****

**PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA**

**Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

*Parliament met at 2.18 p.m. at Parliament House, Kampala.*

PRAYERS

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

*The House was called to order.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to today’s sitting.

I congratulate some of our own who have had victories in the Court of Appeal. Today, Hon. Onen, the Youth MP Eastern Region, has been cleared by the Court of Appeal and can now sit here in peace. Congratulations.

Also, we have a team from the Pan African Parliament that was elected to very high and important posts. All our Members were posted in very important positions, and tomorrow, the Rt Hon. Prime Minister will move a motion to congratulate them. We congratulate our very own Caroline Kamusiime, Nsanja Patrick - of course they were under the wise coordination of a senior legislator - Hon. Felix Okot-Ogong also got a good position. He was the chief coordinator because all these are new. Honourable, you did a good job. Our other two colleagues were also given good positions. Details will be in the Rt Hon. Prime Minister’s motion tomorrow.

I also want to congratulate the youth MPs who have today launched the Status of Youth Report, 2022. I represented the Speaker at Sheraton Hotel. They have been supported by USAID, Department of International Development (DID) and other organisations. I want to encourage members of special interest groups especially the elderly – issues of the military, you cannot just come here and launch your status report; theirs is operational – but especially the elderly, the workers and the youth. When you do such reports, they help us in knowing your areas of interest that we track when we are processing most of the Government business.

Without further ado, I will go to matters of national importance *(Members rose\_).* Colleagues, you have procedural matters? Let me start with Hon. Silwany.

**MR SILWANY:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand on a procedural matter that concerns the sanctity and integrity of our Parliament, which is important to all of us.

Mr Speaker, about one week ago, I saw a minister in this country and in our Government bashing the operations - the work of and how Parliament does its work. It was Hon. Persis Namuganza, the Minister of State for Lands, Housing and Urban Development (Housing).

Mr Speaker, in reference to our Rules of Procedure, Rule 190 gives the Speaker powers to form ad hoc committees and to lead those committees to ensure that they perform the work that they are meant to do. However, the minister was seen on television questioning the integrity of the presiding officers of this House; whether they have the authority to form Ad hoc committees or to initiate and send members of Parliament to the field.

Mr Speaker, would it not be procedurally right for you to invite this particular minister to come here and put this record right because when you touch the integrity of Parliament and its presiding officers, you are touching –*(Interjection)*

**MS OPENDI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to inform this House that I was a member of the Ad hoc committee on the Naguru-Nakawa investigations, and it surprised me when I read the postings by this particular minister that the Ad hoc committee being formed was being used to fight wars - to fight her. She said, “These so-called Ad hoc committees of Parliament” – that is one statement – “What are they for when we have other committees?” She also posted, “Ad hoc committees are created in bad faith.”

I wonder whether you, Mr Speaker, create these Ad hoc committees in bad faith – to fight other people.

Mr Speaker, I am not the kind of person that can be used to fight anybody. This particular Naguru-Nakawa investigation - for the benefit of the members of this House - there was an investigation by the Committee on Physical Infrastructure in the 10th Parliament and that committee presented its report, which was rejected. Having been rejected, this matter resurrected in the 11th Parliament and the Speaker, in her own wisdom, created this Ad hoc committee. This is the information I wanted to give this House.

**MR MACHO:** Thank you so much, Hon. Sarah.

Mr Speaker, this is a disease that started in the 10th Parliament by some Members belittling- *(Interjection)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order.

**MR SSEMUJJU:** Mr Speaker, we have rules that you are supposed to follow in this Parliament. Hon. Silwany stood on a point of procedure. It is also uncharacteristic of a Commonwealth Parliament that someone would rise on information on procedure, but because of your magnanimity, you have allowed it. The Member holding the Floor is also giving information to a colleague that stood on information.

Mr Speaker, is the Member in order to disregard the rules of this Parliament and reduce it to a market where you just raise any point and you shoot up?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. I think Hon. Ssemujju is right because the point of information goes to the person holding the Floor. Hon. Sarah Opendi rose on information to Hon. Silwany.So, Hon. Macho should have asked for a point of information from Hon. Silwany.

Colleagues, sometimes we try to be flexible but that should not be abused. For example, I should not be allowing information on points of procedure and I have been strict on it. Since you are colleagues and you insist sometimes, I become a bit flexible. As a presiding officer, I have that authority on such matters. However, I would not want it to be stretched further because you can substantively stand on your own.

Hon. Silwany, resume the Floor and that is the last information you are taking on this matter.

**Mr silwany:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Therefore, the procedural matter I am raising is, wouldn’t it be procedurally right for you as the presiding officer of this Parliament to invite this particular minister to the Floor of Parliament and explain her conduct to Members why she would go out on social media and television and bash the way Parliament is working?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Colleagues, when you say, “chair” or “Rt Hon. Speaker,” then you are talking to me as an individual. I want to know; when you rise, you must be under a certain rule - Are you rising on procedure? I had allowed a few procedural points but if they are related to this, I can first pick those then make my final guidance.

**Mr basalirwa:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. On this particular matter of Hon. Persis Namuganza, this Parliament adopted a report of the Ad hoc committee unanimously - yes, with amendments definitely -and there was a recommendation that she steps aside. The fact that she did not step aside and continues to denigrate the image of Parliament speaks volumes. I am not so sure whether inviting her here will even serve the purpose because this Parliament indicted her.

I do not know whether it would be procedurally right for this Parliament to summon a person it indicted to explain herself. This Parliament did in that report. Wouldn’t it be right to invoke another rule so that we ensure that the dignity of Parliament is preserved?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Kibalya, procedure - if it is related to this matter because I want to do one ruling.

**Mr kibalya:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. When we debate reports in this House, it is in the interest of this country. We do not expect a Member of this House to take advantage of her position of being in Cabinet to demean this Parliament and abuse its rights.

In the same spirit, the honourable minister was once heard saying Parliament has no powers over her. It cannot impeach, censure or do anything about her. This is the same spirit and arrogance that some of these people have. Even when somebody is a minister, they must remain answerable to this House. Situations of creating impunity that somebody is untouchable or cannot be handled by this Parliament should come to an end, through your office, Mr Speaker.

**Mr macho:** Mr Speaker, it is very disturbing that the House of legislation is being attempted by the Minister. This is not the first time. Many times, Hon. Namuganza provokes, diminishes and abuses the authority of Parliament. This started in the 10th Parliament. It is high time this stopped.

Mr Speaker, this should stop by you coming out and us too, to give a very strong statement. Such character that is of no decorum and not fit of an honourable member should stop.

I, therefore, propose, through your guidance, Mr Speaker, that a motion should be moved today so that we can discipline this horrible Member. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Two minutes each.

**Mr okupa:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to stick to the issue of the rules. Rule 156 of the Parliament of Uganda regarding the committees of Parliament gives powers to this House that:

1. “In accordance with the rule 90 of the Constitution, the House shall appoint Committees of Parliament necessary for the efficient discharge of its functions.”
2. “For the avoidance of doubt, these rules shall prescribe the powers, composition and the functions of the committees.”

Therefore, the issue of the select committees as per rule 190 specifies that:

1. “The House may, at any time upon a motion moved after notice given, appoint a select committee to investigate a particular matter.”
2. “A select committee shall comprise at least five Members who shall be designated by the Party Whips on the basis of proportional Party representation in the House, taking into consideration interests of the independent Members in the House.”
3. “The Speaker shall, in consultation with the Government Chief Whip and the Chief Opposition Whip, appoint the members and the chairpersons of the select committee.”
4. “Three members shall form a quorum if the committee consists of five members, and if the committee consists of more than five Members, the quorum shall be 1/3 of all the members.
5. “Where for any reason a member of the select committee is unable to act, another Member may be appointed in his or her place, taking into consideration party proportionality in the House.”

Mr Speaker, the select committee that you formed was something that was decided by your Office and the whips of both sides. Where does the minister get the powers to question your authority? Does the minister want to be a Speaker? Does she want to direct the works of this House?

Therefore, I fully agree with the Members who have moved a motion that disciplinary action must be taken against the Member for bringing disrespect to this House and more so, to the leadership of this institution. I beg to submit. Thank you.

**Mr ssemujju:** Mr Speaker, I had raised a point of procedure and you had allowed me.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes, I had allowed Hon. Ssemujju.

**Mr ssemujju:** Mr Speaker, I want to thank you very much. I will be comfortable again if we stick to the rules. The behaviour of Members of Parliament during debate is covered under rule 82. Also, there is behaviour in the House under rule 83 and general behaviour under rule 85 and the Appendix F.

Mr Speaker, I am hesitant to endorse what, in my view, - and I want to ask for forgiveness if I offend anyone - I am against Parliament sometimes acting like a mob. I am also against the behaviour of thinking that the decisions of Parliament cannot be criticised. We criticise the Executive and the Judiciary. If there is a particular rule that a Member has offended, either rule 83, 82, or appendix F that deals with our conduct outside Parliament - those who are baying for blood should tell us.

I am not encouraging Members to go and attack Parliament but I am against Parliament acting as the mob; that Parliament is now beyond criticism. I fear that direction, Mr Speaker. I am asking you, Mr Speaker, to interpret these rules before this motion is moved.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable. Colleagues, please, kindly take your seats. I am happy that the Rt Hon. Prime Minister is here. The most important duty we can do here, as colleagues, is to first protect the integrity and independence of this House. *(Applause)* The day we lose that, then, we are finished, as a House.

Even I, the presiding officer or the Prime Minister - any day you can be back on that backbench. The moment we get positions - even out of this House – and they end up misleading us that now we are untouchable, then the decisions we make here, as a House, will never be respected. If you are a Member of this House and you cannot respect a decision of this House, then you are saying to the public that if I, a Member of the family, cannot respect what we agreed upon in a family meeting, then that family is more or less useless.”

Now, if a Member feels aggrieved on any matter, we have an opportunity under rule 55 to come here and make a statement of personal explanation. If you feel aggrieved in any way, we give you a chance.

However, when you go and blackmail the House - I think, whereas I agree with Hon. Ssemujju Nganda – Hon. Ssemujju, the day the decisions of this House are ridiculed - there is a difference between criticism and ridicule. We do not fear criticism because we are criticised every day. I think, in a day, I am criticised like a thousand times. That is part of our life. The Prime Minister here is also criticised but she moves on and does her work. Criticism sometimes helps us to redefine what we are doing and behave better.

I have seen some of the messages. I have seen some of the statements. Rules of natural justice require that a Member is heard. Those rules are very clear. I will not come here and say a Member is guilty and decide what should be done. Instead what I am going to do is to invoke rule 91 of our Rules of Procedure and I refer to the case of the Hon. Persis Namuganza to the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline, where she can go and exercise her privilege as a Member. She will be heard. That is also in line with rule 185. I need the committee to report back to the House within two weeks’ time. That matter is closed. *[A Member rose\_]* on the same matter? No, that matter is closed. The Speaker has ruled; unless you want to change my ruling.

**MS AISHA KABANDA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. There is a letter I want to bring to your attention. Probably, it would help us if they go to the same committee at the same time. I was a Member of the select committee and I know very well the resolutions that were made by this committee over the matter that we are discussing. The committee made a resolution on Internal Medicine of Virginia Limited.

There is a letter that has been circulated and it was written by Hon. Judith Nabakooba to the Inspector General of Police. It reads; if you may permit me:

*“Land for M/S Internal Medicine of Virginia limited, plot 20 to 50 Naguru Road Kampala*

*I received a telephone communication on 7 July 2022 from His Excellency the President directing that you provide security to M/S Internal Medicine of Virginia Limited to enable them to take possession and develop the land leased to the company by Uganda Land Commission with immediate effect. The land comprises plots 25 to 50 Naguru Road, Kampala Capital City.*

*By copy of this letter, all relevant Government agencies are requested to provide the investor the necessary support and cooperation.”*

It is signed by Judith Nabakooba, Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development. The letter is copied to the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the Minister for Kampala Capital City and Metropolitan Affairs, Ministers of State Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Chairperson Land Commission, Permanent Secretary Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Secretary Office of the President, Principal Private Secretary to His Excellency the President, Executive Director Kampala Capital City, Secretary Uganda Land Commission and M/s Internal Medicine of Virginia Limited.

Mr Speaker, this Parliament resolved that the land that was given to Virginia Limited be retracted and be allocated to another person. It was advised that the order to give be rescinded because Virginia Limited was not traceable. The committee failed to trace what Virginia Limited was; they did not appear before them.

There was even another committee of Cabinet that looked for Virginia Limited in vain. We could not allocate land to an entity that cannot be traced. Virginia Limited did not even appear before the Uganda Land Commission when they requested for this land. This Parliament, therefore, advised that that land gets back to the Government and land be relocated to another beneficiary.

Are we proceeding well, Mr Speaker, if we move this way; that Parliament makes resolutions and they are defied by *ex-officios* to this Parliament? Is it not procedurally right, Mr Speaker, that you direct this same minister also to appear before the same committee for having defied the directives of this Parliament? I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable colleague. This is a substantive matter on the Order Paper.

**MS AISHA KABANDA:** Sir, I beg that I lay -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: No, wait. I am going to guide you.

**MS AISHA KABANDA**: May I lay this letter on Table?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: No, I am going to guide you; so, wait, honourable member. This is a substantive matter on the Order Paper. The minister made the request to me because they are going to have a function with the President and she was delayed. She called me and requested that we put this matter on the Order Paper tomorrow. Now, the substantive matter is out of rule 220 of our Rules of Procedure, where the Government is supposed to present an action taken report, which was adopted by the House with amendments.

So, in that regard, tomorrow, she might tell us that the action I took was to disregard or to push aside your report; what if that is the action she decides to take? Then we would decide what to do next.

Therefore, I would guide the honourable member that you raise this matter tomorrow when we reach this item, and that is when you will lay the letter on the Table, so that it is taken up at that time.

I wanted to make clarification for the record. Clerk, kindly make a correction: I referred to rule 185;this rule is about functions of the Committee on Human Rights, it is rule 175, which is for the Committee on Rules and Privileges. So, take note of that correction.

Colleagues, I am now going to matters of national importance. I will start with Hon. Tom Aza- *[Hon. Byanyima rose\_]*

Hon. Byanyima, I hope it is not on this; anything to do with this matter, I guided and closed.

**MR BYANYIMA:** Mr Speaker, on 10th -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Honourable, anything to do with this matter of land and the report, I have guided.

**MR BYANYIMA:** Mr Speaker, on the 10thof May, a nine member ad hoc committee on rationalisation of agencies and merger was reported to this House; it was not debated because the honourable Minister of Public Service requested for two months, and the two months have expired. While they have expired, the Minister of Public Service is busy rationalising agencies – staff in many of the agencies are under times of uncertainty.

Therefore, we would wish that the minister comes in and reports to us; we do respect ministers, we can compare notes. This country does not belong to one side of the people. It belongs to all of us; we want to be involved in this discussion so that Members can debate this report and we come to a logical conclusion of the matter. I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Attorney-General, is there something you wanted to say on this.

2.51

**THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The matter of rationalisation is a policy matter still under Cabinet; it has to be handled by the Cabinet, after which it will formally come to Parliament. So, for Parliament to intervene now, it would be to pre-empt the work of Cabinet; the Executive-*[Several Members rose\_]*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Colleagues, just a minute, sometimes it is good that we give a colleague chance and then we can rebuttal.

**MR KAFUUZI**: Let me repeat, Mr Speaker, that the matter of rationalisation is a policy matter still under Cabinet. Once the Cabinet approves it, it will come to Parliament, which can either pass it or reject it.

My belief is that the steps being taken by Parliament right now are pre-emptive of the work of Cabinet and that causes a conflict because tomorrow, then Parliament will stop Cabinet from doing something else.

Therefore, my humble prayer is that you give us time, as Cabinet. When a report is presented to Parliament, it can either be passed or rejected. I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable colleague- so, the substantive Minister of Public Servicewho requested for two months to study the report, and he said, after two months the report should be debated; was he in order? Was he not in order? Did he know what he was doing or not? Because the minister holding the docket came here and appeared before the committee and the House; he did not submit the way you have submitted.

Therefore, can you go and advise-

**MR KAFUUZI:** Mr Speaker, I will talk to the minister. However, my understanding is that he was talking in respect of the Ad hoc committee report, not the report of Cabinet, which will be tabled before Parliament by the Prime Minister for discussion on the issue of rationalisation.*[Several Members rose]*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Thank you, honourable colleagues. Honourable Deputy Attorney-General, I kindly want to remind you that you are a Member of Parliament; even an ex-officio is made a Member of Parliament. You were part of the decision that Parliament took. The presiding officer that time, the Rt Hon. Speaker, brought that issue here, a committee was constituted and the Government responded. What is remaining is just debate.

I think you are out of order because you should have stopped this before Parliament did its work. Now you are saying you do not want a debate. Rt Hon. Prime Minister -

2.55

**THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja):** Mr Speaker and colleagues, now that the Minister for Public Service came here and asked for two months, bearing in mind that the Cabinet is still handling the matter, I request for your indulgence, Rt Hon. Speaker, that the Minister for Public Service comes here and asks for an extension so that the Cabinet can conclude this matter.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, that is a decent way; I wish your minister had done it that way *- (Interjection)-* No, there is no junior minister here; we have a minister. That is more decent.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, tomorrow morning, come with the Minister of Public Service. I will call the Leader of the Opposition, the chairperson of the committee and we meet over this matter. We shall meet and we harmonise how best to handle this matter, then we shall inform the House in the afternoon. Let us do that tomorrow morning; the LOP, the Prime Minister, the chairperson of the Ad hoc committee and the Attorney-General.

2.57

**THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Mathias Mpuuga):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The reason - I am sorry for trying to drag you back on this matter - is because I had gotten the honourable member who raised the procedural matter differently.

My appreciation of his concern was that already, the minister is undertaking rationalisation. I was seeking clarification from the Prime Minister who took flight and never gave me opportunity to listen from her.

I am revoking your powers to get that clarification from the Prime Minister whether actually, there is on-going rationalisation so that the spirit of the honourable member who was concerned is settled.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Rt Hon. Prime Minister -

**MS NABBANJA**: Mr Speaker, I request that you allow us to do that tomorrow; you had already ruled.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Colleagues, whatever we discuss tomorrow, I will report to the House in the afternoon in my communication. Hon. Okupa, then I conclude with Hon. Amos.

2.58

**MR ELIJAH OKUPA (Independent, Kasilo County, Serere):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am moved by a matter that touches the people of Teso, Lango and Acholi, specifically by a letter dated 7 July 2022, written to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs. The letter reads:

*“STATUS OF PAYMENTS FOR THE WAR DEBT CLAIMANTS/BENEFICIARIES IN ACHOLI, LANGO AND TESO SUB-REGIONS*

*Reference is made to your letter dated 16 May 2022 and referenced AG/2022/013 concerning the above.*

*However, the District is not in position to ascertain the exact number of beneficiaries who received the payments and their corresponding amounts received. Further still, the district is not in position to ascertain the exact number of beneficiaries whose payments bounced and the reasons for the individual bouncing of the payments.*

*The purpose of this communication, therefore, is to request a detailed list of the beneficiaries, clearly indicating those that were paid, amounts received by individual beneficiaries, and those whose payments bounced with the reasons why they bounced, to enable the district to effect corrections so that the remaining beneficiaries are paid.*

*Signed:*

*For the Serere District Chief Administrative Officer, Mr Otira Copied To: Area Members of Parliament;*

*District chairperson, Serere; and*

*The Resident District Commissioner, Serere.”*

Mr Speaker, the Government, headed by His Excellency the President, launched compensation in the three regions in Soroti. But to date, the people in these respective districts, including Members of Parliament, do not know the people who were paid.

I was perturbed when the President was in Kapchorwa and an old man raised the issue. The President asked the Attorney-General to provide an answer and the Attorney-General said he presented a list to Parliament but he asked for time.

Mr Speaker, could you clarify whether you have ever received the list of Members who were paid in those three regions including their names, amount and the cows which were compensated.

When I consulted, I was told that in Lango sub-region, some people received Shs 70,000. Others are receiving Shs 200,000 while some received Shs 60,000. Which cow cost Shs 70,000?

We have been asking for this list but we wonder why the Attorney-General’s office has decided to keep quiet. Even when the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs asked the Attorney-General to submit these details, they failed.

I want to request - Mr Speaker, you can now see that they are asking the districts to give them the list yet they were not responsible for paying –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Okupa, you want the list, isn't it?

**MR OKUPA:** Yes.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, time is not our best ally. Attorney–General?

3.02

**THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. On Wednesday, last week, I came to this Parliament with a pile of lists. I approached the Speaker and told her I wanted to submit them because I am receiving requests from different Members of Parliament. I wanted to submit them to Parliament so that there is a central place from which they can get them, but she said the matter would be put on the Order Paper.

Mr Speaker, even if you asked for them now, I will walk to my office and bring them. The money we had been allocated or spent –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Attorney-General, in the next one hour, table the list here.

**MR KAFUUZI:** Most obliged.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I think that settles it.

**MR OKUPA:** Thank you. It is good the Attorney-General has said last week, but we were with the President two or three weeks ago. So, the Attorney-General lied to the President that he had given the list to Parliament. That must be on record.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Attorney-General, I do not want it to be an exchange. He needed the list and you said I give you time to walk and bring it. So, bring the list. Let me end with Hon. Amos Okot.

3.03

**MR AMOS OKOT (NRM, Agago North County, Agago):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is clear that many people normally take this House for granted, especially our senior people, who are in the Executive arm of Government.

The very debate, which is taking place here now, will tell you that when pressure is being mounted on the Floor of Parliament, somebody gets up and says, I am going to do it. But the moment the pressure goes down, they forget and put it aside. This includes the first matter that was raised, where you even ruled, Mr Speaker.

I am rising under Rule 57(1)(a) of our Rules of Procedure, which states, *“A Member may, with the leave of the Speaker, give oral notice of a Motion during a sitting*.”

Rule 109 of our Rules of Procedure is about a vote of censure against ministers. Mr Speaker, I want to give an oral notice that I intend to bring a censure motion against the minister who did not respect the resolution of this Parliament. Besides, she began giving more threats to Members of Parliament and the sanity of this House - Hon. Persis Namuganza. I am going to bring a motion to censure her. I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Order colleagues! I would wish the House to do its work in a very smart way. And I know that under that same rule, rule 57(1)(b), one requires a notice of three days. Then under rule 57(1)(c), I can suspend the motion -

Honourable members, I emphasised the point of the rule of natural justice. The minister says she needs to be heard. So, I request the Member intending to move the motion to be patient. You never know, the Member – I can see you are holding a microphone. That is intimidating the presiding officer. Otherwise, my ruling is final. Do you want to challenge me before I finish? *–(Laughter)*

Honourable members, I would like to beseech that we allow due process to take place. Let us be patient. In two weeks’ time, our very own House – If you feel you have very serious evidence and information, you can appear before the committee and submit it there. However, we should not be seen to be running after a colleague, as if – Yes, two weeks is not a long time.

**MR AMOS OKOT:** Mr Speaker –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, honourable. I have already warned you that you are intimidating me. Do you see? *(Laughter)* Honourable member, I have ruled on that. Let us take it that way.

Colleagues, in the public gallery, we have students and teachers of Amari-Gardiner Primary School from Buliisa County, Buliisa District. *(Applause)* They are represented by Hon. Allan Atugonza and Hon. Norah Bigirwa. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Colleagues, I hope you have also seen the Prime Minister. *(Laughter)* Could you stand up so that Members can see you. The children want to see the Rt Hon. Prime Minister. Thank you.

On matters of national importance, let us have Hon. Tom Aza.

3.07

**MR TOM AZA (NRM, West Moyo County, Moyo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance. The matter is about the rampant electricity or power outages in Moyo General Hospital. This has caused death to babies in the neo-natal intensive care unit and incubators, as well as damaging vital medical equipment like theatre lights, X-ray exposure switches, dental surgical microscopes, auto-clave sterilisers, water distillers in the laboratory, air conditioners and washing machines, among others.

The challenge of unstable power started a long time ago and whenever power goes off, it comes back with a very powerful surge thereby damaging vital medical equipment. On average, power goes off thrice a week.

Another source of power used by the hospital is a generator but it does not have an automatic switch. Maintaining it has become difficult and expensive because of the increase in fuel prices.

The third one is solar power but the batteries have since become very weak and cannot sustain enough power.

Lastly, to make matters worse, there is no bio-medical engineer to help in maintaining the power equipment. This is in addition to the lack of enough theatre beds in Moyo General Hospital.

My prayers are that:

1. Procurement of an automatic generator with enough fuel be done;
2. The Government fast-tracks the stabilisation of electricity from the national grid;
3. Recruitment of more hospital staff including a bio-medical engineer, be done; and
4. There is need for a brand new and more powerful solar battery for Moyo General Hospital because this hospital serves refuges in Obongi, Yumbe, Adjumani, Palorinya and as far as Yeyi and Kajokegi in South Sudan.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable member, in the prayers, you asked – and this is why I share with you colleagues – there is no prayer that answers an urgent matter. For example, the procurement of a generator will take three months.

3.10

**THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja):** Mr Speaker, Hon. Aza has brought up issues that concern almost all health facilities across the country.

We had a meeting last week with the Minister of Health and have a plan to tackle those issues conclusively because most of our X-ray machines across the country have been damaged by power surges.

In our budget this year, we have planned to recruit bio-medical engineers, anaesthesiologists and all those people because we think that will help us to have these machines last longer. I request that my brother, Hon. Aza, gives me those issues in detail, in writing, such that I can use the same to direct the Minister of Health to consider his facility.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister. Colleagues, I should first help the Attorney-General –*(Laughter)*

In the public gallery, we have pupils and teachers of Clarke Junior School, Makindye Division, Kampala. Please stand up for recognition. *(Applause)* They are represented by Hon. Derrick Nyeko and Hon. Shamim Malende. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Thank you for coming.

Hon. Opendi, I am on matters of national importance. I have to raise –

3.13

**MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo):** Mr Speaker, my apologies but I have to raise this because I raised it last week too; it is a matter regarding UPDF recruitment; it is an urgent matter.

My prayers were very clear. The longer we take, the more the anomaly goes on. The Speaker had directed that this matter should be answered on Tuesday, yesterday. Today is Wednesday and it is not on the Order Paper.

Is it not procedurally right that this matter be placed on the Order Paper for tomorrow so that the Minister for Defence and Veteran Affairs can respond? People are waiting all over this country for this Parliament to speak or make a resolution on this matter. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. The minister is ready. She has already submitted the statement to the Clerk’s Office. I had already placed it on the draft Order Paper for tomorrow. It will be on tomorrow’s Order Paper. Clerk, please ensure that indeed – the minister was even ready yesterday. It is us, the presiding offers that forgot to handle that matter. Thank you.

I would like us to end matters of national importance here.

**DR EMELY KUGONZA (NRM, Buyanja east county, Kibaale):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I rise on a matter of national importance in respect to land grabbing in the five villages of Kayanja Sub-county in Buyanja East Constituency in Kibaale District, which I represent in this House.

The affected households that numbered over 300 are in the villages of Kasenyi, Nyaburungi, Kakenzi, Nyakasozi and Kamuhoko.

The well-orchestrated plan to grab the land of the affected households started in 2005 with the National Forestry Authority declaring their land as part of the Nyakarongo Forest Reserve. With this claim, the NFA proceeded to violently evict the households who were bonafide *bibanja* owners. Their property, including their homesteads worth millions of shillings, was destroyed.

The matter was reported to the relevant local authorities and I have the letter, which I will, at an appropriate moment, lay on the Table.

At this time, some people in the NFA were working clandestinely with the principal land grabber in the names of Mujuni Bernard. Indeed, this Bernard Mujuni, working with some people in Kibaale District Land Board proceeded to apply for free –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, can I request you to listen to one another? If you want to talk to one another, just go outside, talk and then come back here because I do not restrict any of you from moving. This cannot be a chatting ground where you continue conversing. Let us have order in this House. Honourable member, please go ahead.

**MR KUGONZA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your protection. As I was saying, Mr Mujuni Bernard, working with some people in Kibaale District Land Board proceeded to apply for a freehold land title in January 2017, covering the *bibanjas* of the affected persons in the five villages I have already mentioned.

The affected persons caught wind of this illegal attempt to grab their land and reported the matter to the then Member of Parliament, Hon. Matia Kasaija, who contacted the honourable Minister of State for Lands, Hon. Persis Namuganza –

In a letter dated 6th February –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, it seems you have become a doctor and you have written a thesis. That is too long for a matter of urgency. Just tell us your prayers.

**MR KUGONZA:** Now, working with these other people that are taking the land of my people – after the land title was processed – they have gone to court and are now using court, which has granted an order that that these people cannot access their land, which is a source of their livelihood.

I appeal to this august House to direct the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and the police to expeditiously and thoroughly investigate the circumstances under which Mr Bernard Mujuni secured the land title in question, with the view of having it cancelled.

Secondly, I pray that Parliament directs the National Forestry Authority (NFA) to compensate all persons whose property and crops it destroyed in 2005 and for the disturbances since the survey they carried out themselves early this year has proved that this land is outside the Nyakarongo Central Forest Reserve.

I also pray that Parliament, through the relevant committee, investigates the NFA support staff that have been an accomplice in this illegality, with the view of having them punished according to our laws.

I beg to submit, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable, you have very clear prayers but you tied my hands when you said the man went to court and got a court order on these matters. When you bring in that, then, Rule 73 of our Rules of Procedure on subjudice applies. However, some of the issues are those that the Executive can handle – like investigating how he got the land title and all that.

Honourable Prime Minister, I do not know what you can say on this matter? You come from that same area. So, you should be having some good information.

3.19

**THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja):** Mr Speaker and colleagues, I was once a Member of Parliament representing that area. There has been connivance by district officials in Kibaale District. You know, Kibaale, Kakumiro and Kagadi have got land titles of absentee landlords. However, there are those enclaves of public land and some officials would go and title this land without involving the area land committees. This problem is what you, Members, are handling even now in this House.

Now that the matter is before court and court has issued an order – but you also realise that the President has been very categorical. People want to steal people’s land, sometimes using a number of approaches. The RDCs were sanctioned and put on notice by the President, across the country. Police is on alert not to provide security for these people who want to evict innocent Ugandans who have been on that land for life.

My brother, Emely, we need to use a number of approaches and one of them is by using the police to disallow – through the chairperson of the security committee - the RDC. I know that these people are fraudulent; everybody knows. You know the Natalia issue. These are thieves and we shall not allow them to stampede the development of our area.

Mr Speaker, Hon. Emely Kugonza has my support. I am going to use my powers and that of the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and have our people protected. Thank you so much. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon.Okot, these are now issues of Members, who have raised the matters, and the Prime Minister. If you want to give her support, you can whisper to her. You can answer on her behalf next time. *(Laughter)*

Hon. Polycarp Ogwal? I think he is not here. Hon. Margaret Lamwaka?

Colleagues, please, always register issues with our office. Whether you go to the Speaker or my office, we coordinate. Whichever office you go to, you will be guided.

3.23

**MS MARGARET LAMWAKA (Independent, Chua East County, Kitgum):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. We went home for recess and during recess, we were also to do oversight duties. I want to inform this House that on the 22nd of last month, 40 South Sudanese gunmen came to Orom East Sub-county in a farm area called Kabungun and killed a 52-year-old mother of eight children and injured a 17-year-old young boy called Mathew Ocira. They raided eight animals, which haven’t been recovered up to now. They went with our five boys and four girls to South Sudan and released them the next day.

It was unfortunate that when Ocira was taken to hospital, he passed on. That means the South Sudanese have killed two people.

Mr Speaker, from 1927, the people of Orom have been experiencing the killing and raiding by the South Sudanese. At the same time, we also have a similar issue of insecurity – by our brothers in Karamoja.

I come from a sub-county, which neighbours Karamoja. I want to be very specific today that if I say “Karamoja”, I will be doing fallacy of generalisation. The “Karamoja” I mean is the Jie from Kotido. They are the people who are disturbing us day and night.

On the 18th, they arrowed a classroom teacher of Luluku Primary School who passed on, on the 21st and left behind a wife and three children.

Again, on the 24th, they got a man who had gone to fetch water, took him to the bush, killed him and even walked with the hand of this man – they chopped the hand and walked with it. They also went with his bicycle. It was until they went to a place called Lubanya that they said, “You know, we killed somebody. This is the bicycle. Anybody who has Shs 5,000 can buy the bicycle.”

I want to thank the soldiers who were there. After getting this report, these men were arrested. This man had three women and 18 children. These children have been left behind.

Again, on the 7th of this month, the same Karimojong came to - Mr Speaker, I want your protection –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, on matters of urgency, we give two minutes. Just go to prayers.

**MS LAMWAKA:** My prayers are that the soldiers should be deployed on the land offered by the community – it is one square kilometre, near the border – with immediate effect. I see the Deputy Commander Defence Forces; the security roads should be open especially at the porous borders of ours.

Reaching Sudan's border would take you 25 kilometres and that is where the road stops. So, I wish the roads could be opened, the Health Centre II or III could also be built in that same place, then more soldiers be deployed. Because if they come in 40 and ours are only six-eight – then, by military laws, they cannot repulse them effectively. The Ministry of ICT should also send airtel or MTN to put for us some boosters there.

Finally, the Ministry of Trade should also make use of the land, which was given to them for the border market. I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Thank You, honourable member. Rt Hon. Prime Minister-

3.28

**THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja):** Mr Speaker, I truly sympathise with my colleague. This matter came last Thursday, the Member for Agago brought up the same matter and we agreed to have a meeting on Friday at 2:00 p.m. so that we can handle these issues with the security personnel, including the ministers of Defence, Security, Internal Affairs and now you are talking about trade. I think I will also involve Trade and all of you colleagues, Members of Parliament. Thank you so much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, the Deputy Commander Lands Forces has also taken note as a Member of the House.

3.30

**MS CAROLINE KAMUSIIME (NRM, Woman Representative, Rukiga):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise up on a matter of national importance regarding labour export in Uganda. It is becoming a big problem, especially to our girls. Many families are crying in pain because of the girls being taken out to work. When they reach there, they suffer so much. As a mother, I feel so bad.

We need to get a serious solution to help our people. On the same matter, I bring to your attention a girl called Barbara Nyakaisiki from Muhanga Town Council, Rukiga District.

This girl is suffering; I have been in touch with the minister and I have visited the ministry and found many other families crying over the same issue.

I was told that she was in the deportation centre, but it is now four months, and I am not seeing any results. The girl was taken to Saudi Arabia, by a company called Supreme Link Limited owned by Mr Timothy Mwesigwa and this is a registered company.

When they take the girls, even if you make a call, they are not concerned. I went there and met the owner of the company and all he told me was that the girl did not have travel documents; now it is four months.

There is a video that has been circulating on social media that her kidney was removed. Most of them have died, we have seen it happening in our country.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** So, prayers, honourable.

**MS KAMUSIIME:** My prayer is to bring back Barbara to Muhanga Town Council Rukiga District, whether dead or alive. Secondly, a colleague of mine talked about health centres and -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, please.

**MS KAMUSIIME:** Thank you.

3.32

**THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja):** Mr Speaker, the issue of our innocent girls being taken to Saudi-

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: And the boys.

**MS NABBANJA:** Yes, and the boys; some of them who have fallen victim. We talked about this matter and have engaged on a number of forums, to the extent that we even went to those countries; we have made a number of developments but this issue continues to come.

Therefore, I suggest that the minister be allowed to come here with a comprehensive report of how far she has gone to mitigate those issues. Such, that Parliament can also have an input.

There are some of our people who have benefited from it; it is a complex matter and I request that you allow me to inform the Minister for Gender to come up with a comprehensive report so that Members can talk about it and we come up with a solution.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Rt Hon. Prime Minister, any day you want to be on Order Paper - we shall give you Tuesday. We shall have the statement of the minister. *(Ms Kamusiime rose)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, honourable member that is not how we behave in Parliament. You do not access a microphone without the permission of the Speaker. Otherwise, everyone will stand up and speak. I know how you feel; that is why you came up when I had even closed these matters, but I gave you special permission to present it.

So, I think what the Member wanted was at least some message of hope for the family.

**MS NABBANJA:** Mr Speaker, I am going to direct the minister in charge of Gender and Labour to make sure that that girl is brought back.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable colleagues, let me make it very easy for you; not every matter is reported back to this House. There are matters on which a Member rises and then after that, the Member can liaise directly with the minister or the Prime Minister.

Otherwise, this Order Paper will be clogged; we will never have substantive business in this House. So, the Honourable member has got a commitment. The Prime Minister said on Tuesday the Minister of Gender will be here to give a statement. Maybe on that day, if she has not yet handled the matter, then the member will raise it again during the debate.

3.36

**MS JOAN NAMUTAAWE (Independent, Woman Representative, Masaka):** I rise on a matter of national importance concerning lack of teachers in the newly opened Bukakata Seed School. The school was opened in January 2022, but ever since then, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Public Service have never employed any single teacher there apart from the Head Teacher and the Deputy.

The situation forced the head teacher to get volunteers to undertake teaching and –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, it is a maiden speech. *(Applause)* Honourable member, you are protected. Please proceed.

**MS NAMUTAAWE:** Mr Speaker, the school was constructed at a cost of over Shs 2 billion but it has no teachers. My prayer is that the Minister of Education and Sports and the Minister of Public Service should recruit -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, you just need teachers in your school. The Government spent Shs 2 billion in the area - *(Applause)* - They built a seed school and the school was opened. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, with your investment of Shs 2 billion, you did not send teachers. So, give the Member teachers; the Member needs teachers.

3.39

**THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja):** Thank you very much, Member for Masaka District. Mr Speaker, I have taken her concern seriously and the Minister of Education and Sports will send teachers there. In fact, currently, we are recruiting some teachers; so, I will help you to get the teachers. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable member, you have raised an important matter and you have gotten an important answer. Teachers are going to be sent to your school. *(Applause)* Can I allow the Deputy Attorney-General to present the compensation report?

3.40

**THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I have a short statement to make. Mr Speaker *–(Interruption)*

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Mr Speaker**,** thank you, for allowing me to raise a point of procedure. I am raising a procedural matter on the issue that was raised by Hon. Lamwaka.

Mr Speaker, the Prime Minister’s promise of bringing back that child is very good and it is welcome. However, as Parliament, we have heard a number of statements from the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development, but the most important thing here is to bring regulations against these companies that are taking people out of the country.

This matter is going to escalate. I do not think the Rt Hon. Prime Minister and the Government will manage to always bring back these children because everybody is going to say, “I have 10 of them” yet the Government may not afford it.

The procedural matter I am raising is: would it be procedurally right that the Rt Hon. Prime Minister brings a Bill that is going to contain all those laws governing companies that take Ugandans to go and work abroad. Mr Speaker, the moment they take these people, it is as if they become *functus officio* and responsibility remains on the families. At the end of the day, it becomes a matter of national importance in Parliament. A Bill is what we need.

This Bill has been asked for several times but the Government has refused to bring it. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you may give an exciting statement here, but it is a hard task for Government to promise to bring back people –*(Interjection)* – I am on a point of procedure, honourable member. Mr Speaker, the best remedy is to bring a Bill. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable member. There are many laws we have, which we can invoke regarding this matter. We have laws against the trafficking of persons. We have the Employment Act, where you can reprimand all these. Even the Registrar-General has powers to deregister. The Prime Minister can use executive powers. We have police and all that, but it is up to the Prime Minister.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I hope you have taken note. Hon. Ssewungu, on Tuesday, when they are bringing a statement, let this be part of the debate. *[Hon. Luttamaguzi rose\_]* Hon. Luttamaguzi, I had allowed the Deputy Attorney-General. Allow him to first finish and then I will allow you and Hon. Katusabe.

**MR KAFUUZI:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I have a short statement. The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs commenced processing payments, in respect of war debt claimants in Acholi, Lango and Teso subregions, as soon as Cabinet pronounced itself on Cabinet Information Paper *– [Member rose\_]*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, may I request you to sit? When a Member is on the Floor - only one Member can stand up at a time. When you stand up, say what you want but not on the microphone and then I will be able to listen and know whether it is relevant or not. Thank you. *(Laughter)*

**MR KAFUUZI:** The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs commenced processing of payments, in respect of war debt claimants in Acholi, Lango and Teso subregions, as soon as Cabinet pronounced itself under Cabinet Information Paper No.98 of 2021.

Mr Speaker, the affected subregions of Acholi, Teso and Lango comprise 29 districts. These include Kalaki, Serere, Bukedea, Pallisa, Kaberamaido, Kapelebyong – *(Interruption)*

**MR SSEMUJJU:** The Attorney-General knows that in our rules, ministerial statements attract debate. If I heard you correctly, Mr Speaker, you allowed him to lay the voluminous documents he has brought.

By giving a statement, that he has not distributed is actually stopping us from enjoying our privileges of debating his statement. I do not know whether you will now allow debate.

The procedural issue I am raising is whether the Deputy Attorney-General should not restrict himself to your order of laying, and if he has a statement, he brings it under the rules so Members can have the opportunity to debate that statement. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, I only gave you permission to lay, not to read the statement. So, just read the heading of the document you are laying.

**MR KAFUUZI:** Thank you very much. I have no problem with laying. However, Mr Speaker, my senior colleague, Hon. Okupa raised certain issues that I thought I would respond to. But with your guidance, I beg to lay the list of people who have so far been compensated. They are exactly 20,000 –no, let me be sure – they are 20,727 people who have been paid up so far.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will refer the list to the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs for scrutiny and report back to the House.

**Mr luttamaguzi:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am the Vice-Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee (Local Government). The issue that the honourable Woman MP for Masaka District has raised is very crucial –

**The Deputy Speaker:** But Honourable member, it is a closed matter. I guided and ruled. So, when you bring it back, it looks like you are challenging both my guidance and ruling. No, no, no. Colleagues, whatever statement a Member makes here is serious. I hear, “He has serious information” who has no serious information here?

Honourable members, I want to tell you this: you can bring a matter when to you, it is casual. However, the moment you put it here, it ceases to be casual. It becomes a serious national matter. So, I request you, colleagues -Hon. Luttamaguzi, if you are not satisfied, please come back tomorrow. If you want to bring a matter in that same area, I will give you space to raise it but do not take us back.

I had allowed Hon. Atkins Katusabe; I do not want to reopen the same matter.

**Mr katusabe:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I rise on a procedural issue in regard to Rule 83(c), which states, *“While a Member is speaking, all other Members shall be silent and shall not make unseemly interruptions.”*

Mr Speaker, we are here as representatives of our communities. We are here as the voices, the eyes, the ears and the mouths of our communities.

The reason I am invoking Rule 83(c) is that I believe in a value system that goes, “I am my sister's keeper and I am my brother's keeper.”This is the same thing that I am struggling with. Your Members in this House - either by omission or commission –are harassing fellow Members. I am moved by the way we treated our honourable sister from Masaka.

Our rule is crystal clear that when somebody is making a submission, everybody in the House has got to be in total silence. We can only have an individual accessing the microphone –

**The Deputy Speaker:** Honourable member, what is your procedural matter?

**Mr katusabe:** My procedural matter is: is it procedurally okay for us to allow or even tolerate and entertain a culture where we can have a Member on the Floor while several others are literally talking back to this same Member? Would we be procedurally correct when we breach our very rules, specifically, Rule 83(c)? Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Katusabe, I thank you for this concern. I have seen it. Colleagues, there is no difficult day like being on this microphone and you feel your colleagues are laughing at you and not valuing what you are saying. You go back and wonder whether this is the House where we protect each other. We might not have the same capacities but all of us have the same rights whenever we are in this House. We might not have the same experience but we pass through the same channel to come here.

Therefore, I request you, colleagues, to respect whoever Member comes up; let us support each other. You never know who is going to be the best legislator the next day. We all learn from experience. I hope colleagues will really take this matter seriously.

bills

first reading

The Museums and Monuments Bill, 2022

3.54

**The minister of state for tourism, wildlife and antiquities (Mr Martin Mugarra):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I move, under Rule 128 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, that the Bill entitled, “The Museums and Monuments Bill, 2022” be read the first time. The Bill is accompanied by a Certificate of Financial Implication.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, honourable minister. According to Rule 129(2),I refer this Bill to the Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry.

motion for the adoption of the report of the Committee on information, communications technology and national guidance on the petition of unsatisfactory and unfair service delivery by various telecommunication service providers in Uganda

**The Deputy Speaker:** Honourable member, you have 20 minutes to do justice to the report.

3.55

**The chairperson, committee on Information, Communications Technology And National Guidance (Mr Moses Magogo):** Mr Speaker and honourable members, I am here to present a Report of the Committee on ICT and National Guidance on the Petition of unsatisfactory and unfair service delivery by the various telecom service providers in Uganda.

I would like, first of all, to call for your patience to listen through the report. It is a bit lengthy but I will try to be as fast as I can because this matter was raised in accordance with rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, on 9November 2021, you referred the petition to the Committee on ICT and National Guidance for consideration and report back to the House.

Background

On 3 November 2021, constituents from Kawempe Division South petitioned Parliament on the above subject matter and the petition was received by the Office of the Clerk to Parliament. This report has been uploaded and I will try to summarise it in the interest of time by referring to the pages. I am going through page 3.

Relatedly, at the Tenth Sitting of the First Session of the 11th Parliament held on 9 November, Hon. Bashir MbaziiraKazibwe, Member of Parliament Kawempe Division South, presented the petition in the House. A number of allegations against the telecom and television providers, including MTN, Airtel, Lycamobile, Smile Telecom, Roke Telecom, Huawei and Star Times, were raised.

The following key issues were highlighted in that petition:

1. Poor quality of service/dropped calls, billing practices for voice calls charged for a full minute even when it is not consumed due to dropped calls.
2. Exorbitant rates on data bundles, unrealistic consumption patterns and expiry of internet bundles.
3. Challenges with the mobile money transactions.
4. Disconnection of free-to-air television channels on pay platforms upon expiry of subscription periods.

The petitioners prayed that Parliament investigates the quality of the services provided by the service providers, that is the telecom and television companies in Uganda, to enable local content creators, subscribers and consumers realise value for money.

The objective of the consideration of the petition, with UCC as the main respondent, was to ensure that the communication service consumers in Uganda receive quality, reliable and fairly-priced services in a well-regulated environment.

Further, engagements with various stakeholders was to ensure that the recommendations made would promote the use of communication services, facilitating the attainment of an inclusive digital economy and to promote the digital transformation programme of increased ICT penetration and use of ICT services for social and economic development.

We held meetings with various people, including the minister, the petitioners’ Member of Parliament, UCC, various telecom and hardware installation companies, public infrastructure providers, television and media houses and the Executive Committee of the National Association of Broadcasters.

We reviewed legal and policy documents and frameworks.

We undertook field visits to the following entities: DSTV and GOTV, UBC, National Operating Centre for SIGNET at Kololo, MTN Uganda and Airtel Uganda.

Observations and recommendations

The committee observed that in ensuring that the consumers of communication services in Uganda receive quality, reliable and fairly-priced communication services, UCC has undertaken initiatives through the National Broadband Policy, 2018, directed towards general improvement of the quality of services provided by the operators, among others, including: reviewing of licensing framework of the telecommunication sector in Uganda; increasing availability of communication network infrastructure; pricing regulation, enforcement of infrastructure sharing, and improvement of consumer protection services by UCC.

Regarding the issues raised in the petition, the committee reports as follows:

Poor quality of service/dropped calls, billing practices and voice calls

On the matter of poor quality of service and dropped calls, billing practices for voice calls, internal and external factors may be cited as a challenge leading to deteriorated quality of service of calls, sometimes manifesting as dropped calls. These include:

1. Caller movements from over served to underserved areas

The drop-in calls were attributed to subscriber motion to an area with inadequate or no coverage due to obstacles in the signal path; temporary network outage or its absence; interference from other radio transmitters, usually illegally installed network boosters, and congestion due to insufficiency of network resources against the traffic being handled.

1. Unfavourable socio-economic factors

1. Poor quality of service in the country has also been attributed to: vandalism and theft of communication infrastructure equipment; unreliable power supply especially in rural areas where UMEME supply is intermittent; inadequate level of investment in networks sites and equipment for coverage and network capacity.

2. To adequately serve Kampala, 400 additional towers are required yet no building permit has been issued for all the sites applied for Financial Year 2021. It should further be appreciated that the average number of sites that obtain permits within the 30-day window has been declining across the building projects for the Financial Year 2018.

3. UCC has, however, instituted a number of measures to ensure that operators improve their quality of communication services, leading to significant improvement in quality of communication, with operators responding by investing in construction of more towers, fibre cables and other forms of technology.

The committee recommends that:

1. Government should designate telecommunication infrastructure as critical national infrastructure, as envisaged by the National Broadcast Policy, 2018.
2. Government should create a one-stop licensing and permitting centre for telecommunication infrastructure. At the moment, there are different permits that are required to be able to install these towers; the Civil Aviation Authority, the KCCA. All these are different authorities. The recommendation of the committee is that we should have a one-stop licensing and permitting centre.
3. Government should develop a standardised and streamlined regulatory framework for permitting new telecommunication infrastructure.
4. The prosecution of criminals involved in the theft and vandalism of telecom equipment should be enhanced. We are aware that UCC set up a specialised investigation and prosecution unit of six lawyers, licensed by the DPP, to prosecute communication-related offences such as vandalism of equipment. The committee recommends for the boosting of this department.
5. Further investment in the telecommunication equipment should be undertaken to enhance the quality of service assessment of operators to ensure that the measured performance aligns with the subscriber experiences.
6. There should be enhanced working relationship between UCC and the operators to address specific network challenges such as enforcement against illegal radio boosters found to be causing interference.
7. The operators should enhance their network coverage by installing booster towers and sites on buildings and high altitude installation in order to reduce the black spots.
8. UCC should engage the Government, through the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, on the reduction of the levy on imported steel in alignment with the East African tax regime. Presently, Ugandan tax on steel is at 25 per cent yet for the East African Community, it is 10 per cent.

Exorbitant rates on data bundles, unrealistic consumption patterns and expiry of internet bundles. These are the observations of the committee.

Generally, data prices in Uganda have reduced significantly over the years to being lower than a number of other countries, as per the reports done by Cables.co.uk and Alliance for Affordable Internet. The cost is, however, not yet affordable for every Ugandan.

There is a table trying to explain where we came from and where we are at the moment. In this table, the cost was $632 in 2011 and today, it has gone down.Of course, the one in black below - this is not a coloured table - is what NITA-U is providing versus the market rates.

Currently, in 2018, NITA-U goes for $70 compared to the $237 that the market is providing. This is in comparison to $632 in 2011.

According to reports established by Statista in November 2021, the average cost of one gigabyte of data is about Shs 5000, which is comparable to other countries, as reported by the Alliance for Affordable Internet in other global indices.

To be more specific and to bring out the issue, in 2008, Shs 2000 would buy one litre of fuel - I must put a disclaimer that this report was done before we had the challenges we have with the fuel prices. However, I will go ahead and make my point that in 2008,Shs 2000 would buy about a litre of fuel, about five minutes of voice and about 10 MBs of data.

However, in 2018 it would buy about 0.6 of a litre, 40 minutes of voice and 125 MBs of data. Today, and I said I qualified this, it buys 0.4 litres of fuel, 60 minutes of voice, and 400 MBs.

Basically, what the table is trying to show is that fuel is a factor in the cost of voice and data because these towers are powered by generators that consume fuel. Whereas fuel costs are going in a different direction, you can see that the cost of these services are also going in another direction.

Data prices over time have been observed to be influenced by many variables including the level of taxation, cost of inputs, and operations, national/international transit leasing costs to connect to the international tier one internet providers and the size of the market.

The size of subscription has been linked to network coverage, ownership of devices, digital skills, affordability and relevance of the internet or its related services and applications and the cost of differential between the basic phones and low cost internet enabled devices.

We also observed that UCC has, over the years, tried to intervene in the pricing derivation models by the telecom operators. The law gives operators the right to use the cost-oriented price determination model in keeping with the global industry practice.

Subscribers to internet services lose data because of ignorance of the applications that cause data loss, including data sharing options, continuous device connection to the internet in the background, built-in and automatic phone application installations, uploads and updates where the phone is connected to the internet. The data is therefore reduced without direct engagement by the user. This requires sensitisation of the masses on data usage.

The committee commends the initiative by UCC of introducing an easy to use tariff check tool for consumers called NetQ-UG. This is projected to improve transparency around data speed and a means of ensuring customer satisfaction on mobile internet performance. Using this tool, consumers can get an objective, unbiased and open view of the network performance in Uganda. I encourage Members of this House to install this application because it will tell a lot about your data usage and the speeds in a transparent manner.

UCC has also partnered with third party price comparison websites like Kompare Uganda, who provide consumers with independent objective comparison of products and services offered by different service providers. This is aimed at improving availability of information to consumers to choose between providers and the packages on the basis of value for money.

The committee recommends thatUCC enhances engagements with the Government to reconsider some of the taxes associated with the data services.

That UCC should coordinate efforts of co-funding mechanisms between Umeme and tower companies in identified areas upon which other smaller domestic users and SMEs can build.

The tower companies should be categorised as large energy consumers by virtue of their consolidated level of usage of its countrywide installation, benefitting from large consumer tariff rates as an anchor.

I need to explain this a little bit. These tower companies are charged power because of the single connections they have at different sites. Overall, they do not have one bill yet they are scattered all over the country. Therefore, their tariff charges are charged as single installationsand yet, the consumption would have been taken for the largest energy consumer and this definitely would impact on the cost of voice and data.

UCC should support and reinforce the call telecommunication operators to Umeme to extend grid electricity to tower sites or base stations. This will reduce the cost of purchase of diesel for the sites and contracts for transportation of fuel to the sites for the generators. Of course, this would reduce the cost of operation and therefore the cost of the services.

A national operation on a unified planning of data transmission and telecommunication infrastructure sharing by NITA-U and all licenses for voice data and video signals should be urgently enacted. This should reduce duplication in infrastructure deployment. As we speak, different providers will have different routes, transferring data in form of voice or data as we call it or video from one destination to another. If these are combined, definitely there will be a reduction in the cost of operation.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, you have used 20 minutes; I have been watching. I am giving you five more minutes because the report has been with us. I would request that you conclude so that we do other items on the Order Paper.

We usually do 15 minutes-and whoever says it is useful, you have it on record. You see, we have a habit of not reading and we want to read from here when a Member is submitting then you want to debate. Honourable member, please try to summarise because you did your part and submitted early.

**MR MAGOGO**: Thank you for the guidance, Mr Speaker. I will try to summarise by going for only the recommendations. I hope they will make sense if people have internalised the observations.

I will move to page 14, the recommendations in as far as expiry of bundles and billing consumptions of bundles.

The committee recommends that UCC enhances sensitisation of the public on the various data facilities available for use while encouraging the friendlier bundle subscriptions.

UCC should enhance engagements with the telecom operators to develop and provide a broad range of facilities that would encourage customers to access the internet.

The next recommendations will be about the challenges encountered in the mobile money transactions. On page 15,the committee recommends that the Bank of Uganda and UCC the regulator should carry out comprehensive fraud awareness and prevention programmes in the form of trainings, media campaigns and safeguards to prevent the compromising of personal identification numbers, sensitise consumers, staff and agents.

The committee also recommends that product risk assessments should be incorporated into every mobile money service management programme.

The committee recommends that Bank of Uganda and UCC should strengthen compliance, monitoring management programmes in order to ensure top to bottom compliance with the established procedures to reduce internal and external fraud risk.

iv. UCC liaising with law enforcement agencies in the investigation and prosecution of fraud.

In the area of regulation of mobile money, the committee recommends that:

1. Government enforces the National Payments Act, 2020 as enacted.
2. More sensitisation is made to the public about the procedures for the beneficiaries to access the money on the mobile money account of the deceased subscribers.

Regarding income streams, the committee recommends that the Central Bank comes up with a policy that will provide for uniformity while determining the rates that the telecommunications companies charge customers while providing the different services.

Consumer protection

The committee recommends that:

1. Mobile money providers establish a system that issues automatic receipts to customers in real-time to improve the security of mobile money transactions since the receipts can capture actual details of each transaction.
2. UCC and the mobile money providers undertake massive awareness campaigns of the rights and obligations of the subscribers.

Mr Speaker, there was also an issue on the disconnection of free-to-air television channels on pay platforms upon expiry. There was an analysis done. We looked at the different licenses that UCC issued. We made observations and the committee recommends that:

1. UCC enhances the engagement of the relevant stakeholders to reconsider the taxes imposed on communication services and communications assets, which tax reduction eventually trickles down to the final consumer of the telecommunication and television services.
2. UCC should continuously run advertisements on television and other forms of media to remind customers of the available choices for the customers to voluntarily exercise their freedom.
3. Regulations are enacted to require Single Stream Pay-Tv Broadcasters and Multiple Stream Pay-Tv providers licenses to:
4. Pay and broadcast a minimum amount of local content of at least 50 per cent. At the moment, aggregators have no law that requires them to provide minimum local content. So, you are going to be watching a lot of foreign content provided by the aggregators. The law only provides a percentage of local content to the channels but not to the aggregators.
5. A policy should be enacted such that local content by Pay TVs is categorised across different genres.

1. The licensee carriage fees are reduced and harmonised and the UCC license fees should be charged in Uganda shillings not in United States Dollars.

Mr Speaker, there were also incidental observations and recommendations in the process of this investigation.

Levy on gross annual revenues of licensed operators comes from Section 68 of the Uganda Communications Act, 2013 but the target was the telecom providers in the areas where the telecom services do not reach. However, the way it was worded, it includes broadcasters.

The committee recommends that:

1. charging 2 per cent of the gross revenues on radio and television broadcasters are removed.
2. the levy collected by UCC in this regard be earmarked - because it is not even being collected at the moment.As we speak, it is not enforceable.

We also observed that there was no communications tribunal and the committee recommends that:

1. The Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, UCC, the First Parliamentary Counsel, constitute a communications tribunal. The approval of the communications tribunal should also be fast-tracked at Cabinet.
2. Government allocates Shs 5.4 billion for the installation of the communications tribunal.

We also observed that the deployment of the Direct to Home (DTH) one beam Free-to-Air satellite television solution be provided. The observations made on why people are not able to watch TV - I want to go straight to the recommendations.

The committee recommends that:

1. SIGNET is legally disengaged from UBC by creating its own company fully owned by Government with its own mandate, deliverables, Board and Secretariat different from UBC.
2. Government invests in the expansion of the SIGNET Network by:
3. allocating Shs 2.5 billion to rehabilitate Kololo; and
4. Shs 7.5 billion to be able to provide the satellite feed in every inch of this country.

I want to report to the House that in the Budget for the Financial Year 2022/2023, these funds have been provided.

The committee recommends that:

1. the monthly carriage fees be reduced from Shs 12 million to Shs 5 million because they are exorbitant.
2. Government provides incentives and reductions in taxes on DTH decoders and dishes to ensure that these are affordable. Let me explain this a little bit. The objective of this is to make sure that every Ugandan is able to watch the free-to-air channels without paying. At the moment, we have to pay to watch the various channels that are supposed to be licensed as free-to-air because we do not have a platform.

When you connect to Direct to Home (DTH), it means that you buy the decoder and the dishes once then you do not have to pay monthly fees.

The committee recommends that the taxes on this be reduced such that every homestead can afford to acquire it. All they need is a TV, a decoder and a dish and one can watch TV forever.

Spectrum allocation to telecommunication companies is also an analysis we did and it also causes some challenges. Mr Speaker, spectrum is a God-created given amount so you cannot extend it. 300 megawatts are available for telecom players and this cannot be extended. It is shared on page 27, but you will realise that Airtel is at 70, MTN is at 60 and the rest are unallocated.

Mr Speaker, this bandwidth is like a road; the bigger the road, the fewer the cars and the faster the traffic. What happens is that when a telecom has less bandwidth with more subscribers, we suffer the challenges that were raised by the petitioners.

The committee recommends that for parity and fairness, telecom players categorised as level 1 be allocated an equal amount of spectrum of 80MHz because there are some which have not been allocated, according to the table. In addition, there are some that have been allocated to companies that are listed here and they have since closed business.

Mr Speaker, this resource should be allocated to the telecoms to ensure that they provide better services to Ugandans. I will skip 4.6.5 regarding the multiple authorities for the installation of communications sites because I talked about it. The recommendation on multiple authorities for the installation of communications is that a joint agency unit is created.

Need for a national telecom player

The committee observed that:

1. Currently, there are two major players in the telecommunication industry after the closure of Africell. This does not cause enough competition in the market that would, in the end, ensure quality service production and competitive pricing of services.
2. There is un-coordinated and parallel nationwide data, voice, and video signal distribution, where each telecom, the Pay-Tv and data carriers have constructed parallel backbone infrastructure.

The committee recommends that:

1. A national telecom is revamped. Remember, we had UTL, which has since gone to sleep. The national telecom should be revamped or created in the business of data, video and voice, at both business-to-business and business-to-consumer or retail levels.
2. The national telecom created or revamped should be the monopoly national telecom distance signal carrier as this will definitely reduce the cost of usage of the subscribers.

There was also an observation of unfair management of Pay-Tv subscribers’ assets. The committee observed that the Pay-Tv companies are monopoly vendors of dishes and decoders to their respective platforms and these organisations go ahead to discontinue the use of services without due consideration.

The committee recommends that:

1. A policy is created to regulate the devices required and used for television.
2. A billing policy is issued to regulate the payment structure in order to ensure that Pay-Tv subscribers only pay for the time and content they are viewing. At the moment, even when your decoder is switched off, you pay. When you do not want to watch, you will still pay because the subscription is monthly instead of paying as you go.

Management of electronic devices

Mr Speaker, there was an observation that many electronic devices are imported to the country and the two following issues are not adequately addressed:

1. The standard and quality of the devices imported are not ascertained at the point of importation by UNBS and they do not have the technical capacity to enforce;
2. Electronic devices contain beryllium, cadmium, mercury, and lead. At the end of the life of these electronic devices, they are dumped in the environment, which contaminates our soil, air, water and wildlife;
3. There are no e-waste management procedures being enforced and neither do the telecom and television industry players contribute to alleviate the situation.

The committee recommends that resources be availed to build capacity for UNBS to manage the counterfeit electronic devices and apolicy be created and enforced to regulate e-waste management.

Telecom mobile money businesses are subjected to a tax of two per cent of the gross to contribute to the e-waste.

Mr Speaker, allow me to also shed a little light on this recommendation. Initially, all the gross income of the telecoms was subject to the two per cent tax on the gross. This money would be collected by UCC, but with the enactment of the National Payment Act, the licenser of the mobile money business is nolonger UCC. That goes to Bank of Uganda and there is no law providing that the gross they were getting out of mobile money revenues be subjected to this tax. Therefore, there is loss of revenue that can be enforced.

If we can collect it and use it on the e-waste – because people are using mobile money using these devices and they are a challenge.

Mr Speaker, allow me conclude. The Committee on ICT and National Guidance notes that Uganda is on the right path to achieving its goal under the digital transformation programme of increasing ICT penetration and the use of ICT services for social and economic development, through increased ICT penetration, reduced cost of ICT devices and services and creation of more direct jobs in the ICT arena.

However, there are still gaps in ensuring and promoting consumer protection and satisfaction through ICT service delivery. This is partly due to technological advancements, failure to enforce the existing laws and institutional weaknesses.

It is the committee's view that there commendations contained in this report will go a long way in addressing some of the pertinent concerns of the people of Uganda.

I, therefore, pray that the report of the Committee on ICT and National Guidance on the petition on unsatisfactory and unfair service delivery by the telecommunication and television operators be considered by this House and recommendations therein be adopted. I beg to report*. (Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable member. Colleagues, wait a minute. I have not yet opened up the debate. I might close and say debate is for tomorrow. *(Laughter)*

I do not know why we are rushing.

Anyhow, thank you, honourable. You have done justice to this petition. I think this is a well detailed – if you are a Member and you want to be talking about issues of technology and telecommunication, you need to interest yourself in this report deeply.

I remember when I came here as a new Member of Parliament, I knew I would not be a jack of all trades. I chose one area, which I concentrated on and that was the energy sector. I ensured that whenever there was a chance, I contributed other than trying to touch here and there. I guide, especially the new colleagues, that you can look at some areas and you become the expert that we always refer to on such matters. It becomes easy for you to submit in this House.

Honourable member, there is an issue I expected your committee to look at; the issue of interconnection fees. We move to many countries and people laugh at us. They ask me, honourable, why do you carry two or four phones?” The *bazungu* carry one phone and that number can work on all networks. What is important is the reference number embedded; to know that this is for MTN or Airtel, but they do not have interconnection fees.

Why do you have fees for connecting from MTN to Airtel when you are all licensed? This creates monopoly. Secondly, all these are creating bundles so that a user, instead of using their money on MTN to call Airtel, would rather use a bundle. Thus I am forced to carry two phones. I have an Airtel line for calling Airtel users and I have an MTN line for calling – There is someone who even calls you and asks whether you have an MTN or Airtel line; I have seen such scenarios.

I think one of the recommendations should be the removal of interconnection fees; this can be a clear directive from UCC. They have tremendously reduced on mobile money and now it is very easy. Previously it was very punitive and prohibitive to send money across both platforms.

The other issue I expected you to touch on is the expiry of data and voice bundles. How do you tell me that bundles have expired? How? You say they have expired. Expired and gone where? *(Laughter)* Technology has no expiry date.

I have seen in many countries what they do is to require you to reactivate. It is like money on your bank account. They cannot say your account has expired. The bank will only say it has become dormant. When you go and fill a form, they reactivate your account and the money you had will be there.

If I bought my data using my money and didn’t use it, how do you say it has expired? *(Applause)* Something expired is something dangerous. Is it dangerous to the community? Chair, you need to interest yourself in this issue, which I believe we need to also tackle.

With that, colleagues, I open the debate for 25 minutes. Thank you. I will try to balance, please use two minutes each.

4.34

**MS MIDIUS NATUKUNDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Rukungiri):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I would like to thank the chairperson of the committee for the report presented.

My issue is about the telecommunication companies not giving us the right information at the right time. Right now we are trying to move away from carrying cash and we have been helped by mobile money. I understand mobile money has now helped us to transfer money to and from many areas.

However, these days they bar mobile money lines from sending a certain amount of money. For example, on my phone, I cannot send more than Shs 40,000 from one phone to the other. To get this changed, I have to go to the service centre. You can imagine if I was in my village down there in Nyarwimuka, I would have to go to the town to ask them why I cannot transact more than Shs 40,000 on my phone.

It is a big inconvenience yet they keep sending irrelevant SMSs to our lines. If only they would disconnect your phone and tell you why they have disconnected you, it would be better.

In the recommendations, I would urge you to please inform them to always give us the right information at the right time. Thank you.

4.36

**MR RICHARD SEBAMALA (DP, Bukoto County South, Masaka):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairman for the report. Mine are just two issues.

1. TV companies such as DStv keep repeating the same content. We go back home and find our kids actually cramming everything that is on TV – you are with them and they know the next cartoon and everything. There is duplication and repetitive content with the TVs. This has to stop. If we are paying almost $70 for a station monthly then they should be able to give us new content.
2. The other is a very sensitive issue, which I want the committee to be concerned about. There is a lot of money that goes to mobile money companies and it is suspended. People send money from the UK or US to your mobile money account and somehow, it bounces or you send money to someone and you lose it along the way – maybe because you have skipped a number or something – and then it is not reverted back to you. I understand this money is now going to almost Shs 2 trillion on a suspense account in BoU or something like that. There is need for this committee to take keen interest in this money.

By now, it might be going to Shs 4 trillion – where people have sent money and they haven’t been able to get it back. In the villages, some people do not know how to claim it back. These telecom companies remain with that money and the committee has not taken keen interest in it. We want to know where this money is and how they intend to put it back into *-(Member was timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** My very good friend – Colleagues, sometimes I forget your names, forgive me. Yes, Emma? He is my chaplain and always prays for me.

4.38

**MR EMMANUEL ONGIERTHO (FDC, Jonam County, Pakwach):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mine is about television. For us in West Nile, when we talk about it, we are reminded of the earth satellite station in Ombachi. We believe if that earth satellite station is rehabilitated, probably the coverage in West Nile and other parts of Uganda would improve. We also want to hear that it is in the programme for rehabilitation. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Clerk, capture further recommendations that come. I think it would be important for me to read the other recommendations to the House and they get known – the additional recommendations we have made – so that they easily become part of the report, other than being general in nature.

Whom had I chosen next? Yes, I had chosen Kashari and added Najjuma. I will then have my lady - that is Joyce – and then I will pick our senior who has been in the media industry for a long time: Hon. Ssemujju. Hon. Nalule - honourable, I will give you a chance. Let us do it quickly.

4.40

**MR BASIL BATARINGAYA (NRM, Kashari North County, Mbarara):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to take this opportunity, first of all, to congratulate you – because I have never – upon attaining that seat*. (Laughter)*

Secondly, I rise to contribute to this motion. Today, you launched a report for the youth. The youth are the majority users of bundles, especially for their school education. Sometimes these young girls and boys lose their phones when they have just loaded bundles and it takes about a month to replace the phones because of the high costs. Eventually, when they replace them, the bundles would be gone. I am happy that this has been brought here and I urge that the youth be assisted by this report. Thank you.

4.42

**MS SARAH NAJJUMA (NRM, Woman Representative, Nakaseke):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have two issues –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Anywar, I am going to pick you.

**MS NAJJUMA:** I thank the chairperson and the committee members for this good report and I want to add to their recommendations. We have a problem that when you lose a line, you are supposed to replace it using a national ID. If you do not have a national ID, you cannot replace a line. Therefore, people end up losing their lines with money on the accounts. People end up registering lines in other people’s names because of this challenge. Therefore, I request the committee to take up that recommendation.

Lastly, the issue of infrastructural development should be taken seriously. I have a whole constituency; Nakaseke North and part of Nakaseke Central where people climb trees and anthills to communicate. If such a person misses you, you cannot trace that person. So, the issue of poor network and no network at all should be taken seriously. I thank you so much, Mr Speaker.

4.43

**MS JOYCE ACAN (NRM, PWD Representative):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the Committee on ICT and National Guidance for the report.

The committee talked about fraud in SIM card swap. There are instances where a person has not taken the SIM card for swapping but you will find that when a person calls your number, it is a different person answering. You would wonder that messages are being sent on the same number but you are not the one who sent it. I do not know how those come about. The committee has not tackled that. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, that is a very common fraud going on. It is a very serious point. Hon. Nsereko is also going to talk about the same. I know someone very close to me. Someone called and said your number has a problem and it is being blocked so, you have to send money on this. The person thought it was a joke but the number was blocked. He said, “Call it.” She called her own number and it was off. I do not know how they do it.

Chairman, on the issue of fraud, you really need to engage UCC. Despite security doing all they can and insisting that all numbers should be registered, criminals are still using phones and they cannot be traced. We really need to go deep into it.

Hon Ssemujju? Hon. Sebamala, you have presented.

4.45

**MR IBRAHIM SSEMUJJU (FDC, Kira Municipality, Wakiso):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the committee for this good report.

Mr Speaker, the internet is no longer a luxury. I travelled during COVID-19. In some countries, they will announce an application and everybody is supposed to have a phone. When you go to the supermarket, you are supposed to present your status. I want to ask the committee if they interested themselves in the internet use per capita in Uganda.

Secondly, agro-forestry, tourism and ICT have been identified by the Government as key priorities. However, the ICT sector has been abandoned to private players and the report notes that. That is how we were able to nearly sell all the equipment that UTL had to private players and now we are crying.

Can I ask the chairperson, because of his vast knowledge of this sector, whether there is any movement towards either recovery or rebuilding of the national public player, as your report says?

Finally, of course when you open and*-(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Conclude.

**MR SSEMUJJU:** Thank you. If you open and liberalise, there are challenges that will come with everybody participating. From your knowledge as the chairperson of the committee, has the attitude of Government changed towards the various platforms that are offered by providers because *Facebook* at one time was closed?

I do notknow if they have opened but you can see the restrictions; a Government wanting to grow the sector and wanting to control it at the same time. Let the chairperson help me.Thank you very much.

4.47

**MS FLAVIA KALULE (NUP, Woman Representative, Kassanda):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to appreciate the committee, through the chairperson, for the report that you have presented.

I have just one key issue that I have noted is missing in our report and that is the gender digital divide in Uganda currently.

We have very few women accessing the Internet who are able to access technological services. This has a big impact on women's human rights as this locks them out on accessibility to opportunities and skills, building their careers and also promoting their services.

My recommendation is that the report issues key areas, which can help bridge thegender digital divide. The first one is to address the safety and security of women online. I think we need to have pertinent laws that directly target that so that we can have gender laws addressing women's safety and security online and in the technology world.

Secondly, my recommendation is to develop the capacities and skills of women in technology and media. Finally, we lack gender-disaggregated data, especially online. I think we need this data to enable us to improve how we can move forward as a sector, which encompasses women and girls thereby leaving no one behind, as our SDGs say. Thank you very much.

4.49

**MS GORRETHNAMUGGA (NUP, Mawogola County South, Ssembabule):** Thank you, Mr Speaker and I thank my chairperson for ably representing us. I am a member of the committee and I will speak in the capacity-I am the shadow minister and I am giving my position in that capacity.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, this is a report where we are not going to have resolutions. This is not a report where we are going to vote on anything. We are just going to adopt it. So, for theshadow minister, I will pick you at the end because you need to hear the views of other colleagues.

**MS NAMUGGA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker and colleagues, for respecting the shadow minister.*(Laughter)*

4.50

**MR MUHAMMAD NSEREKO (Independent, Kampala Central Division, Kampala City)**: Thank you, Mr Speaker and the shadow minister.

I seek a few minutes to highlight one or two things with the attention of the House. I would like to thank the chairman for his comprehensive report. I am glad honourable members have picked up interest in ICT of late as this is the key driver of our nation but this is being done at the tail end.

The budget we allocated to the Ministry of ICT is laughable. That notwithstanding, I amglad that we all participated in the process and we can correct it now.

Honourable members, the honourable chairperson talked about fraud in the mobile money sector. This is as a result of lack of strengthening the cyber security space in our country. I heard the honourable member talking about the cloning of SIM cards.

That is technically from these devices; when you talk about cyber security, you start with a device. For example, you all have these devices. When you go to general display, you will find where they have the International Mobile Equipment Identifier (IMEI) number for every piece of equipment. If someone gets to your IMEI and they get to your ICC ID, which is the integrated circuit card number then they will clone your SIM card without having a SIM card.

They can, therefore, become what we call the man in the middle. They intercept all your communications so you must make sure you secure this part of your gadget.

Mr Speaker, if you give us time to go into lectures of*-(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: I cannot give you two minutes; one more minute to conclude.

**MR NSEREKO**: Okay. Mr Speaker, I would like to seek your intervention in the future. I request for time to present an extensive motion on technology so that it may benefit the House and the country.

The second thing that was talked about was the bandwidth; that we have 300 Mega hubs. Yes, this is true but look at the gigabytes we are using; some are still on the 3G others on the fourth generation.

Therefore, there is a disparity in communication through the towers and connectivity. The earlier we embrace the fifth generation of the internet, the better because it is faster and moves more bandwidth and in real-time.

With what we are using in technology, which includes the internet of things and artificial intelligence which Hon. Anywar is talking about - the more we move faster to embrace the web, the better for us. I would like to applaud the committee on the issue of equity in sharing the bandwidth that we have but also talk about digitisation.

Even if we do whatever we want, as long as people do not know how to use this phone, they are not digitised. Internet prices will not go down because of connectivity to the internet per capita, which Hon. Ssemujju has been talking about.

Your dad can have this smartphone in the village but they do not know how to connect, they do notknow how to use it and so there will be no demand for the internet and the prices will remain high because there will be less users on expensive infrastructure.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Thank you, honourable.

4.55

**MR ALLAN MAYANJA (NUP, Nakaseke Central County, Nakaseke):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also buy the recommendation that was raised by the chairperson that the national telecom be revived because if it is created, it will reduce on the cost of usage for subscribers.

When you *google* about UTL, you get information saying that it is a network company in Uganda owned by the Government of Uganda and currently under receivership due to large debts of about Shs 700 billion and mismanagement.

Recently, the Government was getting shares in ROKO Construction Company of Shs 202.13 billion. Why don’t we defer that money and resurrect our national telecom?

Lastly, among the observations of the report, there is enforcement of infrastructure sharing amongst telecom operators. I am wondering how this is being implemented by UCC. In Nakaseke Central, there is a place called Bugema where Airtel has just installed a mast but the MTN network is disconnected completely. Therefore, we are wondering how UCC is enforcing this infrastructure sharing. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Government, take note of that. Hon. Gilbert Olanya, Hon. Katabazi. Hon. Ogwari Polycarp, I looked for you but you were nowhere.

4.57

**MR GILBERT OLANYA (FDC, Kilak South County, Amuru):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to appreciate the chairperson of the committee for the good work done.

Mr Speaker, the minister needs to caution telecommunication companies about security. As I speak, many people are losing money, especially on mobile money. There are many companies and there are thieves who have mastered how to steal mobile money, especially from those running mobile money businesses.

I know one man who lost over Shs 10 million from these thieves. They know how to master other codes and they direct you. The moment you press that particular code, the money is gone. Therefore, we need to be cautious about security.

Secondly, I am happy with the committee about the free-to-air decoders. Mr Speaker, Parliament gave money about five to six years ago for the provision of free-to-air decoders but it was only within Kampala areas. Therefore, the free-to-air decoders should be extended upcountry.

In reality, people in Kampala at least have resources. They can pay for decoders, but you are leaving someone in Northern Uganda, eastern Uganda, and far west to pay for decoders. So, I am happy. Let the money be provided so that free-to-air decoders are provided across the country.

Finally, some of us who come from the border posts –*(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I want to pick a few colleagues and let us be quick.

4.59

**MR DENES SEKABIRA (NUP, Katikamu County North, Luwero):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the chairperson and committee members for the report. I have a few concerns.

One is about network coverage at border points, for example, Katuna and Malaba where you cannot access connections on your phone or internet unless you have roamed your phone. I think it is a very big challenge that we need to address.

Secondly, Parliament allocated over Shs 10 billion to Signet Uganda. I wonder why we still ask media houses to pay Shs 5 million as carriage fees. I think it should be free because it is taxpayers’ money we have allocated to Signet.

Thirdly, as a consumer, I want to know how much tax I pay per unit because they said in the recommendation that UCC should enhance the reduction of tax rates on the units or bundles. I equally want to know how much.

Lastly, Government promised free internet services in this country. I want the committee to brief the House on the status of the same. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. There is an honourable colleague dressed in red, Hon. Linos Ngompek, the DP Whip - *(Laughter)* – and then Member for Sironko, whom I have taken long seeing in the House.

5.01

**MR SHEDRICK VINCENT OBONG (Independent, Lira West Division, Lira City):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The issue I want to raise is about the hidden costs we have been experiencing from these telephone companies. This issue might appear to be small but whatever we discuss here, we should take into consideration matters concerning people who are out there and who may not have the opportunity to come and talk here and speak for themselves.

It is important for us to note that there are costs that are not always displayed but we are footing them as Ugandans and as subscribers. I want to give an example that I have noticed on a number of occasions. When you use mobile money and you know the amount you had originally, after sending it to someone, there are costs that are always displayed and there are others that will never be displayed. This is affecting us. Very many people have complained about it but there is no way we can get out of this doldrum when the issues are not raised – *(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Linos Ngompek. Colleagues, you have two minutes.

5.02

**MR LINOS NGOMPEK (NRM, Kibanda North County, Kiryandongo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. On 30 September 2016, the ICT Minister then, Hon. Frank Tumwebaze, launched a free zone internet service in Kampala. However, after a few days or a month, that service disappeared yet it was an undertaking by the ministry and NITA. We want the chairperson of this committee to tell us how far and why this programme stalled.

Finally, we have MoKash service from some of these telecom companies. I am a regular borrower but sometimes when you save, your savings keep disappearing and when you go to complain, they tell you different stories. The committee should have picked interest in such issues because matters to do with dealing with money are serious matters. Thank you.

5.04

**MR PETER OKOT (DP, Tochi County, Omoro):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. First of all, I thank the petitioners that brought this petition to the House that enabled the committee to come up with this good report. I also thank the chairperson and the team.

My concern is about the safety and privacy of subscribers. The fraudsters that defraud members of the public have fairly enough information about the individuals they contact. That gives me fear that the information we give to these service providers when we are registering is not being protected. Mr Speaker, we need to be protected such that the information we give is not easily accessed.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, we have mushrooming towers in villages for these communication companies. I wonder about the safety aspect to the population. If so many of them are put, we need to guard our population regarding their safety.

Thirdly, the committee came up with a finding that some of our users are ignorant about the different devices they can use to lower the cost. I see this as a problem because of the language used for sensitising the population - You find that on the billboards, they use Acholi –*(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Sironko?

5.05

**MS FLORENCE NAMBOZO (Independent, Woman Representative, Sironko):** Mr Speaker, I want to thank you for recognising that you have not been seeing me in the House. For that reason, I take this opportunity to congratulate you upon your election as Deputy Speaker.

I thank the Committee and the Chair for a comprehensive report presented.

Mr Speaker, my points are about leakage. When you look at the media centres, as a person who has been to court, at one point you find that your opponent has been given information about you without your knowledge. We are wondering where such people get permission to get into your contacts or to get through to your line and get information about you without your knowledge.

Two is about the tracking system. We have got challenges of criminal records in this country. It is very perturbing to know that Uganda Communications Commission cannot come in to help the country to track someone using their contacts. What happens in that case? Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. There is that honourable member next to Hon. Chemonges.

5.07

**MS VICTORIOUS ZAWEDDE (Independent, Woman Representative, Nakasongola):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson for presenting a good report to this House.

Mr Speaker, I want to talk about blocked agent lines in Uganda. We have very many Ugandans who are transacting business with different telecommunication networks, for example, MTN. However, for your information, those people who run out of the capital have their lines blocked immediately. I am requesting the chairperson to kindly include that issue of unblocking the blocked agent lines to enable Ugandans transact business and earn a living. Thank you so much.

5.08

**MR BENJAMIN KAMUKAMA (NRM, Ruhaama East County, Ntungamo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this chance. Allow me to thank the committee for the good work they have done.However, there is one issue they have not addressed; network interference especially for us who represent the constituencies that are close to the borders with Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania. When you are in those villages, you only pick network of Rwanda or Tanzania even when you are close to the mast constructed in Uganda.

Another issue, Mr Speaker, is the cost of land. These operators do not have land and they are constructing their masts on the land owned by Ugandans. However, when you look at the money being paid to the landowners, you realise it is very little and the land owners are being cheated. Let us look into the money that is being paid to these people.

Also, the side effects of masts on people’s lives - Sometime back, we were told that these masts affect people who live around them but the committee report has not addressed that issue. It is very important that we look into it so that the side effects are prevented or addressed. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

5.10

**MS JENNIFER DRIWARU (NRM, Woman Representative, Maracha):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for presenting a comprehensive report.

I have one issue, which is, when you lose a line, you are supposed to replace it. To replace it, you are supposed to go to the police. When you reach the police, you are supposed to part with some money in order for the police to provide you a letter, which is a requirement. I want to find out why the police asks for that money. *(Laughter)* It is a serious issue because an ordinary person in the village cannot get that money. That is my concern. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Youth national -

5.11

**MS PHIONA NYAMUTORO (NRM, Youth Representative, Female):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson for presenting a comprehensive report. I have two issues that I would like to highlight.

One, is the matter of cyber bullying. This has become a very pertinent problem in Uganda and it is affecting young people particularly in terms of mental health. There are many suicidal cases reported as a result of cyber bullying yet no particular interventions have been put in place by Government to see that we have preventive measures on this front.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, I would like to request, through the chairperson of the committee - and I hope this directly reaches the Minister of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance as well - to have a particular programme rolled out for young people in this country on the purposive use of internet. The internet is a very good drive towards development but it is also destructive when not regulated. So, we would like to have a program that reaches out to safeguard the morals of young people in this country. Thank you.

5.13

**MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak):**Mr Speaker, allow me to also thank the committee for an excellent job presented.

I want to comment on the issue of internet data access, especially for secondary schools. The secondary schools in this country are implementing a curriculum that requires students to do research but the access to data for research – the books are not there. I wonder how we are managing these children. I visited my daughter recently and she told me that I should inform the school management to make sure there is access to data. We could consider asking the ministry to negotiate lower rates or for Government to take care of that cost. Otherwise, we are wasting time with our children in schools when they cannot learn anything in that new curriculum.

I do not even know how the rural schools are managing. Let us do that as a matter of urgency. As a House, let us interest ourselves in this because our children in the age bracket of senior two and below are really struggling.

Secondly, internet and network access for many places around the country, especially in Karamoja, Bukedea is completely none existent. A number of regions in the country need access to network – let us make it compulsory so that every part of Uganda is connected to some network to ease communication. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

Hon. Nakut *–(Members rose)* – Colleagues, please, the Speaker is speaking. *(Laughter)*

On the issue raised by Hon. Faith Nakut, there is what we call zero rating. In most countries, Governments zero-rate education related websites -if it is just for education matters, for upload of education materials, revision or research then Government directs that it is zero-rated. Like how you see free-to-air channels for TV. They cut off DStv, but you continue watching UBC because it is a free-to-air channel. Chairman, you need to look at recommending zero-rating of education websites where students can do research and all that.

Honourable –*(Member rose)-* No, no, please. That is not how I work, honourable member. I am orderly and I expect you to be orderly too.

5.16

**Mr Ricky Anywar (NRM, Agago West County, Agago):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to appreciate you for how you handle this House. You are deploying the competence needed to run the House. *(Applause)*

Allow me, also, to thank the chairman for providing us with the report. I would like to request UCC to increase the network coverage in the areas surrounding the Karamoja districts, especially Agago District where I come from. Due to lack of network, it has given advantage and mileage to the Karamojong raiders because the civilians cannot communicate with the army when the Karamojong are either planning to raid or after they have raided our cows.

Also, due to lack of network, our children cannot study, especially where the Government is promoting online studies. I request that more –*(Member timed out.)*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Colleagues, at such a time, what I usually do is to consider those who have not spoken, especially on debates of a general nature. Secondly, when I see a colleague who has not submitted in around two previous sessions, I tend to focus on that one.

Thirdly, when I pick a person from your district, know that chances of picking you are “very high” *–(Laughter)-* because you are from the same area. Each one of us comes here independently but I am trying to reach in with all tentacles; trying to touch here and there. That is the aim. Otherwise, if I had a way, each one of you would speak.

I know you have different matters to raise but I do not have where to buy time from.

5.19

**Dr charles ayume (NRM, Koboko Municipality, Koboko):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the chairman who presented the report. Mine is about e-waste. He touched on it in his report - good enough we have the Minister of Water and Environment here - that there is a lot of e-waste that is generated in this country from phones, laptops and computers. Sometimes, I wonder where it ends up.

Likewise, he mentioned that there are lots of mineral components like titanium and all that – some of which are very corrosive and harmful to our health and the environment. I would want them to shed more light on the direction of e-waste.

Secondly, from the security perspective, right now we are operating an oligopoly; that is, two operators. If they woke up tomorrow and charged high prices, we would be in trouble and would not be able to do anything, legally.

Therefore, it is my humble request that we fast-track the functionality of UTL. Of course, from the security perspective, we cannot have our national security and data housed in foreign companies. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Honourable colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon we have the Speaker of Mayuge District Local Council, Mr Anthony Osinde and Youth Councillor, Kaliro District, Ms Ruth Namukobe. They have been attending the just concluded launch of the National State of Youth Affairs. They have been presented by the youth MPs. *(Applause)* Colleagues, you are welcome. I hope you are learning a thing or two in terms of steering the House in your district.

5.21

**Mr John Magolo (NRM, Bungokho County North, Mbale):** Thank you, Mr Speaker –

**The Deputy Speaker:** Honourable member, ensure that you represent the whole of Bungokho. *(Laughter)*

**Mr magolo:** Thank you very much for the opportunity. I also want to add my voice to thank the chairperson for a detailed and well-articulated report.

Last week, the Minister of Education and Sports brought to this House information that the national fibre coverage, especially in the schools, is only 49 per cent yet all the schools, especially candidate classes, are supposed to submit e-registration with very stringent deadlines.

Mr Speaker, I would love that this also goes down to the recommendation about the plan, especially for the infrastructural development of the network to reach all our rural schools to meet this obligation. I beg to submit.

5.22

**Mr Xavier kyooma (NRM, Ibanda County North, Ibanda):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I take this pleasure to thank the chairman and his committee for a good and elaborate report with those recommendations.

Mr Speaker, I think this report will go a long way to tame some of these telecommunication companies because they have been operating as if they are in an environment that is not regulated. Other than the dropped calls, there are also dropped messages. You send a message and the response will be “message not sent” but the money will be deducted. You will never, of course, get a refund of that money.

On the issue of registration, you can register for one SIM card like three times in a year. You go there and they say, “Bring a national ID.” You take it but another day they will switch you off without notice. As one Member put it, you have to go to the service centre. For some of us who represent rural constituencies, we can hardly find a service centre in the constituency. In Ibanda North, we do not have it. You have to travel for distances – consider the cost of fuel.

Therefore, I thank the committee. My prayer is that these recommendations are followed up and implemented. Thank you.

5.24

**Mr rauben arinaitwe (Independent, Isingiro West County, Isingiro):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. At last, your eye has seen me. *(Laughter)* I also want to thank the chairperson for the good report.

When you go towards the borders, there is a problem. You will find that the network of the other countries - for example, let me mention Isingiro West where I come from. It borders Tanzania and Rwanda. The networks and signals of Rwanda and Tanzania subdue ours. When you are inside Uganda, you either have to go on roaming or buy a SIM card from the neighbouring country.

Therefore, I would like this committee to look into that matter. Thank you.

5.25

**Mr abdul mutumba (NRM, Kiboga West County, Kiboga):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank you very much because I have stood in this House 110 times without catching the Speaker’s eye. Today, I want to say, “Praise the Lord.” *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, the issue I want to raise on this report is first of all the cost of the towers. I think in the last two years, there is a company called American Tower Company that came to my district to put up towers. It offered Shs 500,000 for the land where they constructed the towers.

Some time back when MTN and Airtel were putting up similar towers in the same district, they offered hundreds of millions between Shs 100 – 200 million for the same piece of land. I wonder what is happening today. This is because this is an American company - I do not know whether it was contracted by Government. The public would like to know the exact cost of the land where these towers are being erected. Who regulates them? How should we, the nationals, go about it? This is because we see exploitation going around. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, I am going to start provoking some of you. We have an expert in ICT matters in this House but he does not want to guide us. I am going to use my powers to force him to guide us. Hon. Andrew Ojok Oulanyah has just come from NITA-Uganda and he is one of the IT experts in this country. You have heard the issues and we would like you to guide this House because you were in when they were presenting.

5.27

**MR ANDREW OJOK (NRM, Omoro County, Omoro):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson of the committee. I distanced myself from the debate because I am a member of the ICT committee so I will also make comments through the chairperson of the committee -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: But you never participated in the making of this report because it was made before you became a Member of Parliament; I observed that. However, if you have nothing to add to this –

**MR OJOK**: I actually do but I will channel it through the chairperson. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Okay, thank you.

5.28

**MR ACROBERT KIIZA (Independent, Bughendera County, Bundibugyo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to also add my voice to the voices of colleagues on this matter. Otherwise, I was losing hope.

Whereas my colleagues have unfair and unsatisfactory services, Bughendera has poor network services. It is a hard-to-reach area and as such, accessing someone there is a very big problem. How I wish the telecommunication network service providers can come on the ground and serve the people there.

We border DRC and are facing a problem with Vodacom; once it has entered your phone, you cannot ably communicate. Now that we have programmes such as the Parish Development Model, it is really very hard and impossible for the Government to implement some Government programmes.

Therefore, my prayer is *– (Member timed out.)*

5.30

**MS RUTH LEMATIA (NRM, Maracha East County, Maracha):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. You are just like Jesus who saw the lame one *– (Laughter)-* my time is going, protect me, please. I would like to thank the chairman for the comprehensive report.

Someone talked about masts but I am very much against them because nobody knows the amount of radium these gadgets emit to our people in the vicinity. The other time when it started, I was in charge of schools so I refused these masts to be put very close to the schools for the fear of the radium. However, when they introduced the Shs 7 million, people yielded very easily. When I heard Shs 500,000 - a person's life is not worth that.

I think we needed to carry out research. Since this thing started - the people within the circle - how much radium have they absorbed in their bodies? Nobody even bothers to test their thyroid glands to see how much they have absorbed. Otherwise, we shall be turned into Tsukishima in Japan. I beg to submit.

5.32

**MR JACKSON ATIMA (NRM, Arua Central Division, Arua):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Who is that lady behind there? You will speak after Hon. Atima.

**MR ATIMA:** Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee chairperson and the committee members for the elaborate report presented to this House. My concern is similar to the one raised by Hon. Ruth. The health concerns have not been well addressed in this matter, especially the masts that are put in densely populated areas, like the one I lead. Some of these masts are constructed on structures near people’s houses. Therefore, the committee needs to do more when analysing the substances emitted by these gadgets, which may be dangerous to human life.

Two, I would like to add my voice concerning the bundles that are just being cut by some of the companies - not only the bundles – but also airtime. Some of us are businessmen. We load airtime to the tune of Shs 200,000, Shs 300,000 or even Shs 500,000 on our phones but all of a sudden, you find this airtime is no more. You wonder where it has gone. Hence, that also needs to be seriously addressed. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I beg to submit.

5.33

**MS JENIFFERAYOO (NRM, Woman Representative, Kalaki)**: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. My concern is on some of the telecom companies that are offering health insurance, for example the MTNaYo. They display very attractive adverts on TVs but they do not clearly give the terms and conditions. When you save with aYo and probably get a problem and you need your money to help you, you will realise that the terms and conditions are very stringent. Some of the members cannot actually manage the terms and conditions; you follow up for quite a period of time and give up. These monies have ended up actually disappearing and I think the company takes the money. I request that the chairperson of the committee finds a way of having that captured in the report. Thank you.

5.35

**MR JOEL LEKU (NRM, Terego West County, Terego):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I take this opportunity to thank the committee for the report. We have a problem with internet connection and general network, even in Government entities. Imagine up to now, there are district headquarters like Terego District headquarters at Leju without a network, yet Government has moved to e-Procurements, and Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) among others. How are these people going to report? It is a serious challenge. Therefore, I would like to make a recommendation that district headquarters should have access to the internet and a good network.

Secondly, Government needs to bring in affordable phones. Having access to a smartphone is no longer a luxury because we need to report cases of abuse of Government properties, which are supposed to be reported by locals. How do we get through this? We are not in the villages but the people who are supposed to report this do not have access to smartphones and the internet. I beg to submit. Thank you.

5.37

**DR ABRAHAM ISAMAT (NRM, Kapir County, Ngora):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. My concern is still on security, more so the protection of clients. Recently, when we went for PDM mobilisation and sensitisation, a friend of mine approached me and informed me, “Doctor, I have been calling you but the person receiving the call is not you”.

I tasked him to call the person when both of us were together. Indeed, he called the person and that person received his call in my presence. I told the person, “I have been using this line for almost 20 years, so how come you have the same contact?” He insisted that it was his line.

Mr Speaker, this is a security matter. If everything we discuss on phone is accessed without consent, then it becomes a security matter. I pray that the companies involved in this kind of business look into this issue so that we are protected. I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable Minister of Security, I think you need to extract today’s *Hansard* and look through it but concentrate on the security-related matters. Otherwise, the Ministers of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance interest themselves in connectivity. On the security element, link up with the chairperson of the committee so that he gives you more information since he has received more complaints.

5.39

**MR EDSON RUGUMAYO (NRM, Youth Representative, Western):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to applaud the Government of Uganda for resisting pressures and not interfering in fixing prices for data and voice bundles. Most of our neighbouring countries enjoy lower rates because they fix prices. We understand that would be dangerous for us since it kills innovation and drives for investment.

Secondly, the report has noted that data remains unaffordable for most Ugandans because two key players have a monopoly over this. Mine would be to urge the Government to quickly fast track the recommendations of the committee to implement any of the measures that can bring down the price of data.

Mr Speaker, you will note that whereas you, others, and I use MTN and Airtel, young people have now run to *Smile*, and *Lycamobile*, yet the networks do not go beyond Kampala. They are only restricted to very few areas in the country. If we had a policy, like a unified transmission of data, we would bring these costs much lower and ensure it is accessible to most people.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, I would not do good for the young people of this country to leave the microphone without talking about the continued closure of social media platforms like Facebook. This is exposing our young people to virtual private networks, through which they lose a lot of data, and get exposed to other websites which they would not access if this was not closed.

I would like to urge the ministry and the Government to quickly intervene and open up the social media platform called Facebook to allow our young people to continue with their business as usual. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will conclude on this side with the senior from Bukanga. Colleagues, I see all of you and I do not malice any of you. Usually, when I am chairing and I do not pick you up on a particular day, the next day chances are high that I will start with you.

In addition, we have opened up; we no longer attend House in groups. Please forgive me. There is nothing I can do to satisfy all of you. However, I try my level best to be as fair as possible, though it is not easy. If I put you here, you will look for 10 people to pick but fail. *(Laughter)*

5.41

**MR EPHRAIM BIRAARO (NRM, Buhweju West County, Buhweju):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the chairperson and members for the hands-on report from the grassroots.

I would like to begin with the issue of cost. In Buhweju, we have a scanty network. We incur most of the costs even with mere saying “hello”, especially when someone has called. For five minutes, you have not yet accessed the person. That increases the cost.

The second issue is about our personal security. Many people in my area have to climb trees. As you are aware, we are a tropical forest area. You find five people climbing a tree in order to access a network so that they call their friends across borders.

Recently, we had a problem with civil servants failing to access the payroll- *(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Honourable minister, have you captured the issue of masts? Member for Bukanga, before you conclude, allow me to make a special case for Mubende *–* Honourable members, I do not pick regions I pick Members.

5.43

**MS HOPE NAKAZIBWE (NRM, Woman Representative, Mubende):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I finally caught your eye. Hon. Nsereko mentioned that there is very low usage of the internet in the villages. I want to attribute this to lack of computers in schools, more so in rural communities, where they cannot access private schools. They only have Government schools that do not have computers.

I would like to request the Chairperson of the Committee on Information, Communication Technology and National Guidance to recommend that the Minister of ICT and the Minister of Education and Sports work together and distribute computers to rural community schools.

The other thing I want to talk about that should not be taken for granted is the issue of more than one person having the same phone number. I have been directed by the people of Mubende to speak about this issue. People send mobile money it lands on the same number but to a different person. That should be handled seriously. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

5.45

**MR NATHAN BYANYIMA (NRM, Bukanga North County, Isingiro):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me add my voice to colleagues who have said something about this good report.

Mr Speaker, I would request that the committee interests themselves in the Act we have. The UCC has been sleeping on the job. They get two per cent of the money from these network operators but 0.5 is supposed to go for rural communication; they are supposed to regulate all these companies.

You recall MTN took the monopoly over Airtel. Now, they are at equal pace. However, let the committee, Mr Speaker, look at the licences for those two companies, you will be shocked what they are doing now. They no longer even put up the masts.

So, I feel that the moment you look at the Act - But we said the money that goes to UCC, part of it, should help those companies to put up those masts in the far reaching areas so that at the end of the day, each subcounty should have a communication centre.

I propose that the committee gets interested in the agreement they read, Celtel which was formerly Warid and MTN. Of course, MTN has really made – you cannot believe it. There are people who have made a mess of the whole thing because of the monopoly. So, I request that they move ahead to look at the law and the licences. In this way, we shall get better services for this country. I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** In relation to that matter, I am going to request all colleagues who have no network in their areas - we are going to get one focal point and register. Okay? *(Applause)* I am going to ask the Clerk to open a registration desk, at the front, for the whole of next week so that we get all these records because I have seen the telecommunication companies putting masts in many places. You might find some are getting more masts when others do not even have anything.

And then as the leadership of the House, we shall formerly now communicate this to the minister and we link up with the telecommunication companies. Tomorrow, I am attending a function for the American Tower Company. Okay? These are some of the issues, I will raise it with UCC, so that this fund, which is supposed to be helping rural communities - what is it doing? Can we have an audit on that fund? We are going to interest ourselves into that fund; it should be used in extending network to all communities.

Please Clerk, the whole of next week ensure the list is brought to my Office and the Office of the Speaker. We will ensure some action is taken in that regard to help colleagues to access network in their areas.

If you do not register, you will not blame us because we are going to follow up on that list seriously to ensure our colleagues get masts constructed in their areas.

So, hon. Shadow Minister – yes, please I am the presiding officer. You cannot object to what I have decided. *(Laughter)* Hon. Anifa*,* I am the presiding officer. Kindly allow us to move. Hon. Namugga, please and also speak for Hon. Anifa because you come from the same district. Yes, capture her views.

5.49

**MS GORRETH NAMUGGA (NUP, Mawogola County South, Ssembabule):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. As the shadow minister in this line, I will ably represent her views.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** A shadow minister.

**MS NAMUGGA:** Yes, in the alternative Government, Mr Speaker. I thank the chair of the committee for ably representing the committee.

Mr Speaker, it has been the tendency of Government on failing to implement the resolutions of Parliament. I kindly request that these are given urgent attention:

One, is UCC putting structures for the implementation of the communications tribunal? That is very urgent?

Two, there is the issue of the cost of power when it comes to Umeme. This should also be considered because a common Ugandan wonders, how do we come to a cost of unit of power in this country? This should be looked into because all this increases the cost of production in this country.

Speaker, there are areas that have suffered on issues of network, because they are not profit making to these companies that are doing business. These companies only concentrate in areas that have *– (Member timed out.) -* I kindly beg for your indulgence. Mr Speaker, there are some areas that are suffering because of that low population and lack of business for these companies. UCC should take it upon themselves to ensure that every area in this country, is covered, in terms of network.

Mr Speaker, let me also bring to your attention the issues regarding companies that are giving us services. There were serious complaints on the side of Government. The licensing process is simply too long. It takes the American Tower six months to access a licence. So, all these issues should be looked into, to improve services given to our people.

The cost of steel, in terms of raw materials, is expensive. So, why don’t we concentrate on extracting our own raw materials for us to reduce on the cost of importation of raw materials to this country? I am saying this because I think that is the reason as to why the cost of production and the skyrocketing prices of common commodities is high in this country.

With all these done, I implore the House to adopt the recommendations of this very important committee. This issue is very pertinent because it touches the life of a common Ugandan. Communication is something that you cannot underestimate. Communication is relevant to every stakeholder in this country. So, I thank the chairperson and his mighty committee, for doing us a service. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Before the Prime Minister left, she assigned Hon. Bahati, as the Acting Leader of Government Business. So, honourable member, do you have anything you want to comment on?

Leader of the Opposition (LOP), wait because your shadow minister – but I want us to resolve this. LOP, you need to organise your team. When you assign your shadow minister, they should be able to summarise on behalf of your side. But now, let me first allow you to say something before we listen to Government side.

5.52

**THE CHIEF OPPOSITION WHIP (Mr John Baptist Nambeshe):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also salute the committee for presenting a good report, and particularly on the recommendations that are being made in respect to the taxes.

However, it is rather unfortunate, Mr Speaker, that these recommendations come at a time when the budget of the Financial Year 2022/2023 has already been approved by this House. The Executive has always been very reluctant in coming up or even implementing the Acts of Parliament. For example, you know very well that the tribunal, that you have made mention of, is the one that handles all matters that are affecting ICT, including petitions.

This particular petition we are deliberating upon could have been easily handled by the technocrats in that tribunal. However, can you imagine that it is 25 years down the road, ever since the Uganda Communications Act was enacted - and when you read Section 60 of that Act, you will realise it is the one that establishes the tribunal? But as usual, this Government is very reluctant and sleeping on job, Mr Speaker. *(Laughter)*

As I conclude - the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives is here - I would like to remind you that as East Africa particularly the three countries; the coalition of the willing, at one time, Rwanda, Uganda and Kenya, agreed to reduce barriers on trade; they agreed to reduce roaming charges on phones. And we expected that there would be cheaper cross border *– (Member timed out.)-* but up to now, I am wondering and I would love to see the minister, since he is the one holding the fort for the Leader of Government Business, respond to this question. Why is it that these cheaper cross border phone calls have not come to pass up to now?

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Leader of the Opposition. That is a very important point. I think we should also task our MPs at East African Legislative Assembly to debate this issue in EALA and even pass a resolution in that regard for the heads of state to look at in their summit. Minister?

5.55

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY)(Mr David Bahati):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. On behalf of the Executive, we want to thank, first, the petitioner who put this petition to the House and the chairperson and the committee for a value-adding report that they have brought to the House. I would like to confirm to the House that we will look at all the recommendations that have been made and make sure that we use them to inform the policy, moving forward.

I also want to use this time to make a few comments on the report and the comments that have come from the House.

The first one is on access to internet and the cost of internet. Mr Speaker, as you are aware, we have now done four phases of the national backbone to be able to extend internet to the people of Uganda.

Government is in the process of starting phase five. We are processing a loan from the EXIM Bank of China to ensure that all corners of Uganda get the last mile – of phase five – of the national backbone. This is so that the access to internet ceases to be an issue and then we work on the cost of internet.

Somebody raised an issue of mobile money and issues to do with dormant accounts. We passed here a national payment system law that we are implementing to protect everybody who is using mobile money as a means of transaction. So, that is to comfort Members that the law is there.

There are issues of privacy that Members raised. Here, we have a law on interception of communications. I want to confirm – and the minister of security is here – that Government is interested in the security of its people, the security of the country and the property but not to infringe on the privacy of individuals. So, be comfortable that your privacy is protected by the law. The Government is interested in matters of security and matters of criminality, not other issues.

We are processing a cyber law to protect people from cyber bullying and other related matters. As Members said, technology is a good enabler. It helps us in security and to grow the economy and others but if it is not well regulated, it can actually be a danger to our children.

Therefore, because of the realisation of that fact, the Government is processing a Bill – the Cyber Security Bill – which will address most of these issues.

Telecom companies are licensed to provide network to all areas of the country. However, we realise that there are some spots that do not have internet. So, we will be talking to the telecom companies to ensure that the licence they have – the licences that we have issued as Government, If, for example, you are MTN, you should cover from Kabale to Karamoja and everybody should have access to equal network. We will be talking to telecom companies to ensure that they stick to the conditions of the licences so that all people of Uganda can access internet equally.

Mr Speaker, I want to really thank you for this and I must say that reports of this nature are being debated in the House to add value to the policy formulation of this country. Certainly, ICT is a good enabler of our economy and a good enabler of our security.

The issues raised, including issues raised by the Leader of the Opposition on roaming – I come from the border. Sometimes when I am in one of the subcounties, I have to use the code of Rwanda to call somebody in Uganda. We are discussing, as a community, to make sure that those things are sorted out. So, it is just a matter of time.

Thank you very much for the contribution of each Member here. Thank you, Mr Chairman, for the value-adding report. The Minister of Water and Environment is telling me here that for e-waste, we now have a centre to handle those issues of e-waste management, including the things that come from the telecom companies.

We will be coming with these laws. When we come, please, do support them. I have also seen Members saying that the ICT sector needs to be resourced – this was Hon. Nsereko, who has also moved a Private Member’s Bill to handle other issues of social media. When we work together – Government and Parliament working together – we will be able to handle these issues that have been raised in the report. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. Yes, honourable chairman?

**MR MAGOGO:** Mr Speaker and Members, I will take this opportunity to thank you for the various contributions you have made and, of course, thanking us for the job done. There are a number of points that have been taken. I would like, with the permission of the Speaker, to propose that in order – and you guided us very well Mr Speaker that the recommendations being made here be added to the report.

However, I would like to request, on behalf of the committee, that you allow us to repackage because some of them are scattered and it would be very difficult for the *Hansard* to capture them in the way they are to make meaning since some of these involve technical language. We would like to make recommendations that are actually implementable.

The second thing is that there are a few areas on which I would like to try and give some light. I will try to summarise them – the areas that Members contributed on. There is an area of cost. Everybody has talked about cost and cost is determined by cost drivers and by the number of subscribers.

Also, there is one thing that I might not have mentioned, but we are recommending. You see, most of the internet users – internet becomes a cost because it includes when we pay to go to what they call the “internet tier one” – that is the network at the world level. However, you could be moving information from within Uganda to within Uganda.

We have recommended that we need to have the Uganda cluster such that you can be able to access some information without necessarily getting out of Uganda, which would be cheaper. Therefore, cost is being driven down and it will continue to be driven down.

On the issue of security and fraud, we will have further discussion with the people in security because it is not only technology. However, we must also appreciate that technology, especially information technology, is new and convenient to use but it also has challenges. Therefore, we will try to work with the people in security to ensure that some of these cases mentioned can be adequately addressed.

There was also the issue of Ombachi Earth Satellite that was raised by my colleague. I would like to inform you that having an earth satellite does not improve anything in terms of communication. Actually, earth satellite stations no longer have a value addition in terms of communication. What we need is the footprint of the satellite – that signal which comes from the satellite, flashing like a torch
on the geography of Uganda as a map. Otherwise, earth satellite stations are used to transmit the signal up. They do not help the neighbours.

It is what comes down from the satellite that helps the users –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable chairperson, reports of this – please, take your seat. Debates and reports of this nature, unlike the Executive, which is supposed to go and take action, for you the submissions are usually to guide you and enrich you when you are doing your work as a committee. You do not need to respond to Members. It is usually the Executive, because it is going to take a certain action, that must respond. These ones are for information purposes and contributing to enabling you make decisions in the committees.

Your purpose usually, unless members ask for a clarification, for you, you are supposed to come here and acknowledge receipt of these recommendations and contributions; and inform Members how you are going to use them in doing your work as a chair and as a committee. You do not need to respond to members, one by one. But you take note of their contributions. You can resume and you do that and we conclude, chair.

**MR MAGOGO:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the guidance. At the beginning of my submission, I thanked the Members but let me do that again for the enrichment of our report. I have also requested Right Honourable Speaker that if you allow us to repackage this recommendation in a language that can make the recommendations implementable. If that is allowed, I would like to thank the Members and also to thank my committee that worked tirelessly to ensure that we make this report.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you Chairman for the very good report and the committee. Clerk, I told the Chairman to summarise this report. So the *Hansard* might not capture very important aspects of the report which he didn’t read. I hereby direct that the whole report be captured on the *Hansard* to help whoever will be reading the *Hansard* in future.

*(The entire Committee Report will appear in the Hansard monthly bound volume of July 2022)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Then Clerk, I want to save the Chairman the burden of extracting and polishing, please extract these recommendations, together with the *Hansard*, forward them to the minister and as per Rule 220 of our Rules of Procedure, let the minister in three months - I want to give him time. I do not want us to panic. In three months, the minister should come back here with an action-taken report. Some of these recommendations really need some time and they need Cabinet to sit; and also for money to be provided and also for various stakeholders to be engaged. So in three months, the minister should come back here and give us an action-taken report.

So, with those, I now put a question that the report of the committee of ICT on Information, Communication Technology and National Guidance on the petition of unsatisfactory and unfair service delivered by various telecommunication service providers in Uganda be adopted with additional recommendations by colleagues in the House.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

PRESENTATION OF PETITION BY THE ANKORE PENSIONERS ASSOCIATION

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon Tibasiimwa Joram Ruranga, MP for the elderly. This is a very important petition. It may sound as Ankore, but if you have read through, these are issues affecting pensioners but because he is an MP for the elderly for Western Region and it is a petition for that group. Honourable colleagues you listen to him.

6.08

**MR JORAM TIBASIIMWA (NRM, Older Persons Representative, Western):** Thank you the Right Honourable Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable I give you permission to remove your mask, so that you can be more audible.

**MR TIBASIIMWA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am moving this petition under Rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

*The humble petition of the Ankore Pensioners Association states that the Ankore Pensioners Association consists of members from 18 paying stations which include so many districts and municipalities.* Because of time, it will take us a long time but they are 18 in number. *The petitioners are aggrieved by the unrealistic mode of adjustment of pension payable under the Pensioners Act Cap 286 and the irregular payment of pension to the petitioners.*

*Previously, Government policy was that whenever the salaries of serving public officers were enhanced, the pension payable would be revised accordingly to correspond with the increment made to the salaries of the public serving officers. That policy played a fundamental role in enhancing the pension package of the petitioners, which enabled the gradual realisation of improved social protection.*

*However, subsequently Government adopted a system that allows for periodic review of pension payable to take into account the changes in value of money. Accordingly, the Minister of Public Service moved for the Pensions Act (Amendment) on the First Schedule Instrument 2018 whose objective was to provide for periodic review of pension payable based on the inflation rate.*

*The petitioners are aggrieved and concerned about the mode of determining increment to the pension payable based on the inflation rate approach, given that the rate of inflation is usually vey nominal and cannot enable the pensioners attain a reasonable standard of living during their retirement.”*

*Honourable Speaker, I have a range of inflation rates given at the end of this petition. I will let you know about them.*

*Worse still, following the issuance of Pensions Act (Amendment) of First Schedule Instrument 2018, on 13 August 2011, the Permanent Secretary Public Service communicated to the responsible ministers in Ministries, Departments, Cities and Local Government informing them of adjustments to be effected on the pensioners’ payroll of September 2021 and the adjustments of 3.6 per cent and 2.3 per cent were to be effected in 2019/2020 and 20/2021 financial years respectively. However, these adjustments have not been effected.*

*On the other hand, whereas Government revalidated the pensioners arrears for the period 1988-2001 and remitted pension in arrears to some pensioners, other pensioners were not paid. The petitioners who substantially depend on their pension for their livelihood have been left frustrated, vulnerable and unable to meet the medical care and other necessities of life. To make it worse those who have reached the age of 75 years are supposed to have been paid full pension but there are not.*

*Therefore, by this petition, the petitioners pray that Parliament urges Government:*

1. *To repeal the Pensions Act (Amendment) First Schedule Instrument, 2018, which provides for periodic review of the pension payable to take into account the changes in the value of money and revert back to the policy where increment or adjustment to the pension payable was based on the enhancement of salary payable to public serving officers, especially these days that we have seen some public officers salaries being enhanced so we envisage that there will be more enhancement in future. And if the pensioners are not well catered for, they will still get a peanut.*

*2. To pay all the arrears that have since accrued to the petitioners. That the payment of eligible pensioners attaining the age of 75 years should be automatic, rather than going to apply for full pension.*

*3. Establish a salary review commission to look into the salaries discrepancies of Government workers.*

*Your humble petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray and hereto appended their signatures.* Mr Speaker, there are 23 signatures. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable member.

**MR TIBASIIMWA**: Before I go, I beg to lay on the Table the document I have been reading.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable colleague, I have perused the petition and your prayers but all of them fall under the Executive. I would have invoked rule 30(5) by sending it to a committee, but in this kind of petition, there is nothing they can study, because your prayers are very specific and clear.

I am going to invoke rule 30(6), which allows me to refer the petition to the minister. I will also invoke rule 220, whereby I will give the minister a period to report back to this House to see what action has been taken on the prayers you have put here.

Rule 30 (10) says - if I had taken it to a committee, it would need 45 days. I will use the 45 days under rule 30(10) to require the minister to report back within 45 days on the prayers. When the minister fails, then I will involve the committee. Otherwise, I need to give the Executive a chance to act on the very clear prayers that have been put forward. In 45 days, if the minister does not act, that is when we shall come in –

Honourable members, if you are rising on the same petition, I have already given guidance and ruling on it. Thank you. Next item.

PRESENTATION OF THE PETITION BY THE PROJECT AFFECTED PERSONS (PAPS) ON THE HOIMA-KAISO-TONYA ROAD PROJECT

6.18

**MS ASINANSI NYAKATO (FDC, Woman Representative, Hoima City)**: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. I am presenting a petition for the people of Hoima-Kaiso-Tonya Road. The petition is moved under Rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament of the Republic of Uganda.

*The humble petition from the project-affected persons on the Hoima-Kaiso-Tonya Road Project presented on their behalf by Hon. Nyakato Asinansi, the Woman Member of Parliament, Hoima City.*

*SHOWETH AND STATES THAT:*

 *1. Your petitioners are Project Affected Persons on the Hoima-Kaiso-Tonya Road and number over 1,583 persons.*

*2. The subject matter of the petition is the failure by Government, through the Uganda National Roads Authority, (UNRA) to appropriately value and adequately compensate Project Affected Persons on the Hoima-Kaiso-Tonya Road for land appropriated and other properties destroyed during the construction of the Hoima-Kaiso-Tonya Road.*

*3. Your petitioners state that –*

1. *Government, through Uganda National Roads Authority, undertook upgrading of the Hoima-Kaiso-Tonya Road from gravel to bitumen standard;*
2. *the road construction project required appropriation of land and destruction of property along the 92kilometre road corridor;*
3. *UNRA commissioned Comptran Engineering and Planning Associates to carry out a feasibility study, detailed engineering designs, environmental impact assessments and a resettlement action plan;*
4. *Comptran Engineering and Planning Associates carried out an evaluation exercise of the land and property to be affected by the road project and obtained, through UNRA, approval of the evaluation report from the Chief Government Valuer;*
5. *the evaluation and compensation process was not carried out in a transparent manner since the project affected persons were not informed of the evaluation placed on their land and other properties and were forced to sign for and receive compensation without being informed of the value attached to their land and property since 2012 thereby resulting into –*
6. *undervaluation of land appropriated for and property affected by the road project;*
7. *the non-compensation of project-affected persons for property and land appropriated or destroyed or the payment of compensation below the market price of the appropriated land and properties affected by the road project;*
8. *the irregular appropriation and non-payment of land beyond the requirement of the road project; and*
9. *the exclusion of some project-affected persons from compensation.*

*4. Your petitioners further aver that the construction of the Hoima-Kaiso-Tonya-Road was done with little regard to the communities that live along the road, which has hindered the project affected persons from accessing their land or properties due to lack of access roads, the existence of gullies and open trenches along the project area, flooding due to poor drainage and destruction of their properties, which are outside the project area.*

*THEREFORE, by this petition, the petitioners pray that:*

1. *Parliament urges the Government to revalue all the properties of the project-affected persons and pays compensation to all persons whose property was appropriated or destroyed during the construction of the Hoima-Kaiso-Tonya Road.*
2. *A relevant committee of Parliament investigates the conduct of UNRA and Comptran Engineering and Planning Associates in the evaluation and compensation of persons affected by the upgrading of the Hoima-Kaiso-Tonya Road.*

*Your humble petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray and hereto appended their signatures.* I beg to lay the petition.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I participated in the approval and processing of this loan under the Committee on National Economy in the 10th Parliament. There was money which was not part of the civil works but it was supposed to be for additional works in the communities because we understood that communities might raise issues such as “you have left this small road –“ we approved that money. Hon. Bahati, you are the one who presented that petition.

I would like to advise colleagues from areas where they are doing the oil roads to link up with UNRA and the minister so that that money can be utilised under the loan. Otherwise, it will go back. We did it deliberately to include that money. You might find that as they were working on the road, there were some connecting roads, which they should be doing, but utilising the money under the loan.

If you don't do that, the money will go back to the EXIM Bank. So, I am just giving you that tip, that you follow up - these are projects under your area; you get documents. Also call the contractors and interact on how much money was supposed to be for extra works, which we would identify, as leaders in the communities. The CAO was supposed to write to UNRA for it to allow the contractors do the job.

Now, this petition is also close to the petition that was brought earlier. The complaints are about UNRA and the issues are very specific. We should give a chance to the Minister of Works and Transport to take action because they are very explicit views.

If I send it to the Committee on Physical Infrastructure, I don't see what they are going to do with it; they will again come with the same recommendations. So, we would rather give it to the minister, we give him 45 days to take action and report back to this House on those action.

Honourable colleagues, when the minister comes here, we shall debate the report. Let us give the minister chance on this matter, other than rotating around. For clarification, I did not mention, which minister I had assigned the first petition to. It is the Minister of Public Service.

Secondly, like I had said at the beginning, this is a national matter that should not be only for Ankore. Otherwise, elderly people from northern Uganda, those from east – *(Applause)* - those from central are all going to bring similar petitions. So, the minister should give a picture for the whole country – (*Applause*) – by giving a policy guidance and intervention and ensuring that indeed, the issues are handled.

I think if we go this way in handling petitions, it will be easy. Honourable ministers, we are giving you chance to do your work. When you fail, you invite us to the party. So –no, honourable member, this is a very clear matter. It is a petition and I have guided on the same. So, next item.

Colleagues, on petitions, we debate action-taken reports; we do not debate petitions. So, do not say, “Rt Hon. Speaker is hurrying to send matters” no! That is how the rules are.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER ON THE REGIONAL INTER-MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON MIGRATION, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

6.27

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER AND ENVIRONMENT (ENVIRONMENT) (Ms Beatrice Anywar):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity.

Mr Speaker, the 27th Session of the Conference of Parties, that is COP27, to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) will be presided by the Government of Egypt and it will take place in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt in November from 6th to 10th 2022.

The fact that COP27 is organised on the African continent, provides a good opportunity for African states to bring their priorities to the global forum, including climate finance, adaptation, loss and damage, migration, and displacement.

Mr Speaker, the Government of the Republic of Uganda, spearheaded by the Ministry of Water and Environment, supported by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) regional office for East and the Horn of Africa, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, East African Development Bank’s regional collaboration centre based in Uganda, are organising a high-level regional inter-ministerial conference on migration, environment and climate change in the East and the Horn of Africa.

The conference will be held under the theme: *“Enhancing Cooperation in Relation to Climate Change-Induced Human Mobility: Migration, Displacement and Planned Relocation.”*

Mr Speaker, the objectives of the conference are:

1. To bring together high-level participants from 12 regional member states and other African member states to enact to enhance cooperation in relation to climate change-induced human mobility, including migration, displacement and planned relocation.
2. To advance understanding on the links between climate change, human mobility and the importance of regional collaboration to ensure effective and accelerated action.
3. To explore areas of cooperation in mitigating the adverse effects and taking advantage of the opportunities of climate change-related morbidities.
4. To consider how the mitigation, environment and climate change nexus can be elevated through collaborative effort at the global platform and in particular, at UNFCCC COPs, including through a joint declaration towards an action- oriented, forward-looking common position.
5. To identify possible areas of strategic intervention by states, partners and the wider UN family and regional bodies.

Mr Speaker, in attendance at the conference will be the two heads of state: the honourable excellencies, the President of the Republic of Uganda and the Republic of Kenya, regional ministers from several member states that include, but not limited to Burundi, Djibouti, the DR Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda.

The regional bodies will also be in attendance - the UN agencies that will include the IOM, the UNFCCC and others, high-level technical experts, Government technical representatives, the non-state actors, the private sector, the youth representatives, academia and researchers, media and it is expected to pull over 1,000 participants from around the world at the dedicated hybrid sessions.

Mr Speaker, the conference will run for about four days. It will focus on technical discussions among member states and resource persons acquainted with the subject matter. There will be the official closing at the end of all these discussions. Also, we intend to have an outdoor activity for the international delegation that might include visiting the Mabira Forest – *(Applause)* - and the Source of the Nile in Jinja.

Mr Speaker, all delegates attending the conference will follow the SOPs issued by the Ministry of Health of Uganda. The conference will take place at Munyonyo Commonwealth Resort Hotel in Kampala, Uganda, from the 27 – 29 July 2022 – which is just a few days away.

The Government of Uganda and the Ministry of Water and Environment are already in high gear, prepared and committed to ensuring that this historic event is impactful and expectations of the participants are met –

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, honourable minister.

**Ms anywar:** I conclude by saying, Mr Speaker, that a few Members of Parliament, heads of committees – especially the natural resource committee – and some ministers are expected to join us at Munyonyo to represent our country. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, honourable minister. This statement was for information purposes, so, we take note.

response to an urgent question raised by hon. atkins katusabe on the status of the prosecution of the incarcerated Royal Guards of Businga Bwa Rwenzururu, noting that many of them are critically ill and require urgent medical attention, which cannot be obtained in the detention centres

6.36

**The deputy Attorney-General (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have a brief statement – I believe it has been uploaded. I am making this presentation in relation to a matter that was raised by Hon. Atkins, the Member of Parliament for Bukonzo West.

The Member of Parliament sought information on the status of the prosecution of persons commonly referred to as “royal guards of the *Obusinga Bwa Rwenzururu”*. He also stated that some of them require urgent medical attention that cannot be provided within the prison facilities. This is the status report.

It will be recalled that in December 2016, 168 accused persons were charged before the Magistrates’ Court in Jinja with the offences of treason, terrorism, murder, attempted murder and aggravated robbery. These offences, as are well known, related (and still relate) to criminal activities carried out by the accused persons prior to or in the context of the uprising that was centred around the *Omusinga’s* palace in Kasese on or before the night of 26 November 2016.

The case was moved to Jinja due to the tense security situation in the Rwenzori subregion at the time. As investigations progressed, more arrests were made and the total number of those charged increased to 221. These were all committed to the High Court for trial in 2017.

Out of the 221 accused persons, 11 were released on bail in 2017 and another 143 were released in January 2021. These returned to their respective homes in the Rwenzori subregion. They report regularly to the High Court and the Chief Magistrates’ Court within the jurisdiction of their residence, but they are expected to report to the International Crimes Division, Kololo, for pre-trial hearing. The rest of the accused persons were denied bail for various reasons and are still remanded in Luzira and Jinja.

The pre-trial hearing or the case commenced in December 2020, but was constantly interrupted by the COVID-19 restrictions. Nonetheless, when the restrictions were lifted, the process resumed in earnest. A number of pre-trial conferences have been held to deal with the preliminary issues before the actual pre-trial hearing commences, considering the large number of the accused persons and the complexity of the case.

The last pre-trial status conference was held on 23 May 2022 at the International Crimes Division, Kololo. The next hearing will be on 26 July 2022 at 9.00 a.m. at Kololo at the International Crimes Division.

Prosecution has substantially disclosed the evidence and materials that they intend to present at the trial, as required by law. Prosecution has also made an application for the protection of 70 witnesses for a proper hearing – to protect them from the public. When the above application is disposed of, prosecution is prepared and set to commence the hearing over the case.

Mr Speaker, this is a summary, as I conclude:

1. There are 221 accused persons indicted and committed to the High Court over the *Rwenzururu* Kingdom uprising of 2016.
2. They are jointly and severally indicted. While 154 of the above are on bail, the others still remain on remand.
3. The case is for pre-trial hearing in accordance with the rules of procedure of the International Crimes Division.

Mr Speaker, let me also place this on record.

1. According to information given to me by the Commissioner-General of Prisons, as of today, the prisoners that are of interest to Hon. Katusabe look well-kept and nutritionally fit.
2. They receive regular medical consultation from the prison’s health team on the ground and receive frequent outreach services delivered both at Murchison Bay health facilities and other Government referral hospitals.

1. Prescription medicine, which might not be available on the list of essential medicines or health supplies provided by the National Medical Stores, are supplied by a credible pharmacy in Jinja with which Uganda Prisons Service has a memorandum of understanding.
2. Lastly, further, there is food supplementation for the elderly accused persons as part of their medical needs. This is on top of the routine psycho-social and welfare counselling by the psychiatric personnel that attend to them.

I beg to submit and hope that this is enough to satisfy Hon. Katusabe’s concerns. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Hon. Katusabe, any supplementary information? Colleagues, this is limited to the person who asked the question. If you have any appetite for debate, this is not available for you.

6.42

**Mr atkins katusabe (FDC, Bukonzo West County, Kasese):** Thank you, Mr Speaker –

**The Deputy Speaker:** Honourable member, I always allow you to remove your mask – and you have two minutes.

**Mr katusabe:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank my honourable brother, the Deputy Attorney-General, for his presentation.

Mr Attorney-General, what you have just presented does not relate with the tragedy that we, as a community, is confronted with. Understand that, I think last Thursday, up to 11 of our community members perished in prison!

Attorney-General, we are people’s representatives. The people in prison are our constituents. They come from our community and we have taken the duty of checking on them. Attorney- General, Sir, I think your submission would have merit if we had not lost a member of our community and if we, as leaders, had not made visits to the prisons. As a matter of fact, we are in touch with prison authorities.

Mr Speaker, as I speak right now, we have up to four critically ill patients. This is information that we get from prison authorities. Every time we make a visit, the prison authorities keep telling us, as leaders - my colleagues are in the House here and they can attest to this – that prisons are not hospitals. This is the same information that we bring to your attention.

If I can address this to the Attorney-General, the recent death that we had - we had gotten information from the prison authorities; my colleagues and I, over the last three months, we almost made it a song on the Floor of Parliament until that happened. I remember when I said our parishes, as a community, had gotten depleted.

All we are asking for is - there was a directive from you, Mr Speaker, and also the presiding officer, the Rt Hon. Speaker, to the effect that medical attention should be given to those that need it. As far as we know, that did not take place. I remember the same Attorney-General, my honourable brother here, making that a commitment; that you would but you did not do it.

Mr Speaker, you will recall that I started raising this while you were still serving as the Government Chief Whip. Therefore, this matter is something that permanently taints our country and I keep asking about our inaction as a country. Is it because my mother, father, brother, sister, son, friend or relative is not in prison? It is okay. Nobody is asking – I am not the only one. I feel partially offended.

The honourable Attorney-General said he hoped this satisfies me but I am not the only Member of Parliament. In this regard, Mr Speaker, if it pleases you, there are people that represent that community and specifically those that I know have made personal visits checking on our people and I will ask them to give some information.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: No, please, that is not how it works.

**MR KATUSABE**: Okay, if that does not work –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Colleagues, please, on these matters - I know whether you are from Kasese or Kanungu, these are Ugandans. We all feel for them. However, we have rules that guide us in debate here. Honourable, conclude. I gave you two minutes.

**MR KATUSABE:** Thank you very much for –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Conclude on this so that I give my guidance.

**MR KATUSABE**: Mr Speaker, the Constitution is very clear under Article 23 (6) on bail. Your human heart and conscience should be guiding you to the effect that even when you support Government or work for Government, I think the human spirit should be there; that these are people under incarceration. They should have been out of prison yesterday but they have been in prison for the last six years; since 26 November 2016!

In the interest of time, when these members from our community pass or die in prison - let me alert the country that this is what happens. First of all, the Government keeps them incarcerated. When they die, it is only a call from the prison authorities - they look at where they come from. If it is Busongora North, they call the Member of Parliament representing Busongora North; Bukonzo East or West or Woman Member of Parliament. Therefore, you are responsible for picking up the body, buying a pair of sheets and blanket since you are the Member of Parliament. You also buy the casket and then transport the body. Can you imagine? This is an individual that did not die from the MP’s house. He died in the hands or at the hands of guards.

I would like to draw the attention -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Honourable, I know this is an emotional matter but please conclude.

**MR KATUSABE**: Mr Speaker, as I conclude, our community is asking for one thing; unconditional release. Release our people unconditionally. *(Applause)* If they had a case to answer, you do not need to wait for six years for your case to be heard. You do not need six years for your case to be determined; six years down the road and they are in prison and now here you are misleading everybody. The last time I heard about the DPP’s office was about – it only came two years ago –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Honourable, listen to your presiding officer. I do not think you will conclude this matter. Kindly take your seat.

**MR KATUSABE**: They need urgent medical attention, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Thank you.

**MR KATUSABE:***(Text expunged)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: No, please, honourable. I gave you two minutes and you have used nearly 10 so do not go beyond. You are abusing my goodwill.

**MR KATUSABE**: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. *(Text expunged)* Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Thank you. Please, honourable colleagues, I do not need any procedural matter. I am proceeding well. I am not allowing any procedural issues or anything. I know this matter very well. We have handled it. I know the emotions it arouses. As a human being, I feel what Hon. Katusabe has brought up - six years!

Now, the tricky situation you have is that you are asking one party because this is a party to a case. This is the matter before court. We are the ones who sat here and made laws that do not allow us to interfere with issues before the court.

Rule 73(2) of our Rules of Procedure is very clear when a matter is active *-* Colleagues, just listen to me. When a matter is active in court, it is very clear and we cannot do much now.

It also goes on under Rule 73(3)(b) and it defines when a matter ceases to be active, that is, if it is concluded, and a verdict has been made. Now, it ties our hands when we talk about issues of bail. Then, it becomes an argument of party A v. party B. It cannot be matters of this House. This House can never direct on such a matter.

On the issues of the treatment of prisoners to ensure they get adequate treatment or are treated humanely, these are issues within our confines to look into. However, the Executive should also look into it.

Instead of this matter going on and on, where we will never end, why don't we build bridges? *(Text expunged)*

Clerk –*(Text Expunged) -* So, expunge that part of the record of Parliament -*(Text Expunged)-* it cannot be on the *Hansard*.

This matter is concluded. Honourable minister, your statement has been received. Hon. Katusabe, you can continue engaging with the Attorney-General on this matter. I hereby adjourn the House until tomorrow at 2.00 p.m.

*(The House rose at 6.56 p.m., and adjourned until Thursday, 14 July 2022 at 2.00 p.m.)*