



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

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FOURTH SESSION - FIRST MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 7 AUGUST 2024



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FOURTH SESSION - 8TH SITTING - 1ST MEETING

Wednesday, 7 August 2024

Parliament met at 2.17 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to today's sitting. It seems it is going to be an interesting one. My brother, Hon. Zaake, has brought in a new uniform *-(Laughter)-* and a new hairstyle. I hope you have not yet gazetted that one as yours. I am happy to see you, honourable colleague and honourable members.

Honourable colleagues, I request you to join me in congratulating our very own, Peruth Chemutai, for winning a silver medal in the women's 3,000m steeplechase race at the Olympic Games in Paris, France. *(Applause)* We continue to support all our athletes and hope for more medals and good news coming in.

Honourable colleagues, yesterday, when we were discussing the issue of interns, I promised I would cross-check with the Executive to see how best we can move since there will be no Cabinet meeting on Monday, because it will be International Youth Day. I hope – the minister

for youth – that your statement is ready. I do not want to be stampeded at the last minute to amend the Order Paper. We hope to get a statement. It is a very, very critical day. We need an update on what the Government is doing for our young people.

I consulted with the Rt Hon. Prime Minister this afternoon and I showed her how urgent it is. Luckily enough, she was also looking at it as an urgent matter. So, I think around Tuesday next week, she will convene a meeting of the stakeholders with a view of looking at how this matter can be resolved. She will, then, update the House in the course of the week. It can be on Wednesday or Thursday.

Let us give the Prime Minister a chance to coordinate the Government and we see what they will come up with.

I want us to use 30 minutes to handle a few matters of national importance, starting with the ones – wow, for the ones that I do not pick today, tomorrow will be your day.

Mr Ssekikubo rose) Yes, Hon. Ssekikubo? But, you usually look at me when smiling. This time, the face is - okay, that is better. *(Laughter)*

2.22

MR THEODORE SSEKIKUBO (NRM, Lwemiyaga County, Ssembabule): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. You know I am always too glad to be before you, as you conduct the House.

Mr Speaker, I rise on a matter on which you guided from the Chair, that you had received a kind of special petition from petitioners purportedly from Ssembabule. You had indicated that you would be calling me. To date, I have not heard from you.

As you know, once a petition is received, it should be processed. This is so that my name, which was tainted when a crowd was allowed to invade Parliament – purportedly petitioning against a murderer and land grabber – could be cleared. I do not sit comfortably there – once my name was put on the line. I, therefore, pray that you proceed to process the same so that this House can be informed about the outcome of that petition.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ssekikubo, I knew you had another mission. You were very busy; I did not want to distract you from your mission. *(Laughter)* Since you are now available - I heard that you were in West Nile, northern Uganda. I did not want to disrupt your mission. However, since you are available, I will see you tomorrow at 11.00 a.m. Thank you.

(Members rose) Honourable colleagues, let us go to these matters of national importance. You should only react to what I have communicated. It was very straightforward. Maybe, let me allow Hon. Zaake.

2.24

MR FRANCIS ZAAKE (NUP, Mityana Municipality, Mityana): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. When you were beginning your communication, you talked about my dress code, which I believe is very parliamentary.

Secondly, you also talked about my haircut. Mr Speaker, I am just from prison. *(Laughter)* This is a very serious matter because you can all be victims of this. Any time you can be arrested and taken to prison and your hair is cut, illegally. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, by our laws, for any member of the public or any Ugandan, it is unless one is

convicted that they can be humiliated to this extent. I believe this is inhumane. This is not right, from the prisons side – and I believe the minister can come up and explain this. This is wrong.

I was abducted from my party headquarters with my colleagues and my car was towed to Central Police Station (CPS). Mr Speaker, I believe this is wrong.

Also, the situation in prisons – it is good that some colleagues here were granted bail; I was with them there. Mr Speaker, the conditions in prisons are very bad. Our people are suffering there. For four, five or six years, people are just on remand. Some of them have even never faced any judge. I think it is high time we did something so that all of those political prisoners are released, unconditionally. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable chairperson of the Committee on Human Rights, annually, we are supposed to get a report on the status of prisons. Okay? So, I assign you to look into that as soon as we can. LoP?

2.26

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise regarding a matter, which we have been hearing a lot in the corridors, especially as it kept developing.

A couple of weeks ago, the Speaker of Parliament announced, while presiding, that Parliament was going to have some regional sittings. I reached out to the Speaker – I wrote – asking to be brought on board regarding this matter. I did not get any feedback.

I wrote, again, and there was no feedback. A bit of the information I got was from the members of staff, including members of staff in my office, about meetings happening, planning the regional sittings, and so on and so forth.

I wrote again, saying I think it is good manners that as leaders, we are aware of what is going on, but also to be brought on board regarding

a critical matter such as the regional sittings. This is because many questions are asked of us in the public and we do not know how to respond to them.

Mr Speaker, I lead colleagues on this side of Parliament and, sometimes, I am also asked questions by them and I do not have any answers. Where I am meant to get the answers from when I ask, I do not get the answers.

As I got out of my office to come to Plenary, I received a letter from the Speaker of Parliament written today - a few minutes before I could leave office - informing me about the regional sittings and asking me to rally Members of the Opposition to come to the regional sittings which are going to happen in different regions, beginning with the north, west, east and central.

I want to beseech you, Mr Speaker, that we become better organised than this. Why should I, the Leader of the Opposition, be asked to rally honourable colleagues to come for a sitting, one, last minute, and number two, I do not know the details.

Number three, as I have said before - even in some of those letters I have written, can this matter be processed by the Business Committee? Can it be processed by the Parliamentary Commission, which discusses matters to do with finances because regional sittings come with a pecuniary implication; - costs thereof, and so forth?

Why are these matters being handled in small cocoons and so on yet some of us, the leaders, are left out? You only want to bring me on board last minute, asking me to mobilise my honourable colleagues to come and attend. To come and attend what; something I have not been brought on board?

Mr Speaker, I am on a point of procedure. *[Member rose]* The honourable colleague has been in Parliament for a while so he knows that procedure takes precedence.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us listen to one another.

MR SSENYONYI: I ask that we become better organised. The public has been putting Parliament onto a weighing scale and regarding these regional sittings, they are saying, "Wait a minute, you as Parliament, you sit here. Are you not able to sit here and deliberate on matters that will be of great concern and impact to the north, west, east, and central? Do we have to move to those regions and spend money?" Those are questions they are asking. Mr Speaker, we, who are not brought on board - How am I supposed to defend such a situation, which I do not have information about?

As I wrap up, who sits and approves these things away from the Parliamentary Commission, which I am a member of, and I do not know? If we had sat to discuss these matters, then our thoughts, be it in the Business Committee or the Parliamentary Commission, would be taken care of and then we come to some kind of understanding. Yet, I am brought on board last minute only being asked to mobilise my honourable colleagues to come and attend these regional sittings. This is not right, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the Opposition (LOP). I have taken note of your concerns. I do not know what your schedule is tomorrow but I will arrange so that we can have a meeting as top leadership that is, with the LOP, the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker and the Clerk, to brainstorm on these issues before putting them outside that way. Let us do it that way. This is an issue I would not want to explode here and it goes out of context. Thank you. Hon. Najjuma Sarah -

2.32

MS SARAH NAJJUMA (NRM, Woman Representative, Nakaseke): Thank you, Mr Speaker, I rise on a matter of national importance. Nakaseke General Hospital is in a very big crisis. We have no medicine at all. We last received medicine on 13 March.

On Sunday, 15 people were involved in an accident and rushed to the hospital without medicine. Some people are diabetic, they are off medication for almost three months -

I was so disappointed by National Medical Stores. They drove from Entebbe to Nakaseke to deliver liquid soap, jik, glucose, and a few items without drugs; those I can afford as a Member of Parliament. We have no drugs in the hospital so the situation is out of control.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Prayer?

MS NAJJUMA: I do not know what is happening in other hospitals. If it is the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) that delays the timely delivery of medicine by National Medical Stores, let it be scrapped from the system so that medicines are delivered on time. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Health, it seems to be a country-wide issue according to how Members are responding. Honourable minister -

2.33

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (GENERAL DUTIES) (Ms Anifa Kawooya): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I take note of what the honourable member has raised. I also take note of what you have said that it seems to be a national issue. I promise that I am going to find out the status immediately, come back and give feedback.

For some time, we have been requesting honourable colleagues here that for such an issue as the colleague has raised, it would have been pertinent enough that you bring it to our attention so that we can call those concerned in our hospitals to establish what is going on. Now that it is a crosscutting issue, I am requesting time to find out what is happening and I will report back.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. My guidance is that reach out to District Health Officers (DHOs) across the country, get status reports, and order them to deliver medicine. No, not every issue will come back here. That is why you have a clogged Order Paper. You find your reports cannot be debated and given adequate time. The Committee on Health should follow up on the matter.

In the public gallery this afternoon, honourable colleagues, we have a delegation of members of staff from the Parliament of Ghana. They include:

1. Ms Grace Duah - Internal Security Officer. How come the Opposition is not clapping? I heard someone saying, "Eh" They are internal security, so you do not need to see them. They are not that visible;
2. Mr Daniel Acheampong - Assistant Security Officer; and
3. Mr Joseph Kwakye - Chief Usher.

They are currently undertaking a benchmarking visit with the Office of the Sergeant-at-Arms. Please join me once again in welcoming them. Thank you. Hon. Mbwatekamwa-

2.36

MR GAFFA MBWATEKAMWA (NRM, Igara County West, Bushenyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The very urgent matter is about our students who were taken to Iran through the Office of the National Chairman of the National Resistance Movement (NRM), Kyambogo.

On the 10th of October, the Office of the National Chairman NRM Kyambogo advertised requesting all Ugandans who want to go to Iran for a scholarship in various courses and people responded. First and foremost, the students who responded were conned \$800 per student to go to Iran. Over 200 students applied to go and they paid \$800. Over 100 students were taken to Iran –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can we have order in the House?

MR MBWATEKAMWA: Over 100 students were taken to Iran under the disguise that they were going to get scholarships and everything would be catered for.

When they reached there, some found that the courses they were told about were not there. As we speak, some ladies are selling their bodies on the streets of Iran because they have nothing to do.

Mr Speaker, this matter is very important and needs your urgent attention. I wish to lay on the Table a letter from the Office of the National Chairman of the NRM, Kyambogo, calling on some students to apply as they went to Iran. I beg to lay.

I wish to even lay an introductory letter that was given to students to go to Iran University called Ahlul Bayt International - I do not know Arabic. The rest, we can read.

My prayer is –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: From whom is the letter and signed by who?

MR MBWATEKAMWA: The letter was submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and they received it. It was written by Hajjat Namyalo from the Office of National Chairman of NRM.

My prayer is that we need the Minister of Foreign Affairs immediately, to come and tell us the status and plight of our children who are in Iran. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: He is seated right behind you. Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, you can immediately address the concern.

2.40

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Gen. Jeje Odongo): Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the honourable member for the statement he has just made. He has touched on something I still find a little bit very difficult to believe - prostitution in Iran. However, that not being, after this session, I will go back to office and track down all this communication. Hopefully by tomorrow, I will be able to make a substantive statement on the status of those students in Iran.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Bwanika seemed to have information.

DR BWANIKA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. One of my relatives is a victim of that scheme. He

was taken to Iran by the same office to study veterinary medicine. They reached there and got stranded. We have just evacuated him. He did not even have transport back. This is a serious matter that must be investigated.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, since it is your relative and you have clear details, can we have on record the names?

DR BWANIKA: My relative is Paul Ssentongo. He is a resident of Kira Municipality.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, if you need more details, you can cross-check with the Member. Shadow minister, would you like to give information to your colleague?

THE SHADOW MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr Muwada Nkunyngi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am surprised that today, the Minister of Foreign Affairs is present in the House –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just give the information right away – *(Laughter)*

MR NKUNYINGI: Mr Speaker, our diplomatic representation with Iran is also still lacking. A while ago, the substantive ambassador passed away. To date, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has not sent a replacement. This means that Ugandan nationals who are there and whatever challenge they are facing, there is no one there to address it diplomatically.

Equally, the Minister of Foreign Affairs has only appeared today. This is a serious crisis in terms of diplomatic representation. The minister should stand and tell us who the substantive Ambassador of Uganda to Iran is. Without an answer, let him commit that the ministry will follow up and ensure that we normalise our diplomatic representation so that our nationals can be assisted. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, do you have an answer for that now?

GEN. ODONGO: Thank you, Mr Speaker and the Shadow Minister of Foreign Affairs. It is true that our substantive Ambassador in Iran passed on. That is not the only station where we have that unique situation. We do have a similar situation in Kenya and one or two other stations. But what I can assure you of is that this is a matter that we are discussing with the Chief Diplomat, who is none other than His Excellency the President. He will be able to address it very soon, indeed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Tumwesigye Josephat?

2.44

MR JOSEPHAT TUMWESIGYE (NRM, Bugangaizi South County, Kakumiro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter that touches my people of Bugangaizi South.

Way back in January 2022, a survey was conducted by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development in Kakumiro District. It covered my constituency, Bugangaizi South, with the intention of extending power there. When I followed up on the matter with the ministry, I discovered that the report did not highlight any area in Bugangaizi South.

I was advised by a technical staff in the ministry that I could undertake to have another survey, which I did personally – *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of order.

MS ALYEK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have risen on a point of order against my brother. I see the dress code is not proper and I would like to know if this is Parliamentary. He is presenting a very pertinent issue on the Floor of Parliament. Is the Member in order that he has to dress in an un-parliamentary manner? *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I have raised the issue on these shirts several times but it remains a grey area. I think, maybe since we are reviewing the rules, we need to review them now properly.

How these shirts came up to be known as African was during the Nelson Mandela presidency - yes, I know – Hon. Sseggonna – Let us have one of our senior colleagues here.

MR LUBEGA SSEGGONA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Clearly, interpretation and application of the rules is entirely your prerogative. My only issue is that when interpreting those rules, fully address your mind to the rules and the reason behind the requirement for proper dressing.

This thing called “African dress” has been abused. In Africa, there are those cultures where people walk in with mini dresses or even sometimes almost naked. If you are not clear, Mr Speaker, people will come here naked. That one has never been African dress. *(Applause)*

In the rules, we do not have “Mandela dress.” We only have “African dress,” which is a traditional dress. Unless and until you advise me on where that dress comes from in Africa as an African traditional dress, Mr Speaker, it will remain what you have called a grey area, and there is no grey in the rules. The rules say if you are a man, you either put on a suit or an African dress. So, which African dress is that?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us put it this way: I had even called the Chairperson Committee on Rules, Privileges, and Discipline because sometimes when interpreting these rules, the rules are made to fit in society, not society to fit in the rules. I have met very strong sentiments. Honourable members, yourselves come to me saying, why are you being so hard? Why are you like this - We celebrate Africa with these shirts but now I can see the consensus.

Therefore, I would like to give our Member the last chance that these shirts are no longer allowed here, but I am also going to talk to the chairperson, and committee on rules, so that we are very clear on some of these.

MR TUMWESIGYE: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your wise ruling today and for saving the day. When I went to the ministry, I was advised to carry on another survey -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, let us listen to a colleague. The issue he is raising concerns all of us.

MR TUMWESIGYE: I undertook another survey at my own cost of Shs 6,000,000, and I would wish to lay on the Table that a report was produced. Mr Speaker, recently - *(Interjection)*- the title of the report? [*The Proposed Power line for Bugangaizi South Constituency, Kakumiro District.*]

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, you are always attending the House, I told you to stop responding to voices, which are not on record.

MR TUMWESIGYE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. On 2 July 2024, this House was called back from recess to reconsider the Appropriation Bill so that the areas, which had been put out, could be brought back on board. Among the areas that were brought back on board was the extension of power to some areas including Bugangaizi South.

Mr Speaker, I wish to lay on the Table the area, which the minister of finance read on this Floor, which says “Northwest Service Territory, for, among others, Bugangaizi South in Kakumiro District.”

I went back to the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, and to my surprise, on the 16th of July, just recently, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Energy, wrote to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Kakumiro District, detailing Tetra Technical Services to undertake extension of power in the district, including Bugangaizi South. Mr Speaker, the copy of the letter that was copied to me as a Member of Parliament is here with me, which I wish to lay.

To my dismay, I discovered that in all the areas that are going to be done in Kakumiro District, there is no single village in my constituency. I went back to the ministry and they said, “Honourable Member, do not mind, we shall consider you under the scale-up programme.”

But in our local saying, once you are bitten by a snake, you will have reason to fear even a lizard.

I asked the team to provide me with a copy of the scale-up programme. To my dismay, of all the 48 load centres in Kakumiro District, not a single load centre is in my constituency.

I have a question to the minister for energy: who has the power in this country to vary anything in the budget that was passed on this Floor of Parliament? -*(Interjections)*- Not even the President, because he even referred back the issue to this House to consider.

Mr Speaker, lastly, this is my prayer. That the contract that has been awarded to Tetra Technical Services to undertake the extension of power in the district of Kakumiro should consider Bugangaizi South as a matter of urgency. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable colleague. Government Chief Whip, I assign you that issue. Cause a meeting between the minister for energy and the honourable colleague and ensure this is rectified because I do not see the minister for energy here.

2.52

THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Mr Raphael Magyezi): Mr Speaker, certainly it is a very important issue, but you recall yesterday the minister for energy was here and she promised next week to bring an updated report on the extension programme of electricity. We shall request her to include the programme for Kakumiro.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, that was the scale-up. And for this one, it was not under scale-up. It is part of the money we budgeted. So, if in the budget, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development read areas for Bugangaizi South, who is varying the budget right away, before you could even take a little time. So, let them go and reinstate the villages they had put in.

ME MAGYEZI: Mr Speaker, most obliged. I will request the minister to do that.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Otherwise, if we put it under scale-up, it might be lost there. Hon. Stephen Aseera – Hon. Nambeshe, let him finish then I will allow your procedural matter.

2.54

MR STEPHEN ASEERA (Independent, Buhaguzi East County, Kikuube): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I rise on a matter of National Importance in regard to the delayed salaries for staff of Kikuube District Local Government.

We have a very huge concern, significantly, on the delay of the payment of salaries for the staff of Kikuube District Local Government. Many staff have not received their salaries since February 2024, while others have faced inconsistent payments, receiving salaries in some months but missing out in others. Those currently on the payroll have not received any salaries since June 2024.

This delay has affected various employees, some of whom were unjustly removed from the payroll following a recent validation exercise, despite meeting the necessary requirements. This situation has led to several challenges, including absenteeism of the members, and I am afraid some have already developed domestic inconsistencies whereby they cannot even have the capacity to handle their domestic responsibilities.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Stephen, this is a matter we extensively handled on Thursday, because it is not only your area. It is countrywide, and the minister exactly the way you stated your case - I think it was Hoima - it was Hon. Patrick Isingoma from Hoima City who raised this matter, which is exactly like yours. It is countrywide and the minister said they are handling it.

MR ASEERA: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You had a procedural matter, honourable? Let us first pick procedure -

MR NAMBESHE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. This correspondence that has generated the acrimony -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Which correspondence?

MR NAMBESHE: The very one, which the Leader of the Opposition-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: And what is the acrimony?

MR NAMBESHE: The acrimony is about how it has been addressed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is there acrimony?

MR NAMBESHE: Mr Speaker, the point of procedure I am raising pertains to the cardinal role that my office discharges. You know very well that to ensure due attendance of Members is the role of the Whip, but that this correspondence shifts it to the Office of the Leader of the Opposition is of concern, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is it a coup?

MR NAMBESHE: I do not know whether it is a coup d'état, but most importantly, Mr Speaker, even the team that you have just constituted has conspicuously excluded the office of the Whip. And it is so lopsided that it has recognised the office of the Government Chief Whip, but left out a very crucial office of the Chief Opposition Whip.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am sorry, sir. *(Laughter)* Therefore, Opposition Chief Whip, join us in that meeting.

MR NAMBESHE: Most obliged.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kinobere.

MR KINOBERE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Before I raise my procedural issue, I want to join the rest of my colleagues in thanking the Almighty God for having saved you. We continue to pray for you and the family. Whatever obstacle comes your way, it will never achieve its objective.

The procedural issue I am raising is that in April 2024, there was an issue that I raised before the Prime Minister, where a disaster happened in Kibuku and she pledged to send a team there, to find out the magnitude of exactly what happened. To date, not even an official has reached Kibuku.

Sometimes, when we are here, the ministers and the other leaders keep referring to us, saying, “No, please, before you raise the issue on the Floor, try to write to us.” However, when you write letters, you do not get a response.

Therefore, some of us who are in the NRM, end up struggling with the population and the voters. They say, no, our issues are not being heard. Therefore, I need to move this issue forward. Since the Third Deputy Prime Minister is here, the procedural issue I am raising is that wouldn't be procedurally right for her to give me an update on the status of that disaster?

The entire village was displaced. If this incident had happened in other places, by now they would have responded. Unfortunately, since April to date - I pray that the Third Deputy Prime Minister gives me an update on the status of the team coming to handle that issue. Thank you so much. *(Interruption)*

MR LUBEGA SSEGGONA: Mr Speaker, especially when my colleague is talking about plights that befell his constituency, I restrain myself from raising a point of order. However, he has made two statements that I find grave. The first one is that for them in the NRM, struggle. And the second is that if the catastrophe had befallen another place, the Government would have responded quickly and rapidly.

We are struggling to unite this country against people who make unsubstantiated allegations, especially where they say that this Government is discriminative, favours certain regions, and so on. When an honourable member makes a statement and from the NRM - actually, the vice chairperson of the NRM Caucus – and says that this Government is discriminative, it favours some parts of the country, without substantiating;

1. Which region is favoured?
2. Which people are favoured?

Is he in order, because it divides our country?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, you know, when you are faced with a situation like my brother Hon. Kinobere is faced with, sometimes you make statements, which are beyond what you should have said. And this is very unfortunate because such a statement - I have my areas, which I put under the Prime Minister, we got some disasters and I have never received a response. I have been told, “There is no money.”

Maybe if it had happened before in another area, *-(Laughter)-* they would have responded. I understand but that is not the right statement. Honourable, you could say it better without dividing the country.

MR KINOBERE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I withdraw the words “Somewhere else.” However, I meant that the delays make people feel that as their representatives, we do not deliver their message. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I also heard you say that the Prime Minister's office was going to come, assess and all that. That is what we usually advise you. It is the work of the District Disaster Committee to assess and submit the report to the Prime Minister so that it can be done.

However, we now have your colleague with whom you sit on the NRM Caucus Executive, she is the Minister of State for Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees Affairs. You should

take advantage. Hon. Aber - [*Member rose*] – “Just clarification” is when there is someone on the Floor but there is none.

3.04

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR RELIEF, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND REFUGEES AFFAIRS (Ms Lillian Aber):

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I do take note of the matter raised by Hon. Herbert Kinobere. I pledge that I will follow up on the matter. However, I would like to note to colleagues that the ministry can only respond when we have items available in the stores. There are times when we do not have anything in the stores because of budget constraints.

However, what I can guarantee you is that the services that we render are not based on any political affiliation and we still commit that we will -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, I tried to buy for you time to finish but you insisted. Point of order. (*Laughter*)

MR LUBEGA-SSEGGONA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. You know, this particular ministry is called, “The Ministry for Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees Affairs” not “Ministry for Disasters.” What the minister seems to be relaying is actually a disaster; that you have a ministry for disaster preparedness that at times is not prepared at all. And the same ministry, now by disaster, cannot run to Parliament to say, “We have run out of supplies and therefore, we are not disaster prepared.”

Is the minister in order, standing here, to display inefficiency?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: These are statements, which do not need to come on the Floor. For example, the stores are empty, or what? Then if the stores are empty, where do we go? (*Laughter*) Those are internal to the ministry.

What I understood from the minister is they are still preparing to get money as a ministry for preparedness. Honourable minister, there

are statements which you do not need to bring; they are for you. Kindly visit his area. He needs you to visit his area.

MS ABER: Mr Speaker, I take note and we will create time with the technical team to visit his area. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Charles Matovu-

3.06

MR CHARLES MATOVU (NUP, Busiro County South, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Last year, around May, I presented a matter to this House for consideration regarding the Kajjansi Market in Kajjansi Town Council that caught fire, destroying the entire market structure, the shelter, the stores and everything.

The Rt Hon. Prime Minister over there made a commitment last year in May to visit the victims the next morning. To date, she has never.

Mr Speaker, our prayers still stand as they were last time. All we need is support to put up the structures. Basically, the roof looks weird and we need support. If only we could get that tomorrow. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, the point of clarification is not granted by the Speaker. It is granted by a Member holding the Floor. Where there is no Member, you cannot have a point of clarification or information. Rt Hon. Prime Minister –

3.08

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama):

Thank you, Mr Speaker and my colleague for being patient. We were supposed to come and visit that market, but because of the many programmes, I have not made it. However, I would like to direct Hon. Magyezi to go and assess the situation, and then we can start from there. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Next item.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON SALARY
ENHANCEMENT FOR POLICE OFFICERS

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister of Public Service? Honourable colleagues, look at the hour and let me put this out. We sit as Parliament with an Order Paper but from 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m., we are still on Communication from the Chair. It is unfortunate and I no longer want to go beyond 3.00 p.m. handling these matters. Honourable minister -

3.09

THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE

(Mr Muruli Mukasa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This House tasked me to explain the issue of salary enhancement, especially the Uganda Police Force to the extent that instead of an increment of 25 per cent across the board, some people got less while others got slightly higher.

The background to this is contained in Cabinet Minute No. 502 and 509. Those minutes approved the Public Service pay policy principles, as well as the five-year pay plan covering every person paid salary or allowance from the Consolidated Fund or out of money appropriated by Parliament. The financial implications of the enhancement was determined at that time, Shs 9,295,864 trillion over the five-year period.

Implementation commenced in the Financial Year 2018/2019 and by Financial Year 2022/2023, Shs 2,039,875 billion had been committed towards implementing the pay policy notwithstanding the global effect of COVID-19 Pandemic.

Since the commencement of the implementation, the salary of security forces has been enhanced as follows:

- a) Police, Prisons and the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) from the ranks of Private to Sergeant in the Financial Year 2018/2019 by 25 per cent. At that time, the Senior Officers in the Security Forces were not enhanced;

- b) Enhancement of health workers in Security in the Financial Year 2019/2020;
- c) Enhancement of the lunch allowance for health workers in Security in the Financial Year 2021/2022;
- d) Enhancement of health workers and scientists in Security Forces, also enhanced in the Financial Year 2022/2023;
- e) Enhancement of the rank of General from the top down to Major in the UPDF was done in the Financial Year 2022/2023;
- f) Enhancement of aviation staff in the Uganda Police Force and UPDF in the Financial Year 2023/2024.

Higher ranks in the Uganda Police Force and the Uganda Prison Service other than the scientists and health professionals have not been enhanced since the Financial Year 2014/2015, while the lower ranks were enhanced in the Financial Year 2013/2014; 2014/2015; and 2018/2019.

Regarding the UPDF, the Government enhanced the salary of the Senior Officers from the General to Major by 77 per cent of the approved long-term pay targets. The lower ranks in the UPDF were scheduled for enhancement in the Financial Year 2024/2025.

The policy direction and implications in this case are as follows: The Government made a commitment to pay salaries to all public officers according to the approved long-term pay targets, with the effect from the Financial Year 2018/2019, however, in a phased manner, considering the significant financial implications of the targets.

Cabinet, under Minute No.75 (CT/2024) directed the Ministry of Public Service to work with the Minister of Defence and Veterans Affairs to discuss and finalise the pay enhancement for the Army officers from the rank of Private to Captain.

As a result, a Cabinet subcommittee was constituted to implement the directive. The committee recommended enhancement for all officers in security, including the Uganda Police Force, the Uganda Prison Services, and

the security organisations, at least at the level of 77 per cent of the approved long-term pay targets. If that was to be affected, we would need Shs 794.24 billion. However, this was not to be.

The additional wage required to enhance the salary of security forces by 77 per cent of the approved long-term pay targets would be exactly that. For the Uganda People's Defence Forces, we required Shs 497.32 billion. The Uganda Police Force required Shs 213.13 billion. The Uganda Prison Services, we needed Shs 51.86 billion, the Internal Security Organisation, we needed Shs 27.48 billion, and the External Security Organisation required Shs 4.4 billion.

Now, if this was possible, then it would entitle the lowest rank, the Police Constable or the Prison's Warder or Wardress, to earn Shs 847,000 per month, which would translate to 77 per cent of the approved long-term pay targets.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development was, however, able to afford Shs 358 billion, which is 45 per cent of the required budget, including additional pension and gratuity for those planned for retirement in the Financial Year 2024/2025 after earning an enhanced salary.

Mr Speaker, given that situation, this is what we were able to get. For Uganda People's Defence Forces, we got, from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Shs 214.52 billion. For the Uganda Police Force, we got Shs 99.83 billion. For Uganda Prisons Service, we got Shs 27.01 billion. For Internal Security Organisation, we got Shs 14.61 billion and for External Security Organisation, we got Shs 2.36 billion.

Based on the available funds, the salary of all ranks in the Uganda Police Force and Uganda Prisons Service was enhanced by 40 per cent of the approved long-term pay targets.

It is, therefore, Mr Speaker, not true that the Government enhanced salary by only 25 per

cent. The percentage increment is also not based on the current salary that each holder is getting, but on the approved long-term pay targets, which were passed in Financial Year 2018/2019. The increment, in money terms, for the various ranks, therefore, is dependent on the percentage of the current salary to the approved long-term pay targets. Some of the lower ranks, for example, before the enhancement, had reached 30 per cent of the approved long-term pay targets, while some of the senior officers were at 13 per cent.

The exceptions to the uniform 40 per cent enhancement are the Inspector General of Police, the Commissioner-General of Prisons, the Deputy Inspector General of Police and Deputy Commissioner-General of Prisons, whose pay were enhanced by 77 per cent of the approved long-term pay targets. This is because these officers are under the specified officers' category and this is provided for in the Salaries and Allowances (Specified Officers) Act, 1999. Therefore, they were enhanced taking that into consideration.

Based on the above clarification, I request honourable colleagues to note that enhancement of salary of officers of Uganda Police Force and Uganda Prisons Service followed the equity principle and the long-term pay targets approved by Cabinet, under Minutes No.502 (CT 2027) and 509 (CT 2027). The Government remains committed to implementing the approved pay plans and targets as demonstrated in the progressive enhancement of salary in a phased manner and depending on availability of funds.

Enhancement of salary should, however, be balanced with other Government priorities such as raising staffing levels across the entire service, the Government's provision of tools and equipment to deliver services, as well as ensuring that services are delivered to citizens.

Mr Speaker, the detail of what I have been saying is reflected in the table that follows. I beg to state. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Let us have Hon. Otimgiw, Hon. Kwizera, Hon. Edakasi, Hon. Oguzu Lee and Hon. Kirumira.

3.21

MR ISAAC OTIMGIW (NRM, Padyere County, Nebbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us be quick.

MR OTIMGIW: I thank the honourable minister for the report, although we expected the real figures to be stipulated from which amount to the next, after the increment.

Mr Speaker, on a sad note, for example, we have police constables who were earning Shs 484,000 and their salary was increased by Shs 75,000 only, to just over Shs 550,000. On top of that, most of the same police constables are being evacuated from the free accommodation that was being offered to them. On the same money of Shs 550,000, they are supposed to go and look for accommodation outside and educate their family in various schools.

Here we are, wanting to kick out corruption by the police on our roads. How are we going to cope with that? I actually feel that the increment that was made to our police salary, especially those at the lower ranks, was not sufficient, especially at a time when we are boosting our fight against corruption. I am afraid that, that is the main reason why the IGG's report, year in and year out, is always stating that the police is the most corrupt institution.

So, I hope that we can do better in terms of improving the welfare of our people in uniform. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kwizera?

3.23

MR EDDIE KWIZERA (NRM, Bukimbiri County, Kisoro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for the statement. However, I want him to throw some light on how rational it is to increase the constables' pay by Shs 30,000

and that of the IGP by about Shs 6 million, yet the cost of living affects all of them.

Another thing I would want the minister to tell us is where the Cabinet draws a mandate and capacity to decide the pay when we have constitutional service commissions. Maybe the decision of the Cabinet was backed by a study that guided them – because they cannot work without a study or any recommendations from services. So, can he present those reports and we prove that he is not “cooking” the information himself? I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Edakasi?

3.23

MR ALFRED EDAKASI (NRM, Kaberamaido County, Kaberamaido):

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the information he has provided. I would also like to thank the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for finding the resources that they have found this far. I think that is a step in the right direction.

Mr Speaker, the welfare of the police continues to be a major issue for us to be concerned about. If you look at what these young people are doing day and night and you consider the children they have, even with the so-called increased pay that we see – of Shs 800,000 – if someone has three or four children, they cannot send them to school on that pay.

I think it is important that we continue to look into the welfare of the police. If you go to look at the circumstances under which they work – even just the offices – they do not have paper. The equipment they use, apart from the guns, is a problem and all those are challenges.

This House has, every year, given attention to the men and women in uniform. I think it would be proper, Mr Speaker, that we interrogate this issue a bit more over this year so that we can upgrade not just the pay but even other related issues that affect the men and women in uniform. The welfare of their children is a major issue.

I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Oguzu Lee?

3.25

MR DENIS OGUZU (FDC, Maracha County, Maracha): Mr Speaker, the resources that the finance ministry is mobilising to pay and enhance salaries of our officers and constables is out of the allocations by this Parliament. When we were processing the budget, we were given information that the enhancements would be based on a percentage. What we are seeing now seems to be a deviation from what was presented to us.

The minister is telling us that they have premised their actions on a decision that took place in 2017, during a Cabinet, yet the budget we are working with is the one that we passed on the 2nd – I think – of last month.

So, I want the minister to clarify: what document are we, exactly, working with? What would be the legal basis of that Cabinet decision in a budget which we approved this year and they are now processing it without the endorsement of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Can the minister for finance tell us whether there was a virement to the budget we approved?

It seems to me that these people decided to do something else from what they presented to us. Unfortunately, we may not be able to fault the Minister of Public Service because a while ago, we faulted the minister for being open and telling the truth that there is nothing in the store.

This Parliament must guide the country. If anybody just comes and presents things that differ from what was agreed here, how should we hold them accountable? How are we going to hold this minister responsible for acting on a decision that we did not endorse, yet our proposal was 25 per cent, which they presented and we endorsed? Now, they are paying less. He needs to clarify that.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let me pick the two honourable ladies, Hon. Christine Akello – Oh! I had picked Hon. Kirumira, then Hon. Christine Akello and Hon. Ababiku.

3.28

MR HASSAN KIRUMIRA (NUP, Katikamu County South, Luwero): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The plight of police officers, men in uniform, should be of paramount importance to all of us. This is because our security is in their hands and we all know that.

My point of interest is that we are talking about the gross income of these police officers. If you critically look at what they take home - the net income - it is so worrying. I am made to understand that they make contributions towards a SACCO. That one alone, they keep complaining about. I wonder if the minister would elaborate more on that. How they benefit from it is also a little bit problematic.

My interest, Mr Speaker, is that salaries of police officers should be taken into consideration because it motivates them to be effective in their work. That is possibly why most of them arrest us with a lot of anger because they do not know what is happening in the country. I got arrested two weeks ago and I looked at the eyes of these police officers who were arresting me. They were so bitter and that is why for the men in uniform, we have so much respect. We want this country to increase your salaries so that you also enjoy your work. *(Member timed out.)*

3.29

MS CHRISTINE AKELLO (NRM, Erute County North, Lira): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This one goes straight to the Minister of Public Service. Honourable minister, you are doing a disservice to the people of Uganda and you are putting our lives at risk. Taking you back home where I come from, the police are not getting what is enough, looking at the market price and what is happening. They have children they need to educate, they need to eat and they need to sleep well.

Because of that, some of the policemen - I do not even blame them, I blame your ministry - give their guns to young people to go and raid. After they have raided, they take what they have looted to the police. This is abuse. If you do not address the salary issue, our lives are at risk. We do not want to see that. You need to take it seriously.

As we talk about salary, look at the gap between the lowest and the highest ranking officer. That is a problem. I thank you.

3.30

MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I appreciate the Government for the initiative to enhance the salaries of our brothers and sisters. However, I am concerned about how it is being done. One says that there is a group that can have it first, then others have to wait until we have funds.

Mr Speaker, to me, that is not being fair to everybody. It makes many of these officers more disgruntled. It is very difficult to command and rely on disgruntled forces.

Therefore, I pray that this Government takes this seriously. If you want to enhance, plan well and enhance for everybody at once. If you cannot do it, do not create an issue of segregation or being selective.

Mr Speaker, Parliament has the mandate of appropriation. However, with what has just happened when the Appropriation Bill was brought back, it meant that we have a limitation in our roles. We cannot adjust. What did we adjust in the running budget, over which we should be blamed?

Therefore, the Executive must be answerable for the running budget. *(Applause)* We made our proposals everything was brought here and turned upside down. Therefore, Parliament needs not to be blamed.

The Government must ensure that it applies, if not, these people are already disgruntled and we are going to face the consequences. The

delivery of services by them is already affected. Let us not – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chief Opposition Whip-

3.33

THE CHIEF OPPOSITION WHIP (Mr John Baptist Nambeshe): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Honourable minister, I thank you for the statement.

The honourable minister is aware, in the 10th Parliament, of an attempt to establish a comprehensive pay reform through an independent commission that would be charged with the responsibility of overseeing and regulating salary structures similar to the one in the neighbourhood. For instance, Kenya.

Kenya has an independent salaries remuneration commission. If the objective of this salary enhancement was to improve on the morale of the force, it has done a complete opposite. It has created a huge pay remuneration discrepancy. Those of the rank in the cloth, are not easily seeing eye to eye with those below. Don't you think it is undermining the very purpose for which it was intended? This is because the truth of the matter is that it does not only stop here in the police force.

One could be persuaded or even could be justified to hold your ministry in suspicion. Was this salary enhancement done deliberately to secure loyalty of those that give orders to the constables who are at the lower rank? Or was it meant to motivate them or to improve their morale?

It does not stop there. We have seen these salary disparities in other public sectors like education and health care. You know very well what - I do not know whether the salary enhancements should be done because of the good mood of the Head of State. This is because if he wishes, he increases the salary of science teachers in the education sector. You know what that has done. It has exacerbated the relationship between the two. They go to the same markets. They pay the same medical bills. They take their children

to the same schools. Now, the morale of the arts teachers is at the lowest.

Mr Speaker, I am of the view - Earlier in the 10th Parliament, this same ministry came up with something called a single-spine salary structure especially in education and it looked brilliant. However, I do not know how it ended. You come up with very good ideas and pieces of legislation but it is characteristic and typical of the National Resistance Movement. These good ideas die at an infant stage. That is why you see the conundrum of sorts, where salary enhancements are causing more harm than good. I beg to submit. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Shadow Minister of Internal Affairs.

3.37

THE SHADOW MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Ms Betty Nambooze): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The matter before us came here during the budgeting time. When the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development was reading the budget, he said, and I want to quote: “We are enhancing the salary of our policemen, by 25 percent...” and that “the gallant men and women in uniform at the rank of captain and below who are serving UPDF and in Uganda Police, in Prisons, in internal and external intelligence services, this budget contains the first installment of your enhanced pay.”

Mr Speaker, if such a commitment is made to the country, then it ceases to be a promise and becomes a debt - the police have been coming here - in the Financial Year 2023/2024 they were promised a salary increase of 40 per cent, but it did not come. This time, Mr Speaker, the money was found but what is lacking is sharing. It is very unreasonable if we get some money but the top officers who are facilitated in terms of transport, again out of greed, do not care about the juniors, and they take the money for themselves.

I want to request this Parliament to always assert itself about what we pass in this House and seek for its implementation. We cannot

allow these people to put the whole country at risk and leave these people to go out with guns without pay. This used to happen during Obote’s time; a person would be given a gun and then told to go and look for his salary. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you done, honorable member? Okay, there is a point of order from Hon. Akena.

MR AKENA: Mr Speaker, it is very perturbing that people try to blame everything, pick all sorts of ideas and claims and attribute them to UPC. There has never been a point where a caring Government has told people to take up guns and look for their salaries.

One of the first things today was an honourable member crying about medicine in Nakaseke General Hospital. People do not seem to realise that that hospital was built by the same UPC. If UPC was building hospitals all over Uganda but then sending soldiers to go and take - Mr Speaker, I would request my honorable colleague to withdraw her statement because it is clearly and completely out of order to make such an allegation on this Floor of Parliament. Is the honourable member in order?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, are you in order?

MS NAMBOOZE: Mr Speaker, my intention was not to antagonise the President of UPC, Hon. Akena. I regret the pain my statement has caused to him, especially when I mentioned the times when he used to be the first son and most probably young, but I said “we were told.” I was just quoting what I was told.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can grant his request.

MS NAMBOOZE: For that, I would like to tell my honourable colleague that I was told, but now that you have told me the better version of what happened during that time, I withdraw that statement. *(Applause)* However, what I wanted to emphasise is that when you arm a person and you do not pay that person,

you are in essence, telling that person to use the gun to go and look for survival.

Mr Speaker, allow me to show you a WhatsApp message that has been sent to me by one policeman.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can you lay the phone on the Table?

MS NAMBOOZE: Yes, I will lay.

Mr Speaker, because I am the shadow minister, somebody claiming to be a policeman sent me this. He said, "Honourable shadow minister, please tell Parliament that this is how I spend my pay. I earn Shs 466,933 net pay. Exodus SACCO chops off Shs 30,000 and I remain with a balance of Shs 436,933. This is my expenditure per day: Breakfast is Shs 2,000; lunch is Shs 3,500; supper is Shs 3,500; transport is Shs 4,000; Airtime is Shs 2,000. That is 15 times 30, which equals to Shs 450, which means that I have to permanently stay alone without children or a wife but ask: where do I get the medication; where do I get soap; where do I get school fees; where do I get rent since I have even been evicted from a self-made structure that I constructed in my barracks? That is our predicament and I want Parliament to understand that we are also human beings. We guard you; we guard the country, we keep law and order, but how do we keep money in the banks where we do not own any?"

Mr Speaker, I do not know if I should lay my phone on the Table, but this is information from - (*interjection*) - I will take it.

MR SSEGGONA: Mr Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member, for giving way. Related to exactly that, yesterday, upon a prison officer or junior prison warden, hearing that we had intervened in this matter, called me in the morning and said, "I heard you are interrogating the sharing of the monies that you allocated to us, please get this information:

1. "The senior officers who are not meant to be beneficiaries have instead taken the lion's share."

2. "The next thing we are planning" - and I will not reveal this particular person - "is to go on strike such that the people you have sent us in Luzira can come back and bring you to the same level where you have kept us."

Now, this is information and I took it very seriously. That is why I was standing, and in your absolute wisdom you thought other people would -

The second thing I want to say is that you may guide me on the procedure but I am very uncomfortable allowing Hon. Betty Nambooze to lay that phone on the Table because apart from -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, it was said on a lighter note.

MR SSEGGONA: On a lighter one but the confidentiality of that particular person may be compromised. With that, Mr Speaker, I listened to the very good English of my brother, Hon. Muruli Mukasa. It was very, very good. From Nakasongola, it was amazing. (*Laughter*) But one thing he did not mention - (*Interjection*) - she says she is informed. I said, oh, she says she is informed. I was only praising the Hon. Mukasa for his brilliant English. And that is all I picked from his statement.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Nambooze, please conclude.

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE: Mr Speaker, this is a matter of survival for the men in uniform, for the people who keep the law order, for the people who guard this country. I hope everybody does appreciate the challenge before us.

Mr Speaker, I request that this matter be referred to the committee so that these people come and tell us how they shared the money we gave them so that Parliament can assist them in implementing it. The intention of the people of Uganda, through this Parliament, was to give a salary increase to the low-ranking officers of police so that they could afford to survive with their families.

Mr Speaker, I want to move a motion that this matter goes to the committee and then a report be brought to this Parliament so that we can understand exactly where the problem is.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please honourable colleagues, allow the Speaker to do his work.

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE: Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I just wanted to ask the minister one simple thing - because for every budget, we have work plans. So, what was in the work plans? What was in the details of that enhancement? I am asking this because when you say that you have given this much money - yeah because you see, why I am asking this question is because I do not want to put Hon. Muruli Mukasa in just a tight corner alone when we did work with him. Now, all the money that we passed here has been allocated and distributed for salary enhancement.

The issue is - yes, all the money - when we were approving this money, when we were - Hon. Muruli Mukasa, is this the initial plan? Because now I have just remembered; there is something, which has come to my mind - I think this money came in corrigenda.

This money came in corrigenda, meaning it did not go to the Committee on Internal Affairs to get details of the distribution and all that; I have now remembered - no, because you see, why I say it came in corrigenda, honourable colleagues, we held a meeting; the top leadership of this country, chaired by the President, attended by the Chief Justice, the Vice President, the Prime Minister, the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker and Minister for Finance, and we looked at issues, which were very critical at that time versus the resource envelope. I remember they had requested around Shs 870 billion, around there.

But we sat down and cut here and there - I remember very well that in fact in that meeting, we even dropped some of the critical proposals the Government had in terms of supporting the

science and innovation sector and the President said no, at least we must get some money for the enhancement of the salaries of personnel in the security forces though we could only get Shs 320 billion. But what we did not discuss in detail was the distribution, which was a matter now for the Executive.

So, honourable minister, what informed your decision in choosing to start with the senior officers instead of the junior officers? I know it might be in this statement but in a minute.

3.52

THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE (Mr Wilson Muruli Mukasa): Mr Speaker, yes, we decided to look at the senior officers, but I think when we started the enhancement of the salaries of officers in the security forces - initially, we started with the junior people, from - for instance, private, we went up to I think to the level of captain.

When it came to the police, we again started with the constable and went up to the other level. And the others were not enhanced. The senior officers were not enhanced. Now when the second enhancement came, therefore, we felt logically that we should now look at the senior officers and then take care of their concerns as well.

And then the next enhancement, this one now, when it came, we went back to the lower ranks of the security forces. So, well, sorry, Mr Speaker and honourable members, that may be the approach went wrong right from the inception but that is it.

Otherwise, I think since the enhancement is in phases and we are committed to actually enhancing up to the pay targets that we agreed on, I think as we move, this is going to be great.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Why I am asking you, honourable Minister, is to help me guide the House very well. I want to know, you had already enhanced military officers' salaries from the rank, is it of major or from captain? No, no, from major upwards, but you did not do it for the police. And what you run is matched

against each security sector, which is more or less a single-spine salary structure to have an equivalent of a senior police officer at this rank equivalent to the one in the military.

So, was the aim now to cure that defect, where the senior officers in the police were complaining that you enhanced the ones of UPDF, but you left them out? If that was the issue, you should also put it here for us to understand it. I have not given him an answer. I have just - because I was trying to understand this.

MR MURULI: Mr Speaker, that consideration also informed our decision. We still operate a single-spine salary structure. And there is the principle of harmonisation across sectors. So, that also informed our decision.

Definitely when we looked at the military and the officers were happy, the officers in the police and in the intelligence who more or less, you know, are the same rank, same level, and work in unison to provide and secure security, were also disgruntled and they were not very happy themselves.

So since, as I said, those agencies work in unison to synchronise their work, then our decision was partly informed by that. We thought it would be in order to do so.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Gafabusa.

3.56

MR RICHARD GAFABUSA MUHUMUZA (NRM, Bwamba County, Bundibugyo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am seeking clarification from the minister on the phased enhancement. From the statement, this is from a resolution of the Cabinet of 2017, and the implementation started in the 2018/2019 Financial Year. This long-term enhancement target was for five years.

I have computed this 2018/2019 Financial Year and realised that the five years end this Financial Year 2024/2025. If we have not reached the long-term target, when do we

expect this phased enhancement? Has the Cabinet sat again to change the period within which to achieve this long-term target of five years?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Kimosho.

3.58

MR DAN KIMOSHO ATWIJUKIRE (NRM, Kazo County, Kazo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. This matter is very pertinent and the way we are moving, the minister has tried to give chaffed answers, which are very unsatisfying to a very sensitive group in our society.

Mr Speaker, isn't it right that this matter is interrogated thoroughly by either a committee and given the shortest time possible, and we look at all the stakeholders in this matter so that they report back to this House?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, first of all, the budget you approved has been utilised. You know it very well that the moment you give someone a salary you cannot review it to their detriment. Therefore, you cannot recall this budget from the senior officers to say, bring back this money and we give it to the junior officers.

Therefore, I am trying to show you that even if you send to the committee and do what - that is why I want us to move steadfastly.

I had Hon. Onzima and Hon. Ssekikubo.

3.59

MR GODFREY ONZIMA (NRM, Aringa North County, Yumbe): Thank you, Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is a clarification I want to put here. I am hearing Members saying that they departed from what they told Parliament on what they were going to do. However, this was never interrogated by the committee. No, it came as corrigenda; the committee never interrogated it. So, that is why I asked you if there was any work plan

submitted to the committee, let it be shared by the committee.

If it is not there, then I do not want us to start attributing - this is a House of record, honourable colleagues.

Let us move in a steadfast manner and if there was a mistake, which was made, we look at ways of addressing it. Let me first allow the honourable colleagues whom I had picked to make their contributions.

MR ONZIMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. When the issue of salary enhancement appeared in 2017, it was presented to the Committee on Public Service and Local Government and by then I was the Chairperson of that committee.

The statement, which has been read by the minister is typically the pay increment plan that was approved in Cabinet and then presented to the committee.

Unfortunately, along the way when they started implementing this plan, they moved away from what they had presented to Parliament, which we had also presented on the Floor of Parliament and it was approved.

By then, the arguments were that since the lower-ranked officers have lower salaries, the increment should start with them. By then, I cannot exactly recall the figure but it was above Shs 700,000, which was supposed to be in the increment. However, up to now just as Hon. Richard Gafabusa has said, because he was also a Member of the committee *-(Interjection)-* you know I may not pronounce the name well but he knows it. My colleague, Hon. Richard, was a Member of the committee.

At that time when the minister presented this, we had a challenge that we did not have clear money for this increment. When we asked the ministry about the salary increment, and where would we get all this money, one of the proposals was rationalisation; they were going to rationalise these agencies to release some money, which should be added to the salaries. Our question as a committee was “Which one could have come first? Is it the increment or the

rationalisation that could have taken place to release monies?”

The challenge here is, as I had said, that we pass resolutions here and they are supposed to be implemented the way they were passed but at the end of the day, they are implemented in an opposite way and are not followed. This has caused confusion from 2018 up to now. We cannot imagine that the police officers are still at Shs 400,000. They should have been taken to above Shs 400,000.

Mr Speaker, the other issue is that this debate has come as a result of a question, which was raised by Hon. Luttaguzi. He said the police officers are bitter because they get little money. His question was whether the increment had been effected or not. Have they received the money that was supposed to be increased?

Therefore, what the minister has just read is a statement, which has not brought this out clearly. What we needed to know is: as of the end of July, what salary did these police officers get?

That should come out clearly and what they are supposed to get. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssekikubo.

4.03

MR THEODORE SSEKIKUBO (NRM, Lwemiyaga County, Ssembabule): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I happen to sit on the Committee on Defense and Internal Affairs and what the Minister for Public Service, Hon. Muruli Mukasa said was in direct contrast to the interactions we had as a committee with the Minister of Internal Affairs. Unfortunately, the minister of state is here and I am surprised he has kept a low profile as if he is not centrally affected by the debate on the Floor of this House.

Mr Speaker, the conclusion we drew out of our interaction with the minister was that the enhancement had to start with the lowest rank in the Uganda Police Force. He is here and can confirm that. That is what we agreed and the enhancement was to go the minimum

of Shs 800,000. That was the undertaking the Government gave to the committee.

However, now as it has turned out, the seniors have been further enhanced yet they have houses, and those who do not have, receive housing allowances, fuel and everything they need. They are guarded by these poorly paid personnel. They eat dust behind the pickups and they are watching them.

Mr Speaker, they have been displaced from the barracks and if you have been to the barracks, you know that the police officers built shacks for themselves within those barracks. They buy iron sheets, get mud and wattle and build shacks in the barracks but they have been evicted.

Mr Speaker, the point I want to bring forward is that the Minister of Public Service is untruthful to the House. He has read some other statement, not the one, which arose out of the ministerial policy statement. I will take the information- *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Clerk, put for us on the screen the page, which has the computation of enhancements, which was attached to the minister's statement. Honourable colleagues, those who have iPads can check on Alfresco. I need LOP and then, the minister will take us through that page.

4.06

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Mr Speaker, I would like to first appreciate the minister's statement. However, as he makes time to give us that statement, I honestly vehemently disagree with him when he says, "Government is committed to the welfare of men and women in uniform." Senior minister, that commitment is not reflected at all. That is why the House is unanimously saying, "we need to do better."

The welfare of these men and women in uniform begins first with their salaries. We are talking about that; a promise was made but nothing has happened. The welfare includes where they stay.

Mr Speaker, I have two barracks in my constituency. Often, I interact with these men and women in uniform and their families. They live in a shambolic state. You can go to any barracks in this country, and it is like one big slum. That is the situation in which they stay. The government is not committed to improving their welfare.

A colleague talked about the Police Exodus SACCO; by the way, we have discussed that issue here in Parliament severally, and the Government has committed to follow up and deal with it.

They are forced to save money with the Exodus SACCO; mandatorily, which, by the way, is against the law. It should be done on one's own volition. But they save it by force yet accessing their savings is difficult.

They fear to speak out because they will be dealt with, and so, they instead engage with us, as political leaders, so that we can raise these matters.

So, I would like to encourage the senior minister; number one, commitment should be seen in action, not just in the good statement that you have made to us. We want to see action.

Finally, I would like to encourage the minister, who speaks really like he means well - I want to believe that you mean well when you say that you are committed but we are saying that we would like to see that commitment in action. Please find time and interact with these officers, especially the junior ones, and get to know what they exactly go through.

You supervise them, you are meant to take care of them like a father. Try to understand what is going on. Sometimes when we, the political leaders speak, the Frontbench assumes we are just being political. No, I am glad this issue is resounding across board. We want to see better for our men and women in uniform.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, LOP. Honourable colleagues, are you seeing that

table? We gave you iPads and you also have phones. That is why we no longer print.

Honourable colleagues, I see here that from Special Police Constable to Commissioner of Police/Commissioner of Prisons, they got an increment of 40 per cent. Is that so, honourable minister?

Then from Senior Commissioner of Police to Assistant Inspector General of Police, an increment of 42 and 44 per cent respectively. So, the top three categories are the ones, which got a higher amount.

Honourable minister, Uganda Police Force received Shs 99.8 billion. How much of it went to the seniors and how much went to the juniors? You can see there was an increment, but the increment was not fair. For people to understand, a Police Constable got an increment of Shs 110,000. The issue of the figures – Honourable colleagues, I want us to agree that if we see that the gap is so big, then we are sending the Executive back to look for money to top up because we cannot touch this money. *(Applause)*

Let me rule this way, honourable minister: you have listened to the concerns of the House from across. Go back as the Executive and table these concerns in the Cabinet. Even if I send you to the committee now, there is nothing you will table there before going and consulting with the Cabinet.

This would be an issue of a Supplementary Budget if it is to be handled. So, go back and raise these concerns with the Cabinet, and report back to the House in two weeks. Hon. Ssegona, what would be –

MR LUBEGA SSEGGONA: Mr Speaker, I beg your indulgence on this. The reason we had suggested a committee is for Parliament to get involved and look at the finer details of the figures. That is number one.

The minister would go to the same committee. The people who shared out this money the way

they did would also go to the same committee. We would be in a position to understand, first, how we got to where we are that we are even looking for a supplementary; we are struggling.

Even the original budget you passed here twice, Mr Speaker, cannot be implemented. I saw the Permanent Secretary and Secretary to the Treasury (PS/ST) telling the nation that he has released money for the first quarter; Shs 5.5 trillion. We expected Shs 18.5 trillion but he released only Shs 5.5 trillion. Even when you talk of a supplementary, you must be able to understand; first, where is it going to come from?

Two, who led us to where we are? Are we so helpless that we cannot identify the officers that led us to this mess?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, before punishing our colleagues and all that, Hon. Lubega-Sseggon, what you are saying is what I am coming to. That is why I said the minister reports back here in two weeks. Let us first give him a chance. When a statement comes, it will still have issues and we can then easily send it to the committee. I usually want to first give them a chance rather than rushing to the committees. Next item.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON
REPORTS THAT CONTRARY TO THE
ESTABLISHED DIPLOMATIC NORMS,
A CASINO AND GAMBLING FACILITY
HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED WITHIN THE
UGANDAN CONSULATE IN DUBAI,
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister of Foreign Affairs – yes, point of procedure.

MR LUBEGA SSEGGONA: I am very much constrained, Mr Speaker. I have seen this item on the Order Paper, and you will permit me if I appear to be crossing your boundary, but I don't know if before putting this matter on the Order Paper, you did consult those who know more than us about the law on diplomatic relations.

I am looking at the importance of this particular diplomatic mission that we are dealing with, with respect to the services provided to our people. I do not even know whether you properly addressed your mind to the implications of what you are just about to put on your microphone.

I am aware of the demands of international law on matters of this nature. On one hand, I would like very much to hear from my brother, Gen. Jeje Odongo, what he has to say about this, and of course, the rules of natural justice. I do not know whether you, personally, took the trouble to listen to him, first, because what we are going to debate has very serious implications –(Interjection)- not even tainting, but with respect to the future of this diplomatic mission. Guide me.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I do not know why Hon. Kirumira was insisting. When you said “Hon. Jeje Odongo” he kept saying “Saddam, Saddam” – oh, *Salam?* I heard “Saddam”. (*Laughter*) I thought he was “Hon. Jeje Odongo Saddam” (*Laughter*). He is “Abubakar”; that is the one we know.

Honourable member, how this matter came up is that it was raised as a question to the Prime Minister during the Prime Minister’s Time on Thursday, by the Shadow Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Prime Minister offered that it should be the minister to answer it.

Unfortunately, I have not had - I missed his call today. I was busy; I did not get time to return the call. So, I have not shared it with him, but I know he is the one who guides us on such diplomatic issues. So, before his statement, I am sure he will guide us. Yes, honourable minister.

4.17

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Gen. (Rtd) Jeje Odongo): Mr Speaker, indeed, Hon. Ssegona is very correct: matters of diplomacy are sometimes very touching. However, let me make my statement so that you can, then, rule.

In the course of the debate last week, the honourable Shadow Minister of Foreign Affairs raised the concern, arising out of a trending social media item to the effect that officials at the Uganda Consulate in Dubai were operating a casino on the premises of the consulate.

The Speaker, subsequently, following that presentation, directed that the Minister of Foreign Affairs should make a statement of explanation on what was going on. This is the basis upon which I am making this statement here today.

Mr Speaker, the allegations of turning a diplomatic facility into a casino are very serious. It is serious because these allegations touch on the misuse of a diplomatic facility against diplomatic practice, as per the Vienna Convention, touch on the trust and integrity of individuals, some of whom are Muslims, and also touch on the very important matter of diplomatic relations between countries.

Mr Speaker, because of the seriousness of these allegations and their import thereof, the Government of Uganda took this matter very seriously and instituted investigations.

Mr Speaker, because these investigations are still ongoing, I am, therefore, rather constrained because what I might say could jeopardise these investigations.

I, therefore, Mr Speaker, plead with you that I be allowed to make a full statement on this matter after these investigations have been concluded. (*Applause*) I plead, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, this is for me to guide – coming from what Hon. Ssegona - please, these are issues between countries. They are not issues for Members to exchange on, while on the Floor.

So, after listening to the wise counsel of Hon. Ssegona and the minister, who has been ordered not to jeopardise investigations and, therefore, he does not know what he can say or cannot say here that will be interpreted to

constitute interfering with investigations, the statement will come after the investigations. *(Applause)*

I will be coordinating with the Prime Minister to know when these investigations will be complete so that we come back to this House and have it on record.

Clerk, I want us to first do Item No.6 because there is a very - yesterday I promised that we would finish the debate on the agriculture sector and then we go to the State-of-the-Nation Address. Next item.

LAYING OF PAPERS:

I) BUSINESS TRANSACTED BY
THE EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY, 4TH MEETING – 2ND SESSION
– 5TH ASSEMBLY: 23RD JUNE – 4TH JULY
2024, ARUSHA, TANZANIA

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Government, is the paper available?

4.22

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the Business by the East African Legislative Assembly, 4th Meeting - 2nd Session – 5th Assembly: 23rd June – 4th July 2024, Arusha, Tanzania. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt hon. Third Deputy Prime Minister, do you have – I think I saw an accompanying statement, which has a list of the Bills and motions, as required under Rule 36(2) of our Rules of Procedure. You could read it or we could take it that way.

MS NAKADAMA: In accordance with the provisions of Article 65 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community, I have the honour to submit to you copies of the business transacted by the Assembly and Bills passed/ introduced, during the 4th Meeting – 2nd Session – 5th Assembly, held in the East African Legislative Assembly Chambers,

EAC Headquarters, Arusha, Tanzania, for your information and further action.

These include:

1. The East African Budget Speech for Financial Year 2024/2025; and
2. Report of the Committee on Supply and the Committee on Ways and Means and the financial instrument for the EAC budget for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

The following committees' reports, were tabled:

- (i) The report of the committee on General Purpose on the Assessment of the Implementation of the East African Community Budget for the Financial year 2023/2024;
- (ii) The report of the Committee on General Purpose on the Supplementary Budget request and the East African Community (EAC) Supplementary Appropriation Bill, 2024;
- (iii) Report of the Committee on General Purpose on the East African Community Budget Estimates for the Revenue and Expenditure of Financial Year 2024/2025;
- (iv) Report of the Committee on Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources on the On-Spot Assessment of the Implementation of Projects by the Lake Victoria Basin Commission and Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation;
- (v) Report of the Committee on Regional Affairs and Conflict Resolution on the Oversight activity to assess the Processes, Regulations, and Challenges of Conducting National General Elections; 15-22 May 2024 in Rwanda and Uganda; and
- (vi) Report of the 5th East African Parliamentary Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition and General Assembly Meeting, 15-17 October 2023, Nairobi, Kenya.

The following Bills were passed:

- i) The East African Community Supplementary Appropriation Bill, 2024; and
- ii) The East African Community Appropriation Bill, 2024.

The resolution adopted was, “A Resolution of the Assembly paying tribute to the late Hon. Dr Shogo Richard Mlozi.”

The administration of oath was administered to:

- i) Hon. Didier Mazenga Mukanzu, Minister of State, Ministry of Regional Integration, DRC; and
- ii) Hon. Veronica Mueni Nduva – the EAC Secretary General. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Honourable colleagues, these reports will be in the library. I hope we shall all be accessing them. Next item.

(II) WAIVER OF OUTSTANDING VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT) LIABILITY FOR KISIIZI HOSPITAL POWER LIMITED

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

4.28

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

(Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the Waiver of Outstanding Value Added Tax Liability for Kisizi Hospital Power Limited.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. The proposal is referred to the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development for processing and reporting back.

Honourable colleagues, yesterday, after the Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries had presented

the committee report on food and animal feeds security interventions in the country. We agreed here that we should also have the one on the Agriculture Cluster Development Project, since they are related. That was a major aim. We also said that we should receive the report, have one debate and conclude all at once. Therefore, I think we should first handle item nine by receiving the report and then debate items seven and eight together.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES ON THE STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGRICULTURE CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (ACDP)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable committee chairperson, 20 minutes. The full report will be captured on the *Hansard*.

(The report is hereto attached.)

4.30

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Ms Linda Auma):

Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving the committee this chance to present this report. On behalf of the committee - this report was supposed to be here a long time ago, but we thank you for sparing it to appear today.

I would like to also thank my former committee chairperson for the mentorship. I am so proud of you; you mentored me and that is why I have been elevated to be the position of a committee chairperson. I cannot take that for granted. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, I beg to lay, on the Table, the report of the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries on the status of the implementation of the Agriculture Cluster Development Project (ACDP). I would like to also lay the minutes of the committee.

The committee initiated an inquiry into the manner in which the Agriculture Cluster Development Project was being implemented as well as its impact on the farmers in Uganda and its improvement on food security and wealth creation.

The committee conducted oversight visits to assess the level of implementation and impact of this project in accordance with Article 90 and the Rules of Procedure of Parliament as put in the report. This provided and enjoined the committee with authority and power, among others, to do research.

The oversight was done following complaints and a petition from Members of Parliament where projects were being implemented citing failure to meet the intended expectations and lack of value for money. On this basis, the committee decided to carry out oversight visits to selected projects to assess the status of the implementation of ACDP in the various districts where it was being conducted.

The mid-term monitoring and evaluation report on ACDP presented to Parliament by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) in June and July 2022 did not indicate and capture the concerns the area Members of Parliament cited like misuse of funds as well as limited monitoring from the district and ministry, thus calling for a probe into this project.

Mr Speaker, this is a six-year partnership project of the agriculture ministry worth \$150 million and it was a loan by the World Bank through International Development Assistance (IDA). The project was officially closed in March 2022 but upon request, it was extended for a period up to 30 September 2023.

This project covered various crop value chains and 57 districts were part of this. The project's basic information is listed down. I know Members have read it because it was uploaded a long time ago. I am saying this just to refresh your knowledge of it.

There were four components, namely:

- i) support for intensification of on-farm production;
- ii) value addition and market access;
- iii) policy, regulatory and institutional support; and
- iv) project coordination and ICT platform.

These components are aligned to agricultural sector objectives and the Third National Development Plan (NDP III). As it was a loan, 82 per cent was disbursed to Government by that time, 2022. \$105.6 million was spent already, which represents 70 per cent, by then.

The project components were classified into various categories:

- i) The e-voucher programme;
- ii) Training for recipients of e-voucher support;
- iii) Development of agricultural input markets;
- iv) Capacity building for producers' organisation (Cooperatives and farmers' groups), and other value chain actors;
- v) ACCE-level warehousing, value addition, and marketing (storage);
- vi) Farm access roads, and bridges like choke points at the community level;
- vii) Policy and Regulatory Functions of MAAIF;
- viii) Agriculture water management investments;
- ix) Agricultural statistics; and
- x) Management of fall army worm and other diseases like desert locusts.

Mr Speaker, the districts that were allocated are being put here. I am going to move forward with the observations of the committee.

On component one, that is, support for intensification of on-farm production, the objective was to support the intensification of this on-farm production of five priority commodities namely; maize, cassava, beans, rice, and coffee.

For eligible farm households, support under this component focuses on the provision of subsidised productivity, enhancing and

post-harvest handling inputs through the e-voucher system, capacity building for target beneficiaries, and farmer organizations and development of agricultural input markets. The farmers were supposed to register and the Government was co-funding 70 per cent and the farmers 30 per cent and it was in all these areas.

E-Voucher

The e-voucher is a component that involves support towards the intensification of this program through the provision of subsidised inputs, as I had stated. The project had provided 67 per cent, 50 per cent, and 33 per cent respectively of the total cost of the inputs during the first, second, and third seasons while the farmer contributed the difference, as I stated. The farmer is weaned off the subsidiary by the 4th season because it is anticipated that by this time, the farmer would have known the value and adopted the use of quality agro-inputs for commercial farming.

The committee learnt that most of the farmers were faced with challenges in accessing and operating the e-voucher system. In areas where there are no networks - I even saw this before I became a Member of Parliament because I participated in monitoring. The system encountered frequent breakdowns and network failures, sometimes during critical times of the cropping season, which delayed enrolment, placement of orders, and serving of farmers.

The farmers asserted that the e-voucher system where inputs were to be requisitioned and delivered using the Internet, was not working, which resulted in members not receiving their inputs despite paying for them up to the time of the committee visit. Some farmers reported that they did not know how to operate and how the system works. This delayed other farmers from participating in commercial farming.

Most districts reported failure of the e-voucher system, as stated above.

The committee learnt that the contracted bank, that was UBA, was the service provider for the

e-voucher system in some districts, but due to system failures, some farmers' money got lost in the UBA system. This discouraged many potential farmers from getting enrolled. Mr Speaker, I was in Amuru when this happened, because UBA was not in Amuru. They would go up to Gulu. That is how the funds were lost.

Mr Speaker, it was unique in Nebbi. The committee was informed that the Government had withheld the co-funding part of the e-voucher system for 11 months, hence redemption was cut off for some farmers' money that was locked in the e-voucher system. Furthermore, there were reports of missing balances on farmers' e-voucher accounts due to system inefficiency, which was very frustrating to the affected farmers.

The committee received complaints from some farmers about the quality of some of the agricultural inputs supplied through the e-voucher system, stating that the products received through the e-voucher system were counterfeit/fake. For instance, in Kalungu, there were complaints from the farmers stating that they had received counterfeit fertilisers and seedlings that did not germinate.

The committee also received complaints from Balikosa Balibona Biwere Farmers' Cooperative Growers' Union Limited in Bugweri District, of adulterated fertilisers. The same were alleged to have been distributed out of season. There were very many complaints, Mr Speaker, I cannot mention all. Like in Hoima, there were complaints.

Recommendations

1. The committee recommends that all farmers who were supplied with counterfeit agricultural inputs through the e-voucher system should be compensated and the suppliers of those inputs blacklisted.
2. Farmers who had paid for the e-voucher services and had not received agricultural inputs through the system should be refunded. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF)

- should compel UBA to track and rectify the missing farmers' names and balances. access roads that are critical for the movement of farm produce to the market.
3. The matter of quality and timely provision of inputs should be addressed by MAAIF if the intended objective of the Agriculture Cluster Development Project (ACDP) and other projects are to be achieved. This component builds the capacity of the Area-based Community Cooperative Enterprises (ACCES) to effectively perform value addition and become marketing agents of farm produce like the Matching Grants that are under the value addition. This was being given to farmer organisations for value addition and post-harvest facilities. Through this, the project supports investments of locally-based farm cooperatives and associations to carry out community-level post-harvest handling, grading, bulking, and storage, and they went to the extent of building storage facilities.
 4. The E-Voucher Management System should continuously be monitored and stabilised in order to address the frequent breakdown and network failures. The system, if properly managed, is a good initiative that facilitates production and marketing of agricultural outputs. The mechanism for this grant is a Matching Grant that finances almost two-thirds of the cost of the purchase of equipment and construction of facilities needed to scale up and improve the effectiveness of this program to carry out these functions, including the construction of community primary storage facilities, as stated earlier.
 5. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries should task suppliers of equipment to offer maintenance services for the equipment supplied, at least for some agreed period. These were inputs for value addition. Below are the breakdowns, Members, I am not going to read - the breakdown of farmer organisations that receive these funds. Another table is on the machinery that was delivered by MAAIF.
 6. The Government, through MAAIF, should institute mechanisms through which grantees could be offered sustainable technical support and guidance with a view to sustainable productivity. Road chokes
 7. The e-voucher system should be reviewed and improved to enable the farmers to deposit their respective contributions on their e-voucher accounts using mobile money and others. Mr Speaker, this is where the problem is. Under this component, there is a part for the removal of 'chokes' along the farm/market access roads. MAAIF reported that rehabilitative work for road chokes on community access roads is categorised into three phases:
 8. Mr Speaker, the district that performed well in the e-voucher system, like Kyotera, should be allowed to enroll more farmers on the e-voucher system in case this project is continued, though it is taken over by events. We are at the conclusion point of the project. Phase I. The pilot districts - and there were seven pilot districts that covered 254 km.

Component two was on value addition. This is very key, honourable members. This component supports activities and investments to improve marketing and post-harvest handling of farm produce and measures to eliminate bottlenecks and trouble spots in rural

Phase II

In the rollout districts, which were dealing with the road chokes; there were 105 road chokes spread over 376.9 km in areas that have been mentioned there.

Phase III

Rollout districts. This was at the procurement process for 145 road chokes spread over 487.7 km. It was at contract signing and site handover by then.

Mr Speaker, in the third phase, Lira District was part of it but up to now the constructed roads have no bridges. The bridges were done in a shoddy way, and the heavy rain swept the bridges, yet it was stretching, crossing from Lira to Oyama.

Substandard and wrong machinery

The committee observed that most grantees were small and medium scale, where pilot projects were established at lower local government structures and levels to bring together farmers' communities to add value to their farm produce.

The committee discovered that the machinery at various grantees' sites was inadequate and out of capacity to process high-value farm produce.

The committee further noted that the machinery was devoid of complete design specification requirements to handle farm produce across the complete value chain, thereby rendering some machines meant for value addition idle because of assembling and installation. The machines were also noted to have visible signs of gradual depreciation.

The committee was informed by the members of the Oturukuru Produce Dealers and Farmers Association in Kumi District that they had envisaged the installation of machines with complete value chain specifications and therefore expected the machine to hull, sort, winnow, and package rice to market standard. This was frustrating.

The committee was informed by some grantee members in the district that the district focal point person - because the ministry had allocated each focal point person at the district level, was not guiding, and did not support

the procurement of the machinery, meaning that they went blindly and some procured machinery beyond their capacity, others did not have knowledge on how to operate it.

The committee further observed that there was a general lack of technical support and guidance as stated in the earlier submission, and this was exacerbated by inadequate budget allocation and release for procurement of machines with requisite complete value chain specification. For example, incomplete and poor workmanship was seen in some facilities that we visited in Kalungu and Rakai districts.

Two, non-functional facilities due to lack of electricity in Bugweri - three, government issues in Kole District; there were fights.

Non-compatibility of machines in Pakwach, Pallisa, and Nebbi District - these all hindered the well-intended objectives of the project.

Recommendation

The committee recommends that the Government, through the relevant ministry, especially the Ministries of Finance Agriculture, Local Government, Energy, and Mineral Development, should collaborate to offer guidance and support to grantees to procure machinery with a complete value chain of production.

Matching Grants

Mr Speaker, the committee found out that some of the projects in some districts that had been constructed as a result of the matching grants were complete and functional. The investment items under this component include offices, storage facilities, shelter for hullers, guardhouses, fences, ventilated improved pit latrines, weighing scales, moisture metres, and a power extension.

The committee was impressed by some of the successful groups like the Katwaniza Women Farmers' in Hoima, Abongo Women Group in Pakwach, and Kasaali Farmers' Cooperative Society in Kyotera, among others.

The committee, however, noted that despite parliamentary approval in 2016 of \$150 million from the International Development Association of the World Bank to facilitate the Agriculture Cluster Development Project (ACDP), the implementation on various sides was noted to be less than 50 per cent complete, with some having limited space to handle farm produce in preparation for value addition processes.

On the other hand, there was also delayed disbursement of approved funds. The committee received a submission from some cooperative society members that despite the requisition for funds by various farmers' groups, direct disbursement of funds to facilitate implementation was as a result, as by then, April and May 2022, which was close to the expiry of the project.

For instance, Bukose Balibona Buwerira Growers, Cooperative Union Limited in Bugweri applied for a grant in March 2018, and received funds in April 2022.

The committee was informed by some members of Ayer Joint Youth Farmers' Cooperative Society Limited in Kole that ever since the society applied for a grant in November 2019, no response was received from the responsible authorities.

The committee received another petition from Abagalanyi Kabira Coffee Farmers' Cooperative Society Limited. That is in Kyotera, Kabira Subcounty. This cooperative signed a grant agreement with MAAIF in January 2020 to benefit from this project.

According to the agreement, the grant total of the project was Shs 322,350,000. The cooperative was to receive Shs 215,974,500 from MAAIF, while the cooperative was to contribute Shs 106,375,000.

According to the petition, MAAIF released only Shs 147,400,000. In January 2020, up to the time of the reporting, the Ministry had not yet paid an outstanding balance of Shs 68,574,000.

The committee further learnt that there had been anomalies cited by MAAIF that they required the cooperative to first address and the anomalies had been addressed, but MAAIF was not meeting their part of the agreement.

The committee observed that the approval of ACDP funds was occasioned by a bureaucratic process that oftentimes delayed effective project execution. The committee notes that delayed disbursement of funds could not guarantee a successful and effective transformation of society, whose sole livelihood was agriculture.

Recommendation

The committee recommended that the project coordination unit, or at MAAIF, should institute a mechanism to expedite the requisition, and approval of funds to expedite their releases to facilitate project implementation. Mr Speaker, I want to emphasise this. There are very many companies that have contracts to supply these inputs and machinery, but we have been asking up to now. It is three years, and the project is in conclusion, but some of them have not been paid.

Others have already lost property, and others are even dead, which is not right. This money is there. The government was not looking for money. And Ugandans have been paying this loan for 38 years.

Financial performance of ACDP

MAAIF reported that the project's financial performance has kept improving steadily following the take-off of the major interventions, like Matching Grants and rehabilitation of road chokes.

The committee learnt that since the last mission in April 2022, disbursement has remained the same, however, the expenditure increased from \$95.6 million to \$106.6 million, which is mainly due to the functionality of the e-voucher disbursement to Matching Grants to grantees under cohort one, two and three and payment to the contractors under road chokes.

In the table here, it shows the overall project's financial performance as of 30 September 2022. Honourable members, I hope you have seen.

Loan expenditure by subcomponent

By April 2022 and 30 September 2022, the project spent a total of \$106.9 million. Table 4 below shows the expenditure by sub-component. I am not going to read that.

Government and management challenges

The committee established that some guarantees were marred with complex governance and management challenges, including but not limited to leadership wrangles, weak management, poor record-keeping, conflict and interest, non-accountability of grants, limited members' participation, and low firm prices.

Some of the management and governance cases the committee encountered during the oversight visit were as follows:

- a) The Bugweri Maize Farmers' Cooperative Union and Ayer Joint Youth Farmers' Cooperative Society Limited. The members of Bugweri Farmers' Cooperative, made accusations of their leadership on misappropriation of this grant disbursed to the union for implementing this project;
- b) There were also reported cases of impersonation like the case with Limoto Farmers' Cooperative Society Limited in Pallisa District;
- c) Reports from Dokolo Young Oil Seed Farmers' Cooperative Society Limited of multiple special interests in the management of the grantees' affairs on account of financial contributions made by several donors;
- d) Lack of accountability of funds received by some corporations was likely evident with the improper and no bookkeeping when the committee requested to see the books of accounts. Some cooperatives could not produce them; and

- e) Some of the farmers' associations that received matching grants were marred with conflicts of interest within, like the signatories to some accounts of the said association. For instance, the Zambogo Farmers Group in Kalungu, which had 87 members and had a man as the chairperson and his wife. The association had received Shs 160 million. This was managed by a family. There was a lot –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is a point of procedure, honourable committee chairperson.

MR OGUZU LEE: Mr Speaker, issues of accountability and financial management have been raised in this report, but I see the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development who should have responded to some of these issues, walking out.

I do not know how we are going to proceed. This is because while have heard from the report that the World Bank disbursed money to finance, this money has not reached the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries for the implementation of projects and to the final consumers. Who has to explain this kind of thing if the responsible minister has decided to run away? That is the procedural point I had to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. This is one of the things we were arguing about. The Minister for Finance has a special assignment today, so he was requesting - and you know he is our usual ally here. He is ever here. Anyhow, the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries is here. They are the ones who had the project and should account for the project. He will ably respond.

The other thing, honourable committee chairperson, is that I told Members to read this report. Just go on to the recommendations so that we have time for debate. In five minutes, it should be done.

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I had also noticed that those findings are too many, and I hope Members –

Recommendations

The committee recommends as follows:

- i. The Government through the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries should improve on the selection criteria and capacity of the beneficiaries group to enhance ownership and sustainability;
- ii. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries should sign a Memorandum of Understanding with suppliers to provide maintenance of the machinery and equipment because most of these, on which the Government spent a lot of money, are no longer functioning; and
- iii. The chairpersons and signatories to the accounts on which the farmers' associations matching grant was deposited should be held accountable for the funds disbursed.

Mr Speaker, the issue of lack of electricity and water connectivity is so much that most of the projects were not connected. The electricity was not connected to this project or factories to operate this machinery. This has made this project a white elephant.

On that, the committee recommends that in the future, in case of a similar project, the Government should ensure collaboration between the relevant ministries so that they coordinate well to ensure that the project succeeds.

Project monitoring and evaluation had weak linkages, as Members have said. The committee recommends that accounting officers of district local governments, like the focal point person, should arrange for regular capacity building.

On the Agriculture Cluster Development Project (ACDP), the monitoring and evaluation unit should provide adequate guidance or a template to the local governments to help in the supervision for effective implementation.

The respective local governments should prevail over grantees' management and institute mechanisms that would ensure regular monitoring.

For future projects of a similar nature, the Government should, through relevant Ministries, Departments, and Agencies adequately prepare to offer guidance and support to project beneficiaries to implement the project effectively.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries should expedite the process of connecting the projects to the national grid to enable the functionality of this equipment.

Road Chokes

I would like to go straight to the observations.

In Kyotera, 21 road chokes were identified, but only nine were prioritised for rehabilitation. At the time of the committee visit, only two roads under Lot 1; in Kateera-Minziro, and Kasanvu- Kyakaluuma, had been approved and construction was ongoing.

In Ayer that is Kole, that is Ayer-Bala-Akalo Road in Kole District was only 10 per cent completed.

The road projects connecting two sub-counties, Ongino-Kanapa in Kumi, were not completed.

The rest of them in Nebbi and Pakwach districts were also delayed.

The recommendations, I cannot read all, honourable members.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and the Ministry of Local Government should –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable committee chairperson, let us capture the whole committee report on the *Hansard*. You have done a fantastic job. *(Applause)*

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The report was big, though interesting. However, time is not our best ally. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Most of it has been overtaken by events. Honourable colleagues, I open the debate now. I will give the first opportunity to those who have not spoken today but two minutes each. But now, some of you whom I have picked are saying: "All of us." Do you want me to pick you up and leave the rest? I think some of you can volunteer not to talk so that we save time. Yes, let us shoot right away, honourable colleagues.

5.04

MR LAWRENCE SONGA (NRM, Ora County, Zombo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee chairperson for the report. This project was going to be a good thing if it had well implemented in Uganda. Of all the World Bank projects, the Agricultural Cluster Development Projects succeeded in Rwanda, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Kenya. Why Uganda failed is because, one, it is historical. Usually, there is underinvestment in agriculture, and also the morale to practice agriculture, especially in the young people, is low.

Then there is the issue of limited resources. Yes, we wanted to promote public-private partnerships, but the investment of the private sector and their engagement was very low.

Climate change was another factor that affected the project because we did not invest in irrigation systems the way our neighbours did and then the weak infrastructure like roads. Without transportation, you cannot have access to the markets and that was a big hurdle for most farmers. Furthermore, the issue of new technologies; most of the farmers are smallholders and they could not adapt to these new technologies which also hindered the development of that project and its success.

There was also inadequate policy - like policy constraints, the laws related to that, and they were poorly coordinated. Much as the Minister of Agriculture was responsible for this, this

project related to many other ministries but there was weak coordination.

So, in the next project, I think it would be important to address some of these challenges. The clusters were 12, but it covered 57 districts and the selection of the enterprises was also a challenge. When you know that your neighbours are succeeding in a particular sector or crop or enterprise, you take the one where you have a higher return on investment.

So, we went for maize, cassava, and so on, but without studying what our competitors in the neighbourhood were doing. We need to invest in lucrative areas with higher returns. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Songa, Chairperson Committee on Climate Change. Honourable colleagues, we are debating two reports at once. We are debating the one on Food and Animal Feed Security Interventions in the country, and then this one on the Agriculture Cluster Development Project (ACDP) because they are closely related. Thank you. Hon. James Kubeketerya –

5.07

MR JAMES KUBEKETERYA (NRM, Bunya County East, Mayuge): Mr Speaker, I just have two issues to comment on. One is that when it comes to agriculture, I think we should have a fully-fledged policy that we go for irrigation. Let us do as we did for roads that we actually have to ask for money from the Government to ensure that we go for irrigation because all this will be wasted when we have bad weather.

Two, this issue of having fake herbicides is a serious matter and we have the Uganda National Bureau of Standards. That is where the emphasis should be because most of our farmers have been fleeced a lot of money. They borrow, but eventually end up with fake drugs and inputs. That is something that must be addressed. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Bhoka Didi

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5.08

MR GEORGE BHOKA (NRM, Obongi County, Obongi): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. I thank the chairperson and Members for a very comprehensive report and recommendations. Honourable minister, we thank your ministry for the good intentions of supporting Ugandans to produce, add value and make wealth.

Three observations caught my eye, Mr Speaker. The first is the supply of fake inputs which is a function of procurement. We know who planned for this, who ordered, who received, who certified and who accepted that these fake inputs should be given to the beneficiaries. We must hold the procurement teams accountable for supplying fake inputs to our people.

Number two is the post-harvest handling and value addition, which is a function of energy. In the recommendation, the committee recommends that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries considers the connection of electricity to the processing plants. This is a function of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development.

If we do not speak to the need to extend electricity to our rural communities, especially at a time when we are decentralising production, processing and value addition to the parishes, under the Rural Electrification Programme, we are setting ourselves up for failure. We are producing, but we are failing to add value and access markets.

Lastly, the same observations that we are making here are going to be for a similar project called the National Oil Seed Project. Right now, it is in the middle of its implementation and will be completed soon. The beneficiary districts are saying they do not know what is happening. Why? Because of centralisation of the production. I think we need to delineate the role of the central ministries policy – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Solomon Chelangat –

5.10

MR SOLOMON ALINGA (NRM, Too County, Bukwo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join colleagues in thanking the committee for the elaborate report that they have given. The intention of this project was actually to relieve our farmers from the burden that they have been failing to take their products to the market.

However, the implementation of this project has brought a lot of problems. As a Member of Parliament, I have been following in my constituency and my district and the work that has been done there is so much wanting. You remember Bukwo District has very loose soils that a contractor works on a road and once he delays until the rainy season, that road goes back to square one.

We have roads like Kortek Kezima Road, which had been worked on and our farmers had started ferrying their produce to the market easily, and they were very comfortable. However, because of the delays, this road has gone back to square one, and I believe across the country, that could be the problem now. The contractor has to go back and work afresh.

Our farmers are now using donkeys to ferry the crops to the markets. My suggestion is that the ministry should see how best they can harmonise when making payments to these contractors. When you go to the contractor, they complain a lot that they are not being paid by the ministry.

Therefore, the ministry should see how best they can pay these contractors and some of them have made huge losses. They borrowed loans from the banks so that they could run this contract, more especially in supplying these farm inputs. I know of contractors who are suffering because they have not been paid. The interest rates have gone very high. So, the ministry should see how best to pay these contractors so that they do their work. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Feta –

5.13

MR GEOFFREY FETA (NRM, Ayivu Division East, Arua): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join colleagues in thanking the chairperson for a very good report. I also wish to thank the ministry and Government for their good intentions. We have a problem in Uganda. What works is fought and what does not work is promoted. That is the problem we have in Uganda. National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) was a very beautiful programme, implemented at the subcounty level, promoting enterprises and suppliers at every subcounty. The economy was very vibrant. Some people decided that it was not working.

Now, it has been implemented at the ministry level and you can see the challenges being highlighted by the chairperson; very complicated digitalisation, which the farmers cannot manage.

Banks which are not there in the vicinity are the ones selected to offer services. What is the intention? I appeal to the committee to advise the ministry to go back to the approach we used in NAADS, where the trickle-down effect of what we are implementing is seen right in your neighbourhood. We had trading centres where a shopkeeper selling hoes was supplying to the subcounty. An enterprise of pigs was supplying the subcounty. A chicken breeder supplies to the subcounty. The impact of the business and the programme was seen everywhere. Now, you have brought it from the last man to the ministries. You are only bringing challenges here.

May we review the approaches of implementation because, after all, these are loans that our people are going to pay. *(Applause)* Are they going to pay for what they have not felt the impact of? Let us be very honest with ourselves. What works for us? What has a trickle-down effect on the people? I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, these are the challenges we face when we interrogate these

loans. You find that the terms and conditions are cast in stone. They are already approved by the board of the World Bank. You cannot go back – meaning it is from project inception. They cannot change.

I was on the Committee on National Economy and I could really see. There was a time we reduced money – Hon. Nambeshe - and then the World Bank said, no, they could not sign. We had seen a waste of \$8 million. They said, no, go back and approve all of it. For what is approved in Washington D.C. by the board, you cannot do much. Therefore, our negotiators and project designers, from inception and during negotiation, need to up their game.

Hon. Agnes Taaka?

5.16

MS AGNES TAAKA (NRM, Woman Representative, Bugiri): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson for the report.

Mr Speaker, I will pick it up from where the honourable member ended. In my view, we are being let down by the technocrats in this country. This is because, from the time of inception of a project, they plan, negotiate and do everything on our behalf. However, each time, they keep on doing the same thing over and over, even when it does not yield results.

When I look at the report on food security, how the prisons and the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) perform, and how the districts perform – where they go and scatter resources amongst different people – it leaves a lot to be desired. Why can't the technocrats come up with something that works for us? If we need to promote big farmers in the country, then, so be it, so that those who cannot do large-scale farming can work on these farms and get paid. Everybody will benefit in a way, but when our country is moving forward.

Mr Speaker, when you look at the cluster programme, they went on scattering money, with a lot of delays, and we ended up not seeing anything coming out of it.

We have also concentrated on staying in that backward way of doing farming. You find that the National Animal Genetic Resources Centre and Data Bank (NAGRC&DB) does not have the necessary machinery to do the work that it is supposed to do. If NAGRC&DB cannot, what about the ordinary farmer? That is why we go ahead to continue planning for hoes at the ministry for agriculture.

Mr Speaker, I request the Government to take interest in this and organise the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. Uganda is gifted by nature and we can use this gift, with new technology, to become the food basket for the whole of this continent if we do what is right - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Agnes Ameede?

5.19

MS AGNES AMEEDE (Independent, Woman Representative, Butebo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the report.

I have two issues. Butebo was a beneficiary of this project, but the project was tied to two commodities: cassava and maize. In Butebo, we do not have land, so, they were not the right crops to promote.

Secondly, there is the issue of the roads. Honourable minister, there is a road of two kilometres that was done at Shs 200 million. Please, I would like answers. The terrain of that place is flat. There was no swamp. How was the road done at Shs 200 million? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: They scratched the ground and charged Shs 200 million. *(Laughter)*

Yes, Hon. Flavia Kalule, followed by Hon. Katabaazi. Colleagues, I am balancing.

5.20

MS FLAVIA NABAGABE (NUP, Woman Representative, Kassanda): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for balancing the boat.

Thank you very much, committee chairperson, for the report.

On the key issues that I see in Kassanda District regarding this project, the first one is that the groups got machinery, but we have no transformers. So, we have redundant machinery that is not being utilised because there are no transformers. There is no power to operate the machines. For example, we have Myanzi Maize Millers and Kassanda. Those two have totally failed to start off and the group members are just looking at the machinery.

My recommendation would be – because they cannot co-fund and they utilised the money that was given to them and they cannot bring on board more money. So, is there a way we can look at financing the transformer so that the machines can take off?

Finally, there is the disbursement of grants to some beneficiaries. Some beneficiaries got funds, used them for other things and were unable to utilise them on the things they were supposed to. Bukuya Cooperative is one of those examples. We have issues with them, and I do not know whether you were able to reach Kassanda. I have not seen that you reached Kassanda to monitor the groups there. It would be good to also pass by and see what we can do there.

Finally, I think – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Katabaazi? You know, politicians say “in conclusion,” then “finally”, “lastly” –*(Laughter)*

5.22

MR FRANCIS KATABAZI (NUP, Kalungu East County, Kalungu): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I also add my voice to those who have thanked the chairperson of the committee. They did a great job, and I was lucky that when they visited the constituency that I represent, I was there. I welcomed them to Kalungu. Of course, what we found there was not exciting. We have a project which is a “white elephant”. Not even a single kilogramme of coffee has been produced, and it is on the main road. Ours is not a case of power.

There was lack of value for money in most of the projects, because when you look at the money - it was about Shs 300 million. I do not remember very well. However, when you look at what was done in Bukulula, for example, they did not produce even a kilogramme. It is on the main road, by the way. I will take the honourable minister to show him. This money is borrowed and we are all going to pay.

The people enjoying that money, wrongly, should be brought to book – all these people in the ministry for agriculture, who are involved. There is a lot of wastage of money and corruption. You can clearly see that nothing was done well. On the other side, we had a family – a husband and a wife – taking over all the members and buying them off. It is just one family that benefitted from a Government project. We have information about that.

Lastly, the fake inputs are another case that we should not allow. Dr Abed had a Bill where we would help in that - it was contract farming and that would solve it. Dr Abed should be supported on bringing that Bill because it would give us a good solution.

Lastly – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Allan Mayanja. You cannot say, “lastly” two times. (*Laughter*) I am always attentive.

5.25

MR ALLAN MAYANJA (NUP, Nakaseke Central County, Nakaseke): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This project has a component of e-vouchers and when you read the report, farmers paid to receive inputs like maize, seeds, fertilisers, and pesticides but the farmers never received these inputs. I, therefore, recommend that these farmers should be compensated and the Auditor-General should take interest and do what we call value for money accountability so that their inputs are paid back.

Under Article 164 of our Constitution, those officers in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries

should be accountable and they should give back the funds which were misused.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Nangoli, Hon. Martin, Hon. Miriam.

5.26

MR GERALD NANGOLI (NRM, Elgon North County, Bulambuli): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I thank the chairperson for the great report. I have got about two issues.

One is about fake agricultural inputs on the market supplied by the suppliers. This issue is a disturbing one. I happen to be a farmer. We wanted to promote the Buy-Uganda Build-Uganda (BUBU) policy. Recently, I purchased fertilisers made in Uganda, that is NPK, UREA, DAP, to mention but a few. When you apply these fertilisers, after two weeks, the crops begin drying - especially some of us who are growing in Arabic coffee. They begin drying; they shed off leaves two weeks after you have applied. I changed and went back to NPK because I had applied the UREA and CAN. When I applied the NPK, it worsened the situation and it affected even the tap roots; they peeled off. If you remove the coffee trees, you will find the tap roots falling off. When I asked the extension officer, he told me that those were fake fertilisers on the market yet these things are made in Uganda.

My concern is that the agriculture ministry and UNBS should take a keen interest in this because it affects all farmers across, especially those who are getting PDM. They are using the money to buy fake fertilisers. They cannot now get value for money. Yet, at the end of the day, they are supposed to pay back the money for PDM. Where will they get the money from when they are buying fake products on the market?

It is a big problem and so I would like to urge the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to take interest in this. Honourable minister, you were once in my area, that is, Bulago Stock Farm. I am a neighbour to that area. We grow Arabic coffee but as I said, this

season, we are not going to harvest Arabic coffee as expected because of the fake products on the market. I have applied it twice already, but I am at a loss.

Mr Speaker, farmers get these products on a loan. Instead of buying at cash at Shs 125 per bag or 50 kilogrammes, they are getting at Shs 200,000 per bag, simply, because they pay during the harvesting period of November-December. How are they going to pay back the money when they are not able to get genuine products on the market? You need to check suppliers. It is a serious issue. Thank you very much. I stop here.

5.29

MR MARTIN MUZAALE (NRM, Buzaaya County, Kamuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will begin with the choice of the bank. You cannot pick a bank that is Kampala-based and it is going to serve the interests of people in Lamwo, Kamuli. The cost involved is so high for those people to move to these Kampala-based banks.

Mr Speaker, the second issue is about the efficiency of our systems. A SACCO applied for these grants in 2018, they received approval in 2022 when most of the members had already given up. This is why a few members begin now to plan around and enjoy this money when it has come in because most of the members have already lost morale by the time the money comes in.

The third one is the issue of feasibility studies. We pay a lot of money to consultancy firms to do this work for us but I do not know what could be the problem. Someone comes up with a feasibility study and says, it is okay for us to put a maize mill somewhere, where he knows there is no electricity. We go ahead to implement the project and put up the facility, but there is no power. This is happening in so many of these projects. In local government, it is actually a bigger challenge.

Mr Speaker, the issue of our loans - many of these loans have not been performed. I want to give an example. The Kasolwe Stock Ranch,

which is in my district, Kamuli - we gave it a lot of money, but I cannot today even tell you that I know even 10 people in my district that have benefited from the Kasolwe Project yet we put in close to Shs 60 billion. It is four years down the road and I cannot give accountability of what my people around that project have benefited.

Mr Speaker, it is a challenge to us, as Members of Parliament because we pass these loans with high expectations but at the end of the day, we see nothing. As the chairperson has narrated, it is really bad that we had put in \$150 million and nothing almost came out. We have only been able to achieve 30 per cent of the money - *(Member timed out.)*

5.32

MS MIRIAM MUKHAYE (Independent, Woman Representative, Mbale): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also want to appreciate the chairperson of the committee for the report. Mine is the issue of the agricultural extension workers.

This programme is indeed good and if it performed well, it would help our people come out of poverty because I know 80 per cent of our people in the country benefit from agriculture. However, when you look at the extension workers in our communities, I do not know whether they do not have the morale or they are not interested. If you look at the support they give to our farmers, there is a lot to be desired.

The ministry should find a way to scale up the support they give to the people in our communities. If you have distributed seedlings in many forms - there are grants that are given to our people in the community but people do not know how to plant in a modern way and there is no support given to them from the extension workers yet every subcounty has an extension worker. Honourable minister, I do not know whether they are fully trained, or whether they are selected well otherwise, as a country, we need to revise the system of supervising our farmers in the country.

In Mbale District, we have machinery that is not functional because there is no electricity. Many of the people have come to me but the machines are redundant. Money is wasted simply because there is no electricity.

Honourable minister, the extension workers should be looked at and if they are checked, they should improve and then our country will move forward. Thank you.

5.34

MR JULIUS TUSIIME (Independent, Rwampara East County, Rwampara):

Thank you, Mr Speaker and thank your chairperson for the presentation and the good report. I want to thank the committee because the Agricultural Cluster Development Project (ACDP) is a strategic project, well-intentioned, but I do not know what went wrong along the way because the components it has are creative innovations that would spur our agricultural productivity as a country.

Mr Speaker, I want to speak to one thing which I believe desired a multi-sectoral approach. How do we have 179 factories put up and 93 of those cannot access electricity? This is an appeal to us as a country to use what we call a multi-sectoral approach; in everything we are doing, let us have a way of integrating all the components.

In my constituency, I have an urban water project which has failed to take off because it requires electricity to pump the water uphill. So in our planning, we need all sectors to engage in this, and we push, because ACDP had components of ICT, it had components of works ministry, which I think if they had come together, it would be a success.

On food security, Mr. Speaker, we cannot talk of sustainable food security without proper quality and improved seeds and seedlings. Right now, the rainy seasons are coming, and our population is already asking for improved seeds.

To have sustainable food livelihoods, we must cascade the efforts of having food to the lower

local communities. It cannot only be done by these entities like prisons, by UPDF, by my friends at the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) and others. We need to provide and have a centre where we can access quality seeds and always cascade it to the local farmers in my village and other villages across the country. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Joel Leku, Hon. Osoru Mourine, Hon. Ndamira, Hon. Emely Kugonza.

5.37

MR JOEL LEKU (NRM, Terego West County, Terego): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join my colleagues in thanking the committee for a good report.

It is clear that there has been a lack of coordination in the whole project and the selection of projects where some projects have been forced on members. Then there has been a lack of monitoring of these projects.

Mr Speaker, if you look at coordination, how does the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) get to do roads in Uganda when we have the whole Ministry of Works and Transport which is mandated to do roads in this country? What capacity does the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries have to make good roads? I think this is uncalled for. There is lack of proper coordination.

Let the right mandate go to the right ministry. We even have the Ministry of Water and Environment, and you find that MAAIF doing water everywhere. So, how efficiently can these projects be done if we do not address or put the right element in the right ministry?

I think going forward, we need to sit down and for future projects correct all these things so that we can have a well-delivered project. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, this is just all about programme-based budgeting which we are doing. We are doing it without doing it! We are doing it when we are not doing

it. That is why up to now we are waiting for an amendment from the Government on the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) which would enable us also to amend our Rules of Procedure so that we do away with sectoral committees to program committees.

If we have 18 programs and that is how we are supposed to be handling the budget - I told you last time I had a situation where it was so difficult for me. I think it was roads to do with Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA). The money had been put under KCCA. The program was put under infrastructure. Now, the Committee on Physical Infrastructure could not process the project money because the Vote was not under physical infrastructure. It was under presidential. Now, presidential could also not process because the work plans were put under the Committee on Physical Infrastructure.

We suffered a lot. We sent it to the rules committee and the rules committee said, "No, we cannot amend the rules which would not reflect the requirements of the PFMA. So first amend the PFMA."

Honourable Attorney-General, kindly guide the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to enable us so that we can process the budget very well. Now it will be even a requirement that when you are negotiating projects, consider programme-based planning and then we move very well as a ministry.

I had given permission to Hon. Osoru Mourine, Hon. Emely Kugonza and Hon. Catheline Ndamira.

5.40

MS OSORU MOURINE (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua City): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Allow me to join my colleagues in thanking the chairperson for the great report she has presented.

Mr Speaker, it still baffles me - the emphasis has been made by Members that indeed there are counterfeits in the market. The Government

has been doing a lot to make sure that we do away with counterfeit products, even fertilisers and agricultural inputs. But year in, year out, it seems a lot of effort that the Government is putting in is just a waste.

As a way forward, why don't we, as Parliament, invite Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) to interact with the relevant committee and tell us exactly what is happening? Maybe we are sitting here and do not know if UNBS is having staff in order to check the quality of all these agricultural inputs. It is my request that we interact with UNBS such that we do our work.

Year in year out, Mr Speaker, it seems it is not stopping. Even as we talk this year, next year again the same thing will be happening. What could be happening with UNBS? I request that the relevant committee interacts with UNBS; we want to know the problem. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Committee on Trade, Tourism and Industry, you are assigned that. Hon. Emely Kugonza?

5.42

DR EMELY KUGONZA (NRM, Buyanja East County, Kibaale): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for a very comprehensive report.

What I observed over the years in terms of project-development in this country, there has been a problem. Many projects actually fail at the design stage and it is a pity that as Parliament, we normally come at the tail end to do post-mortem.

How I wish the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and other ministries in this country would give an opportunity to Parliament to participate in project development, at least to look at the concept. I have been observing Members here, and I want to believe that our Parliament has some of the best brains in this country and that they can actually positively critique and offer solutions that can work for the country.

I was surprised when I saw, in the project concept that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries is actually going to do roads. And it did not even surprise me when it came to Kibaale District where we had two roads that were part of the Agriculture Cluster Development Program that failed.

Even up to today, as we speak, the project has closed, but the roads are not completed. This is passing a vote of no confidence to the program approach. We would have seen, actually, the agriculture ministry working together with the Ministry of Works and Transport, doing the roads, because they have the experts.

Also, when it comes to production, you cannot talk about production that will succeed and deliver the results that you want if it is not linked to the market. And when you look at the analysis of the entire project, it was actually all scattered here and there.

We need to work on programmes we have done market analysis on, guide the farmers and in this particular case, we need to even look at the project cycle, but before the project cycle, sometimes you need to look at the project cycle of the communities and that is why it becomes very fundamental that you must get down to understand the priorities, ways of life of the communities and then be able to deliver conceptualised projects that will work for the people.

One thing that we can actually see- we have seen many of the reports around. We are talking about overproduction and I will point out one particular case of milk.

In this country, we have overproduction of milk and we are talking 4 billion litres of milk. When you look at the milk per capita consumption and look at the schools, why can't we link up with the education sector and come up with a school feeding program that should be able to take the balance of the milk?

We are looking at people- for example, every time we are promoting poultry in the communities and seeing every time the prices

go down and people cannot be able to consume the milk because there is a cost.

If you have to talk about the economic independence of a country, you need to upgrade this and talk about economic sovereignty. This means that the participation of the citizens must be very important and I think the different ministries and departments of Government need to go back to the basics of project development. I submit, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Dr Emely Kugonza. Honourable minister, on the issues of milk, I visited a friend of mine who produces around 7 million litres per annum in Portugal. What was so interesting was that he feeds his calves on powdered milk and he says it is cheaper - yes, his calves and he says it is cheaper. It also helps him so that in case their mother has a disease or a problem, it does not transfer it to the calves but I was shocked when he said it is cheaper for them to use powdered milk.

He is coming here soon and I will introduce you to him honourable minister and you see the technology they use which is surprising. So, you would process all this milk into powdered milk which is cheap, affordable and all that. Otherwise, I have heard people cry that the milk is down and now tea. And you know Ugandans are not patient.

I know people who are now cutting down and uprooting tea like in many Hon. Magyezi's area and Fort Portal. Yes, Hon. Ndamira, what does the Kigezi say about the project?

5.47

MS CATHELIN NDAMIRA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kabale): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to join the Members to thank the Chairperson of the committee and the members.

Mr Speaker, I have listened to the Chairperson and she has done her part, but I tried to fit in Kigezi Region and found that it was not fitting in very well.

Mr Speaker, Kigezi Region is hard - when we talk of roads, we need to consider the hard rocks that are supposed to be broken by those contractors, but it has not been easy.

When I found that they were given some money, it was little compared to the work that was needed. I continue to thank you because you have tried I also want to put this aside and let the minister know that Kigezi should be considered separately.

Why can't you consider those hard-to-reach areas not like those in – I heard a colleague say that their area is a flat one so there is nothing to work on, but Kigezi is different.

Another thing -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, that is not what Hon. Agnes Amede had said. She talked about the road; just the road.

MS NDAMIRA: Yes, I am also talking -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: This project the road was a very small component of it. So it might be presented as if in Butebo there was nothing to work on.

MS NDAMIRA: Yes, Mr Speaker, I want to bring in the point that the Kigezi has hard rocks, meaning that they should be considered differently.

Another issue which I want to say is that I have heard the H.E. President sing of a one-acre module which I have not seen-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, the President, for those who are a bit extensive four, then in Kigezi one-acre module “*Nyakana*” and that is what he said -

MS NDAMIRA: I am saying that in Kabale we do not have that land. I am a Member of Parliament, and I am speaking for my people I do not have one even acre. Now, I am asking, if those people do not have one acre, can we reduce it to what we have? Why can't the

ministry at least bring a heifer to that family that needs to also grow economically? Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. On. Naome Kabasharira, Hon. Ocheri, Hon. Akugizibwe and Hon. Okot Boniface.

5.50

MS NAOME KABASHARIRA (Independent, Rushenyi County, Ntungamo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the Chairperson and the committee.

Mr Speaker, I think the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries has had a history of implementing projects, getting good projects and getting good money from loans but they implement them either poorly or not well.

The history I am talking about is that one time the ministry was given a lot of money to construct water in areas which were very dry like Karamoja and then the corridors which do not have water.

I want to tell you that it even caused the minister by then who was a Vice President to be censured and the money, up to today - if you go to any place where the dams were constructed, you cannot see water. You only see something like a dam without water - a dry dam. I have never seen a dry dam, but you can get them in that. So, likewise, this project was very good but as my colleagues who spoke previously said we needed to do some visibility study and then we see where the project should fit and how it could be implemented.

That one will bring in the procurement group which is the PPDA, the technocrats you talked about and then also marketing and coordination.

Of course, when the project is good and you do not have marketing like Hon. Kugonza said. What is it for? I saw people producing beans in my constituency and I want to tell you that they did not have where to sell them because they added value by putting in the fertilisers and had no market. And that is money.

I have a big problem and I do not want to say that the Ministry of Agriculture cannot work on roads. They can because they also have good engineers but I have a bridge which was contracted for Shs 1 billion in 2020, up to date, it is done at 20 per cent and you can see that the project has ended.

Mr Speaker, I have moved to the ministry, Permanent Secretary (PS) and what but there is nothing. The contractor said he has a certificate which is supposed to be paid but they refused to pay. I do not know for what reason and they said there is no money.

The PS said that he did not do good work and the man said he should be paid for what he has done and then continue working and then pay the other certificates.

Mr Speaker, I want to tell you that my constituency is suffering because of the ping-pong between the Permanent Secretary (PS) and the contractor. What we want is the bridge. Whether he has done - why should you say that he has not done good work when you have monitors and engineers who are project managers? You have engineers who are monitoring, why should you say that the contractor has not done the work and you cannot pay? If he has not, why don't you cancel the contract and you give it to another person to do it? It goes even to the roads.

We got what I would call, what is naturally said that, *byooya bya nswa* from the project. *Byooya bya nswa*, I do not know, the Baganda can interpret it. Getting nothing out of the project. (Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable member.

Honourable minister, if the project has ended, what would happen to projects that are pending? Okay, Hon. Norman Ocherro, what is in Karamoja?

5.55

MR NORMAN OCHERO (NRM, Labwor County, Abim): Mr Speaker, I want to thank you for giving me this opportunity.

I take the opportunity to thank the committee for producing a report, which I would call a challenge; they produced more of a challenge than a report.

Mr Speaker, Uganda has many problems, one of which is unemployment. Uganda has very good soils, very fortunate. We equally have very reliable rainfall in many parts of the country. If we had put more interest in making agriculture productive, I am convinced that the employment level in this country would go up to 80 per cent.

I believe that if agriculture was made productive and professional, it can employ up to 80 per cent of the people of this country. But as you can hear the debate, a report on a project on agriculture is full of challenges only. Throughout! You see that there is a problem in this country.

Mr Speaker, this country is serious. For example, look at the effort we put into putting roads in this country, the effort we have put in place to ensure power is in this country, you can tell the amount of success that we can afford. What if we put that energy into making agriculture productive, how many people would we employ?

Mr Speaker, it is unfortunate that agriculture suffers the biggest shame in this country. When I was in primary school, weeding the school garden was left for latecomers. It was a punishment. When you come late, they punish you by saying go and weed. We took it that agriculture is a punishment.

No wonder, even a student who comes from university, even the one who studied agriculture, does not practise agriculture; he looks for another job. Even the agricultural extension workers, the ones in charge of advising people, have no gardens at all, but are busy advising people how to farm.

Mr Speaker, my issue was, we are talking about agriculture - anyway, if you look at this project in particular, we do not have it in Karamoja but I would say, the Karamojong practically moved

up and down because of weather challenges. They only have a cow as their reliable garden. A Karamojong can plant several crops but out of that, only one can succeed, leaving them with the cow as the most reliable garden. We can shift if there is no water.

Therefore, if you are telling them that we need - because mostly we are in agriculture, which means we do not need a lot of lectures on mind-set change. For example, which kind of crop should they plant and where is the market?

We need to begin from the very basics. Otherwise, I believe that the challenge of employment in this country would be no more if we could put a lot of interest in promoting agricultural production.

Otherwise, it is still very embarrassing, if you hear the level of debate and challenges that come from projects.

Secondly, agriculture is managed as a project on a project basis. You hear this one has started; it has ended. Okay, this one is now ending. By the way, I am saying, agriculture is one of the biggest sectors in this country. It cannot be handled in a project manner. It is a joke. We should put a lot of interest and prioritise managing our agriculture rather than depending on funds from *bazungu* in the UK and the US - (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you honourable. That is Hon. Norman Ocheru, former Chairman LCV Abim District. Hon. Akuguzibwe?

5.59

MR RONALD AKUGUZIBWE (NRM, Buruli County, Masindi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Masindi District was one of the beneficiary districts, and the story is not any different.

We have a road called Ibaralibi - Alimugonza – Kitanyanta - (*Interjections*)- Yes, up to now, this road has not been worked on.

The people have cried the people on the other side of the road wanted to move to another nation. They were like, “Now for us, we are in another country.”

Then the issue of power. On this, we are like, we have faced this challenge for long, but what is the way forward? I want to request that now that we have already invested a lot of money in these projects, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development should move as fast as they can to make sure power is given to these projects. Otherwise, we are just wasting the money there.

Generally, on agriculture moving forward, we are having a problem of the high cost of fertilisers. You can just imagine a bag of 50 kilogrammes of fertiliser going for Shs 200,000. How many of our people in the villages can afford a bag of fertilisers at Shs 200,000?

At the end of the day, you find that people are just guessing in whatever they are doing. They are unable to practise good agriculture.

Then the other issue is about post-harvest handling. Most of our people do not have silos, honourable minister. People harvest their maize, beans, ground nuts and whatever, but how to keep the maize and grains they harvest is so hard. At the end of the day, our crops end up losing value.

I want to suggest that, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, thinks about post-harvest handling. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Okot Boniface, Hon. Santa, Hon. Nabukeera Hanifah.

6.01

MR BONIFACE OKOT (NRM, Youth Representative, Northern): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I also want to join the rest of my colleagues in thanking the committee for this elaborate report.

Mr Speaker, I listened to this report with a lot of pain, because surely it is a shame that we still have technical officers or technocrats who continue to dodge their responsibilities, and yet the consequences of dodging these responsibilities are very, very dire.

Mr Speaker, there is a general agreement that for us to optimally benefit from our agricultural sector, mechanisation is core. The outputs of mechanisation can only be realised when we have standard machines.

In this report, you constantly listen to projects where the machines are either substandard or wrong. I want to find out from the minister on how the Government is going to address this particular form of corruption that is now so rampant in our agricultural mechanisation agenda.

Secondly, still on the place of planning and coordination in our projects. When I read this report much earlier, I took the effort of visiting some of these youth groups that had benefited under this specific programme, the areas of Ayer, Bala, and Akalo. I was equally shocked about the nature of these white elephant projects. You find machines installed without electricity, value value-addition machines installed without water.

Mr Speaker, as you have rightly guided, we must adopt programme-based planning and budgeting. But from what I see, this could perhaps serve in the long run, because now, the processes of dealing with the Public Finance Management Act and then eventually bringing to the House. My question to the minister is that these projects are meant to benefit our people. What is your plan to deal with this dilemma squarely in the short run?

Finally, I would like the ministry to comment on particularly the implementation of the National Irrigation Master Plan. There are still complaints, and yet this is one of the master keys that we have to unlock our potential in agriculture. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Santa and Hon. Nabukeera Hanifa –

6.04

MS SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join colleagues in thanking the chairperson and the committee for coming up with these two good reports. The first question is, how shall we come to an end on this problem of us borrowing money for the intended plan and then the money goes to waste? To me, some of these loans are a bonanza.

The second question to the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries is that in the first report on Food and Animal Feed Security Interventions, the committee mentioned that in some areas like Karamoja, there is a lot of food insecurity to the tune of 41 per cent, followed by Teso with 21, Lango, Acholi and West Nile at 19 per cent. Do you plan to redistribute food?

According to the report, in some areas we have adequate food while in other areas there is inadequate food. Is there any plan? This is a question of distribution of food where it is in plenty to areas where it is not there. As Government, I thought you should buy some of this food and take to areas which are lacking.

In the second report, Oyam was one of the districts which benefited from this, but we have roads, as the chairperson indicated, which are incomplete. We have areas where we were supplied with machinery, for example, the rice millers, but we do not have power. The problem which the two reports cover is that the Ministry of Local Government is not involved in some of these issues.

Therefore, I would like to know from you because the two reports captured that. The Ministry of Local Government is the face of this country, where all the programmes, projects and activities are implemented. If they are left out – they know the farmers, the projects are being implemented in their areas, and that is why the issue of extension workers is there, but dormant.

The Minister of Local Government, you are here seated. I would like to hear from you because these programmes and projects are implemented – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Hanifa –

6.07

MS HANIFA NABUKERA (NUP, Woman Representative, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join my colleagues in thanking the chairperson of the committee together with the Members. I want to re-emphasise it because I deal with these district agriculture extension officers, but they stop at the district and are dormant. Whereas I think they are supposed to go to subcounties to check on how our farmers are moving with their products and how the farming is going on in our district, but when you find out from them, you find them seated in their offices. If you request them to probably visit a subcounty, they say that they do not have transport and facilitation.

So, I would like to implore the Ministry of Agriculture to revive these district agriculture extension workers.

Secondly, I would like to talk about the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS). The Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development got a chance to interact with UNBS, but they told us that the goods in the field have their seals and they employ people to go and look out for fake products. However, they are not doing enough because you find expired drugs in the market. Yet they keep telling us that they are doing their best in ensuring that they catch those who are selling counterfeit products. I ask the Minister of Agriculture to work hand in hand with UNBS on that matter. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, we do not have much time, but we have Hon. Oguzu Lee, who was the mover of this, so, I will just – No, I am going to pick a colleague from Acholi region, because we had not picked someone from there.

In Sebei, we did not pick a person, but in Buganda, we picked one. Hon. Chemonges has been here. I have Hon. Phyllis and Hon. Chemonges, but one of you should - let me pick a Member from the Acholi region. Honourable colleagues, I know this is interesting, but see where we are and we need answers from the minister. I am sorry.

6.10

MR DAVID LAGEN (NRM, Agago County, Agago): Mr Speaker, I join my colleagues to appreciate the committee for the report presented on the Floor of Parliament. I would like the minister to respond and give us a report. I have been trying to follow up on many of the projects implemented by the Government in the community, but many of them have failed.

Some of the reasons why they failed is because the ministry has failed to do a comprehensive assessment, especially on the types of soil, which crop does well where and what does not do well where. This is the same reason this particular project is failing.

Honourable minister, do you have a comprehensive report that gives details of the types of soil in this country? When you want to implement a project in a particular area, you know that this crop does well in Karamoja, this one does well in West Nile, this one does well in Acholi, and this one does well in Central Uganda.

If you have that report, I think it would be prudent enough for us to know, because that is part of the reason the projects are failing. There has been misplacement of seeds given to areas where the crops do not do well, and that is why the project is failing.

Number two, some of these projects are politically motivated. Some of the projects are taken to certain areas because of political reasons. For example, Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF IV), which is now having a big challenge. It is meant for northern Uganda, but if you see the allocation of resources, it covers the entire east, not only northern Uganda.

The money is just drizzling. You will not see lots of money concentrated in the area that will make an impact to change the lives of the people. Therefore, the ministry needs to do a comprehensive assessment on this. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Chemonges –

6.12

MR WILLIAM CHEMONGES (NRM, Kween County, Kween): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. I join my colleagues in thanking the committee for this very important report. I represent, I think, about 95 per cent of farmers from my constituency, but I want to talk on behalf of the whole Sebei region. What we have discussed here and what is in the report, all these challenges are found in Sebei.

I wonder how our people will pay the loans that we are getting because we are borrowing on behalf of farmers, but we are not delivering what we borrow to the farmers. For example, in my constituency, we have machines. I have a subcounty called Kitawoi, where they procured a very powerful grinding machine, and it was installed in an area where there is no power. For the last 12 years, the machine has been there, farmers have their maize, but there is no power, and they are not using it.

Secondly, we need to be very honest to ourselves; the money that we tell farmers that we have sent to the Uganda Development Bank (UDB) to support farmers is not actually supporting the farmers in our country. I analysed my constituency and also in the entire Sebei region; none of our farmers has benefited from all the billions.

I made time and went to UDB to confirm. There is actually a lot of money, which is meant to support farmers. However, Mr Speaker, I can confirm to you that all these Members know about this. There is no local farmer from our constituencies who can access this money. The people – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, I have honourable colleagues who have not been given an opportunity today, but they have been seated here and were among the first to stand up. I know them. We are going to make a deal of one minute, starting with Haji, followed by Hon. Sharifah, Hon. Christine – I know what time you came in - followed by Hon. Chemutai and Dr Florence. Hon. Edakasi, today you spoke – *(Member rose_)* no, on this, there is no procedure. Honourable member, you have just walked in. I am not blind; I know.

6.15

MR SIRAJI EZAMA (NRM, Aringa County, Yumbe): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: When you are in and out – I have been here the whole day. That business – you go to town, do your business, you come back here and say “I have been here”. *(Laughter)* Please.

MR EZAMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I want to thank the committee for giving us this elaborate report on the Floor of Parliament.

I want to raise a concern on the issue of accountability. This issue of giving money to the farmers’ groups and accountability is not done has really damaged our country. The follow-up of these funds has also not been done well.

A lot of projects have been done, like under Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF) – there was that element of farming activity – Operation Wealth Creation and National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS). All these monies have been put to waste. There are policies that are made to do follow-up, but when the money is given to the farmers, it is not followed up.

You find that in other aspects, it is said that the money should be rotational: when you have benefited from it, someone different should also benefit – *(Member timed out.)*

6.17

MS SHARIFAH AATE (NRM, Woman Representative, Koboko): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I would like to thank the committee chairperson and the team for the report.

Mr Speaker, in Koboko District, I was cheerleading my people to embrace this programme. In West Nile, in particular, 12 roads and 21 road linkages were earmarked. As a cheerleader, I encouraged my farmers that the roads were going to be made. How do I go back to those farmers and now tell them that the project has been closed? I am wondering how to handle this situation.

I am ashamed and baffled to go back to them. How will they look at us, as the Government? How will they look at us as a country? Why was this not implemented on time? Why were we not given a heads-up before coming here and publicly speaking that the project has been closed and nothing has been done?

Mr Speaker, I am very ashamed. Thank you.

6.18

MS CHRISTINE APOLOT (NRM, Woman Representative, Kumi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Kumi District benefited from the ACDP. By then, when I was at the district, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries gave us an Insurance Premium Financing (IPF) of Shs 8 billion to work on the road chokes. The council went ahead and identified the road chokes, based on the guidance of the engineer. All that was not done.

My recommendation, because of time, is that in the near future when we have similar projects, the line ministries should communicate the right IPFs to avoid this scenario where a council ends up identifying many projects, yet the money is not enough to handle them.

Number two, we now have cassava in Kumi District and the entire Teso. The people of Kumi are pleading with the Government that if possible, let us have the cassava processing

plants. When we have the processing plants, there should be a clear marketing strategy since even the vision and the point at hand by the Government is to reduce the 39 per cent.

Mr Speaker, there is no way we can say we are reducing the 39 per cent when farmers are producing a lot and there is nowhere they can sell it to. Thank you.

6.19

MS PHILIS CHEMUTAI (NRM, Woman Representative, Kapchorwa): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I would like to thank the committee for the report.

Kapchorwa District received inputs from ACDP – they received fertiliser and tarpaulins. They even constructed the structures for grinding mills and coffee processing mills. They are all there because there is no power in many of those areas where the structures have been put up. As many people have said, they are not connected to power and, so, they have been to waste for all these five years.

At first, this project was doing very well in our district. Many farmers were very happy to receive it. They received the inputs in time, but later on, things went wrong. They started delaying and our farmers got discouraged. Since the project is coming to an end now, our people have already stopped applying for anything from the project because of the delays. Whatever they asked for was not given to them. What they received was a decision by other people. So, this brought a lot of confusion.

Even the percentage share was increased. It was first at 75 to 25. Later on, it came to 50 to 50. The farmers gave up and said: “No, we can stand on our own and buy these inputs at the right time.” This is because there were so many delays – *(Member timed out.)*

6.21

DR FLORENCE ASHIMWE (NRM, Woman Representative, Masindi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Yesterday I forgot to thank God on your behalf and I will continue praying for you. May Mother Mary continue to protect you.

My question is: who is to blame? Who was the project manager of this big project worth many billions of dollars? To me, somebody must be answerable. How come nobody is going to prison out of all this mess? *(Laughter)* This is corruption at the highest level. We are talking about corruption. Somebody must be answerable to Ugandans. Can't we identify those people? Let them go and sleep somewhere for some days.

Minister of Energy and Mineral Development, Hon. Dr Nankabirwa, where is the power? All these machines are lying idle, not connected. Can you conclude? We need a connection. I am ashamed to see all this money going to waste.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, for projects which are like the one raised by Hon. Chemonges – that either need power or electricity – please, register them with the Clerk. I am going to assign the Clerk so that we can write to the minister. *(Applause)* It is really a big shame. Yes, Member for Kiruhura.

6.23

MS JOVANICE TWINOBUSINGYE (NRM, Woman Representative, Kiruhura): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join honourable colleagues to thank the committee chairperson for the good report. The project and plan were very good, but still, the problem is implementation. I recommend that before we do anything, we should be demand-driven. Some projects are put in places where they are not demanded. So, the issue of demand-driven is necessary.

My other concern is on food security that was in yesterday's report, especially on seedlings for our farmers. I will specifically talk about coffee seedlings. We have mobilised our farmers and they are ready to join the money economy. As we talk, when you go to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to ask for seedlings, they tell us about the Parish Development Model (PDM). Yes, we appreciate PDM but it does not cover all farmers. Therefore, we need to go back and re-plan the coffee seedlings, maize seeds and bean seeds so that we support our farmers. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Nakut, Hon. Tom Bright and Hon. Businge.

6.25

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Mr Speaker, it is unfortunate that we are having this conversation when the project has already ended; when reports have been filed and when the project has already failed. In other words, we are having this conversation to comfort ourselves. Maybe this is for learning for the future projects. If it is so, then my comment will focus on that learning.

The learning is this: when we want to implement a project to develop a sector like agriculture, it does not make sense that we spread it to the whole country, widen the scope, make it ambiguous and impossible to implement. That is why we are here now lamenting.

We got PDM, 39 per cent, then we said let us give the whole country. We got Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF) 3 per cent and said let us give it to the whole country. Now, when you roll it to the whole country, that is what you get; this is the result. I do not know if it is us, the politicians, making it look like the whole country should be served at all times for everything, then this is a learning.

Next time, we see a project going to any part of the country, we should support it even if it does not come to Napak District. Let that part of Uganda develop, let that part of Uganda produce more food to feed us, who are not producing. That is my submission.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Tom Bright -

6.26

MR BRIGHT AMOOTI (NRM, Kyaka Central County, Kyegegwa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My main issue is about co-funding projects. In most cases, you find the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries brings us projects for co-funding. For example, the irrigation scheme now. The suppliers give us substandard materials.

You find that you co-fund 25 per cent and the Government puts 75 per cent. However, out of the total amount you top up, for example, Shs 7 million, they give you only one tank, horse pipes and a small solar pump, which cannot help a farmer to have a good outcome.

I appeal to you, the Government, that before you outsource the supplier, why don't we first assess and analyse the actual prices of the items which are going to be supplied to the farmer? Otherwise, most of our farmers are cheated in the village.

I also appeal to the agriculture minister to help us and take over the issue of manure. Most of our farmers are suffering from manure. The manure/fertilizers are very costly. I believe with the proper technology and technocrats we have in the ministry; they can make proper manure to supply in our area.

Lastly, on the list is the storage of the outcome of agriculture. Most of our areas do not have storage facilities. We normally see big stores which were there when we were not yet born, but they are no longer there in our areas. I would prefer the storage facilities to be at a subcounty level, like they used to be so that we can get a good outcome from agriculture. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Harriet Businge. Honourable colleagues, she is one of the survivors I had.

6.28

MS HARRIET BUSINGE (NRM, Woman Representative, Hoima): We are alive by God's grace. Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to add my voice to the Members who have come up to thank the chairperson and the committee specifically for having created time to come to my district, that is, Hoima District. I think you saw the trouble. This programme is nowhere in Hoima District. Much as it is on the list and in the books, my people have not benefited.

Mr Speaker, this programme failed at inception. Even at the application, there was a mess. I

am wondering whether Uganda is ready for e-systems. Once you come and say people should apply through e-systems, everything fails. I believe that we need to revisit the way we do things. Technically, when you say e-systems, it is like saying the rural area is out of the way.

This is not only for this programme. Look at what is happening to PDM. They are telling people to apply online but the chiefs do not have computers, even when the minister said that computers that were used in the census should go to process PDM. Mr Speaker, it is us, the MPs now who are buying computers to run PDM. This is very unfortunate.

I believe we need an overhaul of the projects that come because most of them are white elephants. We get embarrassed as leaders. You go and blow your trumpet, you as a Member of Parliament and Government, you see that this project has come, but it dies in intubation. It is unfortunate and shameful for us as a country. I just pray that we do better. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Dr Opiyo, Hon. Sekabira then Hon. Musana.

6.30

DR SAMUEL OPIO (Independent, Kole North County, Kole): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee chairperson for that detailed report. Honourable minister, one of the issues raised is on the e-voucher payment system. In my constituency, we mobilised people; they paid for tarpaulins till then, they have never received it.

The Auditor-General's report shows that Shs 4.9 billion was paid and beneficiaries have never received the inputs that they should have received. When is that money going to be refunded? Otherwise, they now think that the Government has defrauded them.

On the road chokes - The chairperson talked about the road in Kole District of 24 kilometres. It was constructed at Shs 1.9 billion; each kilometre at Shs 80 million. As we speak, there is an oil seed project. Again, they are

going to construct a road at Shs 113 million per kilometre. The highest bidder is the one who is being considered for that.

In Kole, I used to think that in corruption, commission is 10 per cent, then 90 per cent does the work. Now I have learned it is the reverse. Commission is 90 per cent, it is 10 per cent that does the work. The Auditor-General's report on the Agriculture Cluster Development Project (ACDP) shows that there were overpayments in 90 per cent of the contractors. It actually states that Shs 827 million is supposed to be refunded.

Work was not done. She is complaining about ping-pong between the Permanent Secretary (PS) and the contractor, but the reality is that the money was already paid and the work has not been done. Mr Speaker, I have given up on these projects - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Sekabira?

6.32

MR DENES SEKABIRA (NUP, Katikamu County North, Luweero): Thank you, Mr Speaker. You have just guided that those areas that have machines with no power connection, compile data with-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: In fact, put it in my office so that I follow up.

MR SEKABIRA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. My point is that in Katikamu North, we do not have those machines. We never benefited. We cannot miss out on machines and this bonanza of distributing power. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, may it please you, to allow me submit a compiled data from Katikamu North Constituency so we also benefit from the distribution of power. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I do not have any bonanza. You heard Hon. Chemonges from Kween and he said 12 years ago, the Government put up a facility; there is machinery but we have never

connected power so the machinery has been lying idle for 12 years. This was on their loan.

Therefore, I am coming in to say - In fact, I was guided by my brother, Hon. Edakasi to say, "Look, why can't you use your authority as a Deputy Speaker to engage?" - I am also going to beg. *(Laughter)*

Honourable colleagues, yesterday, or Thursday last week, we assigned the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development to submit all projects under TBEA; that was around 2018, where we passed a project that was going to connect all subcounties in the country.

We said she should give us updates which will go to the committee for full scrutiny and then the committee will present on the Floor. So, honourable colleague, I request you to liaise with the Chairperson, Committee on Environment and Natural Resources to see whether your areas are captured under those to benefit. Thank you.

Hon. Musana Eric and Hon. Margaret Makhoha.

6.34

MR ERIC MUSANA (Independent, Buyaga East County, Kagadi): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The process of implementing Government projects is quite difficult. The implementation process on many government projects is failing, not because the design was poorly done, but because there seems to be a level of connivance within the system to defraud the whole process. Imagine a situation where the beneficiaries apply for a project, for three years without financing and the money is there, and then the whole process is failed.

Secondly, money is there, but the payments are not effected. Then you wonder, who is failing who because project management is quite difficult in many government projects. If you compare with the private sector - if you go to the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) world - people have a lot of trust, there than in the Government. It is a big shame when you see that Ugandans do not really trust government projects.

I concur with the other colleagues who have proposed that whoever was involved should be checked out and then we measure the efficiency of these projects being done. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Margaret Makhoha, Hon. Aisha, Hon. Aleper, Hon. Mushemeza and we will conclude with Hon. Oguzu Lee.

6.38

MS MARGARET MAKHOHA (Independent, Woman Representative, Namayingo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. I thank the chairperson of the committee for the good report. It is very unfortunate that we are here discussing the post-mortem but let us not be like the bourbon monarchs who learned nothing and forgot nothing.

Although Namayingo is not a beneficiary of this project, we also expect to benefit from the National Oil Seeds Project. I am now scared because if this one has failed, where do I get the confidence to mobilise my people to come and embrace the National Oil Seeds Project? It is like we have people who have planned to loot this country and are deliberately failing the projects.

What scares and worries me is that this is borrowed money. Some people are going to pay for the money that has not benefited the country. Why can't we deliberately bring to book some of these people who are defrauding this country? We should not just talk, lament, and then walk away. I want to see the minister responsible doing something so that we can crack down the list of some of these people who are deliberately failing the goodwill of the Government.

If we do not do anything, then other projects will also just go on like that because they know nothing can happen. It is my prayer that we bring these people on record. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Aisha.

6.38

MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Butambala District is one of the poorest districts in Buganda. Unfortunately, we have not benefited from the four-acre plan that was initiated by the Government because the majority of the people do not actually have the four acres. The proximity of us to the city makes us have very small pieces of land. We have not even benefited from the one-acre plan I have heard.

We are known for two products; "*mairungi*" which was recently outlawed and ginger which is only grown in one parish. Unfortunately, there is no effort to add value to this ginger. We cannot eat it. It is only the Kenyans who come and buy from us whenever they want. So, many times, the market fluctuates as to the interest of Kenyans.

Fortunately, we have a maize mill that was given by the Government to one of the parishes called Kyerima. We are also disadvantaged in the way that that maize mill was not given power. It has been lying there idle for many years. I will be able to submit to you.

We have also not benefited from the African Development Bank (ADB) programme because my people cannot afford the 25 per cent. It is there on books, but not many people actually have benefited from that programme because when we tell people to cost-share, they do not have anything to give.

My humble prayer to the honourable minister is: can we help the people of Butambala? This is because we are too poor to benefit from the four-acre model. The one acre-plan has not come to us, the ADB has not helped us and no value-addition programme has benefited us as of yet.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Aleper.

6.39

MR MOSES ALEPER (NRM, Chekwii County-Kadam, (Nakapiripirit): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to add my voice and also to thank God. This is a real testament that the prayers that I normally ask God to have your life lengthened have been answered. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, those who do not pray for me – *(Laughter)*

MR ALEPER: This is a real testament and I am grateful for that. We need to pray more.

Before I really talk about anything specific about the project, I want us to go to the basics. The basics is about food security, where we expect all Ugandans at all times to have physical, social, and economic access to food of their preference that can help them in their active life and for good health. If we cannot even start with the basics, why do we talk about other complicated things? We have failed there.

We should first go to the drawing board and start from the basics in that ministry so that we can address the issue of food insecurity. You cannot talk about improved, complicated value chains in agriculture when people are starving in some parts of the country. Why don't we first start with the basics so that everyone is first of all lifted and then we proceed?

There is a specific project I want to draw the attention of this Parliament and the people of Uganda to; the Regional Pastoral Livelihoods Resilience Project (RPLRP). The structures that were put there have never been used. In my subcounty of Namalu, the structures that we put there were abandoned by the contractor and it is also characteristic in a place like Amudat and all districts. Let the minister actually tell us if there is one particular one that has been utilised. It has been completely put to waste, it has been vandalised, not even handed over and that is what we are trying to do.

Why don't we start from there, first of all? We are generally not serious about this particular

sector that we think is the backbone of this economy of Uganda. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think this is what makes it difficult sometimes to approve these projects when you are asking very many questions. I am sure Hon. Bright Rwamirama will have responses to these issues, and then we will see how best we can improve.

Hon. Mushemeza, then Hon. Oguzu Lee.

6.42

PROF. ELIJAH MUSHEMEZA (Independent, Sheema County South, Sheema): Thank you, Mr Speaker. As an output of today's debate on this particular subject, I want to move to amend the report that the relevant organs of the state, the Inspectorate of Government (IGG), Criminal Intelligence and Investigations Directorate (CIID) and others carry out an investigation on this project, with the view for prosecution as part of the output to what we have discussed today. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Since you are the mover of the motion, let us first have the Leader of the Opposition (LOP).

6.43

THE CHIEF OPPOSITION WHIP (Mr John Baptist Nambeshe): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My message may look belated but I have already, through a thanksgiving prayer, thanked God for the maximum protection that He accorded to you and the rest of the members with whom you were in that chopper.

During COVID-19, Uganda was, on the continent, the country that stayed in lockdown longest. The most resilient sector that supported our people was agriculture. Indeed, that was a demonstration that it is the backbone.

Recently, a study revealed a challenge where even the programme-based budgeting is failing because of incoherent planning, lack of proper execution of these projects, corruption and inadequate funding.

Mr Speaker, corruption has been mentioned in Butebo which is near Mbale that was a beneficiary; a road with two kilometres took Shs 200 million. To us, that is not shocking. If you are looking for the most expensive road in the whole world, it is here in Uganda incidentally where close to Shs 35 billion was spent on a kilometre; the Entebbe Express Highway.

Therefore, corruption here is endemic, systemic and we are not about to nip it in the bud, even with this threat by our President that he is crashing it sooner than later. It is more on talk but short on action.

Mr Speaker, I am about to seek your indulgence to put your office on notice to grant me space on the Order Paper to sponsor a motion urging the Government to implement the National Objective and Directive Principle XXII on food security and nutrition. It states that: *“The state shall establish national food reserves”* and the able minister knows this.

I heard from a Member here, Hon. Naome Kabasharira, that there was a bumper harvest in Rushenyi. They harvested beans and they were exploited by middlemen at throwaway prices. I have heard about milk mentioned by a doctor. I also heard from Hon. Christine Apolot of Cassava rotting. We have had a bumper harvest, even of maize.

However, here is a Government that is sleeping on the job. It has failed. It is coming to 40 years down the road and they are failing to implement it. Moreover, we have this National Food Reserve, de facto -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, are you discussing the motion that you want to bring? *(Laughter)* This is because you have put me on notice.

MR NAMBESHE: Mr Speaker, the motion will come, but why we are even failing - when the Budget Committee invited members of the National Planning Authority to throw more light on how we could constitute committees that are programme-based, they failed to respond

to that very simple question. So, it seems even those that came up with this programme are not smart enough to explain a way forward on how we could shift from sector-based committees to programme-based.

Mr Speaker, I would not be a proponent of scattering funds. We know the capacity for making roads - even if there are murrum or gravel roads like the road chokes - It is under the Ministry of Works and Transport. If all these funds that are scattered -

You see even water - I have seen a recommendation by this report that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries will procure irrigation facilities and give them to implementing agencies. Why can't that go to water and the environment because they have the capacity? If you talk of engineers that know the water viscosity and all those technical terms, it is in that area.

Equally, the Ministry of Transport and Works has the capacity to handle roads better than the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. I beg to submit; I see you are hard-pressed with the time.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Oguzu Lee.

6.49

MR DENIS OGUZU (FDC, Maracha County, Maracha): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for finally ensuring that this matter gets on the Order Paper. If we had discussed this matter then, we would not have done post-mortem; we would have solved some problems. I need to register my disappointment with the Business Committee. They should have prioritised this matter, which they did not do. So, honourable colleague from Masindi, if you are looking for who to blame, the Business Committee has some answering to do.

Secondly, I should register my -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We take the blame as leaders and we are sorry about it. I hope it will not happen again.

MR OGUZU: I should register my disappointment with the Parliament. This loan was approved by Parliament. Rule 155 outlines what Parliament must look for when they are passing a law. It seems a number of those issues were ignored and then this Parliament was turned into a rubber stamp and just passed things the way they are. That is why we are getting to experience all this because if we looked at the procurement plans and the environmental impact assessment, we would not be here.

The reason I have been insisting on this matter is because in my area, Maracha, a stalled bridge led to the death of five people by drowning. I have the report. I actually wrote to the Speaker. She is the one who calmed us down. We were planning to storm the World Bank because they are financing projects without social and environmental safety. For instance, you go there, we have been complaining everywhere, and there is no response.

What comes out from this report clearly is that financial crimes have been committed. We have people who have misappropriated and diverted government resources. They may be in finance; they may be in agriculture. I want to buy into Prof. Mushemeza's motion that the agencies of government must investigate. Our people cannot die in vain. Never. They cannot die in vain. Some people embezzled these resources and they must account. This matter needs to be investigated. This Parliament cannot sit here and handle this business as usual.

Mr Speaker, you survived because you have stood with the people of Uganda. *(Laughter)* Imagine a matter of this magnitude was covered. By letting this matter be discussed, you are with the people. You are actually making Parliament a pro-people Parliament *(Applause)*.

As a suggestion to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries - there are many of you who want to use agriculture as a tool for socio-economic transformation. I should remind you that there is no way you will

succeed in using agriculture for transformation if you do not look at agriculture as a value chain, which starts with production until the final consumer.

All these concerns, which were raised here, start from production and go through stages. Therefore, you must ensure that the bottlenecks are fixed.

Mr Speaker, I also buy into your proposal that the minister must come clear on those stalled roads. There are roads in Maracha which were earmarked, there was funding for them and we borrowed money. We need to know today what is going to happen to those roads. Where is that money? It was loan money. Was it already diverted somewhere? Where is that loan money? This is what we must get clearly from you and we need to understand the way forward so that we know – *(Interjections)* – Okay, let me take that information because I know you come from Yumbe and you have very critical information.

MR ONZIMA: Thank you, honourable. The issue you are raising equally also affects Yumbe. In Yumbe, three roads were selected at a cost of Shs 2 billion each. Later on, when it reached the implementation, one road was abandoned. At the end of the day, only two roads were selected at Shs 500 million. Therefore, concerning the question you are raising on what happened to the money, we need to investigate this.

When these World Bank projects are selected, a visibility study is carried out, an assessment is done, and that is how this money is allocated. At the end of the day, if all the money did not arrive, where did the other money go? We need this to be investigated by the Auditor-General.

MR OGUZU: Therefore, to sum it up, I would like to tell the honourable members that right now Uganda is paying over Shs 400 billion annually in commitment fees for loans we are not using. We are not absorbing more than Shs 15 trillion in loans. Why are these things happening? This is not business as usual.

Something must be done. There must be an investigation. There must be a forensic audit so that we get to the root of this problem. People cannot eat this money for free. *(Applause)* We must unanimously agree if we are there to solve people's problems. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I thought the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries would respond but let us allow the honourable minister, Hon. Huda, to speak; she might also have some issues.

6.55

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (VETERAN AFFAIRS) (Ms Huda Oleru): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank God for saving your life. We still need you in this country. I am also a Member of Parliament representing the people of Aringa East County in the Parliament of Uganda.

In this discussion, what perturbed me is that the people implementing, monitoring, supervising, planning and receiving the money are all Ugandans. What has gone wrong with the Ugandans? Why don't we have time to love our country? The one who is receiving and the one who is giving are a problem. We have not got any foreigners to come and do this work for us.

What is the problem? Can we do soul-searching among ourselves, when we realise who we are as Ugandans, before we play the blame game among ourselves? I am just happy that everybody who was speaking here said, "I am ashamed." It is good now we are ashamed enough. Let us sit down, sort ourselves and begin doing things right for this country.

Mr Speaker, I also thank the chairperson. In her report, at least, she managed to find two or three groups that have done very well, and they were amazed. Can you imagine they were amazed because they got groups that have done well? It is because as Ugandans, we are used to everything being done wrongly.

Can we research those two or three groups and find out why they have done very well? In fact, why are they successful? Can we learn from them so that the rest of the Ugandans can do what they have done?

I am very happy, honourable chairperson that at least, you together with your team, have managed to pick up those groups that have done very well.

We are not in heaven; we are on earth. If others can do well - if Rwanda and Kenya succeeded, as a Member said here, we can also succeed. We do not have a different DNA; we are all human beings. As Ugandans, let us sit down, love our country, and do things right for this country. God has blessed us with abundance. Nature has favoured us so much. Let us take the benefit of using this nature for our country. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, before you come, there is - For those who have followed me on some of the media coverage, there is something which I have talked about; developing the national ethos. What are we known for as Ugandans? From what we are saying, it is as if we are known for failure. In fact, when you meet very many government officials, they tell you, "We are good on paper, but poor on implementation."

I usually receive reports here that state that many countries have picked our plans and implemented them better, and yet we have those who designed them here. Are we a population that has given up?

Hon. Balimwezo, did the project also come to your area? You seem to have very serious issues which you wanted to raise.

6.59

MR RONALD BALIMWEZO (NUP, Nakawa Division East, Kampala): Mr Speaker, I appreciate you for the opportunity. If we do not critically look at the quality of the agricultural inputs, we are failing. Today, as we speak, Uganda Bureau of Standards (UNBS) is crying for staff. They are understaffed.

In fact, most of the border points have limited presence of the staff of UNBS. Therefore, agricultural inputs that are entering the country, even from our neighbouring countries, are counterfeits. If we do not address that, then we are failing.

Then the other one is the infrastructure, which is basically a support system for agricultural production. It is very critical. You are all aware that road infrastructure is the most important public asset that drives the economy of this country but how much have we given it?

In Kampala here, we are crying and each one of you has been crying because of the poor road infrastructure. We need roads to transport produce from where it has been to the markets, but we do not have roads. I pray that we rethink our priorities.

Look at the land. Many rich people have procured square miles of land, leaving those poor people with nothing, and yet they are not using the land. What have we set to do for those that have chunks of land and are not utilising it? Perhaps there should be a policy on that. I appreciate you, Mr Speaker. Those are the few points that I had.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister?

7.01

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (ANIMAL INDUSTRY) (Lt Col (Rtd) Bright Rwamirama): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the report and raising concerns that are very useful for today and tomorrow. I also thank the Members for their very enriching contributions and concerns.

We are discussing two reports but the one which has attracted a lot of criticism and attention was the Agriculture Cluster Development Project (ACDP). I will start with ACDP; I will respond to many issues but if I do not respond to some of them -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, just give us broad answers, especially on the failure and implementation.

LT COL (RTD) RWAMIRAMA: Yes. I encourage Members to forward their questions and also come to the ministry because unlike others who are talking about post-mortem being useless, it is not true. When you get post-mortem, then you prepare to do better and sometimes to find out to find out the cause so that you stop it in the future.

ACDP was poorly designed. Whereas it focused on critical issues - for those of you who were here around 2019, there was a debate. By that time, I was in the defence ministry. There was a debate here to stop ACDP. It was agreed that the consequences of stopping it were worse than continuing. Therefore, we had to redesign, push and make good of it.

On the issues of concern, first of all, fake road chokes. Agriculture is not in the business of constructing roads, but we are funding construction of road chokes, which is very good. We had farmers who were producing and could not access the market.

Therefore, the design of this project was a partnership between the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and the Ministry of Local Government. The Ministry of Local Government identified the road chokes and supervised the works. Actually, the tenders was given by the Ministry of Local Government.

The problem we met with the road chokes is that the majority of the people took on tenders when they did not have the capacity. As you have heard clearly, people borrowed money from the banks to do the jobs and they did not do them.

The second problem we encountered with the road chokes, was the certificates of engineers on roads rather than the chokes. Hon. Naome Kabasharira and others, I have the same fate in my constituency. By the way, I am the one who launched your bridge. Instead of the constructor

starting with the choke, they would start with the easy work of the road, and they would be given a certificate for Shs 200 million, like she said. I supported the permanent secretary; if the choke is not done, we do not pay. Where did the money go? It went back to the Treasury, rather than being paid for air.

We have cases in court, where certificates are available for roads completed, yet the chokes are not done and the farmers cannot access the market –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Who issued the certificates because they are from the Government?

LT COL (RTD) RWAMIRAMA: The engineers. We had a challenge and it is still going on. We have court cases, but we have decided to go the hard way to fight them in courts of law.

There was also counterpart funding. There was a lot of delay, honourable colleagues, in counterpart funding because the Government was providing 67 per cent and the farmers were giving 33 per cent. However, it was very hard to raise the money. The selection of the farmer groups was sometimes very funny. They could not raise that money and it stayed for a long time.

However, there are success stories. In Kigezi, I heard somebody say that they had not smelt it. I know success stories in Rubanda, Kabale, Rukiga, and Ntungamo, where post-service facilities were done. I think the committee chairperson has seen some of these. We had a challenge and we are learning from it. We took precaution and warned the officers. That is how we managed to get some of the good work done.

On the e-voucher, we cannot run away from technology. If we are representing our people, we must encourage new innovations. This was very simple and I am going to come to the problem. Currently, the market demands that you know what you eat from the farm to the table. In animal resources, in crop resources, and in fisheries, we cannot run away from ICT.

The challenge we had is that at the time when they gave the contract, the participating service provider was not very good. We have a case in court with that service provider and the money was chopped. We engaged another service provider who did fairly very well.

On the fertilisers, their use is no longer an option, honourable colleagues. You cannot avoid fertilisers and irrigation in this climate change era, and poor weather conditions, because the soils are exhausted. We need to add fertilisers. We have a problem of fake fertilisers and poor application. If you put too much fertiliser on the crop, you will kill it.

The other problem we still face is extension workers. We need more extension workers than we have in local governments. I have been fighting with my senior colleague to have extension workers recruited. Also, supervising them in local governments is a big problem. Most of the local government leaders do not supervise the extension workers.

The issue of allowance and money is not really genuine. When you pass the budget for the agriculture ministry, there is a lot of money that we send to extension workers. Recently, we have enhanced their salary as scientists. For them not to work is not a good sign. As leaders, we need to urge local leaders to make sure that extension workers do their work.

There was an issue with soil suitability mapping. We have done soil suitability mapping and we advised the farmers on the suitable enterprise for each area. This information is at every subcounty and is also available at the Parish Development Model Secretariat. We have not done comprehensive soil suitability for the whole country but we have the equipment; we have sampled various areas and given recommendations for suitable enterprises.

With the involvement of the local government, this was between the Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), and we worked together.

Farmers paid the suppliers and they did not supply the equipment. We have taken on these cases and the Permanent Secretary is battling it with the suppliers in court.

On subjecting the ACDP to investigation, yes, I entirely agree. For every programme with shortcomings, we should investigate so that we stop poor implementation of these projects.

On the Food and Animal Feed Security Interventions, the committee observations were correct. Financing was not very adequate. While we passed the money in the budget, it was not availed in time. They asked the agencies to use their money in the budget, and it became a very big problem to run the programme.

However, we have registered success stories, and in all the National Animal Genetic Resources Centre and Data Bank (NAGRC&DB) farms, we are producing feeds for the animals. Prisons and the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) have done very well on multiplication of foundation seeds.

The army has produced enough food to the extent that it covers almost half of its requirement for supply. (*Applause*)

On extension services, again, we are looking forward to making sure that in every subcounty, there is an appropriate extension service provider. If it is fishing, there must be a fisheries officer. If it is livestock, there must be a veterinary officer. If it is apiary, we must have an entomologist. We are trying to make sure that we fill these gaps so that we can support the Parish Development Model.

Land use

On land use, we still have challenges of encroachers on government farms, and we are fighting them.

Agricultural mechanisation

There is no way we cannot mechanise agriculture if we have to feed the population and if we have to do agriculture as a business. I

urge the Members to support the mechanisation programme. However, the funding for mechanisation has also not been very adequate.

Storage and post-harvest handling facilities

For much of the produce – be it livestock, crop resources or fisheries – in Uganda, we are registering 40 per cent loss because of not having post-harvest handling facilities. We had envisaged that agro credit facility loans would help our farmers to do a lot of these storage and post-harvest handling facilities – and I agree with the Members that the uptake by the farming community is still very low.

We need to make it friendlier and my thinking is that we should use only banks where the Government has interest, so that we can direct that they do the job. Otherwise, corporate bank, you know, is based on Pareto Principle. For those of you who know about corporate banking, you know that they would like to lend their money at higher profits rather than lending money to the Government at lower profits.

Pest and diseases –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, you will not go to each and every thing.

LT COL (RTD) RWAMIRAMA: This is the last one. On pest and disease control, we are helping the farmers and also helping government agencies to make sure that they overcome this challenge.

Fake acaricides

Fake agricultural chemicals are going to be history. You must appreciate that, originally, the animal industry and fisheries sector was dealing with livestock – and all the chemicals, acaricides and vaccines – while the agriculture sector was dealing with the crop side.

Now, the veterinary medicine and vaccines went to the Ministry of Health, while these others went to UNBS. We are now creating an agency that is going to regulate food and all

those – and the other ones will be feeding into that organisation, like any other international agency that actually regulates food and agricultural chemicals and veterinary drugs. Very soon, we shall table the law here, and it will end this kind of mess and breakdown in our monitoring system over the inputs for agriculture and veterinary medicine and vaccines.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank Members for their contributions. We have taken note of their concerns and we shall correct where we have erred. We shall also take the errant officers on to make sure that they account for whatever mistakes they make. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I had promised to give Hon. Kibalya an opportunity. He had a point of clarification.

MR KIBALYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I had also decided to keep quiet, after standing many times and not “catching the eye of the Speaker”.

Mr Speaker, I was looking around and I could be the only person among those who were in Jinja in the last Parliament to approve the ACDP loan. Hon. Lee, last year – yes, and you, Mr Speaker; at least I have remembered – you were in Jinja to approve that loan. What was presented on paper to convince us to approve the loan is very different from what went on the ground. The minister said there are very many success stories, but we could have found only two in the whole country. The report was presented the same way this report has been presented.

What happened to the other report? This is because all the sentiments that have been aired here – ours was even worse because we had even wanted to take some people to prison. The honourable minister knows – he can only hide – that one of the ministers influenced what happened a lot. He is aware. It is very disappointing that when we come here, we speak like angels – as one of the ministers said.

Mr Speaker, after one week or one month, these sentiments will go away and another report will be produced in a similar way. It is very disappointing that people had good plans, but when the money arrived, the story changed and different people came. You will see them here. Some people were refusing to buy some of these machines from where they wanted them to buy them from. They said “we can buy from Katwe, which is better” and they said “no, these are instructions from somewhere”, which they do not know.

It is very disappointing that we can come here and speak all the good words, promise everything but at the end of the day – that is why I was getting concerned -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, I will guide.

MR KIBLYA: I was in pain because a report was produced here by the Committee on National Economy, highlighting everything. We were not even shy; we even pointed out some names, but the story ended there. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, you said that some of the money went to the Consolidated Fund. We need to know – because, you see, borrowed money - I do not know how it even went to the Consolidated Fund. *(Applause)* The World Bank project money should not be going to the Consolidated Fund. Maybe if there is an escrow account. How can it be accessed?

LT COL (RTD) RWAMIRAMA: Actually, when they closed the project – I think there is a way the finance ministry handles it. However, the money went back and all the areas, which were not done, were included in climate-smart.

The other issue which was -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is climate-smart?

LT COL (RTD) RWAMIRAMA: There is a project, which is coming *(-Laughter)-*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, conclude.

LT COL (RTD) RWAMIRAMA: Can I answer?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sure.

LT COL (RTD) RWAMIRAMA: The other areas, which were not complete, were captured. Also, I wanted to make a clarification that where they say that they had identified so many chokes and that they financed few, the local governments wanted as many as possible, yet the money available could not do all of them.

The other challenge, for the people who were here during that time, is that the time of the signing of the loan and the time of implementation took so long. I do not know what happened at that time. However, because of that, the bills of quantities were overtaken by the price volatility.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Maybe for the record, honourable minister, for us, as Parliament, we expeditiously handled that loan. That is why we even had to go for a workshop in Jinja so that we could do it quickly.

LT COL (RTD) RWAMIRAMA: I can only assure Members that those areas, which were not complete – (*Interjection*) – which point of order now?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, they are trying to distract you. Conclude.

LT COL (RTD) RWAMIRAMA: Mr Speaker, it is in their interest I answer that those areas which were not done were captured in climate smart project.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Minister of Local Government, do you have anything to say on this? Honourable colleagues, we have to conclude this? I have been seated on this Chair without moving since 2.00 p.m. and it is now coming to 7.30 p.m.

7.23

THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Mr Raphael Magyezi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join my honourable colleagues to thank the honourable members for the valuable comments on the report of the committee. I really liked the report of the committee; they did a good job. There is no doubt as a Government, we shall implement the recommendations therein. I have taken a big note about the issues of local government.

Local governments were involved because at each district, we had a district coordination team chaired by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), with the secretary, the production officer; mainly the agriculture officer and the other heads of departments. We also had extension workers involved and it was our role to supervise and so on.

Indeed, there were some successes, as he has said. If you look at page 15, there were successes in the e-voucher system in Kyotera and other areas. On page 19 of the report, there were functional agricultural processing facilities in Hoima and other areas.

On page 17, roads were rehabilitated in some districts like Kalungu and Nebbi at 98 per cent. It is not that the entire project did not - I am looking at the pages in the report.

We had challenges as local governments which were certainly beyond the districts. For example, delays in the release of funds. You cannot blame this on the districts. Look at system failures, including banks which were far from some of these areas.

There are inadequate extension workers. The minister has pointed out that. We actually have a gap of 2,200 extension workers. In fact, we still have to come to Parliament to say, let us at least have two extension workers per subcounty. Of course, the lack of electricity for some of these APFs as a result of poor identification.

Mr Speaker, I think the recommendations made by Members here remain extremely valid. I have picked two or three.

One, I totally agree that we must investigate, prosecute and take action on anybody who caused loss. *(Applause)* It is your pre-requisite, Mr Speaker and we are under your custody to guide on how we shall do this. However, I think it is important that anybody who caused the loss is brought to book.

The second recommendation which I have picked is the need to rationalise these agricultural processing facilities so that in the extension programme, we do not leave them idle. Let us make them functional. If we put a facility, for example, a milk cooler where there are no cows, we can take it to the area where it is required. So, let us rationalise these APFs so that they are made useful.

Finally, I totally buy into the proposal for a quick meeting between the UNBS and the Committee on Trade, Tourism and Industry so as to address this issue of quality of inputs. How do we address this? Otherwise, it ends up affecting production and productivity.

Mr Speaker, I thank the members of the committee for a good job done. This was a very good report. I want to give the commitment on behalf of the Prime Minister and the Government that we shall certainly take the report forward in terms of implementing the recommendations. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, Hon. Magyezi is the acting chief whip. These days, I call him chief whip and he has been whipping seriously.

Honourable colleagues, we have two reports. We shall start with the one on food security. I now put the question -

7.28

MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. There was a motion to amend but it was not seconded so we would like to second it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is on the agricultural sector project honourable colleague.

MS AISHA KABANDA: I pray that you put the question to the-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, I am starting with item seven.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The other is item eight. Thank you. I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries on food and animal feed security interventions in the country be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Clerk, extract the recommendations together with the copy of the *Hansard* and relay it to the agriculture minister so that an action taken report can be brought to the House as required under Rule 220 of the Rules of Procedure within three months. The minister needs to go back, put the interventions and all that. It cannot be a one-day event.

On item eight, Hon. Aisha is saying she has - Prof. Mushemeza had moved a motion. Had you talked of a value for money audit or a forensic audit?

7.29

PROF. DICKENS MUSHEMEZA (Independent, Sheema County South, Sheema): Mr Speaker, I had moved to amend the report so that in one of the recommendations, the relevant Government agencies, particularly IGG, CIID and the anti-corruption organs that have been established by His Excellency the President take interest to investigate this project with the view of prosecuting those who have caused financial loss to this country.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I wanted to guide on that. We agreed with the President about the oversight role and how we engage with him. You need an entity that will report back here, to us - That would be the Auditor-General - on whether we

should do a value for money audit, a special audit or a forensic audit. After he has reported here, we usually share the report with His Excellency the President which goes to CIID with the view of investigating and prosecuting. So, it would be much smarter that we see the report. Otherwise, those ones will not come and report.

PROF. MUSHHEMEZA: Mr Speaker, for that matter, I move that we make a resolution of Parliament that the Auditor-General, which is an organ of this House, carries out the necessary audit in the terminology that they use.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can we be specific to say either forensic or value for money? To support you, honourable -

PROF MUSHHEMEZA: Mr Speaker, a forensic audit takes a lot of time - *(Interruption)*

MR ALEPER MOSES: Thank you, Prof. Mushemeza. Actually, a forensic audit is more specific. It goes to the details and is able to unearth each and everything because it follows all the trails of the transactions that have been carried out. Therefore, that is the most appropriate audit that should be carried out to this, since it can really feed into the other organs to carry out the prosecution that is required out of whatever criminality has arisen from that. Thank you.

PROF. MUSHHEMEZA: Mr Speaker, I take that professional guidance. I move that the Auditor-General carries out a forensic audit and reports back to this House with appropriate recommendations that would save the taxpayers money.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded? Hon. Onguzu Lee –

MR OGUZU: I am moving -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, we are seconding this. Yes, it is seconded by Hon. Balimwezo, Hon. Mayanja, Hon. Onguzu Lee, Hon. Linda, Hon. Tom Bright, Hon. Businge Harriet, Hon. Akiiki,

Hon. Aleper, Hon. Magyezi, Gen. Masiko and many Members of this House.

I now put the question that a forensic audit be carried out by the Auditor-General on the Agriculture Cluster Development Project (ACDP), as moved by Hon. Mushemeza.

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I put the question that the report of the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries on the implementation of the Agriculture Cluster Development Project be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The one of the forensic audit stands alone because it is a resolution of the House. I do not want it as part of the amendments.

I will meet the Auditor-General over this issue so that it can be expedited. *(Applause)* When you debate this way – even the ministers are concerned the way you are concerned - I think something needs to be done.

Once the forensic audit is out, then we shall guide and share it with the Head-of-State to see that, indeed, the relevant prosecuting agencies are availed with the report, study it and see whether there is incriminating evidence they can use to prosecute whoever will be responsible.

Honourable colleagues, I thank you for today. I know the State-of-the-Nation Address needs to be debated but we had very many pending issues. I am going to give you time to debate the State-of-the-Nation Address. I do not know whether it will be one or two weeks, but I will give you enough time to debate it. I do not want to just pick a few Members, but rather every Member who wants to contribute will be given a chance to debate.

Tomorrow I wanted us to handle the Alcohol Bill, 2024, but I received a message from Hon. Sarah Opendi that she lost someone on Tuesday. Then, they had a function today and tomorrow she has another burial of an uncle. It would be unfair for us to handle a Bill moved by a private Member in her absence, yet she has reported to us. So, we shall not handle that tomorrow but if there is any report that is pending - that has been there for long and we have not given it space on the Order Paper - we are also human beings, honourable colleagues. You can alert us the way Hon. Onguzu Lee did yesterday and we immediately managed to put this critical report on the Order Paper.

Honourable colleagues, you can always drop a WhatsApp message and say, “Mr Speaker, there is this critical report which you have not given space on the Order Paper” and we will give it. With that, the House is adjourned to tomorrow, Thursday, 8 August 2024 at 2.00 p.m.

(The House rose at 7.36 p.m. and adjourned until Thursday, 8 August 2024 at 2.00 p.m.)