

**PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA**

**Wednesday, 9 February 2022**

*Parliament met at 2.04 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala*

PRAYERS

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

*The House was called to order.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I welcome you to today’s sitting. Yesterday, I informed the House of the death of His Highness, the Emorimor Papa Iteso, Augustine Osuban. His Excellency the President has accorded him an official burial. *(Applause)*

On that note, therefore, we want to thank the President for according this leader an official burial. We will have a special sitting to pay tribute to Emorimor tomorrow.

With culture, there is no politics. I also request our friends on the left-hand side to come and pay tribute to the fallen Emorimor because it is about the cultural institutions, which we all respect. I would request my good friend, the Leader of the Opposition, to lead this team back tomorrow and perform that activity. As you all know, this is nonpartisan, of course, the cultural institutions are not. Let us all do that.

The Minister of Gender has released a programme for the funeral service and we will go by that programme. After the sitting, we will hand over to Ministry of Gender.

Once again, I thank Members for devoting yourselves to the House most of the time; it is not an easy thing. However, I am also still insisting that Members that have Bills pending with your committees should finish them so that we are able to process them in the House and have them completed. I thank you very much. Matters of national importance?

We shall have a session at 2.00 p.m. Hon. Musila, you had a matter of national importance.

2.08

**MR JOHN MUSILA (Independent, Bubulo County East, Namisindwa):** I thank you, Madam Speaker, for this opportunity and also condole with you and all of us over the passing of Emorimor Papa Osuban. We all feel it and on behalf of my constituency in Bubulo East, where I have a sizable number of the Iteso community, who are also my voters, I condole with you.

The matter today, Madam Speaker, is on a positive note. I want to move to thank the Minister of Trade for diverting the trailers from both the Busia and Malaba borders; those returning to Kenya. They are now passing through my constituency at Lwakhakha border.

This is a very positive note and of course, the economic activities around my place have shot up very fast; the lodges and everything like that. *(Applause)* This is on a positive note, by the way. However, Madam Speaker, it is a matter of urgent national importance because we started with about 800 trucks per day; they are now 1200. They are now parking over 10 kilometres from Lwakhakha to Butiru. So, it creates some other issues and especially insecurity.

I want to ask the ministries of Internal Affairs and the one of Security to take note of this in case of any terrorist attack, because they keep parking there. Ten kilometres is not a short distance.

Secondly on the parking lane, they have taken over the whole of the road and so, other road users have a problem moving. Although it is on a positive note, we have problems. There are sanitary problems also because there are no public toilets. My people sent me and I talked to the community. I needed to also –*(Interruption)*

**MR WAKOOLI:** Thank you, honourable colleague, for giving way. I also thank the Ministry of Trade for giving us an opportunity by diverting the trailers. However, the information I would like to give my honourable colleague is about the negative side.

Whereas we who come from the constituency of Butiru appreciate it, trailers have been diverted from Makodesi and they access the tarmac road of Butiru. My people have been calling me about the problem of heavy dust emanating from many trailers. In Addition, the carriage capacity of that road does not actually allow the trailers to use it.

I just pray that Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) intervenes by either getting us trucks to be watering that road so that people who are suffering - because even the mushrooming businesses there, the *chapati* makers, cannot sell their chapati because of the heavy dust, coming as a result of trailers.

On a daily basis, I think over 100 trailers pass on that small road. Please, Minister of Trade, whereas we appreciate, we also request that you consider the people of Butiru, specifically the distance from Makodesi – that is Wanzusi – Butiru Subcounty and Butiru Town Council on the issue of heavy dust rising from the many trucks using that short road. I thank you.

**MR MUSILA:** Thank you. Madam Speaker, as I finish, it is on a positive note. We do not have to come here with only cries and lamentations. So, my plea to the Minister of Works is, if we could widen the road, especially in Lwakhakha towards Munamba. I saw that the parking is good for the trailers.

Secondly, if the Minister of Works or Health could move very fast to have sanitary facilities. My people in Lwakhakha - I will come here with a motion in future – my people told me that when the Minister of Works or that of Health constructs public washrooms, then we should name them after our fallen member of Parliament - hon. Abiriga. They said instead of using English names like “washrooms”, why can’t we call them “*Abigiration*” rooms? I thank you*. (Laughter)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you very much. Canthe ministries of Health and Works take up that issue - health in terms of the public places to avoid people getting cholera again?

2.14

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Madam Speaker, this is an issue which needs inter-ministerial coordination. I am going to raise it with the Prime Minister so that we can bring together the different ministries from internal affairs to works, health and trade. We have one meeting with representatives from the affected areas and then we shall be reporting back next week.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Report back on Tuesday on what you have agreed to work on and how we can handle that issue.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE STATUS OF THE VALUE-ADDITION FACILITY AT THE BUSIA BORDER

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the transformation of this country is dependent on a favourable balance of trade between Uganda and other countries. And I believe that was the reason why Hon. Macho brought up this and of course, this requires export-promotion and value-addition.

Additionally, this makes our products globally more competitive. So for us to have a value-addition in the area, it helps us both as a country and to have a market for our commodities that we produce. Can we now have a statement from the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives?

2.16

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (TRADE) (Ms Harriet Ntabazi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I take this opportunity to thank you for allowing me to present today, as I requested.

Madam Speaker, Uganda adopted the border export zone programme in 2010, to address its constraints as a landlocked country, and improve her competitiveness in the regional market, especially with regard to supply of agricultural and non-agricultural products for her neighbours, and especially the border export zone programme that was designed to increase and improve trade infrastructure and the capacity-building to the cross-border traders.

Secondly, to increase export earnings by ensuring export of value-added and quality products; to also increase employment opportunities because the facility will employ Ugandans. It was also intended to promote public-private partnership at the border export zones.

It was also good to improve post-harvest handling and reduce wastage of produce. To also improve compliance to standards and marketing of quality products through the use of improved and organised infrastructure. It was also intended to reduce non-tariff barriers and promote formal trading with our neighbours.

It was also an enabler of Uganda to maximise the benefits of the COMESA, FDA and East African Customs Union, the Tripartite Free Trade Area and the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Madam Speaker, originally the concept was called “border markets”. However, the term “market” was limiting the scope and what was envisaged to be developed, hence the name, “border export zones”, which is wider in scope - so that it can cater for all whatever is involved to develop at the border. Now the target of this project is to develop at least 18 border export zones at strategic border-points of Uganda in the next 10 years (from 2020 to 2030).

Madam Speaker, the ministry went ahead to identify these border areas.

1. At the Uganda-Kenyan border, we identified Malaba, Lwakhakha, Suam, Busia and Lumino.
2. On the Uganda-South Sudan border, we identified Oraba, Elegu, Madi-Opeyi and Amudat.
3. At the Uganda-Tanzania border, we looked at Kikagati and Mutukula.
4. On the Uganda-DRC border, we looked at Mpondwe, Lamia-Busunga, Ishasha, Vurra and Ntoroko.
5. On the Uganda-Rwanda border, we looked at Katuna and Mirama Hills.

The rest of the borders will be catered for after we fulfil these ones.

Madam Speaker, Government will establish at each border export zone the following facilities:

1. The warehouses to promote storage and bulking of marketing.
2. It will provide space for establishment of primary and secondary value-addition facilities to promote export of value-added products.
3. It will also put a border market to facilitate cross-border exports.
4. It will also put a commercial building or commercial buildings for rental, trade in goods and trade in services.
5. It will also put in place a waste-management facility to cater for the waste products.
6. It will also put in place a recreation centre to cater for the young people and the youthful mothers.
7. It will also put in place an extension of utilities – water, electricity and the roads.

Madam Speaker, investment in a border export zone is mainly by the private sector. However, to attract investment into the zone, Government secures the land, opens it up, establishes roads, water and electricity, connects and develops selected facilities including the border markets, waste-management facilities and selected warehouses.

Now the progress of the establishment of the zones in general; the ministry got land from strategic borders in Busia, Masafu, Namisindwa, Lwakhakha, Kabale, Katuna, Amuru, Elegu, Isingiro, Kikagati, Kasese, Mpondwe, Koboko, Oraba and all the areas that I mentioned, with support from the European Union through the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa.

The ministry conducted the feasibility study, which is the environmental and social impact assessment, architectural and structural drawings and bills of quantities. However, due to the limited funds provided by the European Union through the COMESA to the regional integration implementation programme which has since been halted, construction works of starter facilities as recommended by the respective local governments only took place at Busia, Lwakhakha, Katuna, Mpondwe and Oraba.

Madam Speaker, now the value-addition facility warehouse at Busia in particular, which is now the border export zone.

Due to the limited funds, the ministry - and in consultation with the Busia District Local Government officials and the municipal leaders - constructed a warehouse with related facilities that I read earlier. The facility has capacity of 600 metric tonnes of 1,193 to 5,965 metres of storage space. It is scheduled to be commissioned and handed over by the contractor to the ministry. Later on, the ministry is going to arrange to hand it over to the municipal council in February 2022.

The regional integration implementation programme support ended, hence the need to provide a substantive budget to the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives to ensure full development of the export promotion at the borders.

Local governments are calling on potential investors to invest as per the master plan. Government facilitation towards the respective markets will greatly benefit the micro, small and medium enterprises in Uganda, who will grow their capacity by utilising the available investment.

Therefore, I call upon Parliament to allocate funds to the establishment of border export zones at the strategic border points. The establishment of funds to fill the gap is Shs 191.8 billion, to facilitate all the 18 targeted sites. In this regard, a project proposal has been developed and presented to the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for funding under the development support arrangement. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, minister, for the statement. I will allow debate for 10 minutes.

2.27

**MR GEOFFREY MACHO (Independent, Busia Municipality, Busia):** Madam Speaker, from the bottom of my heart and on behalf of the people of Busia District, Busia Municipality and Bukedi, I want to thank, first of all, President Yoweri Museveni Kaguta, the former Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, hon. Bahati who was then in the finance ministry and not forgetting you too, Madam Speaker. You used to sit in the other corner – Rt Hon. Speaker, you are one of the people who supported this value additional facility.

To Uganda, value addition facilities are the solutions for job creation and increment, majorly to areas at the border. I want to inform the august House that since this facility was built, it has changed the face of Busia Municipality. People from the other side of Kenya are eagerly waiting to see us begin the export of quality food from this facility. Therefore, I want to support the minister that as Parliament, we should support Government to give value addition facilities and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) trade markets on border areas throughout and around Uganda.

The fact of the matter is, come next month, after the handover of this facility to Busia Municipality leadership, you are going to see business booming. Busia being a border town, which is the major exporter of maize in East and Central Africa - I want to thank the NRM regime. This is one of the best it has done. *(Applause)*

I also want to appreciate the President for the state-of-the-art market they built for Busia Municipality. However, we request that the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives should help us so that we have quality waste management to ensure our people have value for cleanliness and sanitation in this market. As leaders, we shall talk to the town clerk so that people make use of this facility.

We also appreciate the government for building a state-of-the-art COMESA market in Masafu, in the central constituency of Busia District. However, this facility is not operational yet it was completed about two years ago. Moreover, Kenya is just six kilometres away from Masafu.

It is our prayer that the government, as quickly as possible, hands over COMESA market to Busia District since the government is in the process of handing over the value addition facility to Busia Municipality. Otherwise, Kenya is already prepared on the other side of Mulwanda to Funywa to Matausi. President Uhuru Kenyatta has already tarmacked the road and Kenya has opened up a border post, waiting for the five kilometres from Lumino to Bunyadeti to Mulwanda to be tarmacked so that from Kenya, we can save fuel for 28 kilometres rather than using the main road.

Lastly, I want to appreciate Government and say that building value addition is the way to go – but they should add silos. It will help us to be strategically positioned in the East African Region as a food basket and tap from the bigger market that we have. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Since you asked the question, it has been answered. We have very many presentations from ministers to be answered. We can have hon. Amos and hon. Martin and we close that.

2.31

**MR AMOS KANKUNDA (NRM, Rwampara County, Rwampara):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to register my appreciation, like my colleague has just said –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Is it your colleague, the “Leader of the Opposition”?

**MR KANKUNDA:** Yes –*(Laughter)*- I also sit on the board of the National Logistics Platform Uganda and so, I am privy to some of these things.

There is something I want to appreciate that happened between Uganda and Kenya. Sometime back, we had been asked - because we were told we were given 10 acres in Naivasha for the export zone, processing and value addition. I want to appreciate the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives and the Minister of Works and Transport for not taking on that bait. What we need is exactly what the honourable minister has told us - to do the export zones within our area. What will help Ugandans is to tap into the intra-regional trade.

When you look at, for example Mutukula and you have exports from it, you are able to tap into Southern Tanzania and then enter through Lake Tanganyika, Kigoma, where we are aware that there is an export zone being processed by Tanzania. If we are able to do that, we can even penetrate Southern Congo and all that.

Having an opportunity to produce enough food will help our people to have income. I want to register my appreciation and to support this agenda. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, hon. Amos. Having listened to the minister’s appeal for the additional Shs 191.8 billion to finalise the targeted sites for the border export zones, I have noted that the appeal should have been directed to the Committee on Budget during the National Budget Framework Paper for financial years 2022/2023 – 2026/2027. When I reviewed the report from the Committee on Budget, you asked for Shs 10 billion only for value addition equipment and training of SMEs. No mention was made of export border zones. You need to check your report very well. Therefore, it is better for you to go and align what you asked for vis-à-vis what you are reporting here.

**MR SILWANY:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The clarification I am seeking from the minister is on the access by our local traders to these facilities. For example, at the Busia border, most of our farmers that grow maize form cooperatives and sell these products to Kenya. Now that you are creating these facilities, how are they going to access them? Is it through their groups?

Therefore, I would like you to come on record and tell Parliament how the farmers are going to access and utilise these facilities so that we are also comfortable and we can communicate the information to the traders with authority.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Honourable commissioner, let us first have one thing done at a time. Let us have the facility in place and then that will be an operational kind of – we will know how to handle it as long as the facility is in place.

2.36

**MR MARTIN MUZAALE (NRM, Buzaaya County, Kamuli):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you, honourable minister, for the information you have given us. Honourable minister, I appreciate the fact that you have called on the private investors to come and invest in these cross-border trade zones.

Honourable minister, I would like to give you information that we have industrial parks in this country and most of them are in wetlands. There is already a directive from the President that there should be no more licences issued in wetlands. Most of the traders or investors bought land or were allocated land in these industrial parks.

There is a crisis as we speak today, that NEMA has refused to issue licences based on the directive that was given by the President. It is a crisis that international organisations have been funding industrialisation in this country.

Therefore, you need to find a solution to that problem because what would be the feed sector to most of these cross-border trade zones, which would be the industries built in these local parks, are stranded.

Secondly, I think we need to do more, especially when it comes to cross-border trade. There are a lot of challenges in cross-border trade. Currently, we can see the issue of fuel crisis in the country. We have been promised a number of times that the prices were going to go down but as we speak today, it is still a challenge.

As the Minister of Trade, I think it is within your docket that you can also use this advantage to explain to the country why fuel prices are still going up. I thank you.

**MR ONZIMA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would just like to seek clarification from the honourable minister, arising from the clarification you raised in terms of analysis of the National Budget Framework Paper, which showed that the money demanded by the Ministry of Trade was less.

When the Minister of Trade was answering this question, I wondered whether it was supposed to be answered by the Minister of Trade or the Minister of Local Government. When it came to the issues of ministerial policy statements, the funding for high value addition and markets in municipalities was under the Ministry of Local Government.

In fact, the high value facilities are not only in hon. Macho’s constituency but there is also one in Soroti and another in Arua. Therefore, I would like to seek clarification on that matter, particularly in terms of funding.

I am aware, Madam Speaker, that when you look at the various Government programmes, you will find different ministries doing the same programme. Maybe, what she is trying to raise is a different matter that they are supposed to initiate. When you go on ground, you will find the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries doing agriculture infrastructure development programme, the Minister of Local Government doing the same and another one also doing it. So, there are disjointed activities. I would like to seek clarification whether what she is talking about is different from what the Ministry of Local Government is implementing. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: We actually need to harmonise activities in different ministries. For instance, you find that ICT wants to do work which is related to ICT but you will also find health doing the same job. There is a need to harmonise these activities in different ministries.

The Shs 191.8 billion she is talking about is not provided for in the National Budget Framework Paper. What is provided for is a Shs 10 billion meant for training of SMEs. It is not about the border trade.

2.41

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (TRADE) (Ms Harriet Ntabazi):**  Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank you for the guidance and the critical analysis of the budget framework paper that we presented. I am going to look at the report, as guided, and give you a full report on this.

Madam Speaker, on the question that was raised by the commissioner on how to access the market or the border export zone, we have indicated very well that our part will be to receive it from the contractor and then hand it over to the municipal management.

It will now be the municipal management, which has a whole set of leaders, to sit and see who takes this one – either directly, through subcontract or whichever. There are Members of Parliament here to guide the municipality. I cannot be the same person, again, to go down after handing over and then take over management.

On the issue of the environmental impact assessment, before we construct any facility, an assessment is always done. Hon. Muzaale, we are not going to do anything outside the environmental laws of this country. Therefore, an assessment has already been done on those plots of land, which have been given at the border posts. In case of any other acquisition of more land, an assessment will be done accordingly.

Now, on the fuel crisis, our part was to clear the border and make sure trucks start flowing in. Indeed, you have heard the appreciation – the Members at the border have appreciated. We have done our best as the Ministry of Trade, in collaboration with our colleagues in the Ministry of Works and Transport. You even saw security going there; we have put provisions to see how best we can reduce the backlog because we do not want trucks to be stuck there with fuel. We have put fire brigade trucks there ready to handle anything. We have also put in place regulations.

Now, the work of regulating pump operators and the fuel managers is under the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development. The minister came here and gave a full report on how the ministry is going to handle that. We may not be -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The minister even promised that they would start searching for fuel stations that are hiking prices.

**MS NTABAZI:** Exactly! Therefore, Madam Speaker, that question has already been answered - *(Interruption)*

**MR AOGON:** Madam Speaker, it is important that our ministers always give away and our Rules of Procedure allow for this so that we have a smooth process because as you know, Parliament is for speaking and speaking for the people.

When you go to any petrol station, you notice that nearly every pump is reading Shs 5,000. You sit in the same Cabinet with the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development; I do not expect you to say that it is the energy ministry that is responsible; they know what to do. You sit in the same Cabinet. What have you agreed about the fuel prices, which are not coming down?

Is there a law against hoarding that you know of? What are you going to do, because you have what they call “collective responsibility”? Are you now responsible?

**MS NTABAZI:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for seeking clarification; we add on knowledge every day. And I want to -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Where is the Leader of Government Business or the Government Chief Whip? Government Chief Whip, I ask you to put your house to order. People want responses and actions. The minister was here and said they were going to make sure they follow up and everything would come back to normal. We gave the Ministry of Trade a target and it has done its duty. Ministry of Energy must do its work too. You need to put your house to order.

2.47

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am just standing in for the Government Chief Whip who has stepped out. However, you will recall that when the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development presented a statement here, one of the things she undertook to do, on behalf of Government, was to take action using the existing laws and regulations, that is if the situation continued with the dealers not responding to what Government is asking them to do.

Therefore, we are going to follow it up with the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development to ensure dealers respond and do not cheat. There is no reason for the fuel prices to be where they are now. Therefore, we are asking the dealers to bring down the prices because the excuses they had have been reserved.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I do not want you to ask the dealers; I want you to order them, and we want action taken.

**MR BAHATI:** We will take action, Madam Speaker, on that particular matter.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We want action taken against dealers who are hiking fuel prices and we need a response brought to this House. Ministry of Trade has sorted most of the issues and the fuel trucks have come into the country and they are now many. So, why do we have fuel prices going up? It means no action is being taken. Where is the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development who made a commitment to take action?

**MR NSEREKO**: I know my sister, the Minister for Trade, is in a hurry to complete her submission. However, I would like to first thank Hon. Bahati for having taken the courage to speak about this matter.

As we said last week, every single day that I consume fuel at a loss, it is an increase on the cost of my living and, therefore, it narrows on my disposable income.

Therefore, the question is not lip service. What this august House requires of you - and humbly so - is for you to present a letter here as proof and evidence that you have written to all licensed operators and directed them on the fuel price ceiling as, for example, Shs 4300 or Shs 4600 or Shs 4200 and that you have warned that whosoever does not comply will face the wrath of the law; that is all that the people are looking forward to.

Otherwise, you coming here to tell us that you are engaging them without giving us evidence as to whether you invited them for a meeting or communicated to them in writing - because as regards fuel prices, the world over, there are regulations. Fuel prices are not controlled by the forces of demand and supply. Why?  It is because fuel prices are indices that affect the price indices of all goods and services within the country.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, when you keep interrupting by giving information all the time, we cannot finish. Government, the minister or the regulator is ordered by this Parliament – and now we are ordering and not requesting - to write to order all licensed operators of petrol stations on the fuel prices. A copy of that written order must be brought and laid on the Table, on Tuesday. *(Applause)* Let us go on to next item

STATEMENT BY MINISTER ON THE HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICTS AND THE UGANDA WILDLIFE AUTHORITY HANDLING OF FIRES IN NATIONAL PARKS

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, we have in the recent past seen fire gut down infrastructures located in the national parks especially during dry season. It is suspected that some of these fires are caused by persons in wildlife authority.

Therefore, we need to find out what could be causing these fires. What actions have been taken? In addition, what do we do with the people who have lost property? This question was raised by hon. Solomon Silwany. Honourable Minister of Tourism, you have the Floor.

However, honourable minister, sorry for the interruption. Before you come in, I want to welcome my brother, the Hon. Hillary Onek, the Minister of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugee. I am welcoming him because again social media was awash with information that he had been flown out in a critical condition when the man was chilling in Gulu. The man has now come to prove that he is still alive. *(Applause)*

Honourable, can you just say a word?

2.54

**THE MINISTER, OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER (RELIEF, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND REFUGEES) (Eng. Hilary Onek):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Two months ago, I took leave because of the hectic job that I had in the Office of the Prime Minister, including accomplishments that I had with it.

The two months ended last week, so, I returned to work. First of all, before I even mention my part, I would like to appreciate you, Madam Speaker, for updating Parliament about the health of our brother, the Rt Hon. Oulanyah. We are really grateful that the House is appraised and we pray for him to recover as quickly as possible.

Yesterday, on my way to Cabinet, I was looking through the papers and I found out that I was among those flown out of the country in critical condition; that was according to the *Red Pepper*. *(Laughter)*

I was wondering what happened. Really, I can only forgive them: there is nothing much I can say. However, let the *Red Pepper* retract that statement. Actually, I have even added weight during the holidays. Now, how can I be critically ill in this form?

These speculations about people’s health are not healthy at all. It is bad because all of you are not immune to falling sick. COVID-19 has come, among other diseases.

Really, it is bad politics for people to think that it is the political way of doing things. Maybe the *Red Pepper* was just saying the devil’s prayers and the devil’s prayers will always give you longer life. It is believe that when somebody speculates your death, you will live longer.

Therefore, I am not worried about that, Madam Speaker. However, I am glad to be back with you. Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Welcome back. Yesterday, I read a ruling, which was made by Justice Musa Ssekaana. He said, “I will not tolerate anybody writing about judges or bullying judges on social media”. I think that ruling should apply to legislators too.

They should leave us to do our work. This business of witch-hunting people and writing all the nonsense that you cannot even substantiate is wrong. How can you start writing anything that you like – we need to make a law in regard to that.

2.58

**MR NSEREKO MUHAMMAD (Independent, Kampala Central Division, Kampala):** Madam Speaker, I would like to applaud you on that matter of cyber bullying. Cyber bullying is a huge topic around the world that emanates from computer misuse. Very many people have moved into the era of the third generation of computer and internet without being ready for it.

Therefore, the movement of information has been hurtful to many people and has been used as a weapon to spread malicious propaganda and hate speech in certain countries. From all spheres, you find very many people through social media either being lured into acts of terrorism while others are lured into commission of crimes against their own will just because they have been manipulated mentally.

I agree with you and I would like to sympathise with you, Hon. Onek. For sure you are alive and lively. When everybody looks at you, the Minister, Office of the Prime Minister (Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees), we know for sure that in case anything happens, you are there on standby.

Madam Speaker, at a later stage, I would like to seek leave of this august House to introduce a Bill to clamp down on matters of cyber bullying and computer misuse *–(Applause)–* by pre-emptively introducing the issue of fines as penalties so that they know that if you write anything malicious about any other member of society – you find people sharing people’s images and cropping them without permission. This is hurtful not only to individuals but also their families.

Therefore, as legislators, if we do not step in and protect both sides, we shall have what we call “cat and dog” fights. You abuse someone they come for you and hurt you. At the end of the day, it will be an eye for an eye and everyone might end up becoming blind.

What we need to do is to come up with a strong law and that law should be on penalties of fines: if you insult someone, you pay Shs 50 million. As long as you insult me and produce malicious propaganda that is not right – and if Hon. Onek was to present a demand note of Shs 50 million, I do not think those publishers would do it often. I am not trying to anticipate anything but it is a law that we need.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Thank you. We will gladly receive your motion, giving us notice to that effect. We need to bring these people to book.

3.00

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa)**: Madam Speaker, I am really glad that colleagues are looking at this issue because the bullying that is going on is too much.

It has resulted into some people also overreacting because they have feelings. Some people may bully you online but they do not want you to react. As if you are a robot; they squeeze you online and use whatever words. *(Laughter)* When you react, it is trouble.

Hon. Nsereko, I am glad that you have raised this matter. As Government, we will support you and look into it. I saw them writing about the Speaker driving, people know and we know you have been driving. You are one of the best drivers around. However, cartoons were made of you driving. We have a life. Members, what we should focus on is simple –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** By the way, one thing they should know is that they have “a dotcom” Speaker. People should leave me to live my life. If I drive, it is my business. *(Applause)*

**MR THOMAS TAYEBWA:** Madam Speaker, in conclusion, I really expect an apology to Hon. Hillary Onek. Yesterday, when it was published in the papers, their aim was to show that the Government is spending money on officials just flying them abroad, when our colleague is here, and they even pronounce them dead. I hope he will get an apology.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Thank you very much. Honourable Minister of Tourism -

3.03

**THE MINISTER OF TOURISM, WILDLIFE AND ANTIQUITIES (Col (Rtd) Tom Butime):** Madam Speaker,let meextend my condolences to you. Madam Speaker, members from Teso for the passing on of His Highness, Augustine Osuban, the Emorimor of Teso.

I prepared a long statement on human-wildlife conflicts and management of fires in national parks but it appears that you are more interested in fires in the national parks than the entire statement.

Therefore, I will briefly go through the first part of my statement but later, concentrate on the matters pertaining to the fires in the areas of national parks.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, we understood the challenge that you have on what we had raised earlier on. That should be discussed during the budgeting because we need to give you money to fence off the parks.

**COL (RTD) BUTIME:** Madam Speaker, human-wildlife conflicts occur when human needs and wildlife needs interact. And because humans have intellect unlike wildlife, the wildlife does not recognise that they need to stay within the confines of the gazetted areas and often move beyond the protected area-boundaries, either looking for food or retracing the historical immigration routes, resulting in conflict.

Some of the conflicts involve; property-destruction but in the worst case scenario, these interactions result in serious injuries and death on either side.

Causes of human-wildlife conflict – *(Hon. Harriet Ntabazi rises to exit the Chamber)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Ntabazi, minister, now I am the one whipping you; come back and wait for other ministers to finish. *(Applause)* You people should stop treating Parliament like a market where you come, buy something and go away. What about hon. Bahati who has been sitting here since morning?

**COL (RTD) BUTIME:** After my statement, Madam Speaker I will stay until Parliament adjourns.

Human population pressure

Uganda’s human population increased from 5 million in 1948 to over 41 million in 2021 and it is expected to grow up to 104 million by 2050. This definitely has a direct negative impact on wildlife habitat as people strive to acquire land -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is procedure from hon. Wanda.

**MR WANDWASI**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am trying to follow the statement and I do not seem to see it on my iPad.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** It was uploaded last week. Please, ask people in your neighbourhood to help you.

**COL (RTD) BUTIME:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is there.

Let me go to paragraph 2.2: Wildlife habitat loss

The national forest cover which was 4,850,484 hectares in 1990 reduced by 64.6 per cent to 1,728,778 hectares in 2015.

This loss of forests was as a result of deforestation, timber lumbering, charcoal burning, encroachment, conversion to crop fields, human settlement, urbanisation, industrialisation and bushfires.

The continuous degradation and loss of wildlife habitats has left wildlife with no suitable place to stay or feed from. The search for food or trace of their migratory routes, eventually results into conflicts.

The other reason is poaching and illegal trade in wildlife and its products.

The next one is inadequate and lack of buffer zones or migratory corridors.

Impact of climate change

Madam Speaker, climate change and variability has had a direct negative impact on the quality of habitat and productivity of both protected areas and agricultural land, leading to water and food scarcity.

During the prolonged drought, water sources outside some protected areas dry up, forcing livestock and people to enter wildlife areas in search of water and pasture.

The presence of livestock and people in areas designated for wildlife exposes human beings and domestic animals to the risk of being attacked by dangerous animals - the leopard, lion, buffalo, African elephant, hence a source of human and wildlife conflicts.

Limited and inadequate facilitation to Uganda wildlife Authority and the district local Governments

It is clearly appreciated that human-wildlife conflicts are widespread and frequent, making it difficult for Uganda Wildlife Authority that has limited manpower - most of it being confined in protected areas - to effectively deal with the problem and provide timely response to all reported cases.

Besides, district local governments, which are mandated to deal with vermin – by vermin, we are talking about olive baboon, velvet monkey and bush pig - lack technical and financial capacity to execute the task.

Many of the local governments have not yet recruited officials responsible for vermin. Those that have designated officers to handle vermin have neither equipped them with the necessary expertise nor facilitated them to do a good job.

Common problem animals are species, which include African elephant, the hippopotamus, buffalo, chimpanzee, the velvet monkey, olive baboons, bush pig and crocodiles. Cattle keepers mostly complain about cats that include lions, leopards, hyena, jackals and civets.

There are current mitigation measures to handle human-wildlife conflicts.  These include:

1. Translocation of problem animals;
2. Scaring problem animals;
3. Creating barriers along the protected area boundary;
4. Growing of unpalatable crops;
5. Use of bees against problem elephants;
6. Establishment of wildlife stations outside protected areas;
7. Proposal to fund strategic electric fence.

In collaboration with Space for Giants, Uganda Wildlife Authority embarked on the construction of an electric fence as one of the interventions to address the challenge posed by problem elephants. The construction began in October 2018 along the boundary of Kyambura Wildlife Reserve with Rubirizi District. To date, 52.3 kilometres have been constructed in the Queen Elizabeth Park Area by June 2022, using financial resources from the Uganda Wildlife Authority budget. This will make a total of 40 kilometres in Murchison Falls Park Area and 59.3 kilometres in Queen Elizabeth Conservation Area.

Fortunately, areas where the electric fence has been established – that is Rubirizi and Kasese districts around Queen Elizabeth Protected Area, as well as Nwoya and Oyam districts around Murchison Falls Protected Area - have registered relief from human-elephant conflict. As a result, local communities have had bumper harvest of crops. However, elephants have avoided areas already fenced and moved to areas which are not yet covered. This, therefore, has motivated affected communities to demand electric fences in their area.

Whereas it is desirable and effective to extend the electric fence to cover all protected areas with African elephants, UWA is restrained by limited financial resources due to the effect of COVID-19. Prior to COVID-19, Uganda Wildlife Authority used to utilise part of the earnings from tourism-related activities to fund human-wildlife conflict management interventions, including the construction of electric fences. However, this capacity was highly degraded by the sharp fall in the number of tourists visiting wildlife protected areas, subsequently leading to the fall in revenue earnings.

Against this background, UWA is seeking financial support worth Shs 45.371 billion to extend the electric fence to cover the most prone areas, as summarised in the table below. Members can easily see the table below and you will see that on your right at the corner, we have Shs 45,371,000,000.

Strategic interventions

A national strategy to address the human-wildlife conflict has been developed and approved by the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities. Implementation of the Strategy for Management of Human-Wildlife Conflicts that aims at contributing to harmonious coexistence with wildlife, improved community livelihoods and national development, has commenced.

In order to realise this goal, the strategy highlights key components as follows:

1. Conflict mitigation and management;
2. Capacity development of Uganda Wildlife Authority;
3. Community livelihood;
4. Education and awareness;
5. Research and monitoring;
6. Coordination and collaboration. By coordination and collaboration, we mean effective implementation of human-wildlife conflict management. Uganda Wildlife Authority coordinates and collaborates with line departments, partners and stakeholders in human-wildlife conflict management.
7. Continuous sensitisation of the surrounding communities about the dangers of overfishing, which denies crocodiles food and the use of safe caged water which UWA established.

The Government, through the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, acknowledges the fact that wildlife, as part of the natural capital, significantly contributes to the national economy. However, human-wildlife conflicts are not only a challenge to people and their property, but also wildlife itself through retaliatory killings.

Whereas UWA continues to implement human-wildlife conflict innovative initiatives with immense sense of duty, apathy and purpose, it is important that required human, technical and financial resources are mobilised and deployed to protect people and their property. To effectively address the challenge of human-wildlife conflicts, it is crucial that all stakeholders actively participate in wildlife conservation areas.

It is also vital to note that although compensation is an important step in offsetting the cost incurred by victims of problem animals, it may not be a permanent solution in the long run, as it will not remove the conflict. Therefore, the ministry and UWA will continue to rely on the usual support of the honourable members of this House and other leaders to support the conservation of our wildlife heritage.

Allow me now to address the handling of fires in national parks separately. Most protected areas, especially the savannah areas, go through season fire periods. The months of July and August, January and February are the most critical for bushfires, as the grass is dry and the risk of fires is high. Fighting these bushfires by park staff is the order of the day for all protected areas during these seasons. It should be noted that fires are part and parcel of the ecology of the protected areas and the management of the fires is important in maintaining the necessary conditions to maintain that habitat.

The Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities and its agency, the Uganda Wildlife Authority, are concerned about the incidences of bushfires in the parks during the dry season. The Uganda Wildlife Authority works with the private sector (investors in various businesses neighbouring and within the protected areas) as well as local communities to address the fire challenges. UWA staff have been at the forefront of fighting bushfires in the parks.

Many of the protected areas are neighbouring communities and have a number of public roads running through them. This further complicates Uganda Wildlife Authority’s plans to prevent fires from ravaging through the areas and destroying the biodiversity and sometimes infrastructure development for management and tourism activities.

Early researchers have noted the existence of spontaneous wildfires in the protected areas since the 1960s. In 1976, Dr Eltringham published a three-year study report on the impact of fires in Queen Elizabeth National Park, indicating that in the 1970s, an average of 32.7 per cent of the park would burn through wildfires in only one season, with the highest recorded being 53 per cent of the park affected by bush wildfires in 1976.

The studies by the other researchers, including Dr Eric Edroma, recommended a regime of prescribed burning in selected plots to study the impact of fires on vegetation but also to protect some sections of the park from the dry season bushfires, usually set by poachers and public road users. The studies of 1970s and 1980s by Dr Edroma also highlight the history and practice of setting fires during the dry season by communities within and around protected areas. He indicates that every year during the dry season - *(Interruption)*

**MR SILWANY:** Madam Speaker, when I raised the question about the fire outbreaks in the different national parks in Uganda, I was very specific. I asked about three questions which relate to how the Uganda Wildlife Authority was going to handle Ugandans who have lost their property, how they were going to control the fires and the plan they had to rehabilitate the parks and the property that had been destroyed.

Madam Speaker, the minister is taking me through theories and history of how fire started in national parks in the early 1960s. *(Applause)*  Wouldn’t it be procedurally right for the honourable minister not to take me and Parliament through these theories and directly answer my question so that we are on the same wavelength other than going through the theories – the Big Bang Theory – of fire?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Silwany, the honourable minister is giving a brief background *- (Applause) -* and he is now coming to the specifics. Honourable minister, the issues that we had in this House were that there are fire outbreaks at the national game parks, especially this dry season: what is the cause of those fire breakouts; who is responsible for them, and after finding out who is responsible, what remedy do you have for those who have suffered?

**COL (RTD) BUTIME:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thought that the honourable member was a good student. Before you get the answer, you really must have the background so that you appreciate it. *(Applause)* However, it appears to me he is interested in shortcut answers. I will now discuss the fire management plans and then end my statement.

The general objective of the fire management plan is to guide the staff in handling or managing fires that threaten the integrity of the protected area. The specific objectives of the fire management plan are;

1. To minimise the negative impacts of wildfires on the park ecosystem.
2. To reduce the number of fire incidences within the park.
3. To conduct community and stakeholder education and awareness.
4. To build staff capacity.
5. To enhance visibility, scenic view and promote tourism.

High risk zones

These are areas that frequently burn with high and negative impact and include all areas along the highways and public roads.

Moderate zone

These are areas with short grass and low fuel loads susceptible to less heat. These are mainly tourism circuits and other areas with short grass. Prescribed early burning is recommended in such areas to keep wildfire during the peak season.

Therefore, what will be done is to create fire lines, fire breaks, physical fire-fighting and the enforcement of environment management plans approved by NEMA as part of the environmental and social impact assessment.

Sensitisation of the private sector tourism operators on fire and other wildlife management related issues

Madam Speaker, UWA undertakes regular sensitisation of all lodge proprietors on several issues including fire, knowing the effect bushfire set illegally in the parks, can have on lodge facilities established near the park boundary.

The UWA staff does regular sensitisation meetings with the managers and staff operating such facilities, focusing on fire.

Conclusion

The Ministry of Tourism through UWA, is committed to working with all our tourism stakeholders both inside and outside protected areas to ensure that the tourism sector retains its number one position – *(Interjections)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the minister conclude and then, you give information. He is on conclusion. Honourable minister, please, conclude.

**col (rtd) BUTIME:** Madam Speaker, I am saddened by the loss occasioned by the fire that burnt –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Silwany, the minister is still talking to you.

**col (rtd) BUTIME:** I am actually addressing his point. *(Laughter)* Madam Speaker, through you, I am addressing the honourable member that I am saddened by the loss occasioned by the fire that burnt Safari Lodge in August 2021. We will strengthen strategies and interventions, working with all stakeholders, to prevent similar incidents in future.

I appeal to all proprietors of tourism facilities that neighbour the parks to ensure full implementation of environmental and social impact assessment mitigation measures where they feature as a major threat.

It is not possible for UWA to control all bushfires within and outside the parks, especially during the peak of the dry season. Therefore, a lot of burnable fuel can spark fires anytime.

The UWA also commits to do its best to do what it takes to continue identifying and fighting all wildfires in the parks during the dry season. We will always hunt for the culprits who set these illegal fires and prosecute them.

Yesterday, one of the other lodges in that area also got burnt. The bigger part of that lodge was however, saved. This is the month of January and February. That is when the fires are expected. Personally, yesterday, half of my farm was burnt by the same fire. Therefore, it is common.

Everything must be done during the month of August and September and in the months of January and February. You should have an establishment, if you have an enterprise in areas near or in the national park, everything must be done to protect that investment so that we do not get into a catastrophe like what happened. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, honourable minister, for that brief statement. I heard the minister say that in most cases, it is the poachers that do the burning but it is also within our knowledge that the entity responsible for whatever happens in the parks is UWA. Where is UWA when the poachers go burning the park?

Secondly, what strategy do they have to say even if UWA is burning for it to get new grass, what do they have – because I am told that they put a line to stop the fire from going to the neighbouring areas. What did they do?

3.39

**MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri):** Thank you, Madam Speaker.  I want to thank the minister for reaching the question. He passed very far but he finally reached there.

I have three clarifications to seek from the honourable minister. First, there are fires that have been started by staff of the UWA. They have even informed the owners of these places that they actually started the fire but mistakenly this fire burnt premises. What plan is there to compensate those individuals?

Secondly, about the physical fire fighting plan; how sustainable is this? You always say that you are going to have equipment that fight fire in the game parks but they are not there. How are you going to do it sustainably to ensure fires are stopped?

Then, you are talking about compensating Safari lodge that got burnt in 2021. How about the others? We need all Ugandans to be compensated, including Safari Lodge. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, hon. Silwany. I also want the minister to tell us whether there are some persons or facilities they have licensed to build within the park. If you have licensed them to build within the park and they get burnt, what remedy do they have?

3.42

**MR WILSON KAJWENGYE (NRM, Nyabushozi County, Kiruhura):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I welcome the minister’s statement. Nyabushozi County hosts one of the largest national parks in this republic and the nearest national park to the capital city, by the way, Lake Mburo National Park.

When the minister talks about human-wildlife conflict, it affects the livelihood of my voters in Nyabushozi. The conflict is very well documented. I am sure this is the reason the 10th Parliament enacted the Wildlife Compensation Act. It is now four years and this Act has not been put into practice. There are no regulations yet. The compensation board is not in place and the Act, in as far as compensation is concerned, is redundant. I am sorry to say.

I pity women who, after planting their crops, desert their dear husbands and build temporary shelter in the gardens to protect their crops from germination up to harvest. This is because if they don’t, then wildlife will come and trample, eat and distract everything. This is prevalent in Kanyaryeru Subcounty, in Rwabarata, Sanga, Nyakayenje, Kyakategyere in Rwakobo and Nyakashashara Subcounty. My people are actually suffering.

When the minister put forward the budget for fencing - fencing has been on paper and on programme for a very long time, but what about compensation? I do not see proper guidelines. I do not see the budget. I do not see the drive from the ministry to compensate our people.

Madam speaker, there is something to note; 40 per cent of the wildlife animals in Lake Mburo National Park live outside the park. They eat crops. For those farmers, who have modernised agriculture dairy farms, these animals bring ticks and tick-borne diseases and the cows die. That has contributed to de-acceleration of the modern farming drive in my constituency.

We welcomed the Wildlife Compensation Act, especially the clauses that talk about compensation. When crops are trampled over, nothing is done, but when animals stray to the park, farmers are arrested and are made to pay fines. I would like to see the ministry come out straight on that. I rest my case.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Members, one thing we should not say - like what the honourable has said - is that the Act is redundant. The Act is alive; it is we, the people, to use the Act. When you look at the Uganda Wildlife Act, 2019, Section 83, it talks about wildlife compensation schemes. Section 84 talks about compensation; who is entitled to compensation? Minister, you must make use of this.

When you look at Section 83, it says two per cent of the monies collected by the authority from services it offers shall be used for compensation. Where does that money go? Money is appropriated by Parliament specifically for this purpose; there is money appropriated for compensation because there is an eventuality that something somewhere will happen. The Act is active. What is not active is the ministry. I am told there was a report on this particular - just hold on a minute. Can we get a statement from the chairman who went and investigated the fire? Come and speak from here. You know you are short so they may not see you.

3.47

**MR MWINE MPAKA (NRM, Mbarara South Division, Mbarara):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. First of all, I would like to thank the honourable minister, for the wonderful statement. However, when it comes to the electric fence, during the budget framework paper, the ministry informed the committee that they do not need money for the electric fence. The reason they gave was that they cannot absorb it, if we give them money.

Secondly, in regards to the electric fence, Madam Speaker –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Was that during the budgeting time?

**MR MWINE MPAKA:** Yes, it was recently during the budget framework paper; I think three weeks ago. When it comes to the electric fence, we now have reason to believe – we were there two days ago with hon. Martin, the Minister of State for Tourism. We now have reason to believe that the cost of the electric fence has been exaggerated because they are quoting Shs 50 million per kilometre. These are just three wires on a one-metre wooden pole. We brought the samples and we are still carrying out an investigation, which we believe we will share with you at the appropriate time.

When it comes to the fires, Madam Speaker, we did an investigation. We were in Queen Elizabeth National Park just two days after the lodges got burnt. We met all the stakeholders, including the security officials. It was clear that Uganda Wildlife Authority was the cause of the fire. We further invited them to Parliament. The executive director claimed that they did not burn the lodge, but one would think that Members of Parliament are biased and probably wanted the honourable member to be compensated.

However, the RDC of Rubirizi pinned Uganda Wildlife Authority because they are aware that Uganda Wildlife Authority burns every year between May and July; they even have a fire warden. The RDC pointed out that, even in the security meetings they have never raised an issue of locals starting up a fire.

We further interacted with the DPC of the area. He confirmed that UWA has never opened a case of any local starting a fire. At the time, two days after the lodge had been burnt, you could see fire was still in the park. What UWA does is that they start a fire from the last point and another fire from the farthest point so that the fire meets and that is the way they control the fire.

Therefore, from our findings, we believe that UWA started the fire. Even the fire department of police gave us a report; they went and did a forensic investigation that was certified by the Police of Uganda showing that the fire actually started from the park. It is based on these findings that the committee actually believes that this fire is caused by UWA and, therefore, it should take responsibility for their action. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Under Sections 83 and 84 of the Uganda Wildlife Authority Act, take responsibility and report back to this House.

**COL (RTD) BUTIME:** UWA is not responsible for the fire which burnt that lodge. It is absolutely not responsible. We carried out investigations *–(Interruption)*

**MR ODOI-OYWELOWO:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have had the benefit of reading the thesis of the honourable minister which he presented to the House this afternoon. I also had the benefit of listening to him very attentively. There are three points to note:

The minister makes an admission that by commission or omission, they are responsible for the fires in the conservation areas.

The minister makes the admission that way back in 1960 and in the 70s, they had scholarly material that showed them the fire hazards in the national parks. By omission, up to today, they have never put in place measures to stop these fires destroying property; that is in the report of the honourable minister.

The minister also makes the admission that these fires actually destroy property, investments - and those investments have to be compensated for. Is it procedurally right, Madam Speaker, for the honourable minister to rise and dispute what is contained in his wonderful thesis?

Secondly, is it procedurally correct for the honourable minister to counter the instructions of the Speaker?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I gave a ruling and for now, I am the chair. *(Applause)* Go and do further investigations. However, as it has been said, there is no reference anywhere saying somebody else burnt your park. The committee is saying that you did the burning.

5.54

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The minister has presented a wonderful report and you have guided well. In addition, the chairperson of the committee alluded to a certain report which we have not yet received here.

Madam Speaker, in your wisdom, would it be right that the minister’s statement is taken up by the committee so that they enrich the report and then we debate the committee report?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is fine. Honourable chairperson of the Committee on Tourism, report back to this House in two weeks; take into consideration the minister’s report and bring the report for debate in this House.

One thing we need to understand, honourable minister; put yourself in those people’s shoes. Assuming it was happening to you - none of them is my relative but I am saying there must be fairness in the whole thing.

If you are burning, make sure it stops somewhere. Let us be fair to the people outside there. Let us not just come here and protect because we are supposed to protect. Let fairness come in place. Next item.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE STATUS AND CAPABILITIES OF FIRE RESPONSE SERVICES IN UGANDA

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the matter of fire outbreaks is one of main problems that we have and this is what we have been discussing. We have very few fire stations in Uganda and they are at regional level. With the recent developments, especially petrol stations which are mushrooming everywhere, we need a proper fire response system and a strategy that can help us to avert the danger of fire outbreaks.

We also need to implore the planners to make sure that the buildings have emergency access to the fire trucks. If you remember the fire outbreak in Makerere University main building, the one at the main gate here when there was a bomb blast, it took some time for the fire brigade to come in. Honourable minister, can you give us your response?

3.58

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi):** Madam Speaker and honourable members, I am also going to speak about fire but this time the status and capabilities of fire prevention and rescue services in this country.

Introduction

The Directorate of Fire Prevention and Rescue Services of the Uganda Police Force is mandated to do the following;

1. Ensure prevention of fire outbreak through public education and sensitisation.
2. Fire suppression to save life and property.
3. Provision of emergency rescue services to save lives and property as well as responding to emergency incidences in the country.
4. Provision of protective emergency standby services at public functions, sporting events, VIP functions and to mitigate disaster risks and enhance safety.
5. Participate in disaster management and response as one of the key players.

In the case of the aviation industry for airports and airfields, the emergency response is provided by the Uganda Civil Aviation Authority Fire and Rescue Services based at the Entebbe Airport and airfields in Gulu, Arua, Soroti and Kisoro respectively.

There is urgent need to increase and extend access to fire and emergency rescue services throughout the country. The population is growing, the economy is expanding as evidenced by the ever increasing urbanisation, industrialisation as well as other related and incidental developments.

There is increasing access to and use of electricity countrywide with its attendant risks.

In addition, the volume, number and frequency of motor vehicles of varying sizes and tonnage, including those laden with highly flammable petroleum products, is growing every day on the roads and highways with the attendant risks.

Bulk flammable petroleum storage facilities and medium-sized retail, distribution stations and outlets are being built at a considerable rate.

The Directorate of Fire Prevention and Rescue Services plans to extend emergency services to improve on response time through establishing new fire stations countrywide and enhancing the capacity of the existing ones in order to address the increased risk of fire outbreaks and other emergencies.

The status stands as follows:

1. Manpower strength - 699 personnel
2. Firefighting and rescue trucks – 104
3. Aerial ladder trucks – 03
4. Water Turret trucks – 04
5. Inflatable rescue boats (for floods) - 02

Location of these equipment within the organogram of the Uganda Police:

1. Kampala Metropolitan Police Area – 11
2. Sezibwa Region – 03
3. Kiira Region – 01
4. Busoga East- 01
5. Busoga North – 01
6. Bukedi Region – 03
7. Elgon Region – 01
8. East Kyoga Region – 01
9. Mt Moroto Region – 01
10. North Kyoga – 01
11. Aswa Region West Nile – 03
12. West Nile – 01
13. Albertine Region – 02
14. Rwenzori West – 01
15. Rwenzori East – 01
16. Greater Bushenyi – 01
17. Rwizi Region – 03
18. Kigezi Region – 03
19. Greater Masaka- 01
20. Katonga Region – 01
21. Wamala Region – 02
22. Savanna Region - 01

Planned stations

We plan to establish fire safety and rescue services stations in Kampala Metropolitan Police Area namely in the areas of:

1. Kasangati
2. Wakiso
3. Nkumba
4. Kira-Namugongo
5. Ntinda
6. Makindye
7. Nateete
8. Nsangi
9. Namanve Industrial area
10. Kyengera
11. Matugga

These are heavily populated areas and they are largely settled areas with lots of investments in industrial, commercial and installations among others - that need protection.

The other regions and towns planned for fire stations countrywide, include:

1. North West Nile and West Nile regions(four more)
2. Aswa region (two more)
3. North Kyoga region (two more)
4. East Kyoga region (one more)
5. Kidepo region (one more)
6. Sebei region (one more)
7. Elgon Region (one more)
8. Busoga East region (one more)
9. Busoga North region (one more)
10. Kiira region (two more)
11. Sezibwa region (one more)
12. Savanna region (three more)
13. Albertine region (four more)
14. Rwenzori West (three more)
15. Rwenzori East (two more)
16. Kigezi region (one more)
17. Wamala region (one more)
18. Katonga regio (two more)
19. Rwizi region (one more)
20. Greater Masaka region (five more)

These translate into a requirement for resources. Madam Speaker, we shall seek your support when we present it.

Summary of requirements

The establishment, equipping and operationalisation of the stations in the above mentioned places and regions, including Kampala Metropolitan area, will require acquisition of more fire tenders, water tankers, firm tenders, rapid intervention vehicles, motorcycles and assorted accessories.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, it is glaringly evident that the country is experiencing rapid urbanisation and development. More factories are being established in the countryside and along the highways. These attract other developments to take place. These will no doubt attract similar developments to take place.

The police alone may not adequately handle these emergencies with the provision of fire stations. Therefore, there is a need for both the private sector as well as local governments to invest in acquisition of firefighting equipment to reinforce those of the police, in order to broaden the spectrum of availability and spread of these very critical services to the population.

The police can help to train the crew of such private and local governments to ensure compliance with standards.

There is also a need to formulate an elaborate national disaster and emergency risk management policy and reorganise the national disaster and emergency risk architecture. I am glad that in the House, I have my colleague, the Minister in charge of Disaster Management. We think that this will be through establishment of the Disaster Preparedness and Management Commission along the posture envisaged in our Constitution, which will enhance effective response to emergencies, including fire whenever such happens.

The positive rapid developments in the country require protection against fire accidents and attendant emergencies that are likely to occur. Increased urbanisation, industrialisation and transportation, storage as well as economic activities lead to an increased risk of fire and other emergencies in the country, hence the need to invest in appropriate fire safety and enhancement of emergency handling capabilities countrywide in order to protect life, property and investments, thereby supporting national development. I beg to submit, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, honourable minister, for the report. The report is basically telling you what we have and what we need to add. And what we need to add is within our powers; it is you people to appropriate money for us to add these facilities. Therefore, honourable minister, I hope you indicated it in the National Budget Framework Paper. Thank you. Do you want a debate on this? Okay.

**MR TIMUZIGU:**  Thank you, Madam Speaker. I take this opportunity to thank the minister for bringing this report to the House. I have a challenge with this report because the minister talked about how the police should be prepared to put off the fires. When he talked about the regions, even if we have the equipment in the regions, there is a problem with the community, if they are not prepared to put off the fires themselves.

If you say there is a facility in Mbarara, supposing there is a challenge in Ntungamo or Rubaare - the distance is very far and the communities are not prepared. I have seen in some other countries, where each and every infrastructure that accommodates a big number of people have fire alerts and their fire extinguishers are enough. Honourable minister, I did not hear you tell us how you are trying to prepare the communities. Therefore, I need clarification on that.

The other clarification I would like to seek is how you have worked with the Uganda Police Force to ensure that you learn from what the communities can do, such that you do not act from the top. How have you worked with the police at the lower level to ensure that the country gets prepared? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Maybe, I understood it differently. When the minister says that we want to increase the number of the fire extinguishers, it actually responds to what you are asking. You are talking about the community and what the community needs is for the fire to be extinguished. I do not think the community has an issue on extinguishing fire.

All we need to do is to have a community engagement such that if there is any fire, they can try their best to see that the fire is put off, as we wait for the facility to come.

Secondly, you could also ensure that no factory operates without fire extinguishers in their premises.

4.11

**MR ROLAND NDYOMUGYENYI (Independent, Rukiga County, Rukiga):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I also thank the honourable minister for the report. I would like to bring out two issues, which I think are very important and pertinent in understanding some of these matters:

One, in the planning process, especially in Kampala and other urban areas, you find that the planning for roads does not accommodate the ways for ambulances and firefighting trucks. If, for example, there is a fire outbreak in the city, getting a firefighting truck from Queensway to that area might take two hours. This is because the planners of the roads did not put those facilities into consideration and it is a huge problem for this country. Even with the new roads, which are being constructed, the facilities to ease the movement of firefighting trucks are not in place and this is a challenge. Therefore, I would like the minister to tell us if he has raised this matter with the planners of this country, Kampala City Council Authority and the other urban development guys to ensure that this one stops being a problem.

Secondly, the minister said that private individuals should invest in fire-fighting equipment. That would mean giving up and saying that Government cannot provide services to its people.

What would be the operationalisation mechanism of these fire-fighting equipment owned by private people? The minister needs to come out clearly on that issue because allowing people to own and operate fire-fighting equipment may be more problematic than the anticipated benefits of that intervention. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Members. That was a good report, honourable minister. All you are asking is for Parliament to support you and I hope you indicated it in your budget framework paper. Make sure that once the money is processed, we have the equipment in different areas. However, there are also scenarios when you have a vehicle but no fuel. So, you need to look at all those kinds of things and ensure that your team is ever ready.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENT ON UGANDA’S BID FOR THE 6TH PRESIDENCY OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable Minister of Water and Environment, you can present your statement.

4.15

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER AND ENVIRONMENT (ENVIRONMENT)** **Ms Beatrice Anywar):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank you for this opportunity and allow me, also, to send you condolences for the demise of our *papa*, Emorimor.

I am happy to be back in the House. It is not my method to be away from the House but you know what happened; Covid-19 has not spared many of us, so, when we are sick, we keep distance. I am happy to be back – and my brother, hon. Onek, people will always talk but health issues are for everybody.

Madam Speaker, Uganda expressed interest in the position of the President of the Bureau of the 6th Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly and presented her candidature to the African Group on 14 April 2021. Hopefully, Members have the statement on the Ipads because it was sent here two weeks ago.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes, we do have and you could make a summary.

**MS ANYWAR:** Thank you. The United Nations Environment Assembly is the world’s highest-level decision-making body on the environment and with a universal membership of all 193 member states. The assembly meets bi-annually in Nairobi, Kenya to set priorities for global environment policy.

Through its ministerial declarations and resolutions, the assembly provides leadership, catalyses intergovernmental action on the environment and contributes to the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The United Nations Environment Assembly is also the governing body of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The assembly has a bureau composed of 10 ministers of environment from member states, representing each of the five United Nations regions. The bureau and its president are elected by the assembly for a period of two years, starting at the closure of the session at which they were elected until the closure of the next regular session.

The presidency of the bureau rotates among five United Nations regions. The 6th Session Presidency of the Environment Assembly (UNEA 6) will be held by the member states from Africa region.

Madam Speaker, Uganda stands to benefit from taking charge of the presidency in many ways, among which are:

1. Visibility of Uganda worldwide. Over the next two years, combating climate change will attract greater global forecast given the Paris Agreement 2015 outcome and commitments made at COP26. It is, therefore, important to ensure that Uganda and Africa’s interests in mitigation and adaptation are safeguarded. Those developed countries pushing for phasing out and phasing down the fossil fuels, should be urged to recognise different levels of development and support countries in need with alternative transition gradually to greener technologies.
2. It will ease access to environment-related funding both within the United Nations systems and from partners. It is expected that the commitment to raise the $100 billion annually for the Green Climate Fund will be operationalised from 2023. As President of UNEA 6, Uganda would be better placed to access funds for critical projects such as reforestation, wetlands restoration, management and protection of areas prone to landslides.
3. The environment is currently a topical issue globally, especially around climate change and policy. Therefore, the United Nations Environment Assembly provides a platform to influence global politics and environment policy thereby, increasing Uganda’s visibility as *–(Interruption)*

**MR ODOI-OYWELOWO:** Madam Speaker, we have the entire document on our iPads. Wouldn’t it be procedurally right for the honourable minister to conclude her remarks, given that this statement is only for information of the House?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** By the way, this document is not for debate; it is information to the House that we have a candidate who is standing for that position. The candidate is none other than our good Minister of Environment, hon. Beatrice Anywar. That is that. So, honourable member, just conclude.

**MS ANYWAR:** Madam Speaker –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Of course, rest assured that you have the support of this House. That position is very good for the country; you have our support.

**MS ANYWAR:** Thank you and most obliged. Madam Speaker, allow me to point out this key issue so that I bring you on board before I go to the conclusion.

Holding this UNEA 6th Presidency will help us, as a country, to promote tourism among the United Nations member states. Tourism contributes 7.75 per cent of the GDP and 1.6 billion, as well as 6.7 per cent to the total employment in 2018. This is on record and we envisage that we shall surpass that.

We shall, as a strategy, enable to be in a better position to advance even national interests and the agenda of matters of environment at different levels.

Madam Speaker, we envisage that this presidency will help us strengthen strategic partnerships among governments, support sound environmental action at global, regional and national levels. So, there are many accruing benefits, colleagues, as you have highlighted, which are already there.

However, allow me to give you the current status as I conclude. You are aware –*(Interruption)*

**MR SILWANY:** Madam Speaker, I thank Hon. Beatrice Anywar, for the statement she is giving to the House. I also want to appreciate your ruling that this House supports Hon. Beatrice Anywar because this position benefits the country.

However, Madam Speaker, you notice that this is something that is managed at the level of Cabinet. So, wouldn't it be procedurally right, now that Hon. Anywar has presented to us and informed us of what is going to happen – she just gives us the information and ends at that and then we move to another thing? I am saying this because she may end up - you know, when you talk a lot, you may end up spoiling the vote. *(Laughter)*

She already has our support and we wish her well - no, we are supporters, Madam Speaker. So, wouldn’t it be procedurally right for her to end at that and we support her, wish her well and conclude this matter other than continuing to explain what we already know, what we already support and where you have already ruled?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** And the fact that the Government of Uganda has fully endorsed our candidates, there is no way - there is nothing we can do. You should know that we support you. There is a procedural matter here.

**MS OPENDI:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to wish my sister, hon. Beatrice Anywar well. She has been a champion of the environment in this country. She is *Mama* Mabira; well known. *(Applause)*

However, Madam Speaker, we did pass the National Climate Change Act and I think Section 1 of that Act states, “This Act shall come into force on a date to be appointed by the Minister by statutory instrument.”

Can I know from the minister - you want to move forward? Where are we with this statutory instrument because the Act is there? It is not yet in force because you have not issued this statutory instrument, which gives the Act a commencement date. So, can we get that, Madam Speaker?

Otherwise, honourable minister, there is no point talking much. I think you should simply end there and we wish you well because in this Parliament, we are not voters.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You see now how you are spoiling the whole thing regarding the minister. You are now asking for the Act yet what we are saying is, let us support the minister; you are supported.

**MR MACHO:** Madam Speaker, I am on my knees, praying for the honourable minister because when she wins, Uganda will have won and that brings pride to the Pearl of Africa.

Madam Speaker, in her submission, as I pray for her to win, she stated that the position will be a platform to influence global politics and environmental policy - fantastic for Uganda. We would have won in a big platform. I have a point of clarification.

You are going to a position at the time that Uganda has queries of human rights record at international level. We, who are praying, what prayer should we say? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you so much. When you look at the minister’s closing statement, she says, “We also pray that Parliament will, at an appropriate time, approve the funds to support the bid for the Presidency.”

That is what the minister wants. We cannot approve what we do not know; we do not have the figure. It will be debating in anticipation.

**MS ANYEAR:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for the overwhelming support for our country because it is quite critical that we get this position for our benefit.

Madam Speaker, the figures, which I have already alluded to, will be presented by the Minister of Finance. However, what is critical is that we have arrears, which must be paid before next week. We are going in for elections. By Wednesday next week, the voting will start and be concluded on 28 February.

My second prayer is that colleagues, as we support Uganda, we have an obligation - Madam Speaker, you need to go out and speak and lobby for us. Our members of Parliament in the Pan African Parliament, please – including the former members - we need to reach out to all the environmental ministers because they are the voters.

The countries, which are about to be voted, are three. It is Uganda, Morocco and Algeria. Uganda - I do not want to conclude on that. For God and my country.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The financial obligation is for the Executive.

4.31

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Madam Speaker, the Minister presented this matter to Cabinet and it resolved to handle. At Executive level, we are going to handle it.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Next item?

STATEMENT BY MINISTER ON DEATHS OF A NUMBER OF PERSONS IN KIJONJO VILLAGE, KASASA SUBCOUNTY, KYOTERA COUNTY, KYOTERA DISTRICT, EMANATING FROM SIMILAR SYMPTOMS

4.32

**THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Jane Aceng):** Madam Speaker, at the Fourth Sitting of the Third Meeting of the First Session of the 11th Parliament that took place on Wednesday the second, hon. John Paul Lukwago Mpalanyi, Member of Parliament for Kyotera County raised the matter on the unusual death of 15 persons emanating from similar symptoms in Kijonjo village Kasasa Subcounty Kyotera District.

I take this opportunity to update this august House on the status of the investigations of the alleged strange disease reported in Kyotera.

Madam Speaker, on 2 December 2021, the Kyotera District Health Officer notified the Ministry of Health of 13 mysterious deaths from Kijonjo Parish Kasasa Subcounty within a period of six months. The reported patient symptoms included high grade fever, vomiting, abdominal pain, blood-stained vomit and swelling of the body.

This prompted the Ministry of Health through its Public Health Emergency Operation Centre to dispatch a rapid response team of epidemiologists to investigate the likely cause of deaths. Specifically, the team sought to;

1. To ascertain the cause of death or illness.
2. Establish the magnitude of the problem.
3. Identify possible exposures and;
4. Recommend evidence-based control measures.

The team actively sought for suspected cases in the affected communities and interviewed case persons who are live and close relatives of the deceased persons. They also held discussions with community opinion leaders, local leaders and owners of health facilities and clinics where suspected case persons sought treatment.

Our findings

Madam Speaker, according to the reports, as of 6 February 2022, the investigation team had listed 14 case persons; six males and seven females. There were 13 recorded deaths, six males and seven females. The age range was 15 to 83 years old with a median of about 49. Of these, five died of known illnesses and the known illnesses were malaria, sepsis secondary abdominal operation, hypertension, epileptic attacks and stroke after seeking treatment from the health facilities.

There were eight deaths from undetermined causes. These included six males and two females. Of these, eight deaths from undetermined causes, six had swelling on the body and two were found dead in their homes. One was a known alcoholic. The eight did not seek care from the health facilities instead; they went to traditional healers and used herbs.

No post-mortem was done except the most recent death, which occurred on 27 January 2022. The deceased was a 45-year-old male who died from a traditional healer’s shrine. His body was taken to Masaka Regional Referral Hospital for post-mortem and the results were indicative of pulmonary edema and steatosis or fatty liver.

Madam Speaker, I have provided a table showing the list of investigated cases. I request that I do not go through the table since this statement was uploaded.

Next is a map showing Kasasa Subcounty in Kyotera District and specifically the parishes of Kijonjo and Nakatooke B, which are the affected parishes.

Madam Speaker, the investigation team also found that the affected community calls the swelling of the body *italo,* which is cellulitis in the medical language. They believe that *italo* should only be treated by traditional healers using herbs and that this form of treatment leads to death of the victims. Cellulitis is a common bacterium in your skin infection that causes redness, swelling and pain in the affected area of the skin. If untreated it can spread and cause serious health problems. It is treated with antibiotics.

Madam Speaker, there were four survivors who had swelling of the body parts similar to the deceased. Two of them sought treatment from the Kijonjo Health Centre and they were diagnosed with Malaria and Cellulitis. The third patient was treated for meningitis in the Masaka Regional Referral Hospital. The fourth was, however, managed traditionally.

Specimen samples were collected for testing from the suspected cases at Uganda Virus Research Institute. The samples were examined and found to be negative for viral haemorrhagic fevers, including Ebola, Marburg and yellow fever viruses.

In conclusion, findings by the team of experts that investigated the cluster of cases and deaths have indicated that there is no strange disease in the Kyotera District. The following conclusions were made;

The illness appears non-contagious as close relatives and contacts have not fallen ill. Eight of the 13 deceased cases did not seek care from our health facilities. This may have led to adverse outcomes. Traditional beliefs are hampering this community from seeking appropriate health care early.

The public health actions that we undertook;

1. Health education on health care seeking behaviours regarding *italo.*
2. We heightened surveillance to identify suspect cases so that we can direct them for prompt treatment.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Health team continues to follow up the cases to ensure there are no deaths due to preventable causes. The ministry applauds the community and leaders of Kyotera and all medical personnel for giving care and treatment to the patients and continues to appeal to the public to remain vigilant in reporting all unusual occurrences. I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, honourable Minister of Health. You have heard the statement and the ministry is doing all it takes to make sure this is curbed. We would like to thank the ministry for making that close follow up. Some of us are not medics to start saying that it should have been like this or that. So, when you hear from a medic, you take it that work is being done as long as you are recovering.

Our people also need to take caution. You cannot fall sick and go to a witch doctor. Please, when you fall sick, go to the hospital. It is the hospital to diagnose what you are suffering from.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CONTAINED IN THE EDUCATION CURRICULUM

4.40

**THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS (PRIMARY HEALTH CARE) (Dr Joyce Moriku):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Hon. Lucy Akello raised on the Floor of Parliament, an issue concerning content of Integrated Science primary six materials that was published by Longhorn Publishers on page 214 to 218, also MK Publishers, on pages 197 to 201 and Fountain Publishers.

The same concern, Madam Speaker, was again presented on the Floor of Parliament on the 2nd of February. The content in question is on the inclusion of the methods of family planning, myths and misconceptions about family planning. This content is covered under the topic “reproductive system”.

This topic, Madam Speaker, which is found in the P.6 curriculum is aimed at creating awareness among the learners on the reproductive system. There has been an increase in the number of teenage pregnancies, sexual abuse, child-molestations and rape and the effect of HIV pandemic, which has made it important for the learners to be empowered in the area of reproductive health so as to help them understand the developments of their bodies and the consequences.

The primary six integrated science curriculum’s main general aim at this level is to provide learners with knowledge to prepare them to be responsible citizens. The learning outcome for the topic on reproductive system is for the learners to develop further knowledge about their reproductive system to acquire scientific knowledge, and life skills for improving and maintaining the efficiency of reproductive system.

This curriculum was developed based on Bloom's Taxonomy of 1956, which categorised knowledge into six levels of demand. It categorised it as knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. According to Bloom, the learning outcome in question requires learners to get basic knowledge and understand it for creating awareness and for purposes of applying the knowledge to safeguard themselves in society.

The subject competencies as presented in the curriculum are as you can read on your respective iPads as has been downloaded. Those are the subject competencies as presented in the curriculum.

An analysis of those competencies used in the subject competencies, as has been described in the Bloom’s Taxonomy, it can be noted that they are limited to knowledge and application so as to keep the content appropriate for the end consumer who is the learner.

Madam Speaker, why is the content on family planning on primary six curriculum? First of all, understanding and caring for their body changes during puberty. Learners in P.6 are at the onset of puberty, which is characterised by changes in their body organs and hormones that come with psychological changes. Learners, therefore, need to understand these changes, accept them and gain skills of how to care for their bodies during and after puberty.

Secondly, why the content of family planning? It is for preventing teenage pregnancies. Uganda registered high rates of early onset of sex and teenage pregnancy according to the Uganda Demographic and Health Surveillance of 2016. This is evidence-based information.

Ten per cent of women and 17 per cent of men had sexual intercourse by the age of 15 while 1.2 per cent of women gave birth by the age of 15. This renders inclusion of reproductive health education in the curriculum necessary to create awareness in the children since the curriculum is meant to address societal issues.

Thirdly, it is to provide knowledge to learners who may drop out of school after primary seven. Madam Speaker, Uganda has a low completion and transition rate. According to the UBOS statistics abstract of 2018, 60 per cent of the pupils who join primary one sit P.7.; 60.6 per cent of these join senior one class. This implies that of the 1,965,606 pupils, who joined P.1 in 2017, about 1,179,363 will complete P.7. Of these, few will progress to further secondary education.

This means that only 36.3 of the pupils who joined P.1 class will manage to go to senior one while 63.3 per cent will remain at primary level. Hence, there is the need to give to them this critical information and knowledge about family planning at the elementary level of primary.

The fourth reason is strengthening other governmental interventions in combating HIV/AIDS – *(Interjections)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Procedure? Honourable members, all your documents have been uploaded so, just give us a summary.

**MR SILWANY:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am a father of girls. I was here on the day that hon. Lucy asked the question to the minister about the information on the books. The information was about the sex language that is used when imparting knowledge to the children and the young learners.

Would it be procedurally right, Madam Speaker, for the honourable minister to give us a diversion from the question that the honourable member asked? We are talking about the sex language and the honourable minister is talking about the content and how it impacts on the girls at puberty stage.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** It was not sex language but reproductive health.

**MR SILWANY:** Madam Speaker, it was inappropriate language used. That was the question of the honourable member.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The inappropriate language that we are meaning that was being talked about was reproductive health being taught in P.6.

**DR MORIKU:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for your wise intervention. It was very clear that issues of reproductive health and specifically family planning - and she even gave an example of Reproductive Health Uganda that was quoted in those textbooks.

**MR AOGON:** Madam Speaker, this is the right time for us to ask questions, specifically on reproductive health. It is good in the curriculum; you have inputted the issue of reproductive health. Can you tell us whether in your ministerial policy statements, you have prepared to support that particular work of family planning and reproductive health? I am aware you have a policy, which up to now has not been approved.

There is no law and budget, which is indicating that you are serious. Why are we having the curriculum without anything attending to it? Thank you.

**DR MORIKU:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. This learners’ book, which is procured by the ministry is developed by the publisher. The observation that was made is that the curriculum does not provide for competencies and concepts on sexual intercourse, and the bodies responsible for provision of family planning services in Uganda, as it appears in the material. That is the Longhorn page 217.

It is noted that the content in question is high-pitched for the targeted learner. As such, it is above the age level of the learners. Look at MK pages 200 - 202 and Longhorn pages 215 and 217.

Madam Speaker, the way forward is that -

**MR NDYOMUGYENYI:** Madam Speaker, Hon. Silwany has just been here and he said that the issue is with the content, to which the honourable minister disagreed. However, now in the observations, the report says that the content is the problem and the minister is even quoting the pages in those books. Are we proceeding right, when the minister denies the fact that is in her report?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister, what did you say?

**DR MORIKU:** Madam Speaker, I think there are two critical issues here. The first is the area of reproductive health and second is the content that is delivered for this age bracket within that specific level. “Content” means the terminology used for that class, like reproductive family planning, including the service providers. I think we are still on the right track.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can I ask Members because we are all parents. Why are we running away from our responsibility and leaving teachers to talk about reproductive health? Why don't we take it upon us to talk to these girls and tell them what is correct and what is wrong? Now, they have phones. They look at all those things. Can you stop them?

The problem we have is that we have run away from parenting. We are leaving the teachers to be the only ones to educate these girls that a, b and c are bad. Yet, we know very well that it is the parents who should talk and tell them what to do. It is a reality - whether you talk about sex or not, we are the ones to talk to our children.

4.55

**MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for that submission. Honourable minister, I appreciate what you are talking about. However, hon. Lucy Akello laid books here on the Table. What you should be telling us is what the ministry doing about those books that have been published. Are you not responsible to, first of all, approve the books before they find themselves in the bookstores? This is what we want to hear; that you are going to direct that these books get out of the bookstores because they are not appropriate and the schools that are using them should stop. That should be the way forward.

Otherwise, we all appreciate issues of reproductive health. We know very well that we need a school health policy. The issue of comprehensive sexuality education was talked about and suspended. All these are issues. The way forward should be for you to tell us what you are going to do about those books that have inappropriate language. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Sarah Opendi, the language in the books is about reproductive health. The books are advising that if you do a, b c, d, this will not be good for you; you will conceive. Do you get it? It is talking about reproductive health. Now, we want to bury our heads in the sand and pretend we do not know what is happening. There is no problem with the books.

**DR MORIKU:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was giving a way forward. Members, allow me to conclude. This is the call for action:

1. The ministry has put in place a committee of experts to analyse the textbooks and correlate with the curriculum, including all elementary levels.
2. The report and the recommendations from this committee will enable the ministry to act appropriately. The ministry will issue a statement warning the public, especially the schools and the parents, against using materials that have not been evaluated by the National Curriculum Development Centre.
3. The Ministry of Education and Sports will issue punitive measures against any person caught distributing books that have not been evaluated by the National Development Centre and will be reprimanded.
4. The development of the textbooks’ policy will be expedited to streamline textbooks development and the use of textbooks in schools in Uganda.
5. The publishers will have to adhere to the processes and procedures of material evaluation to avoid exposing learners to materials that are not quality assured or not age appropriate.
6. It is critical that book writers confirm the curriculum and attend the book's specification that is given.

As I conclude, Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Education and Sports has acknowledged that the language used in the content in the question is high-pitched for the target learners. We have, therefore, put in place a committee to critically analyse the textbooks and correlate them with the curriculum.

The ministry pledged to take action immediately after the report and the recommendation of the committee. The ministry also pledges to report back Madam Speaker, on this Floor of Parliament, on the actions taken on the subject matter.

Meanwhile, the National Curriculum Development Centre is compiling a list of all materials that have been evaluated by the centre and found it for use in schools. This list will be published to caution the public against exploitation by authors and publishers whose materials might have not been approved. I thank you, Madam Speaker, and I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. We refer your document to the Committee on Education and Sports to align with what your committee will find out such that we have a common position to that effect. Hon. Ssekikubo, are you presenting a paper?

5.00

**MR THEODORE SSEKIKUBO (NRM, Lwemiyaga County, Ssembabule):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Save for the fact that I want us to be synchronised, in the sense that the minister's statement is contradicting her conclusions. Therefore, unless the minister is at cross-purposes - she first brought out the values–

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Are you debating what has been ruled on?

**MR SSEKIKUBO:** Madam Speaker, what I want you to add -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let the committee analyse the report, see the contradictions and come up with a report to the House. Hon. Ssekikubo, meanwhile, you are welcome. We missed you.

**DR MORIKU:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. On the next item of Namboole Stadium, we have a one-page response. With your permission, I request Minister Obua to come and present that one-page statement. I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We have the honourable Minister in charge of Sports here. Thank you.

5.01

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS) (Mr Hamson Obua):** Madam Speaker, this statement is prepared under rule 52 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

The statement is made in response to an inquiry on Government’s resettlement plans for residents of Kireka B Village, who are to be affected by the impending renovation of Mandela National Stadium, Namboole.

Madam Speaker, the Government, through the Ministry of Education and Sports, wishes to make its response as follows:

1. Mandela National Stadium sits on a titled land in the names of Mandela National Stadium Limited.
2. People who settled on this land in question, including those at Kireka B Village, knew that it was Government land *-(Interruption)*

**MR FOX ODOI:** Madam Speaker, is it in order for the Minister of Health to sneak out of the House immediately after presenting her paper?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Aceng had asked for permission to go out but she has left one minister in charge of health here.

**MR OBUA:** Madam Speaker, I had started to submit that the Minister of Education and Sports, on behalf of Government wishes to respond as follows:

1. Mandela National Stadium sits on a titled land in the names of Mandela National Stadium Limited.
2. People who settled on this land, including those at Kireka B Village, knew that it was Government land procured, preserved and designated for Mandela National Stadium, Namboole.
3. As of now, there is no budget line for the resettlement plan unless Government guides otherwise.
4. The Ministry of Education and Sports will do further consultations with the Office of the Attorney-General for further guidance on this matter.

I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister of Sports. The report that I needed from the Minister of Sports was to inform the House on the ownership of the land. That is the report that he has presented – to whom does this land belong and how did these people go onto that land?

**MR AOGON:** Madam Speaker, I sit on the Committee on Education and Sports. Sports is my area and I am very passionate about Namboole.

I would love to find this out from hon. Obua. Yes, this is titled land in the names of Mandela National Stadium Limited. The Government was aware that this was Government property. How, then, did the Government go ahead to watch people come and occupy the land and do nothing at all, yet, they knew Government owned the land? Who bears the burden of compensation now, given the fact that -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Aogon, is that the first land that squatters have gone to in Uganda?

**MR AOGON:** Madam Speaker, formerly on the Floor, this is the first one I have heard. *(Laughter)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You know, the land belongs to Government. The only thing that we now need to do is to find out how to get these people out. How do we resettle them? Actually, that is trespassing. We need our stadium, honourable minister.

**MR AOGON:** Madam Speaker, I stood not to oppose the on-going renovations. First, as a committee, we supported the ministry. Therefore, now that the Speaker has given guidance, I will reserve my comments along those lines. However, I can tell you, Madam Speaker, that even when we are constructing roads, the same thing happens. People know this is a road reserve but they still settle there. The Government should enforce and keep people away from the road reserves; they compensate and leave people to continue living there and then, the next thing you hear is requests for compensation. That is my complaint.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Honourable minister, are works going on?

**MR OBUA:** Madam Speaker, on the question of works commencing, I want to confirm that the fencing of the 4.1 kilometres and approximately 120 acres of land for Mandela National Stadium is ongoing and work is being executed by the UPDF Engineering Brigade, under Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is on the fence. Two, on the stadium itself, is work going on?

**MR OBUA:** Madam Speaker, the renovation of Mandela National Stadium is supposed to be in two phases. In phase one, we want to start with the fencing of the land. In phase two, they will embark on the renovation and upgrade of the stadium.

One thing that I need to state is that the commencement of phase two will be anchored on the full release of funding required for Mandela National Stadium, which has been approved by both Cabinet and Parliament.

As I speak now, out of a budget of Shs 97 billion, only Shs 5 billion has been released. In addition, under the memorandum of understanding, the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs, represented by the UPDF Engineering Brigade, has been paid Shs 3.8 billion for the fencing. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**MR SILWANY:** Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable minister for sports. He is one of the ministers who, when he comes on the Floor, speaks with a lot of clarity. I want to thank you, honourable minister, for that. However, the only question I want to ask you is: since the construction is already ongoing, has the Government told these people to leave and are they leaving immediately – because you are already fencing the place? These occupants are illegal.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, are you fencing them in or out?

**MR OBUA:** Madam Speaker, the point of clarification from the commissioner is related to the point by hon. Silas that these people settled on the land while Government watched and did nothing.

I want to state that the Government has done something. There is evidence to show that several notices of vacant possession of this land were served on these residents by the management and board of Mandela National Stadium. Mandela National Stadium is a public liability company whose shareholders, on behalf of Government, are Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and Ministry of Education and Sports.

Therefore, there is record to show that a number of notices were issued and served on them. So, that is on the action taken by Government.

In terms of fencing, Madam Speaker, ever since the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces engineering brigade commenced work, apart from the matter being raised in Parliament, we have not receive, any formal complaint; the fencing of the land has not affected any resident. We are simply fencing land that belongs to us because the certificate of title under the laws of Uganda is conclusive evidence of ownership. Whoever is inside this land is being fenced inside, not outside. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Actually, if we haven’t received any complaint from anybody, then we are debating in speculation. The land belongs to the Government of Uganda – it belongs to Mandela National Stadium and so, the encroachers must leave. How they will leave, the Attorney-General knows how to handle that.

Next item.

STATEMENT ON THE INSTALLATION OF REQUISITE ROAD FURNITURE TO STEM ROAD ACCIDENTS ALONG THE BUSIU-BUMAGENI SECTION OF THE TORORO-MBALE ROAD

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Is that Hon. Fred Byamukama?

5.12

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (TRANSPORT) (Mr Fred Byamukama):** Madam Speaker, this is a statement in response to the question raised by my brother, the Hon. Wanda Richard, Member of Parliament for Bungokho Central County regarding installation of requisite road furniture to stem road accidents along the Busiu-Bumageni section of Tororo-Mbale Road.

The Tororo-Mbale Road section is part of a larger project called the North Eastern Road-corridor Asset Management Project (NERAMP). This project covers the Tororo-Mbale-Soroti-Lira- Kamdini corridor, a total of 340 kilometres. The project is being implemented in the form of Output and Performance-based Contracting (OPRC), funded by the World Bank, in partnership with the Government of Uganda.

One of the Key project Development Objectives of the OPRC is to enhance road safety. As part of the design for the planned rehabilitation and improvement works, the contractor was required to undertake a road safety audit along the 340 kilometre corridor and design safety improvement measures.

The Busiu-Bumageni section is among the sections identified as having a number of black spots and appropriate improvement measures have been allowed in the design for the rehabilitation and improvement of the works.

These are to be implemented as part of the main works, which are due to commence once the social and environmental studies holding the start of the works are finalised.

Interim measures to address the safety concerns along the Busiu-Bumageni Road section

Madam Speaker, due to the delayed start of the main works under the OPRC, where the safety improvements are to be implemented, a decision has been taken by the ministry to implement the safety improvement under the emergency provisions of the contract.

The contractor was instructed and the safety improvement works are expected to commence on 14th February 2022, which is Monday next week. The safety provisions, in form of rumble strips, humps and road signs will be implanted at three locations: Busiu (near Manafa Bridge), Mile six and Bungokho.

Madam Speaker, I would like to assure you and the House that the identified safety improvements along the entire corridor of 340 kilometres will be implemented during the execution of the rehabilitation and improvement Works.

In conclusion, the ministry is committed to ensuring the safety of road users on the entire road network of this country. Thank you. I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Byamukama, for the report. Is Hon. Wanda here? Hon. Byamukama, as you prepare to work on that road - and we know it is one of the roads that you need to work on - in the meantime, you need to see what to do to reduce those accidents on that road; it is really terrible.

It is not only in Busiu, even in my area. When you reach Bukedea Town Council, you will realise that you still need to do something because vehicles move faster. Therefore, you need to go on that road and check what can be done in a short while as you go ahead to construct a new road.

You will give me a report on what action you have taken in the next sitting. Maybe you need one week there to visit the locus. Next item.

**MS OBIGAH:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Terego is one of the newly created districts in this country. However, since its creation, we have failed to get equipment to work on our roads. The neighbouring districts have said their equipment is “dead.” We cannot access the most vulnerable. May I know from the honourable minister, when we will get this equipment?

Secondly, we have also requested for culverts. Madam Speaker, our places are not passable. I kindly request for these. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The question today was on the rampant accidents on that road due to over speeding because the road is tarmacked. The road is narrow and people are over speeding, hence causing the accidents.

The issue of equipment is a known fact that the newly created districts like yours do not have road equipment. You are in Parliament. Please budget and buy equipment; appropriate money for that equipment and you will have them in the new districts, and there are not many. Let us have that in the budget and we will make sure we get equipment for your district.

Make sure that you follow up with the Ministry of Works and Transport on whether that is one of the budget items that they have so that you can have the equipment. Thank you.

LAYING OF PAPERS

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Solomon Silwany, Commissioner of Parliament.

5.20

**THE COMMISSIONER OF PARLIAMENT (Mr Solomon Silwany):** Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the 22nd Annual Report on the state of Human Rights and freedoms in Uganda 2019.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. I refer the report to the Committee on Human Rights for consideration and report back to the House.

5.21

**MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri):** Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the 23rd Annual Report on the State of Human Rights and Freedom in Uganda, 2020.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Commissioner, I refer the report to the Committee on Human Rights for consideration and report back to this House.

**MR SILWANY**: Madam Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the Uganda Prisons Authority Annual Report for the Financial Year 2020/2021.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Thank you, Commissioner. I refer the paper to the Committee on Trade for consideration and report back to this House.

5.23

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Madam Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the annual report of 1 July 2020 – 30June 2021 of the Petroleum Authority of Uganda.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Thank you, Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources. I refer the paper to the Committee on Natural Resources for consideration and report back to the House.

5.24

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (Sports) Mr Denis Obua):** Madam Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the Education Service Commission Annual Performance Report for the Financial Year 2020/2021.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. I refer the paper to the Committee on Education and Sports for consideration and report back to the House.

5.25

**MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. In accordance with Rule No.33 of our Rules of Procedure, I beg to lay the report of the 13th Summit of the Women Speakers and the Fifth World Conference of the Speakers that was held from the 6 - 9 September 2021 in Vienna.

Allow me inform the House that this particular meeting; on the side-lines when it ended there was a first global parliamentary summit on countering terrorism that was held on 9 September 2021, with a call on all Parliaments to interest themselves in fighting terrorism in the world. Thank you.

I also beg to lay the summary report of the 143rd Inter Parliamentary Union Assembly and related meetings held in Madrid Spain from the 24th to 30th November 2021. Madam Speaker, you led this delegation; so, I am laying this report on your behalf.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable members, the report is referred to all committees for information. Please evaluate the actions that are required for intervention in the committees and act accordingly.

MOTION SEEKING LEAVE OF PARLIAMENT TO INTRODUCE A PRIVATE MEMBER’S BILL ENTITLED, “THE NATIONAL LEGAL AID BILL”

5.26

**MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi):** Motion seeking leave of Parliament to introduce a Private Member’s Bill entitled, “The National Legal Aid Bill”. Moved under rules 56, 121 and 122 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament;

*“WHEREAS Article 79 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995, empowers Parliament to make laws on any matter for the peace, order, development and good governance of Uganda;*

*AND WHEREAS Article 95(4) of the Constitution and rule 121 (i) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament grant a Member of Parliament the right to move a Private Member’s Bill;*

*AWARE that Uganda is a signatory to a number of international binding and non-binding legal instruments including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966, the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)1979, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPWD) 2006, the Convention of the Rights of the Child 1989, the Lilongwe Declaration on Accessing Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems in Africa, 2004 and the United Nations Principles and Guidelines in Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems, 2012 which all enshrine key principles of equality before the law; the presumption of innocence, the right to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal and access to legal aid for persons charged with capital offences and persons who cannot afford legal services;*

*FURTHER AWARE that the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda adopts the principles of equality espoused in international binding and non-binding legal instruments such as equality before the law in Article 21, the right to a fair hearing in Article 28, the provision of legal representation to persons charged with capital offences in Article 28(3)e and the administration of justice to all irrespective of their social or economic status in Article 126 (2)a of the Constitution;*

*RECOGNISING that whereas certain aspects of the legal aid are embedded in various legislations such as the Poor Persons Act CAP 20, the Advocates Act CAP 262, the Civil Procedure Act CAP 71, the Children Act CAP 59, the Persons with Disability Act, CAP 206, the refugee Act CAP 2006, the Criminal Procedure Code Act CAP 71, the Law Development Centre Act CAP 132. These provisions are scattered, largely ineffective and non-operational since they are only accessed during trial and not when a person first interacts with the justice system. The legal services are limited in scope and do not prescribe the duty bearer and modalities for providing and accessing legal aid services respectively;*

*NOTING that although Uganda lacks a state funded legal aid scheme, there are numerous legal aid delivery mechanisms and models designed and delivered by accredited legal aid service providers but these are all urban-centred, donor-funded and are not sustainable due to lack of clear legal frameworks to regulate the provision of those services, resulting in duplication of roles and wastage of resources;*

*CONVINCED that in order to give full effect to the principles of equality and fairness enshrined in the Constitution, there is need to enact a comprehensive and consolidated legislation providing an accessible, affordable, sustainable, credible and accountable legal aid services to vulnerable and indigent persons in Uganda;*

*RECALLING that on 24 September 2020, the 10th Parliament confirmed the need for this Bill by granting leave to hon. Lyandro Komakech, the then MP for Gulu Municipality, to introduce a Bill entitled “The National Legal Aid Bill”;*

*FURTHER RECALLING that whereas the National Legal Aid Bill, 2020 was read for the first time on 11 May 2021, the Bill lapsed with the dissolution of the 10th Parliament, in accordance with Rule 235(1) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, thereby necessitating this motion.*

*NOW, therefore, this motion is moved that:*

1. *Parliament grants me leave to introduce a Private Member’s Bill entitled “The National Legal Aid Bill”, a draft of which is hereto attached;*
2. *And do order the publication of the Bill, in preparation for its First Reading*.”

Madam Speaker, I beg to move.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, hon. Aogon. Is the motion seconded? *(Hon. Members rose\_)* It is seconded by hon. Elijah Okupa, hon. Muwuma, honourable member from Aruu, hon. Silwany, hon. Abeja, hon. Mawanda, hon. Paparu; by the whole House. *(Applause)* Would you like to briefly speak to your motion?

**MR AOGON:** Briefly, Madam Speaker, you will allow me to make a definition of legal aid and then, I talk about the situation of legal aid in Uganda. The other issue is the need for legal aid in Uganda –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You will present that in the committee. Just tell us briefly.

**MR AOGON:** Briefly, we have been lacking a legal framework to consolidate laws relating to provision of legal aid services. You know, our actors have not been regulated and it is very dangerous to have actors within Uganda in any service delivery who are not regulated.

This law comes in handy to fix that gap. I know when the time comes for us to debate, we shall share the whole details. Otherwise, everything is here. If you like, maybe, I would only, in summary, choose only one thing; the challenges.

1. State provision of legal aid is restricted to the state brief system covering accused persons in capital offences in the High Court and accused persons liable to life imprisonment in the Chief Magistrate’s Court;
2. There is lack of a clear legal framework to regulate the provision of legal aid services by legal aid service providers. Whereas legal aid service providers are accredited by the Uganda Law Council to provide legal aid services in Uganda, the provision of such legal aid services is not regulated, resulting in duplication of roles and wastage of resources;
3. There is lack of coordination between the different players in the provision of legal aid. For instance, whereas there are a number of legal aid schemes and models employed in Uganda through which legal aid service services are provided, many of these lack an overreaching strategy and a standardised set of services that would provide for legal needs of all Ugandans;
4. Lack of funding for legal aid services;
5. The provision of legal aid is based on a determination of a person’s ability to pay and not other tendencies like a person including a person’s vulnerability or stigmatisation.

Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Would you speak for just a minute?

**MR AOGON:** The last one, Madam Speaker -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Are you still talking? So, what will you do when you go to the committee?

**MR AOGON:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Paparu, just one minute.

5.36

**MS LILLIAN PAPARU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to second this motion on introducing a Bill on legal aid services. I want to echo the voice of the mover of the motion that this Bill is overdue because legal aid service is a cornerstone of a fair and just society.

Yesterday, we were processing the Succession Bill. Madam Speaker, we echoed that the Bill of yesterday, if it is enacted into law, it will help the women. We know the women do not have money to access lawyers. If such a Bill or law comes into practice, it will help the most vulnerable people of this country.

Madam Speaker, there are various entities that have been providing legal aid services. However, because there is no law, especially the NGOs, it has been very difficult for them to access funds outside because within the country, there is no law backing them up. This will help them to access more donations or funds to support the vulnerable.

Madam Speaker, we also pray that when this law comes into place, it will decongest the already congested court systems because there can be arbitration out of court and mediation. That will help a long way to promote justice in this country. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. We need a law to regulate the legal aid system in Uganda, not that women are poor and cannot afford. Actually, women of Uganda these days even have more money than men. So, do not call us poor. *(Laughter)* We are not poor.

5.38

**MR MICHAEL MAWANDA (NRM, Igara County East, Bushenyi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to second the motion. I will straightaway go to the remedies proposed by the Bill. Most of the things have been alluded to by the mover and the first seconder.

Madam Speaker, this Bill introduces new provisions that seek to consolidate and update the law on legal aid in Uganda. The Bill seeks to make provision for the operation and administration of legal aid service providers by expanding the scope of legal aid services beyond merely providing legal counsel and imposing criteria for provision of legal aid by accredited legal aid service providers.

The Bill, therefore, seeks to facilitate access to legal aid services by providing credible, accessible, affordable, sustainable and accountable legal aid services to indigent or poor, marginalised or vulnerable persons in Uganda. Madam Speaker, I beg to second.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, the mover and seconders. I now put a question that leave of the House be granted to hon. Aogon Silas to introduce a Private Member’s Bill entitled, “The National Legal Aid Bill”.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Permission has been granted to hon. Aogon. Please, work with the Clerk to have your Bill get ready.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT URGING GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS THE EXORBITANT TUITION AND NON-TUITION FEES CHARGED BY GOVERNMENT GRANT-AIDED SCHOOLS

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Opendi, you are just going to lay the report on the Table. You will come back to present your motion and it will be debated. Just lay it on the Table and it is already uploaded. Members please read through it and the rest will be done.

5.41

**MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is a motion for a resolution of Parliament urging the Government to address the exorbitant tuition and non-tuition fees charged by the Government grant-aided schools. Should I read the motion?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes.

**MS OPENDI:** Okay. Thank you, Madam Speaker. The motion reads:

“*WHEREAS Objective XVIII of the National Objectives and Directive Principles of the State Policy enjoins the Government to promote free and compulsory basic education and take appropriate measures to afford every citizen equal opportunity to attain the highest educational standard;*

*AND WHEREAS Article 30 of the Constitution grants all persons a right to education;*

*AWARE THAT the Education Act, 2008 establishes grant-aided schools as schools not funded by the Government, but which receives statutory grants in form of aid from the Government and are jointly managed by the foundation bodies and Government;*

*FURTHER AWARE THAT section 8 of the Education Act, 2008 spells out the responsibilities of the Government towards Government grant-aided education institutions, including ensuring that trained teachers are deployed, the paying of salaries and allowances to the teachers, paying salaries and wages to all established non-teaching staff, paying statutory grants, providing educational materials and other capital development inputs amongst others;*

*CONCERNED THAT despite the Government’s contribution towards the Government grant-aided schools, most of these schools across the country continue to charge exorbitant tuition and non-tuition fees, thereby restricting accessibility to these schools, to only a few Ugandans, who are able to afford;*

*FURTHER CONCERN THAT some Government grant-aided schools justify their charging of exorbitant fees with the need to pay many other expenses involved, running the schools, including utilities, capital development funds and salaries to which the Government only contributes a small percentage that is insufficient;*

*RECOGNISING THAT even with certain Government grant-aided schools charging exorbitant fees allegedly to meet the various demands of running the schools, which the Government does not adequately meet, some Government grant-aided schools, especially in upcountry districts continue to register excellent academic performance, even with tuition and non-tuition fees for boarding schools below Shs 1,000,000;*

*CONSIDERING THAT the education sector plays a pivotal role in ensuring that Uganda achieves Vision 2040, which aims at transforming Uganda from a predominantly present and low-income country to a competitive upper middle income country;*

*COGNIZANT of the Sustainable Development Goal No.4, which aims at ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all among other objectives;*

*NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by Parliament that:*

1. *The Government intervenes in the fee structure for the Government grant-aided schools and streamlines the tuition and non-tuition fees charged by these Government grant-aided schools.*
2. *The Government justifies why it continues to give statutory grants to Government grant-aided schools that charge exorbitant tuition and non-tuition fees.*
3. *The Government grant-aided schools pay tuition and non-tuition fees into the Consolidated Fund.*
4. *The Government posts sufficient teaching and non-teaching staff to the Government grant-aided schools and pays for salaries and wages*.” I beg to move.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Is the motion seconded? It is seconded by hon. Silwany, hon. Brenda Nabukenya, hon. Mawanda, hon. Fox Odoi, hon. Bishanga, hon. Okupa, hon. Kasolo, hon. Tom Amooti, hon. Jane and hon. Kawooya. Members, thank you for supporting the motion. Hon. Opendi, would you, in just two minutes, talk about - I know you talk a lot.

**MS OPENDI:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will try to justify it in two minutes. We all know that the Constitution gives the responsibility of providing quality education to the Government. Section 4 of the Education Act mandates the state to provide education and training of its children, jointly with the support of parents, guardians and other stakeholders.

Madam Speaker, basic education is supposed to be provided and enjoyed as a right by all persons in the country. However, financing education has become extremely expensive for the ordinary citizens, especially to the grant-aided schools in this country. Financing education in grant-aided schools is through fees, grants from the Government, donations and other means appropriated by the Government.

As per the Education Act, it is the responsibility of the Government to ensure that all trained teachers are deployed in these Government grant-aided schools. It is their responsibility to pay salaries, allowances, pay for the non-teaching staff and provide educational materials in these schools.

Attached to my motion is a report which clearly shows what most of these schools pay such as Mt St Mary's College Namagunga, Gayaza High School, St Mary's College Kisubi, St Peter's Senior Secondary School Nsambya and others. These are the few that we managed to reach and picked their invoices. These schools are justifying the high tuition they charge on the fact that the Government only pays a certain number of teachers. For example, St Mary's College Kisubi has 80 teachers, out of which, 48 are paid by the Government.

In St Peter's Senior Secondary School Nsambya, the Government pays 56 teachers out of the 92 teachers. In Kawempe Muslim Secondary School, out of the 100 teachers, the Government pays only 73 of the teachers and five support staff, out of the 20. Kibuli Secondary School has 132 teachers but the Government pays only 92 of them. Even then, Madam Speaker, this justification does not hold because when we compared this with the private schools like Seeta High schools - you find that Seeta High schools meet the cost of maintaining the buildings, paying all the teachers, feeding the children and other costs incidental in the running of schools yet, the fees is almost the same, with schools that receive funding from the Government and some of their teachers are even paid by the Government.

Madam Speaker, we need equity in education. The poor children that perform very well in our districts from upcountry schools, even when they have scored aggregate four, in their Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE), cannot come to Mt St Mary's College Namagunga or Gayaza High School because their parents cannot raise the Shs 3 million or Shs 2.8 million that is being charged.

All this money is collected and used at source by these schools.

Therefore, in order for us to ensure equity in this country – for the children from Bukedea, Busoga, Sebei, Masindi and everywhere to also come to these very good schools that are grant-aided – we need to have all the money collected by these schools paid into the Consolidated Fund so that it is distributed to support all the other schools in the country.

Madam Speaker, I beg to submit. My seconders are around. The others, who were initially on the document, are on duty upcountry. So, I have given you those ones. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Hon. Sarah Opendi. This is a very pertinent issue that we need to look at in depth. Since the seconders are there – Hon. Elijah Okupa, do you want to speak for a minute?

5.52

**Mr Elijah okupa (Independent, Kasilo County, Serere):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I stand here to second the motion moved by Hon. Opendi and seconded by the House.

Let me just pose questions. When we engaged our research department to carry out research and pick from a number of schools - there were about eight schools that were picked - Madam Speaker, it was mindboggling. For example, for Gayaza, even if you got Aggregate Four and are from Malera, it is not until you pay the Shs 400,000, which they say is for admission yet you have even passed. They charge for utilities – electricity and water.

It is my understanding that for the people of Mwenge Central or the schools there and those in Kasilo, the Umeme rates are the same. Why should Gayaza and Kisubi charge people for utilities at different rates? *(Applause)* That is what we found out –

**The Deputy Speaker:** Remember that those utilities are budgeted for under the Ministry of Education and Sports.

**Mr okupa:** Yes, that is why you find discrepancies. Look at the uniform. A school here is charging Shs 450,000 for a uniform while another is charging Shs 165,000; are they designer uniforms? What is this?

When you come to - I can give you an example of Seroma Christian High School. Uniform is charged at Shs 400,000 – that is a private school. When you come to Namagunga, it Shs 148,000.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, that is why we need fairness. If the education of today was at that time when I went to Teso College, I would not have gone there. I had passed from a village grass-thatched school but I was able to go to Teso College and later to St Leo’s College Kyegobe, from where I performed very well. My OB is here.

We need to bring uniformity and equity such that we are able to allow children from whatever village they are coming from - whether you are coming from Kisoro, Vurra, Isingiro, Kotido or Bugiri – to have the equity.

Finally, why should a school charge more than a university? There is a girl I am supporting at Kyambogo University. I have just paid Shs 850,000 for fees. However, when you go to a secondary school, it is Shs 3 million and at a nursery school, it is Shs 2 million: what is this?

Madam Speaker, I think there is need for us to step up the game and bring fairness and equity and regulate. Let us not leave it to the vanguards of the market forces to determine the prices and our people are affected. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, honourable members. When you look at Article 30 of our very good Constitution – on the right to education, all persons have a right to education. The inequality, the unfairness is stopping other people from enjoying the right to education.

Since we need uniformity in this process, I am referring this motion to the Committee on Education and Sports. Study it very well and bring a report to this House for us to debate and make a conclusion to stop these inequalities. *(Applause)*

**Ms opendi:** Madam Speaker, allow me to lay this report that helped in supporting this motion. It is a report by our research department on the same matter. I beg to lay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I want to thank Hon. Sarah Opendi and the seconder very much. We need equity, fairness and uniformity in the whole process. You cannot pay Shs 3 million in nursery school and in the university, you pay Shs 800,000. This is unfair. It is only children of the rich who will end up going to school. This should be handled by the Committee on Education and Sports, with respect to Article 30 of our Constitution.

I want to thank you wish you a blessed evening. I adjourn the House to 2.00 p.m. tomorrow.

*(The House rose at 5.58 p.m. and adjourned until Thursday, 10 February 2022 at 2.00 p.m.)*