

**PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA**

**Wednesday, 29 September 2021**

*Parliament met at 2.06 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.*

PRAYERS

*(The Speaker, Mr Jacob Oulanyah, in the Chair.)*

*The House was called to order.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I welcome you to this afternoon’s sitting. My communication is not much today. The honourable member seated on the Opposition side, it must be very lonely there; you make quorum that side.

Honourable members, our colleagues, Dr Erisa Rutahigwa, Member of Parliament for Rukungiri Municipality; hon. Irene Muloni, Member of Parliament for Bulambuli District; and hon. Martin Muzaale, Member of Parliament for Buzaaya County in Kamuli District have in the recent past lost their beloved parents.  Hon. Herbert Kinobere, Member of Parliament for Kibuku and hon. Derrick Orone of Gogonyo County lost their brothers.

Honourable members, the country has also lost Dr Joseph Byamugisha. Those of you in the legal world know who he is; a legal colossus and former President of the Uganda Law Society. Please, join me in commiserating with the said honourable members and the family of Dr Joseph Byamugisha for the loss of their loved ones. We pray that the Almighty strengthens their spirit and faith. For this and those who have also departed that we may not know, let us rise and observe a moment of silence.

*(Members rose and observed a moment of silence.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the 23rd National Prayer Breakfast will be held, in a scientific manner, on Friday 8 October, 2021 at State House, Entebbe, starting at 7.00 a.m. The theme of this year’s National Breakfast is *“*Responsibility before God and man.”

The keynote Speaker will be Prof. Vishal Mangalwad. The guest of honour will be His Excellency, President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni and the host will be Jacob Oulanyah, except that I will be hosting at State House this time.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and the need to accommodate other branches of Government, the business community, civil society and the international guests, Parliament will be represented by a limited number of members. We seek for your understanding on this. There has been no particular criteria - I was not even involved in the selection of the members that will participate in this event at Entebbe.

Arrangements have been made for a satellite centre at the Parliamentary Conference Hall to enable other Members and guests participate in the National Prayer Breakfast.

In addition, the country and the world will follow the events through the streaming Zoom service and other media platforms. Thank you very much.

Honourable members, I now wish to use my prerogative to alter the Order Paper to accommodate a statement from the honourable Minister of Security. If you recall, there was a statement made by the shadow minister on the electronic tracking and I had asked him to respond to the statement today.

Although it is not reflected on the Order Paper, it is scheduled today because the statement is ready. I will call the alteration of the Order paper for the Clerk later to call this matter so that we can handle it as well.

I will also alter the Order Paper to accommodate three additional Bills that have not been included because they were brought after the Order Paper had already been published. As you can see, on the Order Paper, we have three Bills but I received three additional Bills, which should be handled as well today; the ministers are aware of this.

I have the Physical Planners Registration Bill, 2021, the Supplementary Appropriation No. 2 Bill, 2021 and the Supplementary Appropriation No. 3 Bill, 2021. These three Bills should be included on the Order Paper for first reading today and the necessary guidance will be given to the committees on how to handle them.

As you can see from the Order Paper, we already have item 1, which is the National Social Security Fund (Amendment) Bill, which has been a subject of public discourse. I promised the country that this Bill will see daylight so that we handle it expeditiously. I will be giving guidance on how we handle the Bills that were returned and those coming for the first time.

Honourable members, you will recall the events of yesterday in this House and outside this House. Concerns were raised about the re-arrest of our colleagues, the two Members of Parliament, who had been granted bail.

At the time of the proceedings, I was not yet briefed about what transpired before. However, later when I left the Chambers, I was informed by the Deputy Speaker that she had received the summons from the police indicating that hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya, Member of Parliament for Kawempe North and hon. Allan Ssewanyana, Member of Parliament for Makindye West, were required. The details are here and are signed by a one Paul Kato Tumuhimbise, Director of Criminal Investigations.

Had this been brought to my attention early, we would have not over insisted on the respect of the Office of the Speaker in the process of handling Members of Parliament. They are dated 23 September 2021 but we received them late; the people who transmitted these documents delayed.

As a result of what happened yesterday, I had a meeting this morning with the Government Chief Whip, the Minister of Security and the Minister of State of Internal Affairs; all of whom are here. The meeting was also attended by the Leader of the Opposition. We came to some agreement about how we handle this difficult situation. We had agreed that we would all be here.

However, just before I came, I received a phone call from the Leader of the Opposition indicating that he has not ben able to talk to his members; so, he is bound to respect the views of the Members whom he had not consulted. They took a decision that they were not yet satisfied and so, they will not be coming to the House.

I said I respected that but I also told him; “Please be in a place where you can monitor so that he sees how we discuss these things and how they have been handled so far. If it is satisfactory to you, then you can join the House later.” However, he is standing by his colleagues, many of whom have gone to Masaka for the proceedings in court there.

We expect the Minister of Internal Affairs to be making a brief to Parliament immediately after my communication because he is not on the Order Paper. He will give us an update on how far we have gone with the subject. If it gives confidence to the people who have taken exception to a high level on the processes that happened, then we will see that some of them will come but if it does not, we will also see what comes.

I also have some urgent matters; I do not know whether to deal with them now because the Order Paper is quite loaded. Let us see what we can do – *(Hon. Member rose\_)* Let me deal with the Minister then I will come to you, honourable member for Adjumani.

2.18

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi):** Mr Speaker, following our meeting today morning, this is an update to the House regarding the matter of the two honourable members - hon. Allan Ssewanyana and hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya - which for want of information, regrettably led to the walk-out yesterday of the Members of the Opposition.

As a recap, Mr Speaker, the two Members of Parliament were arrested, charged and remanded on the 7 September 2021. They got bail on 20 September 2021.

However, in the course of the investigations, fresh information arose that warranted their re-arrest, which was effected on 23 September 2021 and 27 September 2021, respectively.

Criminal summons in this respect were, indeed, issued to the Office of the Speaker as procedure demands. They were held at Kireka until today, when they have been transferred to Masaka for production in court.

The Police is in touch with their lawyers who have been allowed access to their clients.

Your good self also raised the medical concerns of the hon. Ssegirinya and arrangements to allow him to be accessed by his doctors have been put in place.

We shall exert our energies to ensure that all people irrespective of their station in life get just and equal treatment before the law through a speedy and fair trial process.

That is the only way that the interests and concerns of both the victims of crime - for whom the state is enjoined to legally revenge - and the alleged offenders can be assuaged through due process. I beg to submit, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, in addition to what the Minister has said, in our meeting today, it was raised that the health condition of hon. Ssegirinya is not that good.

The Minister requested that if we, as Parliament and Speaker, could release our ambulance so that they do not handle him with police ambulances it would be better. They would also arrange with hon. Ssegirinya’s private doctor so that the Parliament ambulance can go and pick hon. Ssegirinya and take him for evaluation so that if his condition is not too well, it can be stabilised and whatever it is, they would see how to medically intervene in case he is not feeling very well.

I granted that permission and now that that matter is here, if the situation should arise, the Parliament ambulance and the doctor therein plus the doctor of hon. Ssegirinya will be meeting in Masaka and evaluate and see if there is need of evacuation or reference to another health facility, which they can then do in accordance with the terms that we agreed. Thank you.

**MR SSEKIKUBO:** Thank you, Mr Speaker *–(Interjections)–* I do not need the guidance of the “Arrow Boy”, hon. Ecweru, to guide me on how to proceed on my matters -

**THE SPEAKER:** Are you referring to hon. Ecweru?

**MR SSEKIKUBO:** Mr Speaker, he was heckling. I listened very attentively. In your communication, you said, indeed, criminal summons had been presented to Office of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker.

The Minister in his submission said on being given bail, there was need for their re-arrest. That means that they did not allow the full processes of your office to serve these honourable members. The question is; why didn’t they allow that process to take place - if they knew they wanted to re-arrest them and they had the means to arrest them, why did they dupe your office that they were serving you with criminal summons?

Ordinarily, criminal summons are supposed to be transmitted. Honourable minister, if you knew that you had taken the position to re-arrest the suspects, why did you now want to involve the Office of the Speaker and yet, you knew you are not sincere with those summonses to the Office of the Speaker?

One thing can be deduced from that conduct; the Minister is saying that they are at liberty to arrest anybody without any due regard to the processes -

**THE SPEAKER:** But honourable, we know our rules on insinuations of motive other than good, so, please, let us stick to the rules.

**MR SSEKIKUBO:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Honourable Minister, why are you treating Members - now that you are here and not yesterday you were not here - why are you arresting and then after inform the Speaker and yet, the matter is the other way round? You inform the Speaker about the need for a particular Member to appear before Police and be able to answer questions that you may want a Member to answer. I am not saying that Members of Parliament are above the law; that is not my position. All I am saying is; why aren’t you following the due process and procedures?

As we are sitting here, one of us - hon. Ssegirinya - you are now realising that his health deteriorated in the course of your arrest. Why are you putting the lives of Members of Parliament at risk over a matter that you would have handled in a civilised manner by following the due process? Why are you being highhanded when handling Members and yet, you know you can also be here at some point in time? We have seen it. Those who were tormenting Members of Parliament and the public are themselves crying now.

Parliament, through its committee, went to check on the safe houses and the then Director of ISO, Col Kaka brushed off the committee of Parliament in a very dishonourable manner but he is now the one seeking for protection from the same Parliament.

So hon. Muhoozi, when you stand here and you say; “Yes, we found it necessary to arrest without the due process,” where do you think you are standing? Many ministers preceding you have ever stood here and have ever made the same statements -

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, the point is made, honourable member.

**MR SSEKIKUBO:** Can you, therefore, apologise to the Speaker and the House for your underhand methods and showing the force of law when you need not do that?

Mr Speaker, can you, therefore, compel the minister to say sorry to this House and then he promises that this is the last time such an act is being done? I propose, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** The clarification was to the minister not a request from the Speaker.

**GEN. MUHOOZI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think I was clear. I said criminal summons were issued and it is on record that the Speaker acknowledged the same.

Regarding my fate, I think hon. Ssekikubo should not blackmail me. I will do my work the way I think it should be done. However, we shall assure Ugandans and the House that due process will be followed in this case and these Members of Parliament will be produced in court to stand a fair trial. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** No. The issue was, did you give the Speaker the criminal summons before the arrest? If not, why? If it was wrong, apologise to us. That is what he was saying.

**GEN. MUHOOZI:** Sir, transmissions delayed and I would like to apologise for that and we move on, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much. I thought this matter is closed. Do you want to open it again? Let us keep it this way *–(Hon. Mbayo rose\_) -* On what matter do you rise, hon. Mbayo?

2.28

**MS ESTHER MBAYO (NRM, Woman Representative, Luuka):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I appreciate the fact that the matter has been closed but the plight of Members of Parliament should be respected.

A week ago, I was out of the country and I was called by an official at Kibuli summoning me to go to Kibuli and make a statement. In my wisdom, I told him to summon me through my boss, the Rt hon. Speaker of Parliament. He said it is a system, which was and it is now not respected.

My issue is, do the officials at the Criminal Investigations Department know what to do or not? Mr Speaker, shortly after that, you made a call to me and I told you that I was out of the country and when I come back, I would be able to go and make a statement but through the Speaker of Parliament.

When I came to you, you told me that the process of summoning a Member of Parliament should be respected and it is still in place. Therefore, my question is, do we have people in this country that respect the rule of law? Really, the Members of Parliament should be respected. I felt it right to put it on record, Mr Speaker. The way we are being treated is not the way an honourable Member of Parliament should be treated. I submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, hon. Mbayo. I think you should have recounted the full story for the benefit of the Members.

Indeed, I received criminal summons for hon. Mbayo and I called her because she was supposed to *– (Hon. Mbayo rose\_)–* No, I am just going to comment on what you have said. Please, resume your seat.

I received summons today when she was supposed to appear the next day. I then decided to call her and I found out that she was out of the country. I think it was a Thursday. I said, “Okay, since you are out of the country, if they are still interested, they will reissue.” I wrote back to the police and said, “The Member whose attendance you request for tomorrow is not in the country. She will come back next week on Monday. Please, reissue the summons if it is still necessary.”

It is now over two weeks and I have not seen any further summons to this effect. Therefore, hon. Mbayo has not been able to go and make a statement.

Honourable members, these provisions of the law are not just decorations; they are for a purpose where systems are respected. Yesterday, I said sometimes, senior people issue instructions and the people implementing them fail to step them down for them to be within the law. However, the person who issues the instructions ends up taking the blame.

Ordinarily, even if you are to arrest a Member of Parliament, it should not be junior officers or constables but officers of a certain rank. If you are sending some soldiers, God forbid, to bring Gen. Muhoozi, you are not going to send military police with no ranks. You will send a certain fellow who can say, General, we are here and we have to go so that there is that rapport and respect for office and title as well. I think these are things we should know and when we are passing these messages to the people going to implement our instructions, please, categorise them.

A Member of Parliament should not be arrested by a police constable because they do not know the rules. Even if they know, sometimes, they exceed the limit. That is why we say once the Speaker has given, ordinarily – You know, I can even drive a Member to see CID. If I have free time, I will say let us go, I will leave you there and come back. A Member of Parliament has nowhere else to go except constituency and here.

Therefore, we should respect that and when we issue these summons, we should respect them. When we call each Member, we inform them and they come straight to police and record statements. If there is need for detention, that will follow from there; outside the cameras or public things. The way this one was handled, Gen. Muhoozi, was not right. I have seen the video clip, it was not right. These are things you need to change as we go along so that respect is given to each of the citizens of this country and they are treated fairly within the law.

I watched the clip and I was very upset. However, that is it and I thought I should say this for whatever it is worth because it should not be happening. I am not saying Members of Parliament are special but anyway, they are Members of Parliament. To that extent, they are special because we only have 529 Members of Parliament and there is no other outside this. Therefore, we are a special group of 529 people, including the Speaker. *(Applause)* Please, let us accommodate and it helps eventually. We would not have had this situation, which we have had now but let us see what we can do for business today.

I will cause alterations in the Order Paper and we will accommodate this situation. No further comment on this matter, honourable. Is it the same matter? No, this one is closed now. The Speaker has concluded this matter. Have you forgotten that hon. Mbayo is female?

**MR MOSES ALEPER:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. On the 12 September 2021, you accorded me an opportunity to raise a matter of urgent importance because on 9 September 2021, a bridge had been washed away in my constituency, on the Muyembe-Nakapiripirit Road.

On that very day, after raising that matter of urgent importance, the Government Chief Whip promised that there would be a response from the Government on 22 September 2021. That came to pass without any response.

I wrote a letter to the Minister of Works and Transport, copied to your office and the Government Chief Whip. I am surprised that up to today, nothing has been done concerning that bridge.

I remember that, that very day, I clearly said we were cut off – the three districts of Nabilatuk, Nakapiripirit and Amudat – from eastern Uganda.

The plight of the people is deplorable. The people of Nabilatuk, Nakapiripirit and Amudat, because of the situation of the looming famine, are dependent on the trade traffic from Mbale. Now, they are in desperation.

I would like to note something, Mr Speaker –

**THE SPEAKER:** No, you rose on procedure.

**MR ALEPER:** Yes. I would like to note that similar tragedies happen elsewhere in this country and the Government reacts very fast. I remember what happened in Kasese. A few days ago, something happened in Lango and there was even a chopper that took the Rt Hon. Prime Minister to that place to see what had happened there.

The people of Nakapiripirit District are wondering whether they are really part of this country because nothing is forthcoming from the Government.

I would like to request you, Mr Speaker, that before we proceed with the matters of this House today, it is procedurally right for an answer to come from the Government on this issue. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** You have already ruled. *(Laughter)* Honourable ministers, when Members bring these things up, they are counting on you to help them deal with the situations that afflict their people. The Government Chief Whip, you made a public commitment on the record. Where is the Minister of Works? Hon. Ecweru was here. Now -

2.39

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Yes, Mr Speaker. That is why I request that, in a few minutes, I will ensure that he is back to answer.

**THE SPEAKER:** The honourable member has said that we should not proceed. I think he is borrowing from –*(Laughter) (Where upon Mr Ecweru entered the Chamber.)* Hon. Musa Ecweru, thou shalt not disappear each time a matter affecting you is about to come. *(Laughter)*

The issue of the three districts of Nabilatuk, Nakapiripirit and Amudat being cut off by a bridge - two weeks ago, they raised a matter and the Government Chief Whip said you would show up there: nothing has happened.

2.40

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Musa Ecweru):** Mr Speaker, first of all, my apologies. I had just been called by my senior colleague to give me an update on one or two things. I apologise to the House. It was not deliberate that I stepped out when the proceedings were ongoing.

The condition of most of our roads in the country, at the moment, is not good, particularly due to the floods that are ravaging the entire country.

What we have done, as a ministry, is to mobilise culverts so that we can support the districts to ensure that most of the critical roads remain navigable.

As for Karamoja, we have had a discussion with one of our critical agencies, UNRA, to ensure that, within the next few days, the connection between Namalu and the rest of the country is restored, even if it means doing some temporal intervention while major works are being planned. That is the directive that the ministry has given our agency, UNRA.

Mr Speaker, it is true that I have been directed by H.E. the President to go to Karamoja to meet the leadership of Karamoja – the Members of Parliament, local Government leaders and, indeed, the commanders of UPDF - so that among the interventions that my ministry is supposed to undertake there, some include opening what we call “security roads” to facilitate the disarmament.

My plan was, and continues to be, that in the next few days, I will be moving when the Members of Parliament can avail time for me to meet them in Moroto together, with the local leadership and the leadership of UPDF, so that we talk about what has been affected by climatic conditions.

**THE SPEAKER:** Can you quantify the next few days? I remember some leader said “I will come back” and 2,000 years later, he is not yet here.

**MR ECWERU:** My worry is telling Parliament that I am going on Wednesday, then Wednesday arrives when I am not ready. However, I can assure you, Mr Speaker, that I left the ministry this afternoon when arrangements were being made to facilitate the process of this meeting, together with the management of the Karamoja ministry.

**THE SPEAKER:** I am not talking about your meeting. I am talking about the bridge.

**MR ECWERU:** The bridge that connects Namalu – I will be able to inform this House when work has started. I am sure that the agency, UNRA, must have started doing work because the directive was given three days ago.

**MR SILWANY:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to seek a clarification from you, honourable minister. If I recall very well, the last time a Member of Parliament came here and had an issue on roads was about one week ago.

You stood here, in the same place, and told the whole House that in a few days, you were going to sort out the matter. The clarification I am seeking – because this has been the same statement and these roads are killing us – is, how many days does it take the ministry to give a candid response to a Member of Parliament or to hold a meeting with the community that is affected and you give effective and timely answers to that particular community and that particular group of people? What particular time would you need? It has been an ongoing flat statement and it does not give us the exact answer and the comfort we need. I would like to know exactly how long you need.

**THE SPEAKER:** In the case of the Member for Chekwii, the matter was raised two weeks ago, honourable minister.

**MR ECWERU:** Mr Speaker, I will come back to this House tomorrow and indicate the progress that has been made –

**THE SPEAKER:** We do not want you to come back to the House. We want you to go and fix that bridge. Coming to the House is not helpful, if people are not travelling.

**MR ECWERU:** Why I am saying so –

**THE SPEAKER:** I am saying that you do not have to come to the House. Just go to the bridge: send your people there.

**MR ECWERU:** Mr Speaker, my team will go to the bridge tomorrow.

**THE SPEAKER:** Their action there will come to Parliament, somehow. *(Applause)* You do not have to come and tell us that you have called people.

I think there is a similar urgent matter from the Member from Adjumani had an urgent matter.

2.46

**MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The urgent matter from the people of Adjumani is a broken Iraji Bridge, which has disconnected us totally from Pakele to Pabbo. Some of the areas, which have been totally cut off are Adidi, Sukari, Apeni, Ajeri, Olwi and Oninyara. These people are totally locked down.

My prayer is that the four roads be worked on. Otherwise, for the bridge, it has taken one year and it has now become a death trap.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, I thought it was a similar situation. Yes, honourable minister -

2.47

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Musa Ecweru):** Mr Speaker, I am familiar with the situation of Iraji Bridge.

While I was working in the Office of the Prime Minister, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) gave the contract of this bridge to some organisation because the bridge connects our refugee hosting communities but the organisation turned out to be incompetent. The contract was cancelled and at that time, there was a promise by the United Nations, through the Office of the Prime Minister, to review this.

Mr Speaker, I will look at what transpired, particularly between the UN and the teams that were supposed to work on this bridge so that we see what happens – *(Interruption)*

**MS ABABIKU:** Mr Speaker, the procedural matter I am raising is based on the minister’s information. The bridge he is talking about is different from what I have mentioned. They all have the same name but they are at different places. *(Laughter)*

Therefore, the procedural matter I am seeking relates to the minister's statement. Otherwise, he is talking about a wrong bridge. Mr Speaker, I am talking about another bridge -

**THE SPEAKER:** Can you now state the location properly, for the minister’s benefit?

**MS ABABIKU:** Yes. The issue I have raised concerns the security road from Pakele to Pabbo, where part of Iraji Bridge is cut off. However, the bridge the minister has talked about is in a different location. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** But it is not spoiled.

**MR ECWERU:** Mr Speaker, we need to get our facts together. However, the point is: we are going to check what is going on and I am sure that this will be done. The Government has a commitment to work on all these bridges so that we can make them at least navigable.

Again, the point I want to make clear to honourable colleagues is that right now, there are many roads and bridges that are being washed off, as a consequence of the flooding that is happening across the country. We will, at all times, endeavour to make most of these roads at least navigable. Though we may not be able to do much work, particularly, if they are totally inundated until the water subsides. That is the position.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much. Can we now go to the Order Paper? *(Ms Opendi rose\_)* There is a matter from the Member for Tororo District.

2.50

**MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. The matter I am going to raise was raised sometime last year. We are supposed to be having –

**THE SPEAKER:** So, it is not urgent.

**MS OPENDI:** It is very urgent, Mr Speaker. *(Laughter)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Was it raised last year?

**MS OPENDI:** Yes. *(Laughter)* Mr Speaker, you are aware that we had a lockdown because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, Malaba, being a border town, was also closed but later the country was fully opened.

Malaba was designed in such a way that small-scale business people who conduct businesses that do not require declaration at customs were supposed to pass through a certain small gate. However, Mr Speaker, following the closure of our borders, this small gate was locked last year in April.

Today, as we speak, Malaba is a ghost town. The town council that used to collect revenue from the small businesses can no longer collect any revenue. People’s livelihoods have been affected.

The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, where I wrote a letter initially had recommended for the opening of that small gate and they wrote to the Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Health also had no objection to the opening of this gate.

Mr Speaker, we have now been moving in circles between the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives and Ministry of Health. They say it is the Ministry of Security and then, it is the Resident District Commissioner (RDC). I do not know who now has the key. The RDC told me last week that he does not have the key to that small gate.

I request that the responsible ministers open this small gate so that the small business communities can do business. Remember, the people from Kenya would come to Uganda to buy our food – *(Interjections)* – Yes, it is there. It was designed and constructed in that way. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I request that you direct the ministers of health and security to have our small gate opened, so that people’s livelihoods can be restored.

**THE SPEAKER:** I might have to find out from the Government Chief Whip who has the key -*(Laughter)*– of the small gate. Tell us; who has the key?

2.53

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. We shall have a meeting tomorrow to resolve this issue at 10 o’clock and I invite hon. Sarah Opendi to be in attendance. Let us meet and resolve this issue and –*(Interjections)*– We shall resolve issues of the key. *(Laughter)*

2.54

**MS CHRISTINE APOLOT (NRM, Woman Representative, Kumi):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. You are aware that I raised the issue of a road from Kumi to Ongino Hospital, up to Wakide. The hospital is completely cut off.

On behalf of the people of Kumi, may I get clarification from the honourable Minister of Works and Transport when work can take off along that road? I thank you.

2.54

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Musa Ecweru):** Let me, at the risk of sounding personal, declare my conflict of interest, Mr Speaker. I will, on my way to Amuria, check on that road on Saturday because it is not very far from where I pass, when I am going to the constituency.

I had arranged to inform the honourable member, if she could be kind to avail us time, so that we meet. I have mobilised the engineers in UNRA and the works ministry to accompany me through that road on Saturday, as I go to the constituency.

**THE SPEAKER:** So, you actually know the date when you are going. Earlier on, you said you cannot tell us when you are going yet now, you have told us that you are going on Saturday. We have got the information finally. *(Laughter)* Honourable minister, thank you very much.

2.55

**MR ELIJAH OKUPA (Independent, Kasilo County, Serere):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The matter I am raising is of national importance.

Over the weekend, on the junction of Spear Motors to Ntinda or just opposite the Inspection of Vehicles office (IOV), some people decided to start erecting barriers on the land, which is under the road reserve for UNRA, yet, it is also a wetland.

Mr Speaker, in the last Parliament, I remember you directed - when there was an attempt again to put up a petrol station - and hon. Byabagambi then sent a team that demolished the structures. Over the weekend, the same people came down. I have crossed-checked with KCCA and they denied having approved whatever is going on there. By yesterday, they had encircled it with the white iron sheets to the extent of wanting to demolish the KCCA street clock.

There is drainage and a stream flowing all the way from the barracks, crossing the road up to the Pepsi Cola plant. If this is allowed to continue, we shall see floods in the areas of Kyambogo and Spear Motors. It is also under the electricity way leaves. Therefore, I wonder how someone with a sane mind can do that.

Mr Speaker, I would like to pray that you do the same thing you did last time directing the ministers responsible - Minister of Works, Minister of KCCA, Minister of Environment and Minister of Energy - to have these structures demolished. I also pray that the person responsible be apprehended including those - if at all he has a title - but for the approvals, I have confirmed from the Director for Physical Planning whom I talked to this afternoon and denied having approved anything.

He only said that one time last year, they had tried to smuggle something similar but that they rejected and hence that work is being done illegally.  The pace at which the work is going on, something needs to be done and must be done now. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

2.58

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS)** **(Mr Musa Ecweru):** Mr Speaker, this information is coming to me for the first time. I would beg that the honourable colleague avails me adequate information after this Sitting and I will take it up with my colleague and see what intervention we can make very urgently.

**THE SPEAKER:** You have all the information. The point is opposite IOV, it is a swamp, it is a way for electricity; that road reserve corner on the road to Ntinda, along Jinja Road. So, you have the entire information, honourable minister.

**MR ECWERU:** I have heard, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Please, act and such areas should not be degraded because if they are, then, we are threatened.

**MR ECWERU:** Thank you.

**MR TIMUZIGU:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. From the submission concerning building a petrol station, you may remember that a number of buildings in Kampala have collapsed. KCCA has always come out to deny the knowledge of those buildings. The same matter is coming and KCCA is denying knowledge of that petrol station.

Mr Speaker, wouldn’t it be procedurally right for the Minister of KCCA to present a statement to the House about why in Kampala, buildings and any other forms of structures are being put up without the knowledge of KCCA, yet, it is not acting? Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you but it goes beyond that because we also have NEMA. Some of these things have to be with certification from NEMA to prove that an Environmental Impact Assessment was done and its report approved and that a certificate was issued by NEMA. Therefore, if it is a dangerous place, wet land or things like that, that requires one obtaining a certificate from NEMA.

However, in the case of KCCA approving - I do not know whether they approved it but they just denied - what can we do? Why should we call the minister to make a statement here; about what? About things they do not know since the officer denied it?

However, it questions the inspection arm of KCCA. Did they do proper inspection? I mean the building is coming up in the junction of a road near Spear Motors and IOV; would KCCA not know especially when it is on a highway? What has happened to the inspectors of KCCA who used to be there and all these activities?

If they deny knowledge really - if it were some secret place in some place where nobody can reach, one would understand. However, in public places, like I remember the one which was being done here below Crested Towers, the other side on the road reserved at the roundabout and somebody denies knowledge? We need to see how to do this. Anyhow, I will not solicit for a statement from the minister to this House.

3.02

**THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank hon. Okupa for raising this matter. It has been a challenge where Ugandans just erect structures without necessary approvals.

Last year, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development brought here an amendment to the Physical Planning Act and we passed it. We strengthened the Physical Planning Board, whose secretariat we also approved.

As a matter of information, the secretariat is now being constituted and they are recruiting inspectors who will be situated in different cities to work. In the case of Kampala, they will closely work with KCCA to regularly monitor.

Like hon. Okupa has raised, they should be able to detect these kinds of structures, which are being erected and corrective measures are taken even before hon. Okupa has noticed any problem. Therefore, going forward, this function is being strengthened by Government.

We appeal to the public - because there are laws, regulations and guidelines - that if you want to erect a structure, whether a fuel station or a building, follow the procedures; people should not just construct anyhow.

Therefore, we undertake, like the minister said earlier, to follow up on what hon. Elijah Okupa has raised especially on the possibility that if the construction is being done outside the regulations, then corrective measures should be taken and that will be applicable to anywhere in the country. Thank you very much.

3.01

**MR GERALD NANGOLI (NRM, Elgon County North, Bulambuli):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I rise on a matter of urgent national importance. My people in Elgon North experienced heavy rains early this week - on 26th and 27th - that lasted for more than eight hours each day.

As I speak, it has caused havoc, destroyed crops ranging from beans, matooke plantation, onions, cabbages and maize. About 200 households have been affected in the sub counties of Namisuni, Masiira, Buginyanya, Bufumbo and Sisiyi. All these people are locked out and need some urgent attention.

My prayer, Mr Speaker, is to request the Minister of Relief and Disaster Preparedness to come up with an immediate remedy for these people, especially for the five parishes of Gabukoto, Nameezi, Namudongo and Mabano. These people are on my neck.

However, as you earlier directed, Mr Speaker, it is very important that when we raise these issues here on the Floor of Parliament, the respective ministers should get in touch with the honourable Member of Parliament for that particular constituency when they are going on the ground. This is because it is on record that when we mention these matters, the ministers go to the ground without the knowledge of the Member of Parliament of that constituency. You only see them on TV and yet, we are the ones who have raised matters of national importance on the Floor of Parliament. Thank you very much.

3.06

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Mr Speaker, the Bugisu Subregion, where hon. Nangoli comes from, is one of the areas we are critically looking at by virtue of being a disaster-prone area.

Tomorrow, at 11.00 a.m., hon. Nangoli, please, come and we meet with the Minister of Disaster Preparedness to make sure we address the issue and people get off your neck.

**THE SPEAKER:** A member has said that they do not see the people on your neck right now. I think that is use of language.

**DR BARYOMUNSI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is a rainy season and almost every Member has issues in his or her constituency regarding the destruction caused by the rains. Even this afternoon, several Members are raising issues regarding the destruction of roads and bridges.

Could we probably, as Parliament, have a mechanism and Members of Parliament raise all these issues? This is because those of us seated here quietly also have similar issues in our constituencies. We should probably give them to the Office of the Prime Minister, particularly the Minister of Disaster Preparedness and then he brings a comprehensive report on what is happening in the country.

I am sure even Omoro County could also have the similar issues because they are experiencing rains. Instead of raising them piecemeal, could we have a central focus where all of us submit the destructions in our constituencies and then we enable the Minister of Disaster Preparedness to bring a comprehensive report on how the situation is in the country? If he requires more resources, we could then have that discussion to fix all these issues in our constituencies. That is the point of procedure.

**THE SPEAKER:** The real challenge is that sometimes, it cannot wait for the compilation of all these and a report. Sometimes, a report is not even necessary. What is required on the ground is immediate action. How do you then first wait to compile and give a statement to Parliament when there is no bridge is Chekwii and parishes are being washed away? How do you wait for compilation of these things?

These things raised under Rule 49 are of an urgent nature that require immediate response. As for broken bridges and the compilation, that is up to the minister but the ordinary people – when there is a disaster – the CAOs will also have done what they should do to submit to the Office of the Prime Minister.

Now, the Members who raise these issues are Members of Parliament and this is their place to air out their views. We cannot deny them the opportunity to use the time here and inform the rest of Parliament that a disaster has occurred in their place. Let us try to see how to balance it but the ministers responsible – like the other time, we had the one for environment. There was a big list of stuff and things like that.

The only thing you should do if there is an urgent matter is to come to the Speaker and discuss it and we see how to address it. This business of showing up from here - I cannot see you on an urgent matter. You need to come and we discuss it and we proceed from there. That is what Rule 49 says for urgent matters. Can we now go to the Order Paper? Thank you.

BILLS

FIRST READING

THE NATIONAL SOCIAL SECURITY FUND (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2021

3.11

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (ELDERLY AFFAIRS) (Mr Dominic Gidudu):** Mr Speaker, this is my maiden appearance here and it is a privilege to address you for the first time. I am here on behalf of the elderly persons in the eastern region. I am not alone but we are five elderly Members of Parliament. We thank all those that made it possible for us to be here in Parliament. *(Applause)*

I am standing in for the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, hon. Betty Amongi. My duty today is to lay before Parliament the National Social Security Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2021. I move that and lay it before Parliament. That is my first duty.

**THE SPEAKER:** Okay, since it is your maiden appearance, those who have done it many times would have done it differently. They would have said, “Mr Speaker, I beg that the Bill entitled X be read for the first time.” That is how they would have done it. Since it is your maiden speech, I have told you what others used to do.

**MR GIDUDU:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. That is why I told you I am happy to address you today. *(Laughter)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, you know there is a background to this Bill - the National Social Security Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2021. There have been discussions in public on the decisions we made on guidance and how this process should be handled.

As you recall, this particular Bill had come from the Government; it had been processed and gone up to the President for assent. He returned it to another Parliament and neither were the provisions of the rules nor the Constitution followed. Therefore, a decision was taken that we reintroduce this matter and deal with it. That does not remove the fact that the committee had exhaustively dealt with this matter and finished. The President had also looked at it and made three comments on four clauses.

When we send it back to the committee, what we expect from them, since Parliament had already looked at it, is that we urge the committee chairperson – who is he? *(Interjection)* Yes, the honourable member for Kyegegwa, to look mainly at the concerns. Of course, the report had already been adopted by the other Parliament; the Bill had also been adopted and the President raised concerns.

From my reading of the current Bill, what the President proposed has already been incorporated in this Bill. Therefore, what you are going to do is to help us because this Bill is urgent. Look at those proposals that have been sent back by the President and see if you agree with him or not, instead of going the whole way again, which will not help the process. I am giving you 10 days to come back to Parliament and we process this Bill. *(Applause)*

The National Social Security Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2021 stands referred to the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development to handle within 10 days and report on how we will proceed with this matter. Thank you. Next item.

BILLS

FIRST READING

THE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE BILL, 2021

3.15

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on Table the Bill –

**THE SPEAKER:** No, you beg to move that “the Bill entitled X be read for the first time.” Government Chief Whip, is it your maiden speech also?

**MR TAYEBWA:** Yes, in terms of moving Bills. My Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Fisheries and Aquaculture Bill, 2021” be read for the first time.

**MR TAYEBWA:** Mr Speaker, there is also a certificate of financial implication.

**THE SPEAKER:** Okay, could you lay both? Honourable members, let the records capture both the Bill and certificate of financial implications attached. They stand referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to handle expeditiously. This is a new Bill; let them proceed with it. Honourable Minister for Gender, Labour and Social Development, we did not see your certificate of financial implications. Did you bring it?

**MS AMONGI:** Mr Speaker, the certificate of financial implications was sent in writing and so, we did not bring it here but we can forward it again.

**THE SPEAKER:** Does the Clerk have it?

**MS AMONGI:** Yes.

**THE SPEAKER:** It was just not announced.

**MS AMONGI:** Yes.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. The records have captured, The National Social Security Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2021 and the certificate of financial implications attached. It stands referred as stated earlier.

BILLS

FIRST READING

THE LANDLORD AND TENANT BILL, 2021

3.17

**THE MINISTER OF LANDS, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (Ms Judith Nabakooba):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Landlord and Tenant Bill, 2021” be read for the first time. I beg to lay the certificate of financial implications. I beg to move.

**THE SPEAKER:** Let the records capture both the Bill and the certificate of financial implications. Being a new Bill, it should be handled within the rules, which is 45 days. The Chairperson of the Committee on Physical Infrastructure is here. Is it a returned Bill?

**DR BARYOMUNSI:** Yes, it also falls in the category of the first one. It was duly considered by the House, taken to the President but he sent it back on one or two small items.

**THE SPEAKER:** Okay, then the referral is the same like the NSSF (Amendment) Bill. The Landlord and Tenant Bill, 2021 has also been returned to another Parliament.

As I said earlier, the issues have already been captured in the Bill itself; so, deal with those specific issues. The Committee in charge of Infrastructure, I give you 10 days to come back with this Bill to Parliament.

BILLS

FIRST READING

THE PHYSICAL PLANNERS REGISTRATION BILL, 2021

3.19

**THE MINISTER OF LANDS, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (Ms Judith Nabakooba):** Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Physical Planners Registration Bill, 2021” be read for the first time.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Is it accompanied by a certificate?

**MS NABAKOOBA:** The certificate of financial implications is attached.

**THE SPEAKER:** Let the records capture the Bill and the certificate. It stands referred to the same Committee on Physical Infrastructure. This being a new Bill, you have 10 days to handle the other ones and then, 45 days running consecutively to deal with this Bill.

BILLS

FIRST READING

THE SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (NO. 2) BILL, 2021

3.20

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (MICROFINANCE) (Mr Haruna Kasolo):** Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Supplementary Appropriation (No.2) Bill, 2021” be read for the first time. The certificate of financial implications is hereby attached. I beg to lay.

**THE SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. It stands referred to our Committee on Budget to handle expeditiously and advise the House how to proceed. We have a timeline on how to deal with these matters and so, please, act quickly so that we do not begin violating provisions of the Constitution, the Public Finance Management Act and our own rules.

BILLS

FIRST READING

THE SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (NO. 3) BILL, 2021

3.22

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (MICROFINANCE) (Mr Haruna Kasolo):** Mr Speaker, I beg to move that The Supplementary Appropriation (No.3) Bill, 2021 be read for the first time. The certificate of financial implications is hereby attached. I beg to lay.

**THE SPEAKER:** Let the records capture the Bill and the certificate. It stands referred to our Committee on Budget to handle expeditiously to fit within the timeline provided by the laws of this country. Next item.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF SECURITY

3.22

**THE MINISTER, OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT (SECURITY) (Maj. Gen. (Rtd) Jim Muhwezi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. This ministerial statement arises from the statement made by the hon. Abdallah Kiwanuka, Member of Parliament for Mukono North and shadow Minister for Internal Affairs on the implementation of the Intelligent Transport Monitoring System (ITMS).

The following are the issues he raised:

1. The nature of the contract and its alleged non-adherence to Sections 21-22 and Sections 31-34 of the Public Private Partnership  Act, 2015.

Mr Speaker, I should mention that the matters the honourable member raised touch on the principle of *sub judice* because there is a court case going on over the same matter but I have tried to give a statement without injuring that principle.

1. Lack of an enabling legal framework for the implementation of the ITMS;
2. Making owners of already registered vehicles incur the costs of replacement of license plates;
3. The alleged intrusion of right to privacy contrary to Article 27 of Constitution and violation of the Data Protection and Privacy Act.
4. Alleged abuse of the persons by security officials.

It is for the above that I make a response to the statement of the Shadow Minister of Internal Affairs to this august House.

Honourable members, this statement has been forwarded to you, on your iPads.

Mr Speaker, I wish to start by making a clarification on the statement that I disassociated myself from the project’s due diligence flaws or the project for that matter.

The point I made is that the project was conceived by the Government in 2018, during the reign of my predecessor, Gen. Elly Tumwine. I was simply correcting the narrative that I personally handpicked Joint Stock Company Global Security to undertake the project.

Mr Speaker, over the last number of years, Uganda has witnessed a series of shocking and gruesome crimes committed by criminals moving by motor vehicles and motorcycles. We were all shocked by those gruesome crimes, with the last attempt being on the life of the honourable Minister of Works and Transport, which, unfortunately, resulted in the death of his dear daughter and driver.

However, in 2018, His Excellency the President directed relevant Government agencies to beef up security in Uganda by establishing the Smart Tracking System for motor vehicles and motorcycles countrywide. The overall goal was to improve security and reduce crime committed against innocent Ugandans by rogues, who had made it a habit of shooting our people and getting away, mainly on motorcycles.

Consequently, on 23 July 2021, the Government of Uganda, represented by the Office of the President, Ministry of Works and Transport on one hand and M/s Joint Stock Company Global Security on the other, entered into an agreement to implement the Intelligent Transport Monitoring System (ITMS).

The specific objectives of the ITMS are:

1. Crime management through detection, tracking, identification and recognition of all vehicles and motorcycles operating in the country;

2. Provide for additional benefits like: improved revenue collection by URA; improved traffic management by Uganda Police Force being able to track and apprehend traffic rule violators, and; reduction or elimination of duplicate registrations of vehicles/motorcycles as the cases have been  
of late.

The second issue was a detailed explanation for the issues raised by the honourable Shadow Minister of Internal Affairs.

Mr Speaker, the overall benefits of the ITMS are noble and extend beyond the aspirations of reducing crime. Regrettably, sections of the public and media have cast this project as one fashioned with objectionable outcomes, which I intend to explain to the august House.

Mr Speaker, this contract was executed under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement. On 18 November 2019, His Excellency the President directed the Rt Hon. Prime Minister to inter alia implement the ITMS as a classified procurement, under the Ministry of Security.

Pursuant to the above directive, a memorandum of understanding for carrying out a feasibility study on creating an ITMS was executed between the Government of Uganda and M/s Joint Stock Company Global Security on 22 March 2019.

Thereafter, a feasibility study was conducted and the contracting authority identified the Public Private Partnership as the suitable arrangement to engage with M/s Joint Stock Company Global Security.

On 23 July 2021, a PPP agreement was executed between the Government of Uganda, represented by the Office of the President and the Ministry of Works and Transport, with M/s Joint Stock Company Global Security.

Section 33 of the Act gives the option of a non-competitive bidding method called “Direct Procurement”. This method of procurement is a sole source procurement method used where the circumstances do not allow the use of competition, especially where the subject is specialised and, in this case, even of a security nature. However, procurement of a private party under this method shall be approved by Cabinet.

Mr Speaker, the agreement executed between the parties is a “build, own, operate and transfer” type of agreement. It obliges the private party to finance, build, own and operate an infrastructure for a specified period and, transfer, the infrastructure to the contracting authority at the end of that period.

Procurement of security equipment is a sensitive and delicate matter, which cannot be subjected to open competitive methods or public expression of interest as required, under Section 31 of the PPP Act, 2015. It should also be noted that the company we have engaged is an innovator (owner) of this particular system that we want to set up.

As such, the contractor for ITMS was procured in line with Section 33 of the PPP Act, 2015, which permits the sole sourcing procurement method, where circumstances do not allow the use of  
competitive means. Section 33(3) of the PPP Act, 2015 requires Cabinet approval, where a contractor has been procured directly. This requirement was met.

Regarding a due diligence on the firm’s capacity, a technical team/committee visited the company in Moscow and tendered a report. On the basis of the said report, the Government entered into a memorandum of understanding to operationalise the ITMS and became the platform for further engagement of the firm.

I wish to add that His Excellency the President was alive to the security concerns, which is why he directed that the project be undertaken as a classified project.

Nonetheless, we decided to inform the country of what we were doing to address the criminality that is being perpetuated using motor vehicles and motorcycles.

Mr Speaker, it is, therefore, not factual that the directive of His Excellency the President is unlawful. The direct procurement process is provided for in the law. The duty of the Government officials is to comply with the directive of H.E. the President in accordance with the law.

The honourable Shadow Minister of Internal Affairs informed this House that the Traffic and Road Safety (Vehicle Registration, Licensing and Third Party Insurance) regulations do not provide for installation of electronic tracking devices on transportation equipment.

It should be noted that section 3A(g) and (h) of the Traffic and Road Safety Act, 1998 (Amendment) Act, 2020, empowers the Chief Licensing Officer to issue motor vehicles with registration plates and cancel or suspend the registration of any vehicle for breach of this Act. This means that the registration plates on vehicles and motorcycles are the property of the Government of Uganda, which has a right to determine the features of the registration plates.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, the Government is alive to the fact that it must act within the law at all times. Accordingly, I wish to give confidence to the honourable members that this system is going to be used in compliance with the law.

The installation of this system is within the law as far as fighting crime is concerned. The Uganda Police Force is mandated under Article 212(c) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda to prevent and detect crime and the same provision is reproduced in section 4 of the Police Act. Therefore, in performing their mandate under the law, the Uganda Police Force will only use the data collected when one is suspected by the police of having committed a crime. The apprehension that the police will know where one is, if he or she has not committed a crime is without basis. The technology to be deployed, just like the CCTV cameras, is meant to equip and aid the police in performing its mandate under the law.

The Agreement for the ITMS provides for the obligations of the Government to adopt legislation necessary for the operation of the system. In that regard, the Government shall make the necessary amendments to the Traffic and Road Safety (Vehicle Registration, Licensing and Third-Party Insurance) Regulation for the operationalisation of the system.

Currently, the system is at the development stage. I assure this august House and the country that by the time the system comes into operation, it shall be implemented within the law.

The Shadow Minister of Internal Affairs raised a concern in this House about the public meeting about the cost of installation of the system.

Mr Speaker, it is in the interest of all of us to fight crime and weed out criminals within our society, to the extent possible. We should not lose the main focus of this system.

Secondly, the device is going to be installed in the number plates and issued during vehicle and motorcycle registration. Citizens are going to be paying for the number plates, the same way they are paying for them today, except that the cost of the number plates may be slightly higher than the current cost. The payment of the number plate shall be premised on a legal framework.

Honourable members, the assurance I wish to give you is that the cost of the number plate shall not be as exorbitant as alleged. Global Security is not going to charge the said costs arbitrarily. A technical team of the Government shall assess the cost of the plates before the actual figure is formed and implemented.

The honourable member raised a concern of intrusion of privacy in violation of the right under Article 27 of our Constitution and violation of the Data Protection and Privacy Act.

There has been a lot of debate that the system is going to intrude on people’s privacy in violation of the Constitution. The Government is alive to the right to privacy in the Constitution. However, Article 43 of the same Constitution provides that the enjoyment of rights and freedoms should not prejudice the rights and freedoms of others and public interest.

The Government is aware that it is supposed to promote rights and freedoms and that any limitation of the enjoyment of rights and freedoms must be what is acceptable and demonstrably justifiable in a free and democratic society. The question is whether ITMS is demonstrably justifiable in a free and democratic society under Article 43 of the Constitution.

The Uganda Police Force is mandated under Article 212(c) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda to prevent and detect crime and the same provision is reproduced in section 4 of the Police Act. Therefore, in performing their mandate under the law, the Uganda Police Force will only use the data collected when one is suspected by the police of having committed a crime. The technology to be deployed, just like the CCTV cameras, is meant to equip and aid the police in performing their mandate under the law.

Additionally, the right to privacy is not one of the rights that are non-derogable. The non-derogable rights include;

(a) Freedom from torture, and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

(b) Freedom from slavery or servitude;

(c) The right to fair hearing encapsulated in Article 28; and

(d) The right to an order of habeas corpus.

Mr Speaker, suffice to note that the rationale of the ITMS is to facilitate the Government through the Uganda Police Force, to easily identify and track any motor vehicle or motorcycle that may be used by any person in the commission of a criminal offence including traffic offences prescribed under the Traffic and Road Safety Act. This is in public interest, acceptable and demonstrably justifiable in a free and democratic society as prescribed in Article 43(2)(c) of the Constitution.

The intelligent transport monitoring system is only a tool deployed by the Government to facilitate the execution of the constitutional mandate of the Uganda Police Force in preventing and detecting crime in public interest, as envisaged in Article 43 of the Constitution.

On data protection and privacy, the Government is alive to this law. Personal data and information collected, processed and stored, through the ITMS shall be subject to the data protection principles. These principles are provided for in the Data Protection and Privacy Act, 2019. This law clearly safeguards the privacy of the data subject and penalises any violation against abuse of personal data and privacy.

Further, provisions on the confidentiality are in the agreement between Government and the Global Security Joint Stock Company. The agreement has a specific provision, providing that the data collected, processed and stored shall be subject to the Data Protection and Privacy law. This applies to global security, as well as data, supposed to be stored in Uganda.

The penalties provided for in the law shall apply to this project in the same way it applies to any other data collected in Uganda, such as the telecommunications data. Access to the said data is regulated by the law.

Mr Speaker, the Shadow Minister of Internal Affairs is suspicious that the system is intended to curtail movement of the Opposition leaders and prevent dissenting opinions against Government.

I wish to categorically state that the suspicion is unwarranted because the system is purely to fight crime and has nothing to do with the Opposition leaders or supporters for that matter.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, the gruesome criminal acts that have happened in this country in recent times should bring us together, as a country, to fight criminality.

I want to assure the House and the country that the primary objective of the Government is to protect its citizens and their property. We cannot shy away from this responsibility. I thank you, Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, honourable minister, for this statement. Honourable members, this is not a typical statement presented under our Rule 52, where the minister would come voluntarily with a statement. This is a statement in response to a statement by the shadow minister for the sector, who will find a way of dealing with it because we had a debate of 15 minutes or so, under the rules.

When the shadow minister made the statement - ordinarily, the statement of the minister should have attracted a one-hour debate. However, that is up to us because the rules do not say anything about a statement in response to a shadow minister’s statement.

We do not have any provision in the rules; it is not a typical policy statement from the Government. We can only have interactions and let us start debate without decision - it is a full debate. Can we limit the time? Can we do three minutes and debate will take one hour - that is what the rules say.

3.49

**MR ELIJAH OKUPA (Independent, Kasilo County, Serere):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the honourable minister for working hard to ensure that the lives of Ugandans are safe. With that in mind, I want to seek a few clarifications from the minister.

First, when you were reading your statement, you specified that this is a Public-Private Partnership for some period. However, you did not tell us how long the contract is going to be. I need you to clarify because we read in the *Pearl Times* that the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Works and Transport said it is a contract for 10 years. However, the CEO of that company, Mr Ivan Sukraban, was quoted saying that it is for two years before it will be passed to the Government of Uganda. I need you to clarify that.

Secondly, since these assassins involved in most of the killings that have taken place have mainly been using motorcycles, wouldn’t it be right if we piloted this project on motorcycles, because 95 per cent of these are the ones that have been used by the assassins?

Third, what is the total cost of this contract? I think Ugandans need to know that. There were allegations, which we also read in the *Pearl Times* newspaper, regarding the bankruptcy of this company. That is why people were wary because this company was sued by a number of companies and they failed to pay.

One of the companies that sued the company you are contracting is JSC Royal Silk Company and the cost awarded was 19.9 million Rubles. The Stock Trading LLC Company sued it too and the cost awarded was 1.2 million Rubles. Turday GS Company sued the same company and they were awarded 23 million Rubles. This is Russian currency. The JSC ZVI also sued the same company. The Joint Stock Company Global Security Systems was again sued by Ras Prone Technology and they were asked to pay $220,000.

So, these allegations have come; we can read about them. They say that is why this company was declared bankrupt. So, are we contracting a company that is shrouded with all those allegations? Those are the issues that Ugandans need clarification on. Otherwise, I support the lives and properties of Ugandans. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Your time was actually up when you were negotiating with the microphone.

3.53

**MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for the statement he presented. However, I have a lot of concerns.

First, the minister talks about choosing one company under direct procurement. We are all aware that if you want to get value for money, even if you are doing direct procurement, you cannot get one company. You have to get at least four or five companies to compare with.

There is no way one can handpick one company and say, “I am doing direct procurement.” Have you known the cost of the same item in other companies? I think this is a mistake that was made from the very beginning.

Honourable minister, I would like you to also clarify this to Ugandans by telling this Parliament how you came up and handpicked one company. The law provides for it, yes, but for Ugandans to get value for money, you must have compared the cost of the same items in other companies, at least three or four. That will help Ugandans to get the real value for money. For this term, Mr Speaker, we aim to see that Ugandans get the highest benefit from the little resources that we have in this country – *(Interruption)*

**DR BARYOMUNSI:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank the honourable colleague for yielding the Floor. The information I would like to provide is that in my understanding, the Government is not going to invest resources. However, the minister will negotiate with the company to agree on how much it is going to charge to recover the cost, which they put in. Therefore, they would use their own money and then on the licence, they will add some little fee which we shall pay as we get our registration for our vehicles and the company will recover the money that way. However, the Government will not invest in resources.

Thank you, honourable minister, Dr Baryomunsi for that information.

**THE SPEAKER:** Your time is up, honourable member.

**MR SILWANY:** Just a minute. Honourable minister, even if it is that as it may be, Ugandans are going to buy these number plates. We cannot just say we are locking them on one company without comparison.

My issue is that we should have compared to get value for money. There is no way you come up with one company – a company with a lot of issues as raised by hon. Elijah Okupa; the company had been declared bankrupt at one time - and we do not compare. Then we just go ahead and say that “This is the company that is going to provide the number plates and is going to secure Ugandans.”

Mr Speaker, this should be sorted out before we move ahead.

**MR SPEAKER:** Thank you.

3.56

**MR ROLAND NDYOMUGYENYI (Independent, Rukiga County, Rukiga)**: Thank you, Mr Speaker for this opportunity. Thank you, honourable minister for the statement. I have a few concerns that I would like to put forward. The first one is about the payment for number plates by the people themselves.

Personally, I think that whereas security is paramount for us, as Ugandans, it is also very important to understand that Ugandans are paying very many taxes. Almost everything is now taxed. Adding another problem - I call it so because it is a cost and an obligation - to add on them another obligation to pay for number plates for purposes of being tracked, in my opinion, is not proper.

Secondly, after the contract was signed with the Government of Uganda, there were some issues which hon. Okupa has highlighted. I would like to know from the honourable minister, after understanding that there are issues with the company they had signed a contract with, what has the Government done to look into those issues to ensure that any pertinent matters concerning that company are addressed?

It is also very important to understand that there are some assumptions, which were made when they were procuring this company. For example, I would like to know from the honourable minister how motor vehicles and motorcycles which are not Ugandan - maybe those from South Sudan, Rwanda or Kenya - how will they be tracked? Are they also going to be buying the number plates whenever they are entering the country? That needs clarity.

Mr Speaker, there is an issue where Dr Chris Baryomunsi said that the Government is not going to pay for this system. Who is the Government? I thought that the Government is the people? Ugandans are going to pay. Therefore, when Ugandans are going to pay, it means the Government is paying.

It is important to understand that when there is an arrangement - like this, as one of the honourable members said - we need to get clarity especially on how the procurement process was conducted to ensure that there was competition *–(Member timed out.)*

4.00

**MR MILTON MUWUMA (NRM, Kigulu County South, Iganga):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker for the opportunity. I would like to thank the minister for bringing this response on the Floor of Parliament. However, we needed this information like yesterday as members of Parliament. I am happy that finally we are on board that the suspicion and speculation that has been in the countryside will be able to somehow explain about this.

Mr Speaker, there is an adage in Lusoga that if you have ever been bitten by a snake, even if you see a rope then you need to take caution and precaution.

In 2010/2011, during the procurement of the first national ID system, we followed a similar procurement process or procedure of acquiring such sensitive equipment. The Government lost a lot of money to a company called Mühlbauer Group. The Government had to come back to this Floor of Parliament to ask for more resources to ensure that the intended purpose is achieved of having IDs given to Ugandans; because the process was not clear.

I remember, my late elder brother, hon. Kirunda Kivenjinja, this House almost threw him out because he failed to supervise and superintend over that same procurement. This is the red flag that our minister should take interest into - that the cost vis-à-vis value for money. What Ugandans intend to achieve from this, needs to be addressed.

Mr Speaker, even Face Technologies is about management. I remember recently, when its contract expired, the Government took over the management and issuance of driving permits to Ugandans. However, it had become a fleecing and extortion centre for Ugandans who wanted to get driving permits. I feel that if we are not very careful, this one might also suppress our people in one way or another.

There are old vehicles and motorcycles already in the country. The minister is telling the House that the cost will be paid or met at the point of registration of these motorcycles and vehicles. What about the old vehicles and motorcycles that are already in the country?

There are *–(Member timed out.)*

4.03

**MR SAMUEL OPIO (Independent, Kole North County, Kole):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also would like to take this opportunity to thank the minister for the effort that is being made to strengthen security in this country. However, we need to go back a few years when we talked about cameras being the magic bullet in fighting crime. We know that that has not helped to solve the problem.

My question, therefore, is have you done an effectiveness assessment on this system? There are three potential gaps. The first is that can this number plate be removed, placed on another vehicle and used to commit a crime.

The second issue is about the time interval where this number plate will be able to be tracked. We know that most of these systems track every four hours. What happens in the interval between those four hours? We know that it takes less than five minutes to commit a crime. Therefore, have we ensured that this will be real-time, every second or is it every hour?

Lastly, is this system power-driven? We know that most of these GPS systems depend on the battery of the vehicle. What happens when this battery is disconnected? In other words, are we going to have a foolproof system? Or are we going to call it a magic bullet today but tomorrow it will not even be the bronze or silver bullet we expect? Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Tororo District, have you forgotten your constituency? *(Laughter)* Should I be guided by the suggestions being made? *(Laughter)*

**MS OPENDI:** No, Mr Speaker. The mask sometimes makes it difficult for some words to come out clearly. It sounded like Ntoroko.

Mr Speaker, I have heard the President talking about this subject; the vehicle tracking. However, let it be known that when people are determined to commit a crime, they will definitely devise other means of doing the same.

When we put cameras on the roads, I thought this would help us reduce some of these incidents. However, I have noticed that while we put in place the cameras, we did not invest in the human resource to sit and clearly look at what is going on, on our roads.

I had the opportunity of travelling to South Korea and what goes on there is that every six hours, there is a new team at the station. Everyone is given a particular road or area to observe. In a minute, if they see something strange, they call the security people who will be alerted and will immediately rush to that scene; whether it is a traffic offence or any other issue.

However, here, when the President talked of sacking the people manning the control room, I felt sorry for these police officers. You cannot sit and be glued on these cameras the whole night; over eight hours and you think these people will be effective. People get tired, there is fatigue. These are lessons that we need to pick.

Mr Speaker, importing a car into this country is already too expensive due to the taxes. I would like to drive a V8 like yours, Mr Speaker. It may be cheap if I am buying it from Japan but the taxes of bringing that car here are very high and we now want to add another cost to this.

Government should bear the cost because it is their mandate to take care of the security of Ugandans. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

4.08

**MR MICHAEL TIMUZIGU (NRM, Kajara County, Ntungamo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for this statement. Of course, we have been waiting for it for a long time and we represent people who have been confused about how this tracking will be conducted.

Honourable minister, I think you still have a very big job to do, although you think that bringing those tracking devices will help a lot. I think the problem is not failure to track the vehicles but it is with the people committing those crimes.

Honourable minister, I would like to know how your ministry has invested in conducting research to discover why Ugandans are behaving like this. You need to work with the other ministries to make sure that if you find a problem, you can work together to rectify it instead of spending a lot of money; foreign exchange - we do not produce those devices here in Uganda - before we do research and fight the disease instead of fighting the symptoms.

Secondly, honourable minister, I need to get clarification on the cost of the device. You said that the cost will be low but a low cost is relative. How low is it going to be? This is in order for us to communicate to our voters. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

4.10

**MS JULIET KYINYAMATAMA (Independent, Woman Representative, Rakai):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. First of all, I would like to thank the minister for the statement. It has cleared the air out there; Ugandans were wondering what has been happening to the Presidential directive that started in 2018.

You talked about the signing already being done but when is the equipment being brought into the country? When is the process starting in Uganda since you seemingly told us that everything has been cleared?

From your statement, there was lot of money that went to the classified budget. I wonder what that money procured. Hon. Chris Baryomunsi said that we are not going to invest in any money; so what did that money do? How much was it? That poses a big question to Ugandans who have heard this statement.

Secondly, when you tell us that an increased cost is going to be put on number plates, I wonder if we go back to the old cars that already have number plates and the new ones that will be coming in – Are Ugandans going to buy new number plates that they already have at an increased cost? If it is a small cost, can’t you take it up in your classified expenditure and make sure that Ugandans also benefit? It is not majorly benefiting Ugandans alone but it is also going to improve our tax base collection and solve many problems as far as security is concerned.

If it is going to be rolled out to the entire country, let it be fair play for every Ugandan so that you do not have excuses of those that can afford and those that cannot. If it is a small cost, like you stated, then the Government should take it up. Ugandans are already spending a lot on importing cars and the cost of number plates. Hence, that small increment should be put in the classified expenditure, if we want the system to work.

Many people are commenting on the cameras but I think they have done a great job. If you see the attacks that have been happening and how cameras have helped security to lead them to the clues and arrests of the rightful people that have been committing all these crimes, I give credit to cameras. I think if this system is well handled, it will solve *–(Member timed out.)*

4.13

**MS PAULINE KEMIREMBE (NRM, Woman Representative, Lyantonde):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for his statement and I support the introduction of this ITMS because it will curb crime. Hon. Okupa said that they should first try it out with the motorcycles but I do not agree with him because even motor vehicles are being used to commit crime.

In my district, just two weeks ago, my immediate neighbour was picked up on his way to work and within two hours, he was already killed and his body was dumped somewhere. Thank God that those who said that the cameras do not work were proved wrong since they used them in Lyantonde to trace the vehicle and got these killers.

Two incidents have happened. Just three months ago, the same thing happened and I think they are the same killers who got someone from Lyantonde. I think it is a system they are using in Lyantonde. They are not using *boda bodas* but vehicles to strangle people and throw them on the roadside. If this ITMS is introduced, maybe, the crimes will reduce and it is good for the Government.

However, my worry is on accepting one company; Joint Stock Company Global Security as the sole provider of this. I think we would have brought in many companies and seen which one to take on the contract.

The other issue is on the amount going to be charged. As everyone has said, I think let the Government take up this. As we pay for the number plates and the taxes, the Government can do this to protect its citizens. Thank you very much.

4.15

**MR MUHAMAD NSEGUMIRE (NRM, Mityana County North, Mityana):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the honourable minister for this report. I would like to know from the Minister of Security; has he established and compared the cost of this device in other countries? I have a fear that this company might take advantage and hike the price of the device. Thank you.

4.16

**MS NAOME KIBAAJU (NRM, Sheema County North, Sheema):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I join my colleagues in thanking the minister for the detailed explanation, which has cleared the air on most issues that were concerning so many people.

However, I would like to put it to the minister that in this country, most cars which are driven on our roads are not by choice; they are a necessity because the Government does not have enough transport for everyone. Most people buy old vehicles to be able to move from point A to B and they use their meagre funds to pay taxes. I think for the Government to add an extra something on these vehicles is not fair to our people.

I would wish to ask the minister to review this and help our people because they buy cars to take their children to school. There are no buses on Kampala Road, Entebbe Road or Jinja Road. Therefore, these vehicles are necessary and the owners pay deeply from their pockets.

I also want to allay the fears of some Members who think that with classified procurement, you go directly to one company. I think the minister, in his wisdom or his officials, went through so much to zero down on this company. He does not have to tell us because it is classified. I have been there and I know what it is about. You do not wake up and choose one company. I am sure they have gone through a vigorous and rigorous exercise of selecting the best company to procure this item from. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

4.18

**MR AMOS OKOT (NRM, Agago North County, Agago):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Thank you, honourable minister, for the statement. There is a saying that once the rain beats you, you have to be very careful and study the weather before the rain beats you again.

We all live in this country and we have seen several Government projects enter in a similar way. Of recent, there was mandatory inspection of motor vehicles in this country. Ugandans invested and did a lot of work such that their vehicles would be inspected. However, until now, that project has never helped Ugandans.

May be the minister should help us here. The ITMS seems to be a foreign company; who introduced it to Uganda? Who are the directors? In many situations, they come in that kind of colour but at the end, they run away or defraud Ugandans of a lot of money. The worst scenario is that people who are supposed to advise the President do not do it. In the end, it makes us ugly in the eyes of the population, especially if the things get hard. They also twist it as “classified information” to the extent that Ugandans keep asking themselves what things should we put under “classified”?

Mr Speaker, it is paramount to know how many vehicles or motorcycles we have in this country. How many boda bodas do we have? Therefore, if an individual owns like - I know my senior brother, hon. Ecweru, has more than two vehicles *–(Interjections)–* No, he told me last time. (*Laughter*)

Therefore, in such a situation of that nature, how many vehicles now? If the minister is saying - he made it very clear that it is to provide additional revenue to URA. Therefore, we should not hide. If it is about revenue, let us say that we need to collect money. Just like other colleagues are saying, there are bigger problems *–(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Your time is up. For the record, ITMS is the project: it is what is going to be installed. The company is Joint Stock Company Global Security.

**MR AMOS OKOT:** Thank you. That is what I meant. *(Laughter)*

**THE SPEAKER:** So, you can now go and search. Butaleja?

4.22

**MS FLORENCE NEBANDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Butaleja):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to add my voice to thank the Minister of Security for the presentation. I have some concerns. Ugandans out there welcome the installation. However, what is on their mind is the implementation of the programme. We have not been doing very well in that aspect.

I believe we need to pick lessons from the gaps that we had with CCTVs and national IDs.

Apparently, there are issues that are being raised; the costing and procurement. I believe that there are issues that are made public and others are for the Government. How are we going to implement this to make it more effective? For instance, for me in Butaleja, how will the voter be able to afford that? Is it only going to be in the city or countrywide because crime is all over the place and not only in the city setting?

The other issue is the regulation. How are we going to manage the monitoring? Won’t other people misuse it for their own purposes? The other is the issue of right to privacy: how long are these tracking devices going to be installed on a boda boda and the vehicle? Won’t it cause other issues and we end up having court cases? Thank you.

4.23

**MR NATHAN BYANYIMA (NRM, Bukanga North County, Isingiro):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I sympathise with the honourable Minister of Security because this is a done deal. You are just wasting these Members’ time. This is a young Parliament and I am happy to be part of this. Aren’t we tired of doing fake things in this country? This is one of the fake things, I can tell you. This is because you have already signed; there was no due diligence. You come to Parliament at the tail end. I thought I was coming to this young Parliament, that is very zealous, to work. I am proud of it.

However, when I see you bringing in fake things here, it is very embarrassing. We have already failed to manage the motorcycles in town; it is a mess in town. Can’t we copy and paste? People are appreciating these cameras. You go somewhere - are they the same cameras? Ours are fake; they just give bad pictures.

Mr Speaker, open a fresh page for this country. This is a country of young men and women. The moment you continue treating them to this extent, it will be dangerous. People are poor and it is not because these Members of Parliament are rich but it is because it is among us that steal money and eventually, people cannot live a good life. *(Applause)* You cannot continue to give Ugandans supper at lunch time. This is what is coming.

Hon. Muhwezi, do you remember the issue of Uganda Commercial Bank (UCB)? Even the President went for due diligence. We will end up in problems because we have not done any good deals.

Mr Speaker, you remember that I was with you here. We have done fake things in the eyes of Ugandans and one day, we shall pay for our sins. This should not continue. I was in this Parliament for 15 years but I was happy to come back to a Parliament that is rejuvenated by young men and women, yet you want to take us to this. I sympathise with you, hon. Muhwezi because you are dipping your clean hands into dirty waters. You will be caught up definitely. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, save us. Some of these things need to be researched. We all move out of the country and we have seen what people do. Currently, there are some companies in Uganda, who are cleaning these platinum properly. Now, people do not buy platinum *–(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Your time is up, Sir. There is no time for information.

4.26

**MR DICKSON KATESHUMBWA (NRM, Sheema Municipality, Sheema):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the statement and to say that we are all concerned about security and we are interested in finding solutions to the extent that we can support. However, I have some comments.

First, I would like to challenge the Government. We have young people in this country, who have been doing Information Technology (IT) for years. We have a national IT strategy, and we are producing graduates every year but we have failed on imported systems, starting with the national identification cards, passports and driving permits. Each Ministry, Department and Agency (MDA) has got systems. When shall we stop this hemorrhage? Why can’t we innovate as a country and do some of the systems here? It is a challenge to the Government. The way we are trying to control the outflow of travel, among others, we can stop this, if we have serious commitment to win ourselves off these imported systems.

Secondly, honourable minister, I know that with my historical knowledge, we had very many vehicles here when we abolished the annual licensing. Many people have been transferring vehicles without actually transferring ownership. This is one of the challenges you are going to face.

It is worse for the border communities, where you have boda bodas and vehicles that come on a temporary transit but do not go back. How are we going to deal with this problem? I know some Members of Parliament may have bought a vehicle but they have never transferred it into their name. How are we going to deal with those issues as you bring in this system?

On the issue of the user fees, as the minister has said, this is going to be left to the company to decide. We must know that whatever user fees we are putting will actually increase the cost of business. Therefore, we cannot leave it to the company to decide. The Government should be able to negotiate what is affordable for the people because people have number plates. The Government is trying to strengthen security and it is the responsibility of the Government; it should not come as an unnecessary expense to the common *Wananchi*.

We want to support the initiative but like Members have said, such systems should have due diligence but above all, the Government should look at innovators in this *–(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you.

4.30

**DR LILLIAN ABER (NRM, Woman Representative, Kitgum):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the intervention made by the Government to address challenges of insecurity in this country. It is indeed very difficult to accept new interventions. They say change is always hard to accept. When we ask these questions, we ask them in good faith and as national leaders, we want to see that we have fully analysed what we are bringing to our people.

The first question is: is it a good move? I would say “yes”, it is a good move that we need to be secured. However, as we do that, there are things we need to tackle alongside bringing this device and this is the issue of naming roads and houses so that we can connect between the cars and the direction where the car is going. Recently, I have seen that KCCA has started that intervention, which is good. We need to spread it all over.

Mr Speaker, for such an issue, the major question that any local Ugandan would ask is the cost. We should not just sit here and leave the cost to be determined by the company that is going to be given the contract. We will totally be exploited.

As Government, we must come up with our own cost and that should be the basis to do negotiation. I will not agree with my honourable colleague, who said this is a done deal. We would not be here discussing it. Something can still be done and these loopholes we are pointing out, must be addressed.

The second point is the issue of local content, particularly procurement across all the ministries. Let us give chance to Ugandans, who have capacity to support the Government. Let us consider the local content and Ugandan suppliers first.

Thirdly, honourable minister, I will not go into asking the details of procurement. I know the biggest corruption chain is procurement in this country. However, I just want to say that we will be with the honourable minister here and he is a Ugandan. Honourable minister, just put your eyes on paper and follow up with these people because we shall be the ones *–(Member timed out.)*

4.33

**MR GEOFREY FETA (NRM, Ayivu Division East, Arua):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister very much, for trying to do a good job. We do appreciate his effort to secure the country. As we all know, as a result of the recent security challenges the country has faced, everybody agreed that there should be a practical solution.

I have heard my colleagues speak nicely about the cameras. The country invested billions in cameras and we are all aware that in some parts, it has done a good job. However, my story is different. The cameras did not do a good job.

Arua Regional Referral Hospital lost an ambulance of Shs 300 million in front of the cameras; the cameras are installed in front of the hospital. Some people went to the hospital and drove away the ambulance but the cameras could not tell us where this ambulance went. The citizens from that part of the country are asking: Did we spend well? Can we get returns on this investment?

As their representative, I am requesting the minister to give me assurance on the credibility and reliability of this technology. I am a graduate of information technology and I would like to appreciate this technology if you can expound on it a little bit because I am not sure if it will be credible and reliable in the long run. Should we spend this money? Shall we be able to explain to citizens the worth of this money?

You have said the procurement is classified. We are not going to debate it much but is it worth the money we are spending on it?

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much. Honourable members, we should draw this to a close. I have two Motions and four responses to questions, which I intend to finish today.

We have two more Motions. Those who have not debated this one will debate the motions.

4.35

**MR DAN KIMOSHO (NRM, Kazo County, Kazo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I would like to thank the honourable minister for presenting this elaborate statement.

I would also like to officially register my sympathies for the honourable minister for the scandal that is about to befall him –*(Interjections)-* he is my uncle by the way.

**THE SPEAKER:** As a nephew or as a Member of Parliament? *(Laughter)*

**MR KIMOSHO:** There is everything wrong with the method we are using to acquire this service. When one talks about direct procurement, there are standards like exclusiveness – that there is no other provider for this service or it is an emergency and you cannot wait.

From 2018 to date, that cannot be an emergency. The only test it passes is it being of a security nature. Otherwise, it fails on all the rest.

When you search for this company on Google, which is the basic search engine, what you will see is that it has issues to do with bankruptcy. How do we, as a whole nation stake our security – how do we solve a small problem with a bigger problem?

If you are bringing a company already in question to solve our security issues – why couldn’t we, from 2018, if we had embarked on training our own children here – the engineers floating on our streets – and just acquired the tools and we put them in a place to manage this system, we would not be looking at people taking our money.

The other day, I raised a matter of national importance about Lubowa Hospital. Someone in the same skin came and we gave them money for Lubowa and the structure has been at the foundation level for the last two years – (*Interjections)* – okay, now it is a Russian, I think.

I officially would like to register my prayers for my uncle – if it is allowed in this Parliament – because he is headed for a bigger scandal in this project. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. If you are doing it as a nephew, you should have gone home. But if you are doing it as a Member of Parliament, it is okay.

Honourable minister, please, respond very briefly because we have overshot the time.

**MAJ. GEN. (RTD) MUHWEZI:** Mr Speaker, I would like to thank my honourable colleagues, friends and relatives –*(Laughter)*– for taking great interest in this project and also for their prayers and best wishes. However, I would like to assure them, as I said in the statement, that this Government is concerned about the security of the people and of their wealth, including their expenditure too.

Hon. Elijah Okupa asked for how long this company will own the project before transferring it to Government. The answer is that it will not be more than 10 years. They are putting in their money. Government is not putting in a shilling. Although someone thinks that people’s expenditure is Government expenditure. The answer is 10 years.

He also suggested that we do a pilot scheme with boda bodas only and that if it works well, we can extend it to vehicles. Again, I have to repeat that the idea is to curb insecurity and to capture the criminals, who use both motorcycles and vehicles. So we have to start with both.

He then referred to the issue of bankruptcy; that this company was declared bankrupt. According to our information, that is not true. It was never declared bankrupt though there was a bankruptcy case about it in court.

As you know, bankruptcy is applied for by the very company. It has something to do with taxes and so on. This is our information.

The most important thing is that if it were true, there are clauses in the agreement that protect Government. It will not lose even a penny. It will be the company to lose because it is bringing in the money and if it was found out to be bankrupt, then Government would terminate the agreement at no loss to Government.

Hon. Solomon Silwany asked about the procurement process. I would like to thank hon. Kibaju who worked in Ministry of Defense and Veteran Affairs for many years and knows about classified procurement.

When you procure selectively or outsourcing just one company, it does not mean that you do not compare with other companies. You do, except that it is not public. It is not open bidding but you definitely get very many. You can talk to them before you choose the most suitable.

The other question –

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, if you are going to adopt that procedure, I do not have the time. 18 Members contributed. Let us have the issues grouped and you deal with them.

**MAJ. GEN. (RTD) MUHWEZI:** Thank you very much for your guidance, Mr Speaker. Some of the questions were around the same issues. I will answer them as I address the point of cost. How much is very little? In the statement, I said it will not be a lot. So people are asking how much it will be.

The answer is that this amount has not yet been decided. It will be decided by the project management team. We signed, as I told you in the statement, to allow this company to bring its equipment. However, Government is going to negotiate further the details of how much they are going to charge, and the project management committee will decide *-(Interruption)*

**MR AOGON:** Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. This is a very pertinent issue, where we are talking about money, which is not going to be paid by Government, but individuals from their pockets. And we are going to engage a contractor to bring equipment before we have even talked about what we are going to pay. You have just opened the gates of hell for the citizens.

Is it in order for the minister and Government to be reckless in handling matters that concern the public – the citizens of Uganda – by way of such statements? Is the minister in order, Mr Speaker?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable member, final price determination - unless the Government is going to agree to a price and subsidise - cannot be done before the matter is set for the market.

You have bought your suits – I do not know where they are from – but the only time you know the price is when you go to buy it. Even the importer cannot determine from there that he is going to charge Ugandans this amount of money because the transportation will change; everything will start varying.

In other words, the things that feed into price determination are difficult to tell beforehand. Look at our Electricity Regulation Authority setting tariffs. They have issues that they have to consider before they come to a final resolution and even consider Government subsidies to help the people.

So, I do not think the minister was proceeding wrongly in saying they cannot tell the price now because they are even still manufacturing whatever is going to be brought.

**MAJ. GEN. (RTD) MUHWEZI:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The other question was about the technology – whether it is fake. As I said in my statement, a team of scientists visited the company in Moscow and made a report to the President, confirming the capability of this company.

This company owns the technology. Another Member was saying that we give our local company but this is not even an available technology in other developed countries. There are very few countries. So, this company owns the patent rights of the technology. They have done it in some other places and they are bringing it to Uganda.

Another honourable member was talking about human intelligence. Of course, this technology is not coming to replace human intelligence. They work together; they complement each other. As you may have recently heard, the cameras which are being criticised helped in the arrest of the criminals who murdered the chairman of NRM in Ntoroko.

They were able to trace the people using cameras, which captured the vehicle number plates. They found the vehicle; it had been hired for self-drive. The one who hired it gave it to another person but all of them were arrested and the CCTV helped.

Another point I should make is that I referred to regulation, that we shall be coming back to you to amend some regulation. This means that the process by Government and also Parliament is still going on because everything we are doing; we shall do it according to the law. Parliament will be involved at every stage.

So, Mr Speaker, I should summarise by saying that we have taken note of all the concerns of the honourable members and we shall always come back here, when it is necessary, to make sure that we make whatever decision is made together. If it fails, it will not be my problem; it will be a problem of all of us. *(Laughter)* I rest my case.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much. Honourable members, can we proceed to the next items?

LAYING OF PAPERS

LIST OF ACCOUNTING OFFICERS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2021/2022

4.50

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (MICROFINANCE) (Mr Haruna Kasolo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg to lay the list of accounting officers for Financial Year 2021/2022. I beg to lay.

**THE SPEAKER:** Let the records capture that. That is the list of accounting officers, for information of the House. Thank you very much.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT URGING GOVERNMENT TO URGENTLY COME UP WITH A CUSTOM-BASED RECOVERY PLAN FOR PRIVATE EDUCATION SCHOOLS TO ADDRESS THE ECONOMIC STRAIN ASSOCIATED WITH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

4.51

**MS CHRISTINE SENDAWULA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kyankwanzi):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Since this is my first time on the Floor of Parliament –*(Interjections)*– Yes, I take this opportunity to congratulate you upon attaining that seat as the Speaker of Parliament. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, I still take this opportunity to convey my warm greetings to you and the House from the people of Kyankwanzi.

I rise to move a Motion for a resolution of Parliament, urging Government to urgently come up with a custom-based recovery plan for private education schools, to address the economic strain associated with the COVID-19 pandemic; it is moved under Rule 56 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

“*WHEREAS in March 2020, Uganda, like the rest of the world, was struck by the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and Government put in place various measures, including closure of schools and education institutions on 18 March 2020 to prevent and minimise the rate of transmission of the virus among the people;*

*AWARE that the schools remained closed until 15 October 2020, when the reopening started in a phased manner with candidate classes, tertiary and university finalists to enable them complete their studies;*

*FURTHER AWARE that before schools could fully reopen, Uganda entered the second wave of the pandemic early this year and arising from the country recording a high number of COVID-19 cases, schools were again closed, effective 7th June 2021 and remained closed to date –*

*ACKNOWLEDGING THAT the prolonged closure of schools has not only disrupted continuity of education but has also had a spillover effect on the economic operations of private education sub-sector;*

*NOTING THAT the economic shock of the COVID-I9 pandemic has placed private education schools and institutions under significant financial stress due to accumulated bank loans which were acquired primarily to finance school related developments and operations;*

*CONCERNED THAT to date, the education related debt burden is close to Shs 2 trillion with increasing interest charged at a very high rate of 22 percent to 26 percent every single day causing a great risk as banks run out of patience for these non- performing loans and as a result, some schools are on the verge of being auctioned;*

*FURTHER CONCERNED THAT the loss of revenue has adversely impacted on employment capacity in the private education sub-sector with more than 350,000 teachers laid off and about 250,000 support staff remaining unemployed and therefore, without income till now;*

*RECOGNISING THAT as of 2017, the private schools component in terms of enrolment of pre-primary, primary and secondary levels stood at 100 percent, 84 percent and 77 percent respectively, with an overall average of 84 percent across the three levels and teacher employment of pre-primary, primary and secondary stood at 100 percent, 84 percent and 77 percent respectively, giving an average of 87 percent contribution;*

*RECOGNISING FURTHER THAT private schools also contribute about 4 per cent of the national GDP, Shs 200 billion in taxes every financial year and approximately Shs 180 billion annually to the National Social Security Fund;*

*APPRECIATING the contribution made by private education schools and institutions in supplementing Government efforts to provide education to citizens of Uganda and their economic contribution and social development of the young generation;*

*NOW THEREFORE be it resolved by Parliament as follows:*

1. *Parliament urges the Government to put in place a recovery plan, including a revolving recovery fund of low interest rate to cushion private education schools and institutions from the consequences of bank loan backlogs and support them into sustainable recovery in the medium term.*
2. *Parliament urges the Government to engage commercial banks to restructure the loans extended to private education schools and institutions to allow flexibility in repayment.*
3. *Parliament urges the Government to extend financial and logistical support to private education schools and institutions to facilitate them in acquiring appropriate SOPs like sanitizers, face masks for staff, supplementary face masks for learners and hand washing equipment in preparation for the reopening of schools.*
4. *Parliament urges the Government to take over the ownership of private institutions or schools where the owners are constrained to have these facilities operational.”*

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

**THE SPEAKER:** Is the Motion seconded? It is seconded by Members from Agago, Entebbe, Ayivu, Maracha and Nabilatuk. Would you like to speak briefly to your motion because there is something I would like to suggest about the motion?

Honourable members, if you look at prayer number 4, it urges the Government to take over - That means you do not just take over freely. There are financial implications. I do not know how that happens but I am already thinking of some situation that may arise in the course of discussing this Motion.

Honourable member, would you like to justify your motion briefly please?

**MS SENDAWULA:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker and honourable members for supporting the Motion. When you look at the percentage of our schools in the country, private schools have got 100 percent nursery schools, 48 percent in primary schools, 77 percent in secondary schools and 73 percent in tertiary education.

These private schools have employed a lot of our people. Those teachers who come out from primary teachers’ colleges and universities are mostly employed by these private schools. A few are taken by the Ministry of Education and district local governments.

Education as an export earner

The existence of private schools or institutions has opened doors for citizens from other countries to come and study and even teach our students in this country thus increasing export revenue from education contributed to the country.

The growth of our local entrepreneurs

Education as a service has opened doors for many Ugandan investors to invest in our country, especially the private school owners. I, therefore, recommend that in an attempt to improve indigenous investors, we should support the existence of private institutions to stabilise the effects of COVID-19.

Supply chain of agriculture

Private schools or institutions offer a big market to farmers in Uganda. This is when you look at the big number of private institutions we have. It is automatic that even the intake of food from our agricultural products is big e.g. beans and maize which are fed on by our students in those private schools.

Mr Speaker, looking at the future of our teenagers at stake, Uganda is reported to have one of the highest populations of the young people in the world. The Uganda National Bureau of Statistics estimates that 80 per cent of Ugandans are below the age of 35 years, while 53 per cent is below 15 years.

Today, I read somewhere, where they said “protect and keep girls in schools to reduce teenage pregnancy during and after the COVID-19 pandemic”. There is no way we can protect these unless we support the existence of the private schools in our country.

I, therefore, submit the motion. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, honourable. I think it is a very clear request of an existing situation that we all know about. Honourable member for Igara East - seconder of the Motion - you will do it in four minutes. This time, they have two seconders. I will allow the Member for Mityana North to use another four minutes after that. Hon. Mawanda, you have four minutes.

5.05

**MR MICHAEL MAWANDA (NRM, Igara County East, Bushenyi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. We all acknowledge the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic as hard on the education sector, generally, and, specifically, on the private schools, as a result of their closure. The private education subsector has been badly hit by the effects of the pandemic and calls for urgent intervention by the Government.

The private schools are grappling with various challenges, including the stretched closure of schools, which has caused severe operational challenges. They have totally run out of operating capital due to lack of revenue while, at the same time, they are faced with escalating bank loans.

They are suffering with standing maintaining costs and lack of caution and recovery funds for reopening requirement. As a result, over the last two years, many private schools and institutions have found themselves in a dangerous debt corner, leading to the sale of some schools. Some school structures have also been turned into facilities for other businesses.

Many education institutions need and will need major refurbishment on reopening due to the redundancy and dilapidation. The cost will grow bigger as long as the closure continues.

A number of professional teachers have opted - and are continuing to opt - out of the profession to initiate and run microbusinesses and vowed never to return to the teaching profession. In fact, other teachers are shunning away from teaching in private schools because of the uncertainty of job security, yet, amidst these challenges, the private education subsector continues to play a significant role in complementing the Government in the provision of education and training to Ugandans.

For example, private schools, especially at secondary level, normally admit all the learners after PLE and UCE, who have not been absorbed by the Government-aided schools due to the admission cut-off points, thus supporting the Government’s goal of higher education for all.

When it comes to the performance and quality of service, the private education subsector contributes handsomely, as evidenced by the performance analysis in the national examinations including PLE, USE and UACE. Many private education institutions have produced top-performing students at all levels, year after year. For instance, in the UCE results of 2020, it was reported in the local mass media that private education performance, in terms of passes, was over 95 per cent. This is a tremendous value addition.

Mr Speaker, in conclusion, there is need for the Government to urgently intervene and rescue the collapsing private schools by coming up with a custom-based recovery plan, including a revolving fund, to resuscitate these schools to ensure continuity of education when schools reopen.

Mr Speaker and Members, I beg to submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, seconder of the Motion. Can I have the second seconder - the Member for Mityana North: hon. Kibedi Nsegumire?

5.09

**MR MUHAMMAD NSEGUMIRE (NRM, Mityana County North, Mityana):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to second the Motion on the following grounds.

Private schools play a big role in educating Ugandans and complementing the Government efforts of making sure that every Ugandan child attains formal education. However, the proprietors of private institutions have for long been depending on financial institutions and have been very modest and careful investors. They have been servicing their loans promptly. However, with the current lockdown of schools, they are bound to lose their schools as a result of failure to clear the outstanding loans.

Private schools constitute a bigger percentage of education institutions in Uganda and, as such, they supplement the Government’s efforts to educate the Ugandan child and they should, therefore, be assisted out of the situation.

Unemployment

Private school institutions have been key in the provision of employment opportunities in Uganda. As you may be aware, private teachers are over 2,000. It is, therefore, urgent to make a recovery plan for the private schools in order to overcome unemployment that is likely to come up.

It is important to note that the Government cannot recruit all those teachers into the Government’s institutions. While the Government teachers are earning a salary during the COVID-19 lockdown of schools up to date, private school teachers were only left to join petty business such as making chapatis and laying bricks, among other things. This is unfortunate and regrettable for the teachers and this has terribly lowered their livelihoods and standards of living.

Lastly, when you look at the academic performance of every academic year, you realise that some private school or institutions even perform much better than public schools. Therefore, our institutions of learning - both public and private - complement each other in the struggle of improving the quality and service of education in Uganda.

I beg to submit. *(Applause)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, honourable members, for moving this motion. I also thank the seconders, who have given brilliant speeches in support of this fairly universal concern of Members.

Honourable members, there are very many things going on with this particular sector. Personally, I had a meeting in Gulu, where I met the leaders of the Private Schools Association and one of them is our own Member.

There are very many things happening, with the Ministry of Education and Sports itself and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to try and find - because it is a real problem. People are losing properties and things like that. It is a serious situation. A lot of people are involved in trying to find a solution and see how to handle the affected people, who have invested in these private schools.

You will be shocked to learn that they handle more than the Government does in terms of training people from nursery, primary, secondary and tertiary - including university - education. They handle over – I do not want to throw a figure but I think they told me they are handling over 20 million children in their institutions. That figure needs to be verified but that is what they stated. If they are handling this number of children in this country, then the matter becomes serious if such a group dealing with this category of children, all of a sudden, get paralysed and their investments go into jeopardy.

It is a very involving debate and my first instinct was to have this thing wider debated in terms of committees engaging with institutions, the Ministry of Education and Sports and all people concerned about this sector. That was my initial instinct. *(Applause)*

However, it looks like other people want to come directly to Parliament with their issues concerning the same thing. So, I do not know whether it is a proper way to proceed. Do we want to debate this or do we want a more comprehensive thing? If you want a debate, I will open the debate but we cannot have both. If you are debating now that means -

**MR OSEKU:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The way we are proceeding these days is by designation and you realise that for a motion like this, we may have an opportunity for debate only today. However, many Members out there may not have the opportunity to air their views here in the House.

Wouldn’t it be procedurally right that we refer this matter, like you have said to a committee for thorough processing so that they do so on behalf of the whole House and when a report is brought here, it would have taken care of all the interests and at least, we are fairly represented in those committees and they work for the House.

My view is that we refer this to a committee for thorough  processing including the motion so that they look through it, bring the report and then it will be debated and out of that, the minister can prepare the appropriate response for this.

**THE SPEAKER:** That is what I had proposed but there seems to be other views.

5.16

**THE MINISTER, OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT (SECURITY) (Maj. Gen. (Rtd) Jim Muhwezi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have a contrary view. As you said, I think this big problem is well known to everyone, the Government and like you have met some people, I have also met some people including the Executive of the Private School Owner Association and we have communicated in the Government and I am sure the Government is working on it.

My view would be not to prolong it by taking it to a committee. There is no one contesting anything because we know the problem as Members enumerated them. I think we could discuss it, have our views here and work with the Government to see how to resolve this matter. That is my view, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I am aware because I have been involved as the Speaker. I am aware that the Ministry of Education and Sports, including the senior minister, is heavily involved in this process of trying to help this association of owners of private schools. I am also aware of what is going to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development; the negotiations that are going on with the commercial banks in trying to find a solution. I was also part of the meeting in Gulu, with all the leaders of private schools, which I stated earlier. The issues are involving.

There is no disagreement, just like other sectors that have had issues and needed support. We have situations where our traders get problems in places but we try to look for money to help them.

Now, this situation is afflicting the people who invested in these private institutions to supplement the Government's efforts and we know them personally. They are really in problems. So, is there anybody who has objections to this motion? Do we add on the prayers? There are other processes going on but we can deal with processes. Is anybody disagreeing with this Motion? One prayer, we want to add which is an amendment to the motion; the honourable member would like to propose an amendment.

**MR AOGON:** It is not an amendment but I am concerned about the specific prayer, which is talking about the Government taking over. I do not know but maybe, we should be able to receive guidance from you. Otherwise, I see it as a very heavy prayer with a huge burden, which I thought we should be considerate about. I need your guidance, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Are you proposing a deletion of prayer No. 4?

**MR AOGON:** I would propose so?

**THE SPEAKER:** So, why don’t you do so?

**MR AOGON:** Mr Speaker, allow me to move that we delete the specific prayer urging the Government to take over the private schools.

Otherwise, I have already seen the situation we are in. Even Parliament is not operating at 100 per cent; budget cuts have been made at 40 per cent across the board. Therefore, is it realistic that we talk about takeover of private schools? I therefore, move that we have this particular prayer deleted. I beg to move.

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes, mover of the Motion. The proposal is that prayer No.4 should not form part of the resolution of Parliament but the Member is satisfied with prayers No. 1, 2, 3 and it seems many other Members are satisfied with his proposal. Prayer No.4 urges Government to take over-

**MS SENDAWULA:** I meant “where the owner of the school will not be able to manage in this period” so that the Government can come in to intervene and see how it can help or takeover managing the school for some few years-

**THE SPEAKER:** No, honourable member, it will be a matter of willing buyer willing seller.

**MS SENDAWULA:** We can delete it; we can remove and remain with the three prayers. (*Applause*)

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you.

5.22

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr Amos Lugoloobi):** Mr Speaker, I want to agree with the view that we handle this matter here and sort it out from here. If there are any issues that we may add to the prayers, we could add them but let us resolve it now because time is of essence. To push this Motion to a committee, then you should be talking about another two months from now, by which time, we shall be in the Christmas season and it might die a natural death.

I propose that we handle it here. If we agree with the prayers, we pick them and if we may want to make some adjustments, we do those adjustments *–(Interjections)-* may I be protected from hon. Ecweru? Mr Speaker, I think we can deal with this matter here and now.

I thought that I should provide some information in some areas. For example, on prayer No.1 that talks about a revolving recovery fund, we already have in place an SME recovery fund, which is akin to the Agricultural Credit Facility. As Government, we have provided Shs 100 billion, where participating banks would also be providing Shs 100 billion to make a total of Shs 200 billion.

I am aware that private schools require in the region of Shs 300 to Shs 500 billion to stabilise the situation. I thought that this recommendation could be adjusted to fit within that framework so that we do not talk about a separate revolving fund but we recommend that these private schools could be given special consideration within the framework of that fund.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, through the Central Bank, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has been working with Bank of Uganda on a credit relief facility. The idea behind this facility, is to restructure the loans to extend the repayment period. Now, this has been there and I think we have had about three tranches of such extension schemes because we are in a second lockdown, and each credit relief programme lasts for about six months. Now, we have almost had three and after the three tranches,the challenges is going to be that these debts become bad debts. What that means is that if the owners cannot pay, then other measures can be taken by the lending institutions.

Today, I had a conversation with Stanbic Bank about this same issue. The banks are equally concerned because they have a significant part of their resources in these schools. Stanbic Bank told me that they are making provisions, where they would allow to take over interest for this period for which schools have been closed, to write off interest for that period so that the schools would have to pay the applicable principal for that period. We agreed with Stanbic Bank and the idea could be sold to the bankers association to see if this could be accommodated by other banks.

Therefore, we have started on a process in that direction, and I thought that we should not lose track of that.

Thirdly, there is the issue the Shs 20 billion, which the President pledged to the teachers in private schools. I would like to say that the challenge has been with the teachers themselves. They have failed to organise themselves properly *–(Interjections)–* kindly, listen to me. This is the problem and we have put it in writing to them. The Ministry of Education and Sports wrote to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, communicating that there is a SACCO that has been established for the private teachers. As we were planning to disburse the money to the SACCO, another group came up claiming that SACCO being proposed by the ministry was fake.

In fact, they proposed about six formations that form a certain umbrella SACCO and they said that was the right one. Now, we have written to the Ministry of Education and Sports to clarify.

These are some of the issues happening in the sector and we think that we already engaged and the entire sector is already embedded in the process. I thought that we could conclude the discussion so that we continue dealing with these issues *–(Interruption)*

**MR AMOS OKOT:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. At the beginning, you asked a question here whether we can debate the motion or refer it to the committee. The committee is one other area, where Parliament can have enough time to discuss matters, no matter whether one is a member of that committee or not, even the public can be given opportunity to come and give in their views. The minister was trying to bring in matters according to what the Floor was discussing that maybe, we amend the prayers. For us to amend the prayers now, it will require some explanation.

Mr Speaker, would it not be procedurally right to give the Committee on Education and Sports some few days so that we get the opportunity to go and amend this thing from the committee?

Also, it would be of advantage to this House because discussions, which are taking place outside do not involve Parliament; it involves technocrats and the people outside. However, in this situation, Parliament will have a say because the country is saying schools have been closed due to lockdown while in other countries, schools are open. Why don’t we maybe do regional opening of schools? People from the west open schools and their students study there. The north and other regions do the same.

In that way we can manage to catch up with the situation, which we are in. Rather than opening the whole thing to the whole country. For example, students that come from Agago and study in Kampala, and when the situation becomes very bad, you run to Agago with Corona.

Is it not procedurally right for us to refer this Motion to the Committee on Education and Sports to give us the opportunity to visit the committee and talk from there rather than starting to debate here? I also have some issues to bring forward that also need debate.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, this issue involves the citizens of this country. Their investments are now in jeopardy arising from things that were not created by anybody in this country; COVID-19. They are suffering; they have made petitions, they have held meetings and people are trying to intervene to try and see that they are assisted.

The way we have structured this Motion cannot be the way to process it to a proper decision. That is my opinion. What is very difficult with sending this thing to the Committee on Education and Sports and the Ministry of Education and Sports, together with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development make a position on the motion, private owners come and make a contribution and teachers in private institutions come and make presentations. It does not matter how long it will take, as long as we find a lasting solution *–(Applause)*

That is my sentiment because I have attended some of these meetings. I am not in the habit of complicating rather straight forward things by things that sometimes are not properly well thought through. Okay?

I am not going to put the question; I will propose the question for debate when the matter comes back to Parliament. This motion is referred to the Committee on Education and Sports *–(Applause)–* let us have that interaction and the Committee on Education and Sports will kick-off debate by making a report advising Parliament on what it should do.

Given that this matter is not of a normal nature, is the Chairperson of the Committee on Education and Sports here? Is the Vice-Chairperson here? Can I see the Members, who are here? Can we give you 10 days to come back and report? *(Interjections)* The Committee on Education and Sports is given 10 days to look through this Motion, interact with people, enrich it and come with recommendations. We will pass the resolution by this House, advising Government on what we think, as Parliament, can be done in the meantime.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT TO HIGHLIGHT THE DECLINE IN ETHICAL AND MORAL VALUES IN THE COUNTRY AND PROPOSE SOLUTIONS FOR REVERSING THE DESTRUCTIVE DECLINE

**THE SPEAKER:** The proposers of the Motion prefer to handle it another day and the mover is not here anyway.

RESPONSE BY MINISTER TO QUESTIONS RAISED ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF KABAALE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, HOIMA

**THE SPEAKER:** The honourable member who moved the Motion is actually here; he only changed seats. I have a request from them that they would like to present it another day. Thank you.

Honourable minister, remember that this matter had already been discussed and there are only points of clarification.

5.34

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS)** (**Mr Musa Ecweru):** Mr Speaker, when my colleague, hon. Fred Byamukama, Minister of State for Transport came and made a statement on behalf of the ministry here, honourable members raised some issues that needed clarification; particularly, in regard to Kabaale International Airport in Hoima and Entebbe International Airport.

My team in the ministry has prepared a detailed response. What I have decided to do is to upload the whole response for honourable colleagues to read and internalise at their convenient time.

What I will then do is to capture what I consider specifically salient. For example, the minister was asked to give a status report on the local content for Kabaale International Airport.

What we would like to say here is that the contractor has a total workforce of 929 employees. Of these 929, 915 are local employees. They are Ugandans. There is a breakdown of those who are female and those who are male. Overall, the project is in compliance with the loan agreement as well as the national requirement for local content and gender responsiveness.

Kabaale International Airport, according to the question here, was allocated 3.19 square kilometres which, in the opinion of the honourable colleague, could have been adequate. Why do we need more land?

Mr Speaker, the total requirement for the Kabaale International Airport land is 5.14 square kilometers. The current phase one was allocated 3.19 and hence the need for the remaining land.

I also want to draw the attention of the Members to the fact that the ministry has made a request to Uganda National Oil Company to allocate additional land to the airport project and the request is being handled.

There was this question, “Have you put into consideration issues of accessibility, particularly in most of our infrastructure programmes for the people with disabilities?”

The design caters for access of the people with disabilities to the public areas and conforms to the international standards.

Did the ministry include construction of the access road in the master plan of Kabaale International Airport? The access road was included in the master plan for Kabaale Airport. However, it could not be covered by the loan due to funding constraints.

What we have done is – UNRA has been tasked to construct the road since this leads to a very critical facility.

Question: “The Government claims that they have fully compensated the persons affected by the project. The question is that some are complaining.”

The compensation of PAPs for the refinery is 99.7 per cent complete from our records. In most of our projects, there will always be some residual challenges but we are studying those that are coming up so that we can see what can be done.

The last one is – the rest my colleagues will study on their own.

Question: “What is the date of the contract particularly for Entebbe?” The commercial contract for the upgrade and expansion of Entebbe International Airport was signed on 08 October 2014.

There was one which might interest some Members here, including the presiding officer.

Question: “There was a promise that Gulu Airport would be developed into an international airport long before Kabaale Airport was conceived. What happened?”

Mr Speaker, the plan to upgrade Gulu to an international airport is still alive. Gulu Airport is gazetted as an entry and exit airport in Uganda and a master plan for its transformation into an international airport has been developed by the ministry.

Acquisition of extra land required for the airport expansion has been completed and the fencing of the newly acquired land has also been undertaken.

According to the master plan study, the first phase of the development is estimated to cost us USD 55 million.

My ministry and Civil Aviation Authority are currently sourcing for the requisite funding to put in place the required infrastructure for an international airport.

I would like to state here and now that that plan has not died. We are on course. However, Kabaale Airport on the other hand was prioritised as a strategic, special purpose vehicle for transportation of heavy equipment to support our oil industry in the Albertine Region. That is how Kabaale came before all the other considerations. I beg to move.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, very much. That brings to an end, items 8 (a) and 8 (b). Can we go to the next item? *(Interjections)* We had a full debate on this matter. These were points of clarifications. The minister said he could not deal with some of them at that point. I directed that he goes, deals with all and comes back. This is the response to that.

There comes a point when you need to exhaust a procedure. A statement was made, issues of clarification were raised in the course of the debate. The minister tried to respond to some of them. But we decided that since he could not respond to all of them, he might as well come with the responses on the points of clarifications that had been raised. So there has to be a cutoff somewhere.

If even on the clarification you want to start a debate, then we will never end matters. I would suggest that we receive these as the responses to the points of clarification that arose from the debate on the statement and then move on to the next item. That is how we are going to proceed. May the Members resume their seats.

RESPONSE BY MINISTER TO A QUESTION RAISED ON THE IMMINENT STRIKE BY TEXTILE DEALERS IN KAMPALA DUE TO THE DECISION BY UGANDA REVENUE AUTHORITY TO USE TEXTILE WEIGHT FOR TAXATION

**THE SPEAKER:** Proceed, honourable minister.

5.43

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (TRADE) (Ms Harriet Ntabazi):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I wish to provide an update on the imminent strike by the textile dealers in Kampala due to the decision by Uganda Revenue Authority to use textile weight for taxation.

Mr Speaker, during the 23rd Sitting of the 1st Meeting of the 1st Session of the 11th Parliament of Uganda held on 2nd September 2021, I was directed to meet the traders affected by the tax charges, which were charged in US dollars for importation on textile, fabrics and garments and report back to Parliament.

The matter was a bit hot but the ministry took some action. After receiving several petitions from textile and garment traders, our ministry held various meetings to understand, discuss and propose a way forward on the concerns of the traders.

These meetings involved the Textile Traders’ Associations, Kampala City Traders Association (KACITA), Kampala Arcaders and Traders’ Associations (KATA), the Kampala Arcaders Advocates Forum (KAAFO), United Traders’ Entrepreneurs Association (UTEA), Uganda Attires Association (UAA), Uganda Tailors’ Association (UTA) and Integrated Tailors and Fashion Designers Association under Kampala New Generation Traders’ Association, among others.

The traders had requests, Mr Speaker. The requests that they made were majorly two; that the Government stays application of specific tax of US$ 3.5 per kilogramme on imported garments and US$ 3 per kilogramme on imported fabrics.

The second one was to reduce the ad valorem tax from the current 35 per cent to 25 per cent on both imported garments and fabrics. Mr Speaker, Government did not sit; it took action immediately.

After receiving these requests, I, together with the ministry, forwarded the same to the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for consideration because all the rights of taxation lie in the hands of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

Following our submission to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, a meeting was immediately organised and chaired by the honourable Minister of State for Planning and Economic Development, here seated with us, hon. Lugoloobi. In attendance were the local manufacturers from Nytil and Fine Spinners. Tailors’ associations were also present. KACITA was present, UTEA, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives and other key stakeholders.

The Minister of State for Planning updated the meeting on the steps and offers that Government had so far taken to address the traders’ concerns. The offer Government had given was that out of the 572 products of the tariff lines representing 91 per cent of all categories of imported textile fabrics and garments, only 35 per cent import duty would apply.

On the other hand, the 47 textile products of the tariff lines representing less than 10 per cent of all the categories of textile fabrics and garment imports fell in the category of products that are locally produced and thus, warranted protection.

According to the 47 products of the tariff lines, Government agreed to the duty rate of 35 per cent or US$ 3 per kilogramme, which is higher for textile fabrics and 35 per cent of US$ 3.5 per cent per kilogramme, whichever is higher for garments.

This position had been communicated to URA on 4 August 2021. However, Mr Speaker, when this offer was communicated, the traders were uncomfortable and it seems it did not address their concerns, given the problem and effects of COVID-19 and the long lockdown that we had undergone. They requested Government to entirely remove the specific duty per kilogramme on all tariff lines.

Mr Speaker, after a long interaction with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives together with the stakeholders, we had to reach a final decision.

Government considered the traders’ concerns and revised its earlier position on the remaining 47 products of the tariff lines and stayed the application of the specific duty rate of US$ 3 and US$ 3.5 per kilogramme for piped fabrics and garments, especially the ad valorem tax applied to all the 572 tariff lines.

This decision allows importers to clear all goods that are currently under shipment or in customs and to give reasonable time; up to 31 December 2021, to traders to adjust their business decisions appropriately.

Therefore, all the US dollars per kilogramme were waived off and now the traders, beginning from that time, were free to go and pick their goods from the bonds.

The above decision has been communicated and the traders have rescinded their earlier decision to strike and some have started clearing. They are very happy with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives. We are doing very well, Mr Speaker. I beg to move.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much. Honourable members, you remember how this matter came up. It was the Member for Kasilo who raised it and traders were unhappy saying, how can they now start paying per kilogramme, when per kilogramme of different things are not the same? When you now open up in the market, it will be affecting people differently and yet it will be a breach on one of the principles of taxation and that is equity.

If you want to seek a point of clarification – but I think the matter has been substantially resolved. The question is, these provisions are normally contained in the laws. How did it come this time? Did they amend the law midterm without Parliament?

These are points we need to know. On the period of up to 31 December, what about the period from 1st of January to 30th of June? What happens, honourable minister?

**MR LOGOLOOBI:** Mr Speaker, the provision we have within the law talks about the ad valorem rate and a specific duty rate. In other words, we are talking about ad valorem rate of 35 per cent of the value or $3 or $3.5 per kilogramme in case of garments.

Now, since it was “this” or the “other”, we proposed that we could stay execution of the specific duty rate of $3 or $3.5 per kilogramme since we have the option of 35 per cent because it was causing a lot of instability among the traders. In fact, even entrepreneurs are involved in adding value to fabric - manufacturing garment. Therefore, there was a real stalemate in the sector. We had a number of containers stuck under customs and there was no movement at all. Therefore, we agreed to stay the execution of the other portion of the rates and took one that the traders felt more comfortable with.

We had options and we said that *–(Interjections)-* May I finish the submission to answer the Speaker’s question? After the specified period - we were looking at a situation. When the law was passed, some of these guys had already placed their orders. Some of the goods were in transit and, so, we felt that the period given would enable them to clear all the goods that were in that process.

After that period, there would be a review. We would sit down with them and see if we could sustain the idea of the 35 per cent or if we could move on to the $3 per kilogramme. It will be reviewed and the outcome of that review will be presented to Parliament, for guidance.

**MR AOGON:** Mr Speaker, I have a concern. One, I have been thinking that it is Parliament that has the preserve of varying taxes, including even the rates for cars that are coming into the country.

I would like to give the example that, in this House, we took a decision not to allow cars of a certain make to enter the country. Do you want to say now that it is possible for you to vary decisions that are taken by this House?

Mr Speaker, my concern is that it is this House that instituted the taxes and I thought that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is the implementer. How come that this matter was not brought to this House before the decisions that you have taken? I thought that you would have taken it to the level that we have done with this issue of education and referred this matter to the committee of finance.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable member, it is because this Parliament gave the ministry the option. That is what the minister said: you either do this or this, with the rates included. That is the response.

Honourable minister, had you finished?

5.57

**MR THEODORE SSEKIKUBO (NRM, Lwemiyaga County, Ssembabule):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was looking at the understanding reached between the Government (Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives) and the traders with a view to say that you allowed a transition period of up to December. You really hinted on it though the minister did not catch it.

You would be moving on two different tax policies in one financial year. What happens? Do we look neat, honourable Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development? This is because 31 December is only a half of the financial year? What happens to the next, aware that one of the principles of taxation is that there must be uniformity and certainty?

However, you are now leaving uniformity, certainty, consistency and economy all in balance. Are we having strategic partners in the ministry for finance where you are now or is there something happening differently? I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, I think there is a more technical point, adding to what the Members have said. If Parliament gives options and at the beginning of the financial year - implementing that law - you choose one option to apply, can you, midterm, change the option because you have already chosen that you wanted to go, based on the value and you started implementing it? Then midway, you say: “No, we now want to go by kilogrammes.”

That is why you are saying it is disruptive because people are already used to this and now you are telling them, midway, that “no, let us shift to this” and now there are issues.

The substantive questions, therefore, is that we are doing the budget and you are bringing revenue Bills again to this Parliament: why would you break the financial year into two regimes? Wouldn’t it be smarter to review - as we reviewed the tax laws leading to the next budget - so that you do not disrupt the market?

**MR LUGOLOOBI:** Mr Speaker, we take the guidance but the reason we felt that we would need to meet again and review is because either side was raising issues. URA rose concerns relating to the valuation of imports - those importers were grossly under-declaring what they were importing and, therefore, the application of the ad valorem rate would lead to a lot of loss of revenue to the Government. That was the concern.

However, at the same time, the importers were also complaining that the application of the specific duty rate of $3 was untenable; it was making their imports very expensive and, therefore, buyers could not afford them. Given these two scenarios, we thought that let us go for these few months and see how we progress on either side and then we sit down to review.

Actually, the review would help us, especially when it comes to planning for the next financial year. We are already into the budget cycle and consultations have already begun. Therefore, that review is largely to inform our next strategy in this area.

**THE SPEAKER:** Okay. Thank you.

RESPONSE ON THE FLUCTUATING VANILLA AND COTTON PRICES

6.02

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is a short response to the gate prices of cotton and vanilla. On the issue of cotton, the main growing areas of cotton are in the north, east, south-east of Lake Kyoga and Kasese area in the west.

In terms of production, we had an average of 150,250 bales annually. In 2020, production of cotton countrywide was affected by floods, leading to the law harvest of 80000-100000 bales.

The likely - and from our research - the causes of the price fluctuations were mainly four:

1. The cotton prices are set internationally. When the prices of cotton on the world market go up, they also go up locally and the reverse is true.
2. The extreme weather conditions like floods and droughts that cause unexpected changes in the quality harvested. As a result, middlemen acted fast and bought off the little that farmers had got so as to benefit from the likely high prices due to the low harvest.
3. The quality of the product; when the quality of cotton is good, it fetches high prices but when it is not good, it fetches a low price on the market.
4. The outbreak of COVID-19 brought a lot of complications in terms of movement and transportation of the product since the majority of buyers are based in Kampala, hence causing price fluctuation.

I will say something on vanilla prices and then I will inform the House what the Government is doing to help the farmers.

Commercial growing of vanilla in Uganda is carried out in the districts of Mukono, Kayunga, Mpigi, Luweero, Buikwe, among others. Most of the Ugandan vanilla is exported to the United States and Europe. Vanilla is harvested twice a year; in June and July, and then December to January.

Available statistics indicate that Ugandan vanilla farmers produce 31.4 metric tonnes annually. Accordingly, farmers in the central region produce a variety of the crop for home consumption and market purposes but there is high production of vanilla for marketing, as compared to other crops.

More than 85 per cent of the population in the foothills of Rwenzori Mountain depend on farming. Vanilla is a very lucrative business in Kasese, given its prices that have been steadily increasing over time.

In January 2020, a kilogramme of green bean vanilla had reached Shs 300,000 but kept on falling and going up by a margin of Shs 50,000. The farmers say that some buyers have already intimated that the prices might drop further with a kilogramme of vanilla going between Shs 10,000 and Shs 20,000, down from above Shs 50,000 in 2020.

Causes in the price fluctuations

1. Vanilla theft which at times, causes farmers to harvest immature crops leading to poor quality and hence low commodity prices.
2. Marketing of vanilla is mostly done either through middlemen who exploit farmers.
3. The impact of COVID-19 has also affected vanilla like it has affected everything else in our life.

What has the Government done to help the farmers?

The Government, through the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries implementing a training programme for farmers on the production, marketing procedures, process of agricultural products, since these agricultural products are frequently faced with price fluctuation and also to ensure that once they produce, they produce products of quality because it is quality that fetches good prices on the international market.

The Government is also facilitating farmers to organise themselves into cooperatives so that they have a high bargaining power with the buyers and all other things that come along when people, especially farmers, cooperate.

Working with the Ministry of Finance, we want to implement silos and other value addition facilities to help farmers, not only with cotton but other crops so that when the prices are low, at least, people can store their goods until when prices stabilize.

We also want to help farmers to produce quality goods by ensuring that a right seedling is planted in the right soil and post-harvesting is right.

Exporters are being trained on export regulations and how they can competitively capture the foreign export markets, other than being outcompeted by large scale commercial producers and exporters in other countries.

The issue of standards is what we are concentrating on so that we educate our farmers to say that in order to benefit from export markets, you must have goods which meet the standard. This is our response, Mr Speaker. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, honourable.

**MR TIMUZIGU:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I take this opportunity to thank the minister for bringing this response.

Honourable minister, I need clarification from you about preparing our people, most especially those exporting vanilla to produce the final products of vanilla. Otherwise, Uganda has fertile soils, enough rain; two seasons in some areas and some places like Fort Portal, have rain throughout. How are you preparing Ugandans to have the final products of vanilla?

Secondly, you have informed this House that you are training traders and exporters through the Ministry of Agriculture, which is very good. However, you are only training exporters and leaving behind the potential exporters.

We appreciate that we have an unemployment rate of 2.5 per cent in the country and it is going up. If you train the potential exporters, they will export enough and they will need employees and so, the unemployment rate will go down.

The same applies to the production of the final products of vanilla here in Uganda. If we can add that to Fine Spinners – By the way, it is only Fine Spinners and Nytil that use our cotton. We could train other Ugandans to use cotton because as far as I know, we do not have many Ugandans using our cotton to produce any cloth. What does that mean? As the population of Uganda increases, when the knowledge is static, in future, we are going to get security problems.

Honourable minister, could you clarify on the production of final products and the training of potential exporters? Thank you, Mr Speaker.

6.11

**MR THEODORE SSEKIKUBO (NRM, Lwemiyaga County, Ssembabule):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Sitting in this House, you find a lot of contradictions. In the earlier statement, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development advocated for doing away with this tax so that taxes can be imposed on garments and other textiles in a bid to promote our local textiles.

When it came to the basic raw materials for cotton and garments, the ministers told us that our prices are determined at the international market. This means that the Government is helpless. They are not even intervening on helping the local farmer so that capacity can be built for us to have our local textile industry boom. Yet, on the other side, they say that they are protecting that. What a contradiction. How do you come to protect what you do not have?

You are harassing traders by scrapping this tax and imposing $3.5 for the garments and yet, you are not even taking deliberate efforts to ensure that you cultivate and build synergies for the local textile industry.

I, therefore, would like to raise this to the honourable minister: are you serious when you are lecturing to Members of Parliament and think we have such a short memory and we cannot follow to find out that you are not being serious? On the one hand, you are projecting interest in the country's sector but on the other, your actions are contradicting *–(Interjection)-* I will take the information

**MR AOGON:** Thank you, hon. Ssekikubo.  Mr Speaker, the information I want to offer to my colleague is: there is an example of the ATM in Mbale; that very huge factory, which used to be a centre textile. Every day when the ministers go to the East, they pass there. What happened? Has Government become blind that they cannot see it because I thought this would be the time for us to rejuvenate such factories for them to consume the locally produced cotton in form of lint? What went wrong? Government, where are you?

**MR SSEKIKUBO:** Mr Speaker, I witnessed the transformation of the Uganda Coffee Marketing Board here. At the time, Government encouraged the setting up of the textile industry and indeed, virgin girls were collected from across the country to work here under AGOA to promote the textile industry of our country *–(Interjections)-* yes, it was clear on this Floor; it is on record.

They were brought to do the tailoring and help in the development of the textile industry. What happened? It died along the way. Our machines for Coffee Marketing Board were all removed and all that land was taken away under the guise of promoting our local textiles. You ask them now, how many companies are operating? If you cannot protect those companies, the few that you have and you leave them vulnerable to the international market. Are you serious about developing our local capacity?

Mr Speaker, I find it contradictory on the part of Government that you are preaching water yet you take wine. Youjust say something that is convenient at that particular point in time and you justify it – (*Interruption*)

**THE SPEAKER:** No, honourable, if you want to debate you debate. Please, his time is up.

6.16

**MR ACROBERT KIIZA (Independent, Bughendera County, Bundibugyo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. First, I thank the honourable minister for the formation and the clarification about vanilla. I want inform him that Bundibugyo, among other areas, is good at producing vanilla. However, the concern I am raising is about the quality. The quality is being affected as a result of insecurity and you have said it. Now, my concern is: why is it that Government is failing to provide security to the people?

I see here, you have talked about fluctuation but I am looking at it as abnormal fluctuation. You can imagine, you mentioned Shs 300,000 for a kilogram. I remember in Bundibugyo, in 2019 and 2020, a kilogram was at Shs 250,000 but currently, because of insecurity and too much theft, a kilogram is at Shs 5000 only. So why can't Government come in to provide security so that the quality of vanilla is maintained? I beg to submit

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Byanyima, you wanted to contribute on this matter?

6.17

**MR NATHAN BYANYIMA (NRM, Bukanga North County, Insingiro):** I was concerned especially when hon. Bahati - a few months ago, while he was a Minister of State for Finance - he knows on the big list of loans there is a very big loan for Phoenix. We were here, where did it go? What benefit? You know, I want Ugandans to be treated, well the way you want to be treated or most of us. You know, it is good to open a fresh page; kindly, time is up for us to be accountable. If Members went to Coffee Marketing Board and Phoenix, what is happening there? It is terrible.

Honourable minister, you are a Member of Parliament, you have added responsibility, be honest enough to see that we put our money where we can benefit. We are making Uganda a bottomless pit. We are not harnessing some of these things.

Therefore, I would like to know, but Members should remember Phoenix is a bottomless pit and the Coffee Marketing Board; that is a good building by the way; it could even host a ministry. Therefore, I thank you and I want him to take note of that.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Are we opening it up again?

6.16

**MR AMOS OKOT (NRM, Agago North County, Agago):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Minister said that the middlemen are exploiting but he does not have anything to say about it.

In my area, people grow cotton and it is one of the cash crops that they cannot run away from. However, the biggest challenge is the middleman. We have the Cotton Development Authority, which this House gives money. There is Cooperative Alliance, which is part of Government; to leave the middleman so that nobody can even check the determination of the prices of cotton, maybe vanilla - my interest is about Cotton. Can the Minister of Industry - this could be an area that can promote industrialisation very fast. You do not leave marketing in the hands of the middleman - of course, middlemen are after profit. They can even come, deceive, and say that you know, the price has dropped internationally and yet they are the ones setting the price. You said that others go and buy off from farmers, keep it somewhere, then eventually go and sell.

Somebody should step in to check that area. Without that, our farmers will be exploited and then that sector will not even grow. Some three years ago, farmers cultivated cotton; they could not sell because the prices were too bad. Others decided to leave it to rot in the garden without harvesting and plucking it out - they cried a lot.  Why don't you help us and control the middlemen?

In addition, when you come closer to open doors and you do what is called contract farming where you go do farming expecting the market to be there - the ways are closed. Let the linkages and synergies be there between the industry, Cotton Development Authority, the Cooperative Alliance, bring them together, champion it so that at the end, you protect the farmers with their cotton and the industry will grow or give us money. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. I had already picked the Member for Adjumani East.

6.22

**MR JAMES MAMAWI (NRM, Adjumani East County, Adjumani):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I would like to thank the minister for the report he has given.

There are a lot of challenges, which our farmers are facing. One of the challenges is price. Aware that as a country, we are exporting at a low cost but importing materials at a high cost after processing, how can the Government bridge these two gaps? How can we export at a high cost so that even if we are to import at a high cost, we shall have a gain in regards to that?

My honourable colleague mentioned a good point here that why don’t we encourage cotton farming among the farmers? Why don’t we encourage cooperative unions, which existed before? We are aware that the northern region grows cotton on a large scale but the challenge we have now is that if we have farmers to produce today, tomorrow, you will find the price has gone down, and at the end of the day, people will stop producing. When they stop production, the price again, goes high. Those are the few confusions we are getting on the ground, Mr Speaker.

We want our farmers to be helped and it is this very House that will help our farmers by fixing good prices on our products. Therefore, we need some good reports from the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives together with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to see how subsidisation of price can be done with our farmers.

We have agricultural subsidies and we have banks that provide loans to our farmers. Why don’t we equip them with such things so that they are able to access funds and produce on a large scale? I thank you, Mr Speaker.

6.24

**MR DAVID MUHUMUZA (NRM, Mwenge County North, Kyenjojo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the report but I have only two issues to ask.

First, we have left the farmers on their own. In my area, we grow some vanilla on a small scale but we have never seen any technical person coming to check on the farmers. The minister talked about farmers harvesting green beans, which are not ready and thus spoiled the market. However, the farmers are not trained or guided. You just grow your vanilla, harvest it and sell it the way you wish. There is nobody to guide you. These are the issues that the Government should come up with and bring technical people to mobilise and educate farmers, and help them on how to handle post-harvest handling.

The other issue is about the thieves. You grow your vanilla and before it gets ready, the thieves come and pick and sell it. When they sell it, eventually, they are selling vanilla, which is not ready.

The second issue is about the market. We know that Madagascar is leading in the production of vanilla in the whole world. Uganda is maybe, somewhere there. If we know that vanilla is too much in Madagascar and it is coming up, how can the Government help our farmers and inform them maybe, to prepare and look for more market? We have embassies in the whole world and we can use our embassies to promote this crop. We have the export promotion board. How are they helping our farmers to look for more markets? If maybe we are failing to sell in the UK, we can get another market in China or somewhere else.

Finally, there are other crops, which can be promoted. We have heard about avocado, macadamia nuts and cashew nuts. If vanilla is now disturbing us, how can the Government help us to promote other crops, which have more value and can help us as farmers, to get more money or maybe, have something else in case of bad prices of vanilla, then we have an alternative? I thank you, Sir.

**MR BAHATI:** Thank you. The comments of hon. Ssekikubo, are not on record. Mr Speaker, in the context of short run, I will answer two questions and make one comment.

First, is on the security. We are going to go into what you have proposed; working with the local leadership - RDC and DPC - and see whether security can be provided although it is a very big challenge for our security to monitor all the gardens but we will look into that.

The second point is about training and extension services by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries - to give the right knowledge to our farmers, about what they should be growing, how they should grow it and how they should market it. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries is working on this. As we speak now, they are in Kyankwanzi trying to come up with a strategy.

Mr Speaker, as you may recall, this Parliament provided money for extension workers in agriculture and we have continued to support them in that area. In the medium and long run, the solution is industrialisation; to add value to our products. For example, if we are processing vanilla, making cakes and other products, the prices will not be affected.

I would like to propose that at an appropriate time, in October, you give us time to come to this House with a comprehensive statement on how we are planning to industrialise our country. How are we going to handle the issue of cotton? How are we handling the issue of cocoa and cassava?

For example, cassava alone in terms of value, we are importing 80 million every year for starch that we use in our pharmaceuticals, when actually our cassava is grown and wasted like this. We want to industrialise this country. Mr Speaker, give us an opportunity so that we can have input from these Members on how to industrialise our country. I thank you, Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the honourable minister gives the impression that it is the Speaker to allow him bring a statement. *(Laughter)* Honourable minister, the day you have a statement, come and say, “Can I make this statement?”  However, you cannot start making promises when it is within your right as a minister, to bring a statement. Why are you doing it the other way round? How can I allow what I do not have? *(Laughter)*

**MR BAHATI:** Mr Speaker, I was sending a signal that when we come in October, you will give us sufficient time in the House to debate this statement. I am glad that the House is agreeable to that. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Just prepare your statement and come to Parliament. Do not make us feel eager about the statement in October when there is nothing.

Honourable members, usually in this month, at least, for three weeks, we have a recess. For a proper announcement, I will make it tomorrow, to this effect. I am just alerting you that usually in this month, we have a recess. We have received six Bills today and we might receive more tomorrow. Some of them had already been handled before and like I referred to the committees, giving them shorter periods so that they can come back and advise the House on how to proceed.

That is related to the Landlord and Tenant Bill, 2021 and also, the National Social Security Fund (Amendment) Bill, which we have given to the committees responsible, only 10 days to come back. Like I said, usually in this month, for about three weeks, we have recess.

Tomorrow, there will be communication; advising with consultation and how we will proceed in the next two or three weeks, or the whole month and we will be guided accordingly.

Honourable members, we have done very well. I thank you for sitting up to this time. House is adjourned to tomorrow at two o’clock.

*(The House rose at 6.31 p.m. and adjourned until Thursday, 30 September 2021 at 2.00 p.m.)*