report about the outcomes of such engagement.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You see, colleagues, these motions are not from Government. It is not that France or Germany sat, as a Government, no. These are Members of Parliament abusing their authority; trying to question resolutions. Do you want to say we did not do a good job here? You want to say they have more information about our natural resources than us?

This is just a scare of seeing an African country going to progress and now, it would no longer be begging every day. What we are saying is very simple: sit down and discuss issues.

One can question any other issues but issues of economic sabotage and economic blackmail - please, because that is going to scare our investors from coming here, which will make us remain beggars.

Whenever we get stuck, we beg. We are saying we have begged enough. Let us exploit our resources so that we reduce the begging. It might not take away the begging completely but we shall reduce it.

2.43

MR MUHAMMAD MUWANGA KIVUMBI (NUP, Butambala County, Butambala): Mr Speaker, Hon. Kibalya knows where we are coming from; he knows our history. *(Interjections)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, please, stop diverting Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi - *(Laughter)*

MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI: Mr Speaker, this matter is very critical. The African crisis is not for lack of potential or resources. We have these in abundance. When you study from the British institutions, you realise that the international interest is to keep Africa as poor as we are, so that they can continue to enjoy our resources freely.

That given, the real crisis is with us. For as long as we mismanage our economies; for as long as some people sit somewhere and think that they can decide our fate, then they will have a certain degree of arrogance. We need to clean our house, prudently manage our resources and grow our economies. That is when we will truly be an independent African country.

The alternative for us to continue doing what they are doing - we have Army Generals here - we use their weapons; these are their weapons because they manufacture them and most of the products we use are theirs.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, conclude.

MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI: These houses of Parliament or governments of Africa can have a cure. The cure is prudent economic management of our resources. If we do that - Hon. Bahati knows the history. He does not travel to some European countries because he dared move a motion here and sponsored a Bill.

I went to some Arab country and questioned them about the treatment of our girls. That country no longer gives me a visa because when I went to that country, I said, "You are mistreating our people." I came to this Parliament and raised it. All that sums up to the fact that we, the African elite, must do our work and clean up.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

2.46

MR FELIX OKOT-OGONG (NRM, Dokolo South County, Dokolo): Mr Speaker, I represent this country in the Pan-African Parliament; a Parliament of 54 sovereign states. Africans have a big task. There is a lot of foreign intervention in the progress of Africa and a lot of pilferage of our minerals. According to statistics, billions of dollars are siphoned from Africa freely, in terms of raw materials, but when we want to add value to our raw materials or our minerals, they want to sabotage.

Therefore, in the Pan-African Parliament, we have decided - Africa has unique problems. Our problems must be solved by our own designed methods. Nobody should demand, and nobody should dictate what we should do with our natural resources. We started the exploration process a long time ago. We have spent money, we have done everything possible to mitigate the impact of the greenhouse gas emissions.

I want to bring it to your attention that America contributes 26 per cent, in terms of greenhouse gas emissions but they have refused to belong to the Kyoto Protocol. They are no longer with the climate change body, but they want to - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, conclude, honourable.

MR OKOT OGONG: In conclusion, our Government should stand firm. We are a sovereign state. In 1884 - during the Berlin Conference, when they were partitioning Africa - we were never there. Right now, we have gained our independence and we must be independent.

I would like to support him that we must have economic independence. *(Applause)* Let us use our resources appropriately and diligently so that we survive on our own. For as long as we continue borrowing and begging, we shall be subjected to their hands.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, you have heard our concerns.

2.49

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (REGIONAL AFFAIRS) (Mr John Mulimba): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate the concerns that you ably aired. I beg for your indulgence to escalate the same to us, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Guided by the principles and purposes enshrined in the United Nations Charter on equality of Sovereign States for Maintenance of International Relations, Peace and Security, we will study and give a guided response.

Mr Speaker, this is not the first time – like one of the speakers said here – that we have had various integration parliaments talking about East Africa or Uganda. Sometimes, using the very framework of the Vienna Convention that we pass, especially if we know they have no serious bearing, we respond. However, when it gets to us, we will study and come back to this House.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Matters of national importance. Let us have Hon. Charles Matovu.

2.50

MR CHARLES MATOVU (NUP, Busiro County South, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of urgent national importance. On the 8th of September, last week, a stone quarry located in Nganjo Village, Bweya Parish in Kajjansi Town Council collapsed and buried five people. A search and rescue exercise was mounted by good samaritans and the victims were found dead, having been crushed beyond recognition.

The victims included Ronald Kaggwa, who is survived by two wives and seven children; Vincent Kasule, who is survived by one wife and one child; Irumba Junior, survived by a wife and two children; Ponsiano Lubega, survived by two wives and three children; and Abdullah -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, please, make your prayers, and we pick the principle.

MR MATOVU: Mr Speaker, it is the duty of the State and the responsibility of parents to cater for the children of the nation. On account of the absence of the breadwinners and considering the welfare of children –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is the problem of giving a long preamble. Please, conclude your prayers.

MR MATOVU: My prayers are that the welfare of the children be considered and

that Government provides education for these children. Secondly, Government should provide start-up capital to the surviving widows and, perhaps, provide food relief to the over 200 residents who are affected by the collapse of this quarry. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Prime Minister -

2.53

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Mr Speaker, we are very sorry for the families that lost their loved ones.

About the issue of getting some relief, the ministry in charge of disasters should be given a write-up of all the details the Member read here so that they can make a follow-up on what happened in that place. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, please, meet with the Member and find a way of helping the families. (*Mr Okin rose*) Procedure?

MR OKIN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We have just been talking about parliamentary resolutions, which are not honoured. We have been saying that in the EU, they dishonoured the Parliamentary resolution on oil and gas. However, we have cases where domestic Parliamentary resolutions have not been honoured.

A case in point, on which we need a pronouncement of this Parliament, is the issue of *Nyege Nyege*. The issue of *Nyege Nyege* was discussed in this Parliament and there was a Parliamentary resolution but we are seeing varied responses from the Executive to the effect that this festival must continue.

Do we really respect this Parliament, Mr Speaker?

So, the procedural issue I would like to raise is: Does the Executive respect and honour the resolutions of this Parliament? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is that a question for me? I think, in the end, it was a question for the Executive. Rt Hon. Prime Minister? *(Laughter)*

MS NAKADAMA: Mr Speaker, the last time *-(Interjections)-* Can I be protected?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, let us listen to the Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NAKADAMA: Mr Speaker, the last time we talked about *Nyege Nyege*, there was a consultative meeting planned between the Executive and Parliament. The Speaker, who was in the Chair, accepted to host those people for negotiations.

I do not know what was reported here, but because of the negotiations that were agreed upon, I think that is what is happening now. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I can see that the Rt Hon. Prime Minister is not sure of their negotiations.

Colleagues, I will consult with my senior, Madam Speaker, and we shall be updating the House. If *Nyege Nyege* is tomorrow and the House passed a resolution against it – if I come to know that any of you, colleagues, has attended *Nyege Nyege*, you will be in trouble. *(Laughter)*

Colleagues, in the Public Gallery this afternoon, we have students of Bugema University Main Campus, Gayaza. They are represented by Hon. Muwada Nkuningi and Hon. Betty Naluyima. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. And, we also request you not to go for the *Nyege Nyege* festival. *(Laughter)*

Honourable colleagues, also in the Public Gallery, we have students and teachers of Hope Christian High School from Lugazi. They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Stephen Sserubula, and Hon. Diana Mutasingwa. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

Now, colleagues, be cautious; we have very young people and we should not discuss issues of elders when they are listening. *(A Member rose_)* I hope it is not related to issues of elders. Hon. Manjeri and colleagues, please, leave the Speaker to do his work. I request you, colleagues, to reduce the frequency of this. If you have your issues, I have them here and I am always fair.

DR BATUWA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am rising on a procedural matter. On Tuesday, you guided us very well, we who have urgent matters of national importance; that there are matters you are deferring to today when the Prime Minister is here to handle. Are we still on the list?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is you people wasting your own time because I have just picked one colleague and you are raising points of procedure.

DR BATUWA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the guidance.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am still - you know.

2.59

DRE LISARUTHA HIGWA (NRM, Rukungiri Municipality, Rukungiri): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have a matter of national importance on access to various services at the Uganda Heart Institute. I will refer to a patient that came from Rukungiri at the beginning of the month of July, who was referred to Mulago and she had then passed through Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital and finally, been referred to Mulago.

Everything was done for her in Mulago, and a final diagnosis was reached, but she needed an operation. She was invoiced up to the tune of close to Shs 19 million. This patient from Rukungiri definitely could not manage. She had to go back and sell a piece of land and you know what that means. This impoverishes the family.

We advised her to write to the Executive Director for a waiver and the family was able to raise Shs 6 million. However, up to now, Mr Speaker, there is no response. The next thing you shall hear is that the patient is dead.

My prayer is that the minister looks into such issues. As a doctor who has been in practice for the last 30 years, I know that these cases are happening from all corners of the country daily. So, I request that the minister -*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Now, honourable colleagues, let me guide you. There are matters, which are very urgent. These ministers are accessible to you. For such a matter, you do not wait for the Floor. What if someone dies?

If the minister does not pick your call, please, reach out to me or any of us. However, it is very good you have raised it. I would urge that for such urgent matters - and ministers, I request that you should be available for Members of Parliament because they carry a lot of burden from their constituents. Honourable Minister of Health -

3.02

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (GENERAL DUTIES) (Ms Anifa Bangirana): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank my colleague, Dr Rutahigwa, whom I want to declare that in one way or another, he is my MP because I was born and raised from his constituency.

I agree with you and take much concern, especially about such issues and issues concerning our honourable colleagues. It is very unfortunate in this case, and especially when we appreciated that sometime back here, the whole House supported us in the ministry, and some continued to support us, especially within the budget framework, to enable Ministry of Health and Government to ensure we execute our mandate in service delivery.

Mr Speaker, I have met my colleague on other issues. As you said, as ministers, our doors are

always open and; we do not have bureaucracy. As soon as you approach us, if we cannot resolve the issues here, we meet our colleagues in the offices. Now on coming -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I do not have much time. I usually want quick -

MS BANGIRANA: I am concluding because it is a matter that touches all of us.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, but we have rotated so much, honourable minister.

MS BANGIRANA: I request, finally, that the honourable colleague - as soon as I am done with my paper here or anytime because of the urgency, he comes and we discuss it and forge a way forward. I thank you.

MR SSEGONA: I thank you, Mr Speaker. I am only seeking guidance from the ministry because I want to thank Hon. Anifa Kawooya for that parental approach. However, there must be an issue of policy. What is the policy? There are many Ugandans who may not even access their MPs. What is the policy in cases where people go to Government facilities; they are billed and they cannot afford it because this is just a one-off? I think we must be guided on whether there is a policy.

Otherwise, it should not be a matter of approaching the minister. We should have a policy that clearly gives us guidelines.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sure. Hon. Ssegona is raising a very critical issue, honourable minister, because if the Member is saying the constituent was charged Shs 19 million or Shs 18 million to be treated at Uganda Heart Institute; is it true? Do you allow such charges at the Uganda Heart Institute?

Therefore, honourable minister, let us escalate this a bit further by requiring, on top of you handling the issue with the Member, you to bring us a statement on costs and charges for treatment at Uganda Heart Institute and Uganda Cancer Institute. *(Members rose_)*

Colleagues, we do not have much time, please. Hon. Maurice Kibalya. Colleagues, you know we are going to reach 4.00 p.m. and we are still on matters of national importance.

3.06

MR MAURICE KIBALYA (NRM, Bugabula County South, Kamuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. On Wednesday -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will allow a comprehensive debate on a statement when she brings it.

MR KIBALYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. On Wednesday, 25 July 2018, the Prime Minister of India together with the President of this country visited this Parliament. In the few words that the Prime Minister said in opening the State House, he was addressing the President to his people, who would have opened many strands to the Indian community. Among the issues he noted was the sacred site at Jinja, where a portion of the ashes of Mahatma Gandhi were immersed, and said that in his life and beyond, he is one of the Africans; and, that at the same sacred site in Jinja, where the statue of Gandhi now stands, we will build a Gandhi Heritage Centre. And, there was high applause in this House.

Mr Speaker, from that time, because he said this would be in celebration of the 150 years of the Gandhi history - Mr Speaker, you were part of that sitting and everybody was here, including the Head of State, who was very clear. This was an offer from the Prime Minister of India.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Prayers -

MR KIBALYA: Mr Speaker, our prayer is that since we passed the Monument Bill yesterday, the minister of trade should come and tell this House and Ugandans at large what is stopping the setup of that Heritage Centre in Jinja.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is that the trade or tourism minister?

MR KIBALYA: The trade and tourism minister -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: They were separated, honourable colleague. You need to be updated, but we get you.

MR KIBALYA: Secondly, Mr Speaker, two months ago, there was a rumour *-(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I saw that story in the news to get such an offer and we -

Honourable, that is not a matter for the trade minister; it is a matter for the tourism minister. We need a statement from the Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities to come and explain what happened. Because, all they needed was land to put up a state-of-the-art Mahatma Gandhi Convention Centre. We could not even take up that offer when we are spending a lot of money trying to build convention centres. Therefore, honourable minister, in one week, please, bring us that statement.

Is Hon. Mudimi around? He is not around. I know it is a lengthy issue and your explanation here will not be satisfactory, Rt Hon. Prime Minister. Hon. Manjeri.

3.10

MS MANJERI KYEBAKUTIKA (NUP, Woman Representative, Jinja City): First, I would like to apologise for coming to remind you about this urgent matter. I came to you because I reported this two weeks back.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, you have only two minutes; so, better shoot. You and I are okay. *(Laughter)* You know, she is the one hosting *Nyege Nyege*.

MS MANJERI: Mr Speaker, we have a challenge of insecurity in some parts of Jinja City, yet it is the city that is going to host *Nyege Nyege* tomorrow.

On 4 September 2022, a female resident known as Prossy Nyange aged 33 *-(Interjection)-* Please, I need your attention - was killed by an armed gang in Budumbuli Bugembe Ward,

Jinja City. She died instantly, after sustaining deep cuts on the neck, back and stomach. Nyange Prossy was a heavy weightlifter. She was stabbed on her way home from her night duties.

According to the information I have, the police officers from Bugembe Police Post could not respond immediately because of inadequate transport facilities and manpower; yet, this area is highly populated, and they later arrested the suspects.

Mr Speaker, a similar incident happened eight months back when a one Bogere was stabbed to death in the same area. In that particular area where the incident happened, there are no security lights as well as in other areas of Jinja City, hence making people lose their lives, yet the population is growing rapidly due to the city status.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Prayers -

MS MANJERI: Mr Speaker, due to the security concerns *-(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, I have told you to say your prayers but you have not. Honourable Minister of Security, we have insecurity in Jinja *-(Ms Manjeri rose_)* Please, we have two minutes. No, respect time. Honourable colleague, we have rules in this House.

MS MANJERI: Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, I request you, when you come here, please, go to the substance of the matter; two minutes maximum.

3.13

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): Mr Speaker, I have noted the concerns of Hon. Manjeri. I will verify the action on the two cases. But also, regarding the camera issue, we have just done the evaluation for the third phase of the camera programme and we would want to extend them to some of

these areas that they are talking about, in order to handle crime in such places which are not covered.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, how are you going to help her people?

GEN. MUHOOZI: On *Nyege Nyege*, they *-(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, not *Nyege Nyege*. *(Laughter)* Honourable minister, what are you doing about the general security situation in Jinja? Her people were listening and watching.

GEN. MUHOOZI: Mr Speaker, she raised it in the context of that big festival -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, I am the one who brought in *Nyege Nyege*, honourable minister.

GEN. MUHOOZI: And, it also has a dedicated security arrangement, but we shall respond to her concerns.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, honourable, link up with the colleague so that you capture her issues seriously because these were specific cases; so that you can handle them. Honourable minister, that will be much better. Dr Bwanika.

3.14

DR ABED BWANIKA (NUP, Kimaanya-Kabonera Division, Masaka City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am in possession of a copy of a document entitled, "List of shortlisted applicants for the position of probation police constables, general duties and drivers."

Mr Speaker, my concern on this list is the variance in the number of applicants per district. There are districts, for example, Obongi with two applicants shortlisted; Maracha with four; Madi-Okollo with three; your own district Mitooma with only three; Gulu City with 33 applicants shortlisted; and Kiboga has only two.

Mr Speaker, I am also concerned about the people who were shortlisted. From Masaka District and Masaka City, we have reservations that these people who were shortlisted might not be coming from those two districts. My prayers;

- i) *The Minister of Internal Affairs lays before this Parliament the quotas per district; (Applause)*
- ii) *The Minister of Internal Affairs lays a full list of the shortlisted candidates per district with their national identity cards; and*
- iii) *The minister gives an explanation on these variances.*

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, I request you to lay that document on Table, so that once the minister brings his, we are able to compare. Honourable minister -

3.17

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Hon. Dr Abed Bwanika indeed raised those issues earlier, and he called me on phone, and in a short time, I raised these lists from the police and his concerns are valid.

When it comes to Masaka, the names listed – I know, for the record, that Ugandans can stay anywhere, but I see they are mostly from *un-*Masaka. I see Ecuret, Alfred – I think these could be children of police officers, but I need to verify. *(Laughter)* I want to verify and come back with a more informed position; and also to verify on the criteria used to – then I will inform the House.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Bwanika, please, lay the list on Table.

DR BWANIKA: Mr Speaker, I beg to lay a document entitled, “List of shortlisted

applicants for the position of the PPS/drivers.” I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I am referring this matter to the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs because we cannot solve it on the Floor. The committee should report back in two weeks’ time. Hon. Teddy Nambooze, you have two issues, but pick one because I cannot take the two.

3.19

MS TEDDY NAMBOOZE (NUP, Woman Representative, Mpigi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. My matter is about the prolonged power outage in various areas of Bulongo, Buzilango in Nkozi Subcounty, Ggoli Parish in Mpigi District. This was caused by a weird storm that brought down part of the power supply line. Seven poles fell down leading to a total blackout in the area.

The matter was reported to the Umeme office. Unfortunately, it has not yet been responded to and this has affected approximately 480 households and businesses around. Imagine in the current economic situation in the country -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Prayer?

MS NAMBOOZE: My prayer is: Let the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development be directed to address this issue urgently through the Umeme area office. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister of Energy and Mineral Development?

3.20

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (MINERALS) (Mr Peter Lokeris): Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, don’t you think it would have been appropriate to have the minister in charge of the electricity sector? I am saving you the burden of carrying - you know. Okay, thank you.

3.21

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (ENERGY) (Mr Sidronius Okaasai): Mr Speaker, he was actually right to stand because he is taking the docket of Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development. I request, with respect, that you let him answer.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, he is in charge of minerals and you are in charge of electricity. Please, respond to the issues of electricity.

MR OKAASAI: Mr Speaker, I always prefer to be given details. Therefore, I invite her to my office to help me through the concerns she has raised, for me to be able to address them. It is better that way rather than raising them here. I will make a political statement here - I need to understand what it is exactly, and where it is, so that we can resolve it. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, this is an issue where you can link the Member to Umeme and they address her concerns. It is not an issue where you are required to report back here.

MR OKASAAI: Let her come and we resolve it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, you can also go to her. She is a beautiful lady. *(Laughter)*

MR OKASAAI: Thank you very much. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We have to treat ladies very well, colleagues. Yes, Hon. Irene Muloni.

3.22

MS IRENE MULONI (NRM, Woman Representative, Bulambuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to raise a matter of national importance regarding the flash floods and landslides that continue to ravage Bulambuli District.

Honourable members, you must have all seen or heard what is going on. Since last week, we have had flash floods where rivers have over-flooded and washed away bridges in Bulambuli. We had landslides that buried one person and the cracks in the ground seem to be emerging and widening. Crops and gardens have been washed away.

Mr Speaker, I appreciate the response by Government to rescue our people, but I want to emphasise that Bulambuli District needs urgent attention to relocate people from these risky places.

Government came up with the GiveDirectly Programme recently, which was launched in Bududa. Unfortunately, Bulambuli is not yet part of it.

I would like to request the Office of the Prime Minister to come to Bulambuli's rescue urgently, with a programme with the same principle as GiveDirectly where instead of waiting for Government to build houses to relocate people from – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

3.24

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Like the honourable minister said, we are touched by the people who are always being displaced due to disasters; the process is still continuing. The GiveDirectly Programme was there and we handled that area, but we have not yet reached her area. Soon, we will be there to handle those issues. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can follow it up with a meeting. This is your senior colleague; please, share. Also, it is important that MPs from the Elgon area – because nearly more than - should I say 80 per cent of the MPs from the Elgon area - are bringing these issues to our office every day.

So, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I would urge you to do frequent meetings. Do not do one and – Please, keep updating each other on that issue. *(Mr Sseggon rose_)* Yes, point of procedure.

MR SSEGGONA: Mr Speaker, I thank you very much. I remember in this very Parliament, I co-chaired a meeting – not a meeting but a sub-committee meeting that examined the Disaster Management Policy in this country. One of the issues – that was a joint committee; Public Accounts Committee (Central) and Committee on Public Accounts (Local Government) – that we brought out was that in all these disasters, the ministry or the minister specifically designated for this, that is, the minister for disaster preparedness, is always missing. He is not directly involved, yet, the country has a Disaster Management Policy that is inclusive and representative up to the grassroots.

Can we be guided on the policy that the Prime Minister's Office is using to the exclusion of the minister and the technical officers in the office of the minister for disaster preparedness? This is not the first time we are experiencing these floods. We experience them twice every year. Maybe we should be guided on the policy they are using.

How do you tell somebody - how do you tell a national Parliament that, "Oh, we are moving but we are not yet in Bulambuli." When do you intend to get there? After the rainy season?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You see, honourable, I am constrained to ask the Prime Minister about that when the minister has excluded himself from being here. This should have been answered by the minister, but the minister is nowhere to be seen.

I do not know whether, in the Office of the Prime Minister, they have a policy of excluding the minister. I wish I had heard that from the minister. What I usually advise – and I had shared this with the Government Chief Whip – is that during the period from August to October, whenever we have a sitting, we should have a minister in charge of roads and a minister in charge of disaster preparedness

because it is a rainy season. However, they are not here.

Prime Minister? *(A Member rose_)* No, you asked your question. Let me allow the Prime Minister to answer you.

MS NAKADAMA: Mr Speaker, the ministers have been attending all our meetings. During this time, because of the many disasters that are around the country – you know that there are two ministers for disaster preparedness – the ministers are in the field to handle disaster issues. Otherwise, we have been having them in our meetings and they are always with us. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Prime Minister, we need the minister for disaster here. All ministers have work in the field. It is a matter of knowing that Parliament is a priority. You need money from here. You say you are handling disasters, but Members are saying you are not handling their disaster. Many of them are coming to my office. So, please, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, ensure that the ministers come.

Colleagues, I have structured your questions in such a way that some will go into Prime Minister's Time. Otherwise, we shall reach 4.00 p.m. when we are still on matters of national importance. Hon. Martin Muzaale, you have two questions for two ministers; please pick one.

3.30

MR MARTIN MUZAALÉ (NRM, Buzaaya County, Kamuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand on a matter of national importance. The sugarcane farmers in Busoga complained to me about the rampant theft or cheating by the sugarcane factories using the weighing scales. Farmers are losing close to three tonnes per truck. They have made their cry to the managers of these factories, but I think they are untouchable.

Mr Speaker, their prayer is that Uganda National Bureau of Standards should make on-spot visits and checks to see how these

weighing scales are operating.

Secondly, as the sugarcane forum, we had a sugarcane Bill that we wanted to process, but we were failed by Government. It is our humble request that Government brings up this Bill and it is processed to cater for these challenges. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, I received information from some concerned people that weighing scales are not calibrated. I got some of this information from a manufacturer who also complained that, indeed, some of these people who are transporting or doing whatever – there are even middlemen – are using weighing scales that are not calibrated and farmers are losing much.

3.32

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the honourable member for raising this important issue. In Masindi, when the Members of Parliament raised this particular issue, we held a meeting with sugarcane growers and manufacturers. The issues of scales and prices were discussed and resolved.

We shall also have a meeting in Busoga about the scales and prices. We are sure that we shall be able to resolve it. In some cases, some of this information is true and in others it is not. Therefore, it is important that we go there. I promise that I will go there and have a meeting with both the manufacturers and sugarcane growers.

On the issue of the sugar Bill, Mr Speaker, we actually have an Act of Parliament. We passed it and we are trying to implement the Act. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE INTERNATIONAL DEAF AWARENESS WEEK

3.33

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (DISABILITY AFFAIRS) (Ms Hellen Asamo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. You will allow me to remove my mask. I am presenting a paper concerning people who are deaf and they want to see facial expressions.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, you have 10 minutes.

MS ASAMO: Mr Speaker, I rise to brief you about the forthcoming commemoration of the International Deaf Awareness Week.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can get closer to the microphone.

MS ASAMO: The purpose of the parliamentary statement is to provide information to Parliament regarding this year's International Deaf Awareness Week, scheduled to take place between 19 and 23 September 2022. The climax of the International Deaf Awareness Week will be at Iganga Municipal Primary School Grounds in Iganga Municipality on Friday, 23 September 2022.

Mr Speaker, every year, during the third week of September, Uganda joins the rest of the world to commemorate the International Deaf Awareness Week. This is an initiative of the World Federation of the Deaf and was first celebrated in 1958 in Rome, Italy.

According to the 2014 Uganda National Housing and Population Census statistics, there were 1,083,649 deaf people in Uganda. From 2014, the number increased to 1,290,000 of the current population of Uganda.

The International Deaf Awareness Week is in line with the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, as given in different objectives and Articles.

Specifically, the Constitution, under Objective XVI of the National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, enjoins the society and the state to recognise the right of persons with disabilities to respect human dignity. Objective XXIV(c) emphasises promoting the development of sign language by the state.

Mr Speaker, the World Federation of the Deaf gazetted the third week of September each year as the International Week of Deaf People and it has been celebrated, as I have already indicated.

The week draws attention to the accomplishments of people who are deaf. It raises awareness about their unique needs and also promotes their human rights. During this week, state and non-state actors publicise many activities and informational campaigns to educate people about deafness and hearing loss.

Honourable members, the week-long annual commemoration is not only a chance to raise awareness about the challenges of living with hearing loss, but also an opportunity to show that one can live a better life with a hearing loss.

Mr Speaker, Government of Uganda, through my ministry, in partnership with the Uganda National Association of the Deaf, has been celebrating this event for the last 16 years. The commemoration brings together Government ministries, departments and agencies; community members, professionals, institutions, development partners and the general public to participate in the engagement on hearing loss, deaf people and their socio-economic well-being.

Colleagues, Government is committed and prepared to address the concerns that come with deafness to ensure inclusion of deaf people in the socio-economic development processes.

Inclusion of the deaf community in the country's development agenda is key in fulfilling Uganda's Vision2040 and achievement of the 2030 agenda of leaving no one behind.

The International Deaf Awareness Week seeks to increase awareness about deaf persons, their challenges and culture. It helps in motivating the community to learn and appreciate the importance of sign language, address grievances and promote the human rights of deaf persons.

Results/outcomes of the previous events

During the last year's commemoration, key achievements were highlighted and challenges identified in relation to upholding the rights and welfare of deaf persons.

The outcomes from the previous activities included increase in the number of deaf people benefiting from the special grant for people with disabilities. Deaf people are among the most vulnerable categories of disability due to their inability to access information. Through affirmative action, we are ensuring that many benefit from this grant.

Between the financial years 2020/2021 and 2021/2022, there was about a 31.2 percent increase in the number of deaf persons accessing this fund.

Similarly, the Ministry of Education and Sports has embarked on the process of translating learning materials into Uganda sign language. This was made possible with support from UNICEF.

The Ministry of Education and Sports needs to prioritise translation of more educational materials for a meaningful inclusion of deaf children in schools across the country.

Since the last celebrations in 2021, Government has made commitment to recruit sign language interpreters. This commitment was made during the Global Disability Summit that took place in February 2022.

Since the previous event, Uganda Communications Commission has strengthened monitoring for the media houses to comply with the requirement for sign language interpreters. Similarly, the National

Council for Persons with Disabilities, together with Kyambogo University, engaged the Uganda National Association of Sign Language Interpreters to enhance professionalism in the sign language interpretation profession.

After the 2021 Deaf Awareness Week, my ministry launched the National Disability Coordination Committee, which includes representatives from the deaf community with sign language interpreters, as an affirmative action for this category of disability.

For the last year's events, my ministry has made several engagements with key ministries such as the ministry responsible for ICT and media houses, Ministry of Public Service, among others, to raise awareness or the urgency to adopt sign language as a critical medium of communication in routine operations. And Parliament has also raised some matters of concern on several occasions, challenging Government on inadequate mechanisms for the deaf community.

I will skip the challenges of last time and then go to the activities so that I do not get caught up.

The highlights for the theme for the event

The UN theme for the International Deaf Awareness Week, 2022 is: *"Building Inclusive Communities for all."* This theme has been domesticated to read: *"Building Inclusive Communities for All; Uganda Sign Language Unites Us."*

The adopted theme aligns with the Ugandan culture and global advocacy efforts to raise awareness about the needs of the deaf community at different levels. It is about coming together, becoming united and demonstrating the unity to the rest of the world through sign language.

Sign language is a critical prerequisite to reach the full participation of deaf people in their communities and ensure the realisation of their human rights. It calls upon relevant stakeholders to provide support and disseminate

information for early acquisition of Uganda sign language, and provide inclusive quality bilingual education.

In addition, it calls for support to professionalism and trained Uganda sign language interpreters to enable the participation of deaf people.

The recognition of Uganda sign language as an official language in Uganda is important for the inclusion of deaf people in implementing Uganda's Vision 2040 and the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda of leaving no one behind.

Colleagues, as a sector, we thank you very much for standing with us in appropriation, and we also seek your continued support in a meaningful inclusion of PWDs especially the deaf community. This will help to build their socio-economic resilience to withstand the shocks brought about by exclusion. As we count on your deliberate affirmative action during legislation/appropriation, my ministry has worked hard to ensure equitable distribution of the national special grant for persons with disabilities.

Apart from the Parish Development Model's 10 per cent allocation for persons with disabilities, including deaf persons, my ministry is engaging the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education and Sports, among others, to ensure that accessibility to education and health services by the deaf community is strengthened.

This theme of: *"Building Inclusive Communities for All: Uganda Sign Language Unites Us,"* will, therefore, highlight the efforts Government needs to undertake to provide inclusion of the deaf community, especially through sign language, to increase their access to Government programmes and information.

It will also motivate other stakeholders and development partners to support the deaf community to utilise available programmes in Uganda for inclusion.

The theme, therefore, reminds us of the need to fill the gaps in deployment of teachers in

inclusive education models and increase in the number of special schools for the deaf. Some regions are not covered with the special schools, yet inclusive education is still challenged with resourcing, hence excluding most of the deaf children in the untargeted regions.

Colleagues, preparations and the actual celebration of the event will maximise synergy and mitigate duplication through the multi-sectoral national organising committee, which will oversee the event.

Mr Speaker, allow me go to our area of -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, conclude.

MS ASAMO: I am now concluding. The chief guest for this function will be the Rt Hon. Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda. And, the events that we are going to handle are activities that have been noted down - and Members can go through those activities.

I would like to appreciate this Parliament of the Republic of Uganda for taking lead in sharing public messages through sign language interpreters. I know, Mr Speaker, when you were seated here before 6.00 p.m., your message is seen on TVs and the deaf appreciate this Parliament for that. I also think that other institutions should emulate this practice.

Key issues, as I conclude, are:

- i) To note that there is need to support the Ministry of Education and Sports to have all schools staffed with sign language interpreters, to enable the deaf children access education in their localities without moving to the few specialised schools of the deaf.
- ii) To note the need to support the Ministry of Public Service to have all public institutions staffed with sign language interpreters for meaningful inclusion of the deaf community.

iii) To note that the theme for the International Deaf Awareness Week in Uganda is: *"Building Inclusive Communities for All: Uganda Sign Language Unites Us."*

iv) To invite all the honourable members of Parliament, on behalf of the deaf community, to join the deaf community in Iganga Municipal Primary School Grounds on Friday, 23 September 2022.

Mr Speaker, I thank you and the honourable members; it is the first time we talk about deafness in this Parliament and thank you for your administration. God bless you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have students from Sironko Parents Secondary School, represented by Hon. Ssasaga Isaias Jonny and Hon. Wamala Nambozo Florence. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

I am going to allow submissions of about 15 minutes as we go to Prime Minister's Time.

Hon. Wokorach, Hon. Onzima and Hon. Acon, then I can add on; two minutes each.

3.47

Ms BRENDA NABUKENYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Luweero): Thank you, Mr Speaker and I would like to thank the minister for the statement and also support his prayers or recommendations. A few weeks ago, a motion was moved here in regards to deaf schools, in each district in Uganda or constituencies. We still have so many districts or constituencies without a school for disabled children. That means accessibility cannot be achieved. We cannot speak of being inclusive if we do not provide schools, for children who cannot hear and the rest.

Therefore, I support the minister that while we debate this matter, we think of putting up schools in each and every district so that children do not have to walk long distances or

to go to other regions to access education. And also, loss of hearing is not only limited to those who are born deaf or who at a young age lose hearing; but while people age, they tend to get into that state of hearing loss.

I understand that accessing hearing aids in this country is quite expensive. I think while we debate the issue of disability, we should put in mind that at a certain stage, we also have to think about Ugandans who are ageing because we are all candidates for that. We should not limit it to only the young people who have hearing problems.

I want to support and thank you, but I think we need to put up schools; a motion was moved, and we need to act on it so that children can access education. If you say that *-(Member timed out.)*

3.49

MS FLAVIA NABAGABE (NUP, Woman Representative, Kassanda): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, and I appreciate the minister for presenting that elaborate report on the deaf. However, I would have liked to hear more desegregated data, including data for the number of deaf people that we have in the country at the same time trends: Are the numbers of deaf people in the country increasing or reducing? What could be the cause?

The second issue I want to raise is about the healthcare accessibility for deaf people, especially when they go to healthcare facilities where there are no sign language interpreters. In that way, their right to privacy is violated because they cannot be able to go into details of what their ailments are. Even when they need privacy - because they need interpreters.

Therefore, I would recommend that Government trains all medical health workers in sign language so that these people can easily talk to them without having a second person to listen to their issues. Thank you very much.

3.50

MR PETER WOKORACH (NRM, Aswa County, Gulu): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I would like to use this time to appreciate the ministry for initiating the Deaf Awareness Week. Most importantly, to invite our Speaker to be the chief guest on that day so that Parliament appreciates the challenges that the deaf people go through.

There has been an attempt by this Government to strategically place interpreters to support deaf persons in this country. These people, first of all, are already vulnerable. They become more vulnerable when they want to access services in this country. I wish Government could fast-track placements of interpreters in all these public offices.

Mr Speaker, the deaf are really more vulnerable, and when you go to referral hospitals you really see that there is need for this Parliament to request Government to quickly place interpreters in all public offices to support the deaf.

Secondly, I appreciate Government's efforts to start up schools for the deaf. But it is only limited to primary schools. How can Government and Parliament support the deaf at secondary school level so that their education does not only stop at primary level but also goes as far as secondary, university and other public institutions levels? This is my submission, Mr Speaker. Thank you.

3.51

MR GODFREY ONZIMA (NRM, Aringa North County, Yumbe): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the brief to Parliament on the celebrations. I support the view of the minister that sign language should be taught in most of these schools.

As my colleague has just said, I witnessed two situations; one was at a police station, where somebody who was deaf came to report an incident, but there was nobody who could

interpret his complaint and it became very difficult to help this person. The second one was also at a hospital.

Therefore, we can never talk about inclusiveness if the deaf are left out in terms of communication. Now, many times, we present reports here; but my view is that Government should adopt this presentation as a strategy to be included in the review of the education curriculum.

Recently, there was a review of the education curriculum by Government, and the idea that certain languages should be taught in schools must be adopted in our curriculum such that they are not left out.

We are talking about the placement of interpreters, but how many do we have? Sign language has become a comprehensive communication pattern. In that way, I think we can achieve what we talked about in terms of inclusiveness. Thank you very much.

3.53

Mr JULIUS ACON (NRM, Otuke East County, Otuke): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to appreciate the honourable minister for elaborating on her statement; today, I am her PA for the time being. I would like the minister to include the deaf people among those who should be given jobs.

I would also request the honourable minister to make sure that these people are not discriminated against. They should do activities such as sports - because, in the world of sports, I have not met Ugandans representing the deaf. They also lack several institutions such as schools in the Lango subregion; I think we have in Lira.

So, such a person has to walk or come from Otuke which is 72 kilometres away, which is a long journey. Honourable minister, these are the people who create a lot of challenges for parents or caretakers, and if we do not bring them together, I think it will be very difficult for us to take care of them. Thank you.

3.54

MS FAITH KUNIHIRA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kyenjojo): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the minister for the presentation of the report. In her report, she indicates that there are 1,200,000 people in this country that are deaf. My concern is how many of these people have been intentionally trained in sign language, because to be able to use sign language, this person must be trained in this very language?

In her report, she indicates that they want to increase the number of people that are able to translate for the deaf people. I think apart from places in the city, many of the deaf people in the rural areas are not able to understand the sign language, because they have not been significantly trained in it.

My prayer to the minister is that sign language training begins from childhood, not in adulthood; it should be integrated in the schools that our children are trained in. Number two, there should be an increase of teachers of sign language in our communities so that the sign language story will become a reality rather than a paper story. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, you have three minutes. We are coming to the Prime Minister's Time, colleagues. Okay, as she comes, let us hear from the Leader of the Opposition.

3.56

MR MUHAMMAD MUWANGAKIVUMBI (NUP, Butambala County, Butambala): Mr Speaker, I have looked through this report. This type of report - I am a person who loves figures and finance. First of all, the ministers that come here should also brief us on how much money they spend on these international days/weeks because sometimes, the budgets of these agencies are blown on such functions.

Secondly, the statement should have spoken to the financial needs in actual figures to alleviate this situation and you ask Parliament for action. When we come to the budgeting process, this report should have informed us of

your financial needs and what you have, what are the funding gaps, but it is silent.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi is giving you serious support.

MS ASAMO: Thank you so much. I want to thank honourable colleagues; most of them have given compliments of the day; so, I want to appreciate that on behalf of the deaf community.

Mr Speaker, the issues Members have brought here are critical issues. I think some of them like education, which Hon. Nabukenya has brought - we are trying to get schools like seed schools to have units such as a classroom aside, so that they learn. We are talking about inclusion so that you come back to this committee after instruction. That is one of the strategies we are trying to sell to the Ministry of Education since mine is a coordinating ministry.

I also want to say that recently, in the Ministry of Health, they were training some workers in sign language. The challenge with sign language is, when you do not practice, then you lose it. However, I think it is something that we are going to take on board for advocacy.

Hon. Acon, deaf people are very good sports people; they play football and volleyball. One of the activities we are going to do is that one. They can do MDD; I think you have seen me talking of a beauty pageant, some of these girls are going to shine; usually, deaf girls are very beautiful. I want to encourage Members to be inclusive enough *-(Laughter)-* Yes!

The issue brought by my brother, Hon. Kivumbi, is critical. However, Mr Speaker, I am planning - we have commitments that were passed by this Government in February. We are working as a ministry to look at all those sectors; education, health, and then put a cost. My department is already working on that. I thought at this point, I would talk about this, but bring a detailed one, so that it covers all the disabilities other than just the deaf.

I am going to categorise in such a way, so that we look at the different disabilities, because you will find albinos need sunscreen, a, b, c, d. I will not be coming in piecemeal. We are working on a comprehensive one to bring to this Parliament and I pray that I will get your support.

Lastly, I did not put here the issue of data and I have noted it, we shall take care of that, as we present more information. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. A very strong appeal; this House can be represented by Hon. Okot and Hon. Rugumayo, you have been reminded that we should be inclusive when we are marrying; the deaf are beautiful. So, please, colleagues who are not yet married, represent us, we need that quarter, and Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi can add on. I know he has one, but what I can say is that he still has a gap of three according to his religion. Colleagues, we have come to the Prime Minister's Time. Clerk, please take us there.

PRIME MINISTER'S TIME

4.00

THE RT HON. PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I got a question from Hon. Alex Brandon Kintu, Member of Parliament, Jinja District, Kagoma North Constituency.

He said that in 2001, the President promised that Government would tarmac Jinja-Mbulamuti-Kamuli-Bukungu Road, which is also known as the Amber Court Road. The road has featured in successive budget speeches from 2001 to 2021.

His question is: *"When is Government going to work on this road? Can you provide an update on any plans to fulfil the Presidential pledge on this matter?"*

Mr Speaker, my response is that Jinja-Mbulamuti-Kamuli Road is a national road managed by the Ministry of Works and

Transport through Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA).

The designs for upgrading this road were completed in 2015. The upgrading works were prioritised for implementation during the National Development Plan III. Procurement of the contractor is currently ongoing and works are expected to begin in this financial year.

Hon. Arinaitwe Reuben, Member of Parliament Isingiro West, Isingiro District. He raised a matter about uprooting electricity transmission poles and accessories in the Iryango Ward, Kabuyanda Town Council, Isingiro District on 22 August 2022 by a one Vajira Usham of Asian nationality, and a one Twebaze Kenneth, both employees of DIMO engineering company, and their subsequent arrest for malicious damage and vandalism.

His prayer: Can I update the House about these unfortunate incidents of uprooting electricity poles in Isingiro?

Mr Speaker, we have many cases reported against contractors who keep removing materials from one project to another without authorisation. In some cases, there are allegations of financial inducements in favour of particular project areas.

Mr Speaker, His Excellency the President is very clear and very categorical, and this must stop.

In the case of Isingiro, the contractor DIMO engineering company was audited. In the process, it was discovered that the main contractor, Diesel & Motor Engineering Company Ltd (DIMO) had contracted Shim services to carry out construction works on the said line.

The company extended eight poles beyond the approved three poles. The extension did not form part of the approved scope of the project. Hence, its implementation was contrary to the contractual provisions of the contract awarded to the main contractor, Diesel & Motor Engineering Company Ltd.

Mr Speaker, this issue was referred to the police where the contractors' personnel statements regarding their actions were taken. The contractor has been instructed and warned to stop the activity of uprooting the network under construction along the Kabuyanda-Iryango line.

The Contract Management Committee has been instructed to assess the financial impact of the additional scope of work of the extended eight poles beyond the approved three poles to mobilise additional funds that shall cater for the construction costs.

I commend the community and local leaders of Iryango Ward, Kabuyanda Town Council of Isingiro for being vigilant and ensuring that no contractor recovers any materials from the project site without their knowledge.

Such project activities should follow proper procedure and authorisation.

Mr Speaker, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development has been instructed to do countrywide mobilisation and sensitisation for Ugandans to own projects, so that they can be protected because Government has injected a lot of money into those projects.

Hon. Juliet Achayo, Member of Parliament, Ngora County, raised the concern that: *"Government recently introduced a policy for parents feeding their children in both primary and secondary schools to be compulsory. While parents are struggling with availing scholastic materials and paying fees, Government is adding parents a burden of paying for milk to be given to the children at school."*

Her prayer is that I should inform the House on why Government is burdening the parents, yet the majority are just recovering from the effects of COVID-19.

Mr Speaker, on 27 October 2017, Government, through the Ministry of Education and Sports, launched the parents-led school feeding model where parents or guardians take charge of feeding their children in school.

This model has an option of either contributing food in kind or cash for food rations. We all know that feeding is important for the health of our children and how poor learning, absenteeism and school dropout are partly caused by hunger in schools.

Mr Speaker, Government started a pilot project to engage parents to start contributing towards feeding their children while at school, targeting at least one million children within Kampala Metropolitan Area – covering Entebbe, Kira, Makindye, Mukono and Nansana municipalities – and later to have it extended to the districts of Jinja, Mbale, Soroti, Lira, Gulu, Hoima, Kabale, Arua, Kabarole and Masaka, if well implemented.

Government has secured a partnership between the Ministry of Education Sports and SNV Uganda, a Netherlands Development Organisation, which will help in subsidising the parents. As such, the parents will contribute between Shs 10,000 and Shs 20,000 each term to ensure their children are fed on milk at school.

Mr Speaker, milk was chosen because it provides bone-building nutrients, specifically, calcium, vitamin D and magnesium, which are of high nutrition for both good health and development.

Government has entered into partnership with processors who will design specific milk and yoghurt products for school children and distribute about 250mls (per quarter pint) of milk to each child per day for five days. Mr Speaker, the targeted level of school is pre-primary, primary and secondary school.

We, therefore, urge honourable members and parents to embrace this programme for the better health of our children in schools and to improve their learning.

Hon. Ronald Akugizibwe, Member of Parliament, Buruli County, Masindi District. He said: *“Census is a critical planning tool, which helps governments to plan for the future in terms of schools, hospitals, roads, urban*

infrastructure and more. For Vision 2020 to be achieved there is need to plan based on reliable statistics.”

His prayer is that I update this august House on when Government intends to carry out a housing and population census.

Mr Speaker, on Monday, 12 September 2022, Cabinet approved a plan to carry out a housing and population census, scheduled for 24 to 25 August 2023. The process is estimated to cost Shs 330 billion, which Government will mobilise in two financial years; that is, 2022/2023 and 2023/2024.

The census will enable Government to establish the number of houses, the people and budget accordingly, in terms of service delivery to various regions. The census will be done digitally and data uploaded directly to the central server in Kampala.

Mr Speaker, this year, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, through the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, shall be procuring information technology (IT) devices, which will be used in the exercise. After the census, the smart gadgets will be used to carry out other studies such as agricultural census and administrative statistics, among others.

Question No.5 came from Hon. Phiona Nyamutoro, the National Female Youth MP. She said: *“There are about 13 million people in urban centres in the country. Over 50 per cent of Ugandans, by the year 2050, will be in cities, yet housing is still a challenge in urban centres. Last week, His Excellency the President launched a multi-billion housing project in Lubowa, under the National Social Security Fund (NSSF).”*

She asked: *“What is the status of Solana-Lubowa Housing Project and its benefit to the people of Uganda?”*

My response, Mr Speaker, is that on Thursday, 8 September 2022, His Excellency the President commissioned the first phase of the Shs 1.4 trillion Solana-Lubowa Housing Project.

Close to \$31 million has been invested in construction materials that have been sourced from local industries. The project created over 1,500 direct jobs and 3,200 indirect jobs. These numbers will increase as the project is implemented in the next eight phases.

It is estimated that over 50 per cent of Ugandans, by the year 2050, will be in cities, yet housing is an integral part in developing our nation. This project will reshape the future of housing in this country since it will have a multiplier impact.

The units are to be sold on a rental payment model where one pays a small percentage of the total cost of the unit and starts living in it as he pays rent and, on completion of the payment, they officially own these units.

Mr Speaker, the Lubowa Housing Project is a good initiative and it is worthy to commend the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) for growing from a small fund to one that now takes part in big investment projects in the country.

Hon. Okot Boniface, Youth Representative Northern Uganda: He says that as a country, we need a Salary Review Commission to regularise and harmonise salaries in all public offices. His question is: *“What is the update on the establishment of the Salary Review Commission?”*

Mr Speaker, the issue of establishment of a national body to determine pay, commenced in 2014, when the Ministry of Public Service presented a Cabinet memorandum, CT/2014/89, on the principles of the establishment of the National Salary Commission Bill, 2014.

Cabinet under minute 327/CT/2014, however, deferred the paper until the discussions of the then ongoing constitutional amendment were concluded. The constitutional amendments did not put into account the matter of establishment of the body as envisaged. His Excellency the President, consequently, at the Cabinet meeting held on 2 August 2021, under Cabinet minute 160/CT/2021, directed

the Minister of Public Service to prepare and present to Cabinet a paper on the status update on the operationalisation of the Salary Review Commission.

The Cabinet information paper CT/2021/71 was presented to Cabinet and the Minister of Public Service was directed to carry out further stakeholders' engagement for consensus building. The ministry sought written memoranda from the Parliamentary Commission, the Local Government, Finance Commission, Judicial Service Commission, Health Service Commission and Education Service Commission, Public Service Commission, Equal Opportunities Commission, Local Government Finance Commission, Prisons Authority, Police Authority, Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs, Attorney-General, the Solicitor-General, Law Reform Commission, National Planning Authority, the Chairperson of the Consultative Council for the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development.

A meeting comprising the above stakeholders and workers; Members of Parliament, representatives of Public Service, labour unions, representatives of the Chief Justice, the minister for security, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the Head of Public Service and Secretary to Cabinet, as well as the Deputy Head of Public Service and Deputy Secretary to Cabinet, was held on 15 February 2022.

The stakeholders consulted and agreed to establish an ad hoc body to be called, “The ad hoc National Emoluments Review Board”, which was guided by the honourable Attorney-General. The body should be ad hoc in nature, established through a policy developed by the Minister of Public Service in accordance with section 7 of the Public Service Act, 2008 and approved by Cabinet.

The Minister of Public Service is in the process of carrying out a regulatory impact assessment. The regulatory impact assessment shall guide in the development of the policy on establishment and functioning of the ad hoc National

Emoluments Review Board. The ministry will then prepare a Cabinet memorandum on the policy for the establishment and functions of the ad hoc National Emoluments Review Board. The Board will then be constituted and inaugurated to commence business, starting with carrying out a comprehensive job evaluation, review of the existing pay and benefit systems, and rationalisation of the salary and benefits in the whole Government.

Government through the Ministry of Public Service is committed to implementing the roadmap to the establishment of the ad hoc National Emoluments Review Board. We count on the support of the honourable members of Parliament, and all stakeholders in order to achieve the objective of establishing a central body to determine pay and benefits for all public officers who draw salaries and allowances from the Consolidated Fund. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister. Colleagues, I now open up for all questions.

4.22

MR JOHN MAGOLO (NRM, Bungokho County North, Mbale): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, there is a question here concerning the Petroleum Authority of Uganda, and the way they are running this MDA is evidently affecting many things; it is not running the way it is supposed to be. They are handling matters relating to the renewal of staff employment contracts in a manner that is discriminatory, biased, unfair and unjust.

This has led to some staff being denied employment on prejudicial basis, malice and witch-hunt, denying highly trained, talented, experienced and skilled personnel an opportunity to serve their country.

I request that the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development urgently intervenes in the process of renewing of staff employment contracts at the Petroleum Authority of Uganda.

Also, the pending non-renewal of staff employment contracts is halted until the minister has conclusively addressed the issue relating to the same. The matter is here, the details that -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not for oral answers by the Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, let me get the details.

Now that the minister for energy is here, can't you come and throw some light on this? *(Laughter)*

4.24

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (MINERALS) (Mr Peter Lokeris): Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Rt Hon. Prime Minister for passing over the microphone to me.

The complaint has reached our offices and we have set up a team -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, switch on the microphone, honourable minister.

MR LOKERIS: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am saying that the complaint has reached our table. We have considered getting a tribunal to listen to these issues. If there is any unfairness on the part of our staff who have been there, their matter will be handled.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Colleagues, it is only one minute strictly. Clerk, please set it. There are no follow-up questions on Prime Minister's Time. That is what your rules say.

4.25

DR TIMOTHY BATUWA (FDC, Jinja South Division West, Jinja City): Mr Speaker, Jinja has been a town for over 100 years - since 1907. Today, it is a city. It has only one landfill. In the last 10 days, the residents of Jinja could not access the only landfill in Jinja City. One man has seized it, and put a 40 feet container in the access route, and deployed private security

guards. The Resident City Commissioner (RCC) is helpless.

The elders convened a meeting with the RCC, to discuss how they are going to host the Nabbanja guests – the *Nyege Nyege* people - because the town is filthy. The RCC failed to deploy Uganda Police to go and arrest the privately deployed guards. Yet we even have a barracks. My prayer, Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, do not add yourself time. Take your seat; if you cannot use one minute, that is not my problem.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I will institute a team *-(Interjections)-* I cannot deceive you that I will do it today because I am still here. Tomorrow, the team will be going to Jinja to investigate under which circumstances this man blocked our road and grabbed people's land? I will get reports from the RCC and come back here to report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, finish it from there. In case a Member is not satisfied, that is when you can come back here.

MS NABBANJA: I will link up our team with him.

4.27

MR JOSEPH KOLUO (Independent, Toroma County, Katakwi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question to the Prime Minister is about the lack of a security patrol vehicle in Katakwi District for over five years.

Thieves have now taken advantage to load cows on a daily basis in enclosed vehicles. The Resident District Commissioner (RDC) reported that in less than three weeks, more than 30 cows were taken.

My prayer: The Ministry of Internal Affairs should avail a patrol car; since even Olilim Police Training School is in Katakwi. How do you train the police without them knowing what a "patrol car is"? Lastly, the people whose cows were taken should be compensated.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I am aware of that issue and we have had a number of meetings to see how best we can help the RDC and the DPC of that area. I am going to involve higher authorities in the police so that they can send there the Anti Stock Theft Unit (ASTU) those police that are trained to handle cattle theft; they will come to your area so that you get a unit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

4.29

MS JANE AVUR (NRM, Woman Representative, Pakwach): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This week the country woke up to a rude shock that we lost about 10 children in the district of Pakwach, reported to be emanating from food poisoning from the cassava they ate.

It is not clear whether it is about the variety of cassava or the processing. And, the reports from the district indicate that they have sent samples to the National Analytical Laboratory.

I would like to know from the Rt Hon. Prime Minister the interventions Government is taking or planning to take for the people of Pakwach District, especially for the families that lost loved ones; but also, because this cassava can find its way onto the market, either in restaurants or schools. We would like to know whether the results are out *-(Member timed out.)*

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I am aware of that incident. It is through the investigative arm of Government that we got those samples brought to Wandegaya, and we are waiting for a report which I believe will come out today. However, in the meantime, the following is being done:

- i) I have instructed our people to send the food to Pakwach so that those who are struggling to look for food do not eat that cassava.
- ii) The fishing community that changed the way of survival - Government removed the small boats which were killing

them and also the illegal nets. That was their livelihood. We have informed the President about this and we know very soon they will also be given- (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

4.32

MR RICKY ANYWAR (NRM, Agago West County, Agago): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Geregere Subcounty in Agago District is in total darkness since the tony ransformer, which serves more than 50,000 people, got blown up two years ago. Our effort to get help through the Ministry of Energy has failed.

My prayer is: Can the Prime Minister help us restore electricity in Geregere Subcounty? Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: Now that the minister is here, I am instructing him in your presence to handle that matter, immediately. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, that is a good one.

4.33

MR FRANCIS MWIJUKYE (FDC, Buhweju County, Buhweju): Thank you, Mr Speaker. On Tuesday, I raised a matter with respect to the disconnection of Buhweju and the neighbouring districts, due to the heavy rains. The bridges were washed away, roads were cut off and we cannot go to Ibanda, Sheema and Buhweju.

We are really stuck; we are now landlocked like I said the other day. Whereas I am supposed to go to Buhweju tomorrow, I cannot go. I have to remain here. It is an emergency for which I needed their attention. I have been communicating with the Prime Minister, and I need assurance that I can go to Buhweju tomorrow or something be done urgently.

MS NABBANJA: I already have that report in my office through the Member of Parliament and Hon. Koyekyenga. We have instructed UNRA and provided funding so that they can go and work on your roads.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

4.34

MR OKIN OJARA (FDC, Chua West County, Kitgum): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Gold is one of the minerals that are now highly exported in Uganda. And, when you check the balance of payment for Uganda, 2021 according to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), it is not even captured as one of the leading exports of the country.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I think it is within your docket to inform this House how gold is being explored, and the companies which are exporting these gold deposits; and you update Parliament with the mineral maps of Uganda because the locals whose mineral deposits are found there are asking for royalties.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, Cabinet, under the wise leadership of Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, came up with a strategy and we stopped the exportation of raw materials including gold. But now that the minister is here, I do not want to direct him. Let him come and tell you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have one minute, honourable minister, we do not have time.

MR LOKERIS: Mr Speaker, about gold, the law is there on how to exploit, process and export it. But there are also people who do illegal mining through porous borders and the law which we made here to stop that has not yet been assented to. Once it is assented to by the President, we will fix the loopholes which exist. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, read rule 41. You will see the rules on Prime Minister's Time. There is no clarification. There isn't - please - honourable, you are a senior colleague in this House; read the rules. I only apply the rules honourable. I don't apply anything. Hon. Edakasi, hon. Jane Bainomugisha and Hon. James Kubeketerya. Okay, they came here and booked and then went to Dubai.

4.36

MR ALFRED EDAKASI (NRM, Kaberamaido County, Kaberamaido): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise here on the issue I raised in this House sometime back about the denial of my cattle traders to access the ferry taking their cows to Amolatar. This matter has been raised here several times. The Prime Minister should tell us because the President's letter has expired. After this, I think I might end up debating against my own Government. I need the answer today. Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, after the Member brought up that issue during Prime Minister's Time, like three weeks or four weeks ago, we held a meeting between the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF); and we came up with a strategy to open up if they have not opened up to now. I think I will go back since the minister is here, and put it in writing, and the cows will definitely go to Amolatar.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, let the minister tell us. Why would you need to write to him when he is here?

4.38

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): Yes, as instructed, Mr Speaker, by my superior the Prime Minister, this is a two-docket issue. And, MAAIF has the final say on this one. However, we shall implement it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: But have you done your part? Because you need to do your part then -

GEN. MUHOOZI: My part in this is minimal, Mr Speaker. It is MAAIF, but we shall clear as instructed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. There is one honourable colleague behind - I haven't gotten the face well, and then the next.

4.40

MS VICTORIOUS ZAWEDDE (Independent, Woman Representative, Nakasongola): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to inform you that Nakasongola is among the districts that were submerged by water surrounding Lake Kyoga, and two were submerged; that is Rwampanga Health Centre III and Moone.

Mr Speaker, through you, I want to thank the Prime Minister for the positive response she made to these facilities; the UPDF contractors are doing some good work. But as the Prime Minister came for the oversight visit, we noticed that one staff quarter block was not considered, and the Prime Minister instructed the UPDF constructors to take over. However, up to date, they are saying they have no funds.

Therefore, I am requesting the Prime Minister to please follow up with the UPDF contractors so that they can implement the design for the Rwampanga Health Centre III. I would like to appreciate the Prime Minister, for being a hard-working lady and a down-to-earth person. *(Applause)*

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, that one is encouraging. I remember when I came here in 2021, after my tour across the country to assess the damage that was caused by floods - when I went to Rwampanga, I found those people had no health centre.

Therefore, remember the Shs 5 billion - so, we used the procedures in our accounting processes, and told the accounting officers to use at least Shs 5 billion instead of always pushing the food and non-food items so that we hit up for those people. So, that is what she is talking about.

Mr Speaker, we constructed the health centre in Rwampanga, then Moone Primary School -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Unfortunately, we don't have time for all those explanations as per our rules.

MS NABBANJA: I wanted to highlight – okay. But the districts of Amolatar and Buliisa benefited and the health centres are almost – but I will go and instruct the army brigade to make sure that, that staff house is constructed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Now colleagues, let me guide you: Prime Minister's Time is for – we love our Prime Minister. Very few of you love her the way I love her, but this is not the session for appreciating. No, it is not. During debate, you can appreciate and what – you know, I am constrained. It is a moment for sharp questions, and we get sharp answers. Okay, please. Yes.

4.41

MR JOHN LUKWAGO (DP, Kyotera County, Kyotera): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, last year in July, specifically 23 July 2021, I raised an issue regarding Kyotera-Masaka-Mutukula Road. You promised that by September there would be some maintenance work on it. It is almost a year now. No works, except for Masaka of about 5-7 kilometres were worked on. The road is in a very pathetic state. We are losing lives; and there are accidents on a daily basis. I want to know when this promise you made last year would come to be actualised. Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, that road connects us to our neighbours of Tanzania, and so, it is a priority road. The designs were completed last year. And, we had a meeting with the finance minister together with UNRA and the works minister; it is a priority road to be worked on. I promise!

4.43

MS NORAH BIGIRWA (NRM, Woman Representative, Buliisa): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the current state of flooding in Kampala City has led to the loss of lives and properties. What plans does Government have in solving the drainage problem in Kampala and its suburbs? Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: We had a meeting today with Kampala Capital City Authority officials to look for ways of stopping flooding. But we

are also appealing to the general public to stop disposing of polythene bags and plastic water bottles anyhow because they are the ones clogging the drainage system.

However, I will come back here with a report so that you people can be given what we have come up with in order to stop flooding in Kampala.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister. The minister for Kampala is required to bring a statement to that effect. She promised on Tuesday – she shouldn't be in the House.

4.44

MR BOSCO OKIROR (NRM, Usuk County, Katakwi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have a humble question to the Prime Minister in respect of the plight of our roads in Katakwi. The majority of our roads in Katakwi are marram. There is only one tarmac route going through up to Karamoja.

However, you find that because of floods, geographically, we are disadvantaged because Katakwi is on the lower belt of Karamoja and susceptible to floods. Currently, as we talk, the road from Katakwi going through Usuk to Ongongoja, where even the second citizen of this country comes from, has issues. It is cut off by floods and the roads are ravaged. Going to Obwobwo, all of them are big ditches.

When you go to the regional office of UNRA, they will tell you they do not have fuel and equipment. It is becoming a very big problem. The rest of the population is suffering. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we kindly appeal that you respond to the plight of the people; immediate risk reduction interventions should be done to those roads. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, on top of that, whereas the works minister was able to access my area and do an assessment, now even on foot, I don't think he can access Ruhinda North; even on foot, he cannot walk there. It is completely washed off. I don't know whether you should also cry here.

MS NABBANJA: You have already done it. Mr Speaker, the Vice-President had raised this issue and the Minister of Works and Transport – because we want to put culverts on that road to raise it. The Vice-President had talked about it. The Uganda National Roads Authority will go and work on it, including your road, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Oh, I am excited.

4.46

MR IGNATIUS WAMAKUYU (NRM, Elgon County, Bulambuli): Rt Hon. Prime Minister, last week, Elgon County experienced floods and mudslides. I shared the information with your teams on *WhatsApp* and got information that your teams were coming for assessment.

Up to now, nobody from your office has gone there to see what is happening. I have been waiting there for three days. People are displaced, bridges have been washed away and children are not going to school. What intervention do you have for Bulambuli County in the short, medium and long terms?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I request that you give me more than two minutes so that I answer this question conclusively.

Mr Speaker, Cabinet has come up with a strategy, under the guidance of the wise President of the Republic of Uganda.

We have been constructing houses and the construction takes too long. Through our consultative meetings with the Members of Parliament, we agreed that instead of struggling for years and years to construct houses, let us do cash transfers to people. When we give people money, they can go and buy land on their own. The Members of Parliament will help us to sensitise people so that people do not misuse the money.

We have already identified one of the donors, that is, GiveDirectly. This donor is going to give Shs 7 million per house, per household and the Government of Uganda has earmarked

Shs 10 million. I believe Shs 17 million is enough to bring down someone from the dangerous enclaves of the Elgon and Rwenzori mountains, so that we settle these people once and for all.

Once that is done, Government will plant forests and gazette it as a national park. We have come up with this design.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I had requested earlier on that you should not get tired of regularly meeting MPs from the Elgon area because the issues are very many in my Office.

Colleagues, if you had spoken earlier, please, you know that I will not pick you. So, do not bother standing.

4.49

MS JOAN ACOM (FDC, Woman Representative, Soroti City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My issue is about Soroti Regional Referral Hospital. In July, the Prime Minister was in Soroti and promised that she would work on the floodlights in the theatre, but up to now, the people in theatre are using torches other than the floodlights.

Secondly, we have only one delivery bed on the maternity side, and it is as new as 1954. My question is: When are you delivering on the promise you made to us in Soroti City?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: It is true I was in Soroti. *(Laughter)* You know the results: Hon. Ariko is there. I want to commit Government that we shall work on those floodlights. Let me now direct my sister here: Go and take floodlights to the theatre. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Lamwo?

4.50

MS NANCY ACORA (Independent, Woman Representative, Lamwo): Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, Lamwo is a refugee-hosting district, with about 60,000 refugees from South

Sudan. Lamwo District does not have a general hospital. We are being served by Padibe Health Centre IV.

In February, UNHCR and the Ministry of Health's commissioner in charge of infrastructure went to Lamwo to do assessment on the elevation and upgrade of the facility to a general hospital. However, up to now, we have not got any feedback.

Our prayer is that the Government of Uganda, through your office, upgrades Padibe Health Centre IV to a general hospital. Otherwise, Padibe is constrained. I beg to submit.

MS NABBANJA: We are going to use funds under the Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project (DRDIP) to work on that facility. It will be upgraded. Thank you.

4.51

MS ANNE TUMWINE (NRM, Woman Representative, Ntoroko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, there is a UNRA road from Karugutu Town Council to Kanara Town Council in Ntoroko District. This busy road takes goods to Congo. However, for the last two years, UNRA has not maintained this road and it is now impassable.

People are sleeping in Semliki Game Reserve because the road is very bad. The transport means mostly used now is motorcycles, but they are very insecure. This is the place where our NRM chairperson was killed.

I request the Prime Minister to order UNRA to maintain this road.

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

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker and colleagues, it is true that most roads in the country have had issues and they still have issues because of what happened in the last two years - COVID-19. However, yesterday and today, we have had meetings with the ministries and we are going to work on those roads. I promise.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. There are colleagues whose names I have forgotten. There is a colleague next to Hon. Lematia and the one behind Dr Ruyonga.

4.53

MR EVANS KANYIKE (NUP, Bukoto County East, Masaka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My concern to the Prime Minister is about a new report on business in Uganda, which shows that up to 55 per cent of Ugandans who opened business in the last five years have closed them due to a decline in capital, high cost of inputs, COVID-19 disruptions and heavy taxation.

This information is contained in the national report done by a non-governmental organisation called Twaweza. My question to the Prime Minister - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, did you pick it?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker and colleagues, the Member is saying that most of our businesses do not last for long - you start a business today and it does not see its second birthday.

Government has come up with strategies. We have the minister for cooperatives here. Please.

4.54

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (COOPERATIVES) (Mr Fredrick Gume): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Colleagues, businesses do not last for long because there is a lack of critical analysis for business ventures.

What we need to do is to carry out a mind-set change so that people can analyse the type of business they want to do in terms of how profitable it can be. This is a challenge we have -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: What are you doing about it, honourable minister?

MR GUME: Government is strategically engaged in telling people to:

1. Do business in an organised way;
2. Do business that has market; and
3. Deal in commodities where we can add value and be able to export.

That is what I have.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, it is okay but I request you to bring a statement in regard to this question so that we can have a comprehensive debate.

MR GUME: Most obliged, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, in one week's time. Honourable?

4.56

MS AGNES ACIBU (NRM, Woman Representative, Nebbi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I rise to present my concern about Nebbi-Goli-Zombo Road. I think we have all seen over social media, what is happening and the Nebbi-Goli route is one of the routes that generate a lot of income or taxes to our Government.

As we talk, we are completely cut off and Government is also losing a lot of revenue. May the Prime Minister give an answer today so that my soul is at rest. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, that road connects us to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, during a Cabinet debate on Monday, that road came up and the President directed the Minister of Works and Transport to make sure that, that road is made motorable. I believe the plan is there for Government to help that area because we get a lot of revenue from that road.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, let your soul rest but not in eternal peace. *(Laughter)*

4.57

MR PATRICK BINGI (NRM, Butemba County, Kyankwanzi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. We all appreciate the role of Resident District Commissioners (RDCs) in our respective districts. In Kyankwanzi, we have had three RDCs in the previous three months and I am told the fourth just settled in yesterday. As you are still introducing an RDC, and he is still getting acquainted with the projects in the area, another one comes.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, what explains the sudden deployments and transfers of RDCs?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister? She was once an RDC. *(Laughter)*

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, if this is happening, it is regrettable. I am going to take up the matter, inform the President. If this is true that members in that position are being transferred anyhow; it is not acceptable. Remember, I was an RDC; when you go to an area, you get to know the people and the geography; you set in place a number of things because you head security. Mr Speaker, I promise that this will be handled.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Gilbert Olanya?

4.59

MR GILBERT OLANYA (FDC, Kilak South County, Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, in 2010, Government registered those who lost their properties during the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) war in Acholi subregion, and Government promised to compensate those people. Up to now, we are waiting.

I would like to find out: When is Government going to compensate those who lost their properties like vehicles, houses, others lost their hands and ears, their mouths were cut by the LRA – Government registered those people. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I will liaise with the Attorney-General and I believe he will come with an answer. For cattle, we started and launched that programme in June in Soroti. But for these other properties, I will liaise with the Attorney-General.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Leader of the Opposition?

5.00

MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI (NUP, Butambala County, Butambala): Mr Speaker, I thank you.

Let me start with the Prime Minister's response to the people of Mount Elgon. "GiveDirectly" was closed during COVID-19 because it was trying to give out money and you closed it. Now, you are saying, "In Mount Elgon, it is going to give out money." Where have you gotten the newfound love and what could have gone wrong during the COVID-19 period that this agency was closed; now you are in love with it and it is giving money in the Mount Elgon area?

Secondly, Mr Speaker, the Prime Minister has spoken about population census. We are careful about the timing of the census. The timing of the population census determines representation of the people. I come from a region where we have huge numbers in terms of population size in constituencies. Because of that, the Electoral Commission has not demarcated new constituencies based on population. It has gone for Affirmative Action and districts, and that undermines -

That is why we call upon you to fast-track the population census and not do what you did the other time to bring the official results after the general election, because before elections, the Electoral Commission is supposed to demarcate constituencies - new ones as per the population census. We hope you will not gerrymander and cause a Parliament where effective lesser people are not effectively represented.

On the housing policy, Mr Speaker, I have seen you speak about the initiative of the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), but this country requires a profound housing policy. Housing is so critical. It is even one of the drivers of corruption. As people work - now you have said that about 50 per cent of our population is going to be living in urban areas - are you going to leave it to NSSF or does Government have a strategy on how to improve housing in this country? Where is the strategy? How many housing units will the country need and how will you build them?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the Opposition. Colleagues, this is a session where my hands are tied. I know most of you would want to ask but unfortunately, my hands are tied. So, if I do not pick you, please, kindly do not think I have refused to pick you out of what - the rules require me not to go beyond 5.00 p.m. and I have to follow the rules. But also, we have another session where you can contribute on other items. Next item?

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE DELAYED PAYMENT OF CONTRACTORS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF UGANDA

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. As the chairman comes, honourable members, in the Public Gallery this afternoon, we have pupils from St John's Nursery and Primary School, Kakumiro District. They are represented by the Rt Hon. Robinah Nabbanja and Hon. Fred Byamukama.

They have come to observe the business conducted in this House and see their Prime Minister. Please join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)* Thank you for coming and I hope you are inspired by your Prime Minister, one of you. *(Applause)* Thank you.

Honourable chairperson? You have strictly 20 minutes because I need 40 minutes of debate.

5.32

MR FELIX OKOT OGONG (NRM, Dokolo South County, Dokolo): Mr Speaker, you have made a ruling and I do not want to challenge your ruling. However, I would like the motion to come from the Members of Parliament that the report presented by the chairman of the Committee on Physical Infrastructure be expunged from the records of Parliament. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded?

5.32

MS ALUM SANTA (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I stand to second the motion. The road sector report is what we have been waiting for, for a very long time. It is affecting all of us throughout the country. So, I want to second the motion by saying that the report that has been given this evening should be removed completely from the records of Parliament and a very thorough and clean report be given before this Parliament.

Finally, Mr Speaker, this is a very important report. I don't see the ministers concerned – ministers for finance and works. So, on the day we will be receiving a clean report on this sector, I pray that all the ministers concerned will be present. I beg to support

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I put the question that the record to do with the whole of this item be expunged?

(Question put and agreed to.)

(Record expunged.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Felix Okot Ogong, I will appear a democrat on the record, but I also have the powers, as the Speaker, to direct that indeed, it be expunged. However, since Members want to participate in the expunging *-(Laughter)-* let us expunge wholeheartedly.

Colleagues, Hon. Anifa Kawooya has an item and she has been here. Honourable minister, are you ready?

RESPONSE BY THE MINISTER OF HEALTH ON THE URGENT QUESTION OF MONKEYPOX IN UGANDA

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, five minutes are enough.

5.34

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (GENERAL DUTIES) (Ms Anifa Kawooya): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This statement has been before the House for some time. I will deliver it within the five minutes that have been accorded me.

Mr Speaker, I take this opportunity to respond to a question raised by Hon. Aloysius Mukasa, MP Rubaga South, seeking clarification on monkeypox in Uganda and the risk factors, including sexual transmission.

Mr Speaker, the Director-General of the World Health Organisation, on 23 July 2022, declared the monkeypox outbreak, a public health emergency of international concern. This followed failure of the International Health Regulation Committee to reach a consensus in the two separate meetings.

From 1 January 2022 to 2 September 2022, a total of 52,015 laboratory confirmed cases have been reported in 102 countries globally, with 18 deaths, of which seven occurred in Africa. Of these African member states, Uganda is not inclusive.

A high proportion of 99 per cent of these cases have been reported from countries without previously documented monkeypox transmission. So far, only one per cent, that is 345 cases of the global number of cases, has been reported from the African countries that have previously reported a case.

Low severity was observed with a few reported cases of hospitalisation. The 18 deaths since January 2022 represent a case fatality rate of

3.5 per cent to every 10,000 patients, albeit the low mortality, but significant morbidity as shown above. It is clear, this is a rapidly expanding pandemic, which the Ministry of Health is taking very seriously.

Mr Speaker, the major causes of death among other reported deaths is a result of co-existence of septicaemia, severe immune suppression and other ailments.

Uganda has not had any confirmed case of monkeypox as of today. And, over the past four weeks, 59.9 per cent cases have been reported mainly in European regions and 42 per cent of these are from the Americas region.

Given the above, for now, the risk of massive monkeypox pandemic transmission is significantly low in Uganda. The ministry is following up through our surveillance system. This, however, does not mean that Uganda should not be on full alert. As I have said, we are surveilling and well prepared to respond in the event of transmission, if it escalates.

Mr Speaker and honourable members, as I said, the monkey pox epidemic in some African countries that include Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Gabon, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. This is where transmission has been reported as far back as 1970.

In these settings, the reservoir is among white monkeys and squirrels after the wildlife-human interface is breached. Further, human-to-human transmission is largely driven by contact with an infected person through the following means:

- i) The most reported mode of transmission is through contact during sex;
- ii) Person to person contact - close contact with skin lesions and body fluids, Ulcers or sores in the mouth and other mucocutaneous lesions; and

- iii) Inhaling contaminated particles or viruses usually in close proximity.

Common exposure settings include parties, bars, and large gatherings.

Mr Speaker, evidence available so far indicates that the highest risk factor is sexual transmission mainly by men who have sex with men.

Historically, the sexual component of transmission in the endemic African countries has been observed to contribute less to human-to-human transmission of monkeypox than has been observed in the on-going global outbreak mainly in the European countries and the Americas.

Mr Speaker and honourable members, as it is required by the International Health Regulations, on declaration of a public health emergency of international concern, member states are mandated to put in place measures to respond and mitigate the effects of the pandemic.

Therefore, in this regard, the Ministry of Health has activated the COVID-19 incident management system to support the monkeypox response in addition to continuing work on COVID-19 surveillance.

The Ministry of Health will ride on the success of the already existing COVID-19 incident management team and all its structures to effectively tackle monkeypox. As part of this assignment, assessment of response capacities has been undertaken.

Mr Speaker, in the immediate term, the Ministry of Health is finalising the preparedness response plan with consultation with the One Health Approach Plan, and other partners handling animal health.

In this plan, the ministry will evaluate the potential of transmission, and conduct baseline surveys to understand the potential transmission dynamics as a way to prioritise the response intervention.

The Director General, Health Services, alerted the nation through a press release. Further, circulars have been issued to all healthcare workers in case of detection, notification and management.

All district health officers and directors of regional referral hospitals, alongside the disease surveillance and laboratory focused persons, have been oriented on the monkeypox response and management, and both the district and the regional referral hospitals. The ministry has had two prime time media discussions on monkeypox to increase public awareness, and that is continuous.

Mr Speaker, to date, we have received 34 suspected alerts and which have all turned out negative. Initially, in the absence of the diagnostic capacity for monkeypox virus, samples were shipped to the National Institute for Communicable Diseases Laboratory in South Africa.

However, this capacity has been developed at the Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI), with support of partners, WHO and to date, the country has the capacity of the laboratories at UVRI to handle the case.

Mr Speaker, as I conclude, monkeypox belongs to the poxviridae family to which smallpox and cowpox belong. I think the doctors know this better now.

Since the declaration by the third World Health Assembly on 8 May 1980, of the eradication of smallpox in one of the most successful public health interventions, through vaccination and cessation of small pox vaccination thereafter, as a result, there is attendant increase in the population of susceptible individuals to monkeypox. This indicates that there is limited immune protection to monkeypox should major transmission occur.

Mr Speaker, the good news, however, is that the risk of transmission today in Uganda remains significantly low. As I have said, the major transmission is man to man; and as you

are aware, in Uganda, there is no man to man sexual transmission. That is why the risk is still very low.

The Ministry of Health will continue, from time to time, to carry out risk assessment, re-examine and revisit the interventions accordingly, and update the nation on whatever risks of monkeypox, in the event that it becomes severe.

I thank you, Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, and I pray that we observe the risks and the transmission pattern. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Honourable colleagues, the rules are very clear on such responses; under rule 44(2) only a supplementary question can be brought and it can only come from the Member who asked the question.

Therefore, if Hon. Aloysius Mukasa is not around, I hereby adjourn the House until Tuesday, next week, at 2 o'clock.

(The House rose at 5.44 p.m. and adjourned until Tuesday, 20 September 2022 at 2.00 p.m.)