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THURSDAY, 8 FEBRUARY 2024



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

THIRD SESSION - 7TH SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Thursday, 8 February 2024

Parliament met at 2.24 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to today's sitting.

Parliament of Uganda shall be hosting the President of the Union of European Football Association (UEFA), Mr Aleksander Ceferin. He is leading a team of 22 former international footballers for a four-day visit to Uganda.

During their stay, they will play a football match with the Parliament of Uganda team, on Monday, 12 February 2024, at 2.00 p.m., at Kitende Stadium. All Members are invited to attend. *(Applause)*

The delegation will also visit several sites in Uganda to look at our footballing facilities. I really thank the Federation of Uganda Football Association (FUFA), and the Ministry of Education and Sports, for organising this very important visit. I hope we shall be there in big numbers to cheer our team on.

Honourable colleagues, we shall have matters of national importance after the Prime Minister's Time. We want to have a long interaction today

with the Prime Minister, since we have taken a while without having Prime Minister's Time. Next item.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES ON THE OUTBREAK OF THE FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE IN THE CATTLE CORRIDOR AND THE RESULTANT QUARANTINE

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of procedure, from the honourable member from Wakiso.

2.27

MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso): Thank you so much. Mr Speaker, last week when we raised matters concerning fisheries and the fishing communities in Uganda, you gave an assignment to the minister to meet those of us who come from the fishing communities, to deliberate and get back to the House. We were supposed to meet on Tuesday.

Wouldn't it be procedurally right that before we get this statement, we get a reason why we were not met and called, and also get a commitment from the fisheries minister to raise these matters away from this Plenary? They are quite a mess. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let me directly assign the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to spearhead this. Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Animal

Industry and Fisheries, please meet the Members of Parliament from the fishing communities. They have – there is no one on the Floor. Clarification only applies when we have someone holding the Floor. That is not provided for under our Rules of Procedure, honourable. I am sorry.

Honourable minister, please, I do not know when you think you could meet them, but the matters seem to be very urgent.

2.28

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I always meet people, and especially Members of Parliament. Unfortunately, we never got to connect. I did not know that we were supposed to meet on Tuesday. On Tuesday, I was in Soroti, and I told Parliament. We can connect and meet, no problem – *(Interjection)* - I will give you the date and we can follow it up after here – *(Interruption)*.

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I never wanted to interrupt the minister's presentation. However, I am raising a procedural matter. This House has Rules of Procedure, and among them is a rule on the dress code.

This House is changing slowly on dress code. When I come as a Member of Parliament, and above all Shadow Minister of Education and Sports, I dress smartly, as you can see me, Mr Speaker. I would think that something must happen, whether it would be procedurally okay, to amend the Rules of Parliament, and remove those stringent demands of dress code. Otherwise, we are degenerating slowly. I do not want to mention anybody.

Mr Speaker, if we raise points of order, you might have about 10 Members being sent out of the House. Indeed, it is within your powers to determine that. The issue of dress code in this House is degenerating day by day.

Therefore, would it not be procedurally okay, Mr Speaker, that you give a serious warning

and a ruling? This is because my decency must be reflected on other Members, on my side as well. Otherwise, I would not like to mention, because I am a bit - I should end there, Mr Chief Whip. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Ssewungu. I register your concern seriously.

What we will do, next week, is meet the Leader of the Opposition, the Government Chief Whip, the Whips, the Chairman of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline, the Speaker and I. We shall contemplate on this matter and give proper guidance that is harmonised, to Members, in as far as interpretation of the rules on dressing is concerned.

Next week we shall give that guidance. Honourable minister.

MS NALUYIMA: Mr Speaker, I beg your indulgence that he gives us a time and a date.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please honourable, the minister needs to go and look at his diary. I do not want to give a time which he will - this is the minister, okay? I am sure he will deliver on that.

MR TUMWEBAZE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will give you a call. Today, I will take your number. *(Laughter)* Please prepare.

Thank you, Mr Speaker. You will recall during that the Plenary sitting of 1 February, I presented a comprehensive statement in response to issues raised by this House, regarding Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in Uganda. In particular, you framed the issues as follows: how long the affected districts have been under quarantine and how long it is anticipated to take; Government's position on availing the vaccine to farmers; Government to present the short and long-term measures to manage economic effects of the outbreak in the affected districts; how the disease spread to various districts and yet their measures are put in place; and the support needed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries from the different stakeholders.

Mr Speaker, I informed the House that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries would be presenting to the Cabinet, strategies to control and eradicate FMD in Uganda. I further committed to update the House once Cabinet had considered the same.

The following immediate, short, medium and long-term strategies were presented to Cabinet during the meeting of Monday, 5 February 2024, for discussion and consideration. The short-term strategies are as follows; to contain and stop further spread of the disease. The following immediate and short-term interventions were proposed and approved by Cabinet:

1. Immediate procurement under emergency arrangements and distribution of 10 million FMD vaccine doses to vaccinate animals in affected and high-risk districts, to complete ring vaccination so as to enable resumption of safe trading activities.
2. Immediate set up of the National Veterinary Storage Infrastructure to enable mass importation and storage of vaccines at Entebbe.

Those are the short-term strategies, which we hope to undertake as soon as we are supported.

Medium-term strategies: As I previously briefed this House, countries that have effectively controlled and eradicated Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), as guided by the World Organization of Animal Health, and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), have implemented a compulsory by annual FMD vaccination for the entire susceptible domestic animal population, that is to say, cattle, goats, sheep, and pigs.

To achieve this intervention, the following were proposed to the Cabinet, and they were approved.

1. Procurement and distribution of 88 million doses of FMD vaccine annually for bi-annual mass vaccination of all the susceptible domestic animal population.

2. Making FMD vaccination compulsory by a legal instrument issued by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.
3. Establishing and equipping eight regional cold chain facilities to support safe vaccine storage and distribution. Because if we import all of these doses, they have to be safely stored and then accessed by the District Veterinary Officers (DVO)
4. Supporting and strengthening vaccine administration and disease surveillance systems at regional, national, and local government levels.
5. District veterinary officers, sub-county chiefs, and parish chiefs to routinely collect, document, and update data on animal population per homestead so as to enable precision and periodic vaccination.

The long-term strategy we presented is: Under the long-term measures to control and eradicate FMD, the Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) proposal to Cabinet is as follows:

1. Develop and grow the culture of compulsory FMD bi-annual vaccination for all the susceptible domestic animals.
2. Support NARO to fast-track FMD vaccine research and development. The NARO process is already ongoing. When the vaccines are domestically produced, the cost will substantially reduce and become more affordable to the farmer. Importation and procurement delays will also be mitigated, thus guaranteeing a stable supply chain in the country.

MAAIF further presented the options as well as pros and cons of either vaccinating the entire 44 million susceptible domestic animal populations or the 16 million cattle herd, as some people have suggested. In either option, the Government would have to make an initial procurement of all the required vaccines so that farmers can buy from the Government. But finally, the Cabinet discussed and said all animals must be vaccinated.

MAAIF also presented and the Cabinet considered policy options regarding the reverse of policy from the Government providing the FMD vaccine as a public good to farmers paying or contributing towards the vaccines.

The following options were presented.

1. Farmers pay 100 per cent of the cost of the vaccine and the Government covers the cost of vaccine administration. In this option or scenario, the farmer would be required to pay the cost of each dose of the vaccine, which is estimated at \$2 per dose, as given. And this would be twice a year for each susceptible animal and present evidence of payment to the designated veterinary medical store.
2. Government then dispatches a veterinary officer to administer the vaccine, and the cost of vaccine administration is met by the Government. The advantage with this option is that the Government is able to replenish the stock easily and ensure a timely availability of vaccines in the country since the funds will be ploughed back into a revolving mechanism to be used for the timely placement of vaccine orders.
3. Costs sharing: Farmers pay 50 per cent of the cost of the vaccine and the Government covers 50 per cent plus the cost of a vaccine administration. Under this scenario, a farmer would be required to pay half of the cost of each dose of the vaccine. That is about one dollar per dose, and per cow, and to be done twice a year. And present evidence of payment of the same to the designated veterinary medicine store. The Government then dispatches the veterinary officer to administer the vaccine. The advantage with this option is that the farmer bears a smaller cost and may be more motivated to comply.

The challenge, however, is that Government would be required to continuously, every year, provide funding for the 50 per cent in the

Budget to replenish vaccine stock which may prove costly in the long run and any Budget insufficiency or cuts may affect the vaccine efforts or calendar. And then we go back to the usual problem.

Decisions by the Cabinet

Following the presentation and discussion of the various options and strategies, the following were resolved by the Cabinet.

1. Directed the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to avail a supplementary Budget that allows immediate sourcing of 10 million doses of FMD vaccine to facilitate vaccination of the affected and neighbouring districts that are at high risk and thereafter make it easier for veterinary authorities to lift quarantine restrictions as was being demanded by the colleagues from the cattle corridor districts.
2. Government will no longer provide FMD vaccines for free as a public good. Farmers will henceforth be required to pay for the vaccines 100 per cent as per option one because the cost is seemingly affordable.
3. Government will however continue to meet the cost of vaccine importation, storage, distribution and administration. This is for purposes of ensuring- that vaccines are live organisms, so they have to be in the hands of the Government. And if you allow anybody to bring in any vaccine, they can bring in strains we do not have and end up complicating the disease.
4. Government will, in the next Financial Year, 2024/2025, create a revolving or buffer fund to kick-start the procurement of FMD vaccines for the entire 44 million susceptible domestic animal population. The farmers will be paying for them through a financial digital system managed by the Ministries of finance and Local Government. The proceeds from the sales will be ploughed back through a revolving

mechanism to facilitate continuous and timely procurement of vaccines in the subsequent periods or years.

In other words, the Government will have to inject into the revolving fund a one-off allocation. Bi-annual FMD vaccination will be compulsory, and approval of vaccination will be a precondition for trade in animal and or animal products. Therefore, colleagues, I hope you will bear with us as we implement this.

The Cabinet maintained that for purposes of biosafety/security, the Government should remain in control of importation of the vaccines so as to control the risk of any other private entity bringing into the country foreign strains which are not in Uganda, thus further complicating the situation and could potentially wipe out the entire susceptible domestic animal population.

In Conclusion, I am convinced that if my Ministry is supported to implement the above strategies; immediate, short, medium, and long term, FMD will both be controlled and eradicated in Uganda, just like other animal diseases like rinderpest were eradicated. I appeal to this august House to support these strategies and walk the journey with us all through.

In the meantime, and as I briefed you last time, colleagues, the quarantine restrictions in affected districts remain in force to avoid further escalation of the disease.

We have further guided in writing to the district authorities on how non-affected areas can trade safely. We have designated the district security committees, chaired by the Resident District Commissioner (RDC), and with membership of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), District Internal Security Officer (DISO), the Chairperson Local Council five (LC5), and Secretary for Production, among others, to become the district FMD task forces and thus implement the issued guidelines.

I appeal to you, honourable colleagues, from the affected districts, including those at high risk,

to always be in touch and support the district security committee in the implementation of these disease control guidelines. I thank you. Yes, LOP.

2.43

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to appreciate the Minister for his statement. On 8 April 2015, this very Parliament, well not this exact one, passed a resolution for the Government to set up a Foot and Mouth Disease vaccine production plant, that the Government, promised to adhere to.

We are now being told by the minister, as part of his long-term strategy, that the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) should be supported for these vaccines to be produced locally. It is what makes sense.

My challenge, though, is that we keep talking about it, but there is no clarity on how it gets to be done. We have been promised these things before; we were promised a COVID-19 vaccine and so on but we did not get to see the light of day. We would *–(Interjection)–* we shall never see, that is what somebody is saying. We would like the minister to have a bit of specificity.

When you promise us here that you are fast-tracking production, what does that mean? Could you come to Parliament and say, here is a budget with specificities of what we need to do? So, that if Parliament does not support you, tomorrow you can blame Parliament that, look, I brought my budget, you did not support me but there is nothing of the sort. You are only promising that we are working on making sure the vaccines are produced here, like was promised about nine years ago. We want specificities, honourable minister.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, do you want to respond to that for now or - you can respond to that?

MR TUMWEBAZE: Thank you, Mr Speaker and Rt Hon. Leader of the Opposition, congratulations on your new appointment; I had not seen you since you got you appointed.

NARO has started on the process of developing the FMD vaccine and in my previous statement, I defined the stage, but they are not yet far. With the support they got in the previous years, they were able to progress with the anti-tick vaccine.

This House, through the Committee of Agriculture- Mr Speaker, you fully visited NARO, I am glad to inform you that so far, out of Shs 60 billion for the anti-tick vaccine, I think NARO has received about 60 per cent and they are now completing the factory for mass rollout; it is really good news.

On the anti-tick vaccine, the veterinary professionals like Hon. Abed Bwanika, know that the burden of tick-borne diseases is another huge monster for the farmers.

On the FMD vaccine, to be honest, the support has been minimal because of competing priorities from the Government. The Cabinet agreed to support NARO. They require something close to Shs 80 billion to be fully paid out.

Therefore, I hope, with your support and with the commitment of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, NARO will make us proud. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, this has come at the right time when we are in the budgeting process, we have passed the Budget Framework Paper. We are now going into the Ministerial Policy Statement. I hope this is fully reflected because there is willingness from the Cabinet and Parliament so we should have a solution for this instead of all this money continuing to go out of the country.

I will pick Hon. Christopher Komakech, Hon. Katusabe, the honourable member for Kyotera, the honourable member for Ik, honourable member for Gomba - cattle corridor here - and Hon. Tom Aza. Honourable colleagues, I am going to give you a chance. The disease is spread across the country, so that is why you all have to speak to this item.

4.48

MR CHRISTOPHER KOMAKECH (Independent, Aruu County, Pader): Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity. Allow me to thank the minister for his elaborate statement.

When we were hit by COVID-19, we got donations of vaccines and the Government did receive them. The President who is the Fountain of Honour of this country and minister visited Algeria and it donated vaccines to Uganda.

Honourable minister, when we were on a field trip in Algeria, the Ambassador ascertained to us that he had lobbied for vaccines worth one million Euros to be given to Uganda. Why is it that your Government and you the minister, are so reluctant to get this donation? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Atkins Katusabe.

2.49

MR ATKINS KATUSABE (FDC, Bukonzo County West, Kasese): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for his submission.

So far as I can recollect before he joined the Cabinet, the minister was heading a research directorate in the State House, indicating that in this very House, the minister should be among our colleagues here who are in a position to recognise the role of research in national development.

Also, we are glad to have our presiding officer, as a member of the top leadership at Makerere University as far as administration is concerned.

Mr Speaker, I have listened in from A to Z as it relates to the minister's submission, and nowhere have I heard the minister talk about research, innovation, data, information, and knowledge.

Mr Speaker, universities are there to generate knowledge. A professor at the university is paid Shs 15 million per month of taxpayers' money. An associate professor is paid Shs 13 million. Senior lecturer, Shs 8 million. The

reason why the Government does that is that the knowledge producers. In other words, the professors at the university, should be able to go to the lab and generate knowledge through either research or field studies.

Field studies that are published in international peer-reviewed journals with high-impact factors.

Mr Speaker, at Makerere University, we have a fully-fledged College of Veterinary Medicine, Animal Resources, and Biosecurity. We have professors right in that college doing a lot of amazing work, that partner with international universities, including in the United States.

Here we are as a country, we as a Government, that are supposed to be knowledge consumers, not tapping into the knowledge generated by universities, especially the knowledge producers and we are allowing this knowledge in universities to be on the shelf to gather dust.

As a country, we continue saying- especially the Government, that we should have a certificate of financial implication. Mr Speaker, as a university leader, I recommend and urge the Government, to insist or demand a statement of financial implication; this House should adopt a policy that we also demand that these ministries attach to their submissions or policy proposals, a statement of science, technology, and research and innovation so that we can be sure that the interventions made by the Government ministries will have the required impact.

But as we continue with this arrangement, making submissions that are not peer-reviewed, reduce on the impact that their ministries do as they relate to programme interventions. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You did not understand? I see some of you –(Laughter)- honourable colleagues, it is a training for you. We send you on many international trips, so you must learn to listen to Americans.

In the public gallery, honourable colleagues, this afternoon we have students of the Guild of Soroti University from Soroti East, Soroti District. They are represented by Hon. Herbert Ariko and Hon. Anna Adeke. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please join me in welcoming them. (Applause)

2.54

MS FORTUNATE NANTONGO (DP, Woman Representative, Kyotera): Thank you, Mr Speaker, and thank you, honourable minister, for your statement. To take you backwards, I request that before any quarantine is instituted, the ministry should first consult the local government officials. In Kyotera, we faced a challenge where people wanted to strike, demanding that the local government explains but it was not aware of any quarantine instituted and that caused a crisis.

Secondly, the ministry issued a circular indicating lifting of the quarantine and quarantining only areas that are affected. However, no vaccines have been sent. In Kyotera, we have areas that have been quarantined, but there are no vaccines available at the moment, yet the quarantine was put in place on assumptions that we have Foot and Mouth Disease. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I would like to correct the record. I was reading what was sent to me here, but Soroti University is in Soroti City and it is represented by the ever-present Hon. Joan Alobo. (Applause) That is our “Kiprotich”. (Laughter) Whenever we have our athletics, she always wins all kinds of medals.

2.55

MR HILLARY LOKWANG (NRM, Ika County, Kaabong): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister for the submission. We have districts along the international borders. For example, the entire Karamoja receives a lot of animals from Kenya. The Turkana animals come to graze in Uganda for almost five months every year, but now because of the Executive Order No. 3, they have not come around for almost the last one year.

What happens to those areas? Is there any plan by the Government to establish some centres where these animals can be assessed before they enter Uganda because there is free entry and exit in that region? Thank you.

2.56

MR TOM AZA (NRM, West Moyo County, Moyo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Thank you very much, honourable minister for agriculture. The minister talked about the spread of Foot and Mouth Disease in other parts of Uganda and other districts, and short-term, medium-term and long-term strategies for control. This involves animals like cows, goats, pigs and sheep.

As it was said by my honourable colleague, the land between South Sudan and Uganda is vast, so much that cows from South Sudan roam freely. At times, the refugees move with these animals across the border. From Koboko, Moyo and Adjumani in West Nile up to Lamwo, these areas are being used by the refugees for grazing their animals.

Mr Speaker, my worry is that sooner or later, there are going to be issues related to Food and Mouth Disease in these areas if the Government does not control movement of these animals in West Nile. Thank you very much.

2.58

MS ROBINA RWAKOOJO (NRM, Gomba West County, Gomba): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Like you said, I speak for the people of Gomba West, where we have Foot and Mouth Disease spreading like wildfire. That is part of the cattle corridor and is where we have the national herd.

I was wondering, after the minister said that they are going to have storage facilities, whether he is going to look at the population of the cattle in the area to determine this. I think Gomba should be one of the districts that should have one, considering the number of cattle that we have.

Secondly, we have really been putting in so much. Every time in the agriculture budget,

provision comes for pesticides and things to do with fisheries, but animals are left out. Why do you want to sell us those vaccines in the short run? First give them to us for free, then after that, we start buying –(*Interjection*)– yes, you people cannot believe it. But I am entitled to speak for the people with cattle and I am hurting. (*Applause*) We cannot sell cows or milk. People are asking us for school fees. I thought some provision would be made in some of those schools at the beginning of this term.

Honestly, pupils are seated at home; they do not go anywhere. They look up to us and say, “You MPs get cash”. Even for us who have cows, they say the same, “You do not rely on the cows; you get cash”, which is wrong. I get money from the dairy and cattle sales. In a way, I look at it as a disadvantage. Please do something; give us some affirmative action in the meantime. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Rwakoojo, for the correction. That is Gomba West. The honourable gentleman from Padyere County – honourable colleagues, some of us know each other but we do not know the constituencies where we come from. I am trying to bring in this issue of the constituencies to also see whether my memory can serve me right. (*Applause*) It is very important.

3.00

MR ISAAC OTIMGIW (NRM, Padyere County, Nebbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. You are perfectly right. I thank the minister for his statement. I only have one request from him.

We are actually reading the list of these districts with restrictions through the newspapers and the number keeps growing every time. I am wondering, through his statement or answers later, whether you can provide, for the record of this House, the latest number of districts affected by this Foot and Mouth disease. If you could name them, it would be great.

I am also a bit concerned that we are going to wait for the supplementary in order for these vaccines to be available. What is the immediate

solution that is going to take place? How are we also going to guarantee the authenticity of these certificates for the vaccinated animals because we know very well that in Uganda, there are ways of creating some of these certificates, which may start going around? Thank you very much.

3.02

MR NATHAN TWESIGYE (Independent, Kashari South County, Mbarara): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Honourable minister, thank you for the statement, but as a person from the cattle corridor, I am a bit disappointed. I do not think that you are the first minister in this ministry. I am disappointed because I hear you presenting proposals to the Cabinet. I do not know whether you did not get a handover file where all these, as my colleague was saying - whether planning and research is not part of your ministry.

When you are talking about animal products, you are talking about perishables. Milk will not wait for you tomorrow. You cannot keep meat for a day. Our farmers are suffering. We are in a school-fees period and this is their only source of income. We are selling milk; this is the source of living.

In marketing, honourable minister, customers expect a good service, not excuses. From your presentation, I would be comfortable if I were looking at the short-term solutions because as we speak now, we are still stuck.

The disease will not wait for that budget. Can we have short-term solutions so that our people can get what to do?

Finally, you seem to be doing a fire brigade. Today it is foot and mouth. Tomorrow there could be another outbreak and these outbreaks kill animals in dozens and seconds. They do not wait for a supplementary budget. Honourable minister, you should give us short-term solutions because our people are badly off. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues- I really feel for Hon. Robina

Rwakoojo on what she raised and what Hon. Itungo is raising, about Kashari South. I have met many farmers who have said that the Government has controlled the supply of these vaccines.

You do not have the capacity to supply them; I have my money and my cows are dying but you cannot allow me to buy these vaccines, what do you want me to do? I was in Kazo over the weekend and I shared this with the people.

Whereas people might say that we give for free and I understand it is a farmer. If you have been supporting other crops we could do that but this business of not having an option for people to buy their own vaccines yet we cannot allow them - when their cows are dying.

You would rather give them the option saying; "the vaccines are available but pay" and they save their cows. What does it help for us to stop them and the cows die because we do not have the capacity? Yes, the honourable Member for Bukanga.

3.05

MR NATHAN BYANYIMA (NRM, Bukanga North County, Isingiro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am surprised because the two ministers for Agriculture hail from my area. The origin of the Foot and Mouth Disease is Tanzania and you all know it. And for so long, the moment is a dry season for the people of Isingiro, the cows go to the other side because there is a big ranch there.

Tanzania is even trying to tarmac their roads up to the border. Can you imagine? However, you cannot go there because there are no roads. You do not have because if the ministers were able to access the border - even the Committee of Agriculture cannot go to Isingiro because there are no roads.

You have denied us services and we continue suffering, spending money. You just make dams along the border and monitor. You do not have a disease coming from Kenya, it is from Tanzania where the animals loiter around. Our people even go and buy cows from there and bring them to our flock.

Let us treat the disease where it is coming from, it is Tanzania. Hon. Frank Tumwebaze, and the Hon. Lt. Col. (Rtd) Bright Rwamirama are the people who know where it comes from (*Laughter*). No, they know.

Much as the money must come from the Government, let them look at Isingiro as the main source of the disease and the matter will be put to rest. thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member for Napore West, followed by honourable member for Adjumani.

3.07

MR PHILIPHS LOKWANG-ILUKOL (NRM, Napore West County, Karenga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Thank you, minister. As a person with cows, you have talked uncoordinated information. You talked about 100 per cent cost by the farmers and you said “and 50 plus” the administration. Can we get it clear?

Another bit is the administration of these vaccines. Is the ministry prepared with the people who must have a certificate to come and administer these drugs to our animals? Because the recent goat disease that has infiltrated Karamoja was administered by people who claim to have been veterinary persons yet in Karamoja itself, there are very few qualified people. What is going to be the case if it is not going to add more problems to Karamoja? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Jesca Ababiku.

3.09

MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Honourable minister, I have one request regarding the statistics of the new farmers who have joined trading in animal business because I know that our Government went full blast, headed by the head of state, mobilising the country to engage in animal keeping.

Therefore, as you concentrate on the traditional animal keepers - the new ones are seemingly left out. For example, West Nile, I am now in the animal business and you need to do your survey to establish the new statistics about the farmers who have entered this market. Less than that, some of us are going to get marginalised.

Two, we are in a difficult situation and we know how much these animals cost when we procure them. So, we need an immediate solution. As we are seated here, animals are dying and we are losing. How are we going to contribute to this economy?

You have talked about the short term strategies but also the process of getting the money through a supplementary budget is tedious. The Cabinet has to bring it here and we refer it to the Committee on Budget before we approve. Even after approval, the releases take time. Can you open up? Because we have been buying these vaccines to ensure quality importation, so that when we buy at this time when you are not ready to help us our animals will be safe.

Lastly, I am concerned about our veterinary officers at the district level. There is very poor coordination. Our foot soldiers, the veterinary officers at the subcounty level, need to be brought on board regularly.

How often do you meet these people? How many of those are doing their work and they are reaching out to the farmers? Many farmers are struggling alone.

I am a Member of Parliament, that is why more attention is being given to me but how many farmers are being reached out to by these officers? I pray that this ministry does more work than what it is doing now. Thank you.

3.12

MR WILSON KAJWENGYE (NRM, Nyabushozi County, Kiruhura): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Today, I am happy that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries talking. The statement gives us hope and it represents a Government that listens to the people.

My concern is this: when we finally have vaccines in the country, it should be the administration of that. The day of vaccination should be simultaneous throughout the country. That calls for professionals to administer these vaccines. The population - the doctor-patient ratio is low. The police population is low. I am not sure whether the veterinary doctors we have in this country are more than 2,000 yet as the minister rightly put it, we have 44 million domestic animals susceptible to this disease. What then is the minister's strategy in this case?

I propose, Mr Speaker, that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries quickly, through farmers' cooperatives, carries out training for people to administer these vaccines. I submit.

MR TUMWEBAZE: Thank you, Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, for your supportive submissions. Hon. Komakech said that the ambassador told him we had a donation of the vaccine from Algeria. I do not have that information. When we were in Algeria with the President, the vaccines they have are of a different strain so we cannot just allow it in Uganda; whether as a donation or even it is cheap. We have to be sure that the vaccine we have relates to our problem. I remember our President even inviting them to come and collaborate with National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO).

I listened properly to capture the words of Hon. Katusabe because my English is not like his. His is very complicated but I picked the message. *(Laughter)* He was challenging us, and I agree with him, that we must ensure utilisation of research work in our policies and programmes. To this, I would like to let him and the House know that the College of Veterinary Medicine, Animal Resources and Bio-security (COVAB) of Makerere is collaborating very strongly with NARO. I think one of the lecturers, Prof. Kahwa is also doing research funded by Government, on anti-tick.

By and large, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation is responsible

for ensuring that the public and Government utilise research findings so that they can brief you on the policies in place to facilitate uptake of research, dissemination and utilisation.

The Member from Kyotera said that the quarantine procedures shocked the people. Ideally, quarantine procedures should be bottom-up. That is how I know it. Our commissioner here at the centre cannot declare quarantine in district X until the District Veterinary Officer (DVO) has reported the cases. Of course, we have cases where the DVOs collude with the local governments not to report the disease so as to be collecting revenues from the markets. That is very criminal. I will check and be sure because Kyotera is a border district.

I will be responding to another question. The high-risk districts are those that are at the border - the Tanzanian side, Kenyan side and even Ntungamo. Also, districts like Kiruhura and I think those in the Karamoja Subregion that border national parks because wildlife carries the reservoirs. We will ensure that there is ownership and understanding among the district leaders. However, I appeal to you to also tell them not to oppose it.

Quarantine, unpopular as it maybe, is the first measure to disrupt transmission the effects of trade disruption notwithstanding. We did not lift quarantine in safe areas. We only provided for mechanisms of safe trade. My district, Kamwenge, does not have a single case of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) but we closed the markets because Fort Portal City has FMD.

The district security committee should be transparent enough to provide for a sub-county, which does not have cases to trade. Ideally, it should be full quarantine but because of listening to your advice and appeals from the people we represent, we put that mechanism. However, there is a risk of abuse. If we detect abuse, we close again. It is unfortunate as that.

My friend, the Member for Ik County, Hon. Hillary Lokwang, your districts - the high districts - will be given priority. You will get more doses. The high districts are those at the borders and those bordering wildlife reserves.

Mr Speaker, you approved a loan here called Climate-Smart. Part of the infrastructure will help us to build what we call permanent border quarantine stations. You bring a cow from Tanzania and the security forces get you, it will be quarantined there to check if it is disease-free. If it is diseased, you take it back or we kill it there. If it is free, there will be diagnostic centres. I think the side of Isingiro, Kyotera, Rakai and those bordering South Sudan; Ntungamo and Kasese will have quarantine stations permanently there.

Hon. Aza, on control of animals, I agree with you. The Animal Disease Act, which I think is being considered in the House has stringent measures for illegal animal movement and it will be enforced.

Hon. Robina Rwakoojo, just to give you comfort, the 10 million doses we shall get will still be under the same policy arrangement of free distribution for now. The payment will come with the compulsory one, perhaps from July. We are aware of this.

Honourable Member for Padyere, I reported by last time 36 districts. I need to check with our dashboard if there are any more that have added on. Actually, this unpopular quarantine is the solution to avoid further spread. I can tell you, if you are disciplined, one kraal can be sick and yours will not be sick if you have biosafety and control. I will check but my prayer is that we do not get more.

Hon. Itungo, treatment and disease control sometimes conflict but it is as inevitable as that. However much I plan, if I do not have enough money, this compulsory bi-annual – I am sure when Hon. Ssempijja was a minister, he must have briefed this House that we needed to do it. We never got the budget. You know how there is very much scramble for money in the budget. That is why we now saying that let us enable the farmers to pay for the cost, which is at \$5.

Hon. Byanyima, there is a problem in Isingiro, the border district - you have a market there called Kamwema. Honourable colleagues,

when we finish the issue of mass vaccination, we shall have to discuss the matter of cattle markets. You take a cow there, do not sell it, which in our local dialect is called “Okudiba” – meaning it has not been bought, then you return it home. It is one of the leading causes of the spread of animal diseases.

Can there be something to replace cattle markets? I know it is something unpopular with the local governments, but let us openly debate it.

Therefore, we will prioritise border districts with quarantine infrastructure to test the cows coming across and detect illegal movement. There are no roads to the border of Tanzania, I am not sure, but I hope Hon. Byanyima knows how he will sort that with the Ministry of Works and Transport.

Hon. Ilukol, that I confused you by saying “100 per cent cost and 50 per cent.” No, I was explaining the two options I presented to the Cabinet. We were proposing cost sharing but the Cabinet said no, let it be 100 per cent because \$5 or \$4 in a year, someone with a cow can afford. Government will continue to pay for the cost of administration, fridges, transportation and the veterinary doctors who administer the drug.

The worry from Hon. Philip Ilukol is the same worry I picked from Hon. Kajwengye. Do we have enough professionals? I am not worried about that because if we draw the vaccination calendar, every District Veterinary Officer (DVO) will mobilise the veterinary resources in the district to follow a calendar. They will say, “Today we are vaccinating sub-county X”. They will go and vaccinate and eventually recover their district. Where there are gaps – Mr Speaker, every sub-county should have a veterinary doctor. The Ministry of Local Government declared vacancies for extension staff of close to 4,000.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development was waiting to finish rationalisation to fund them to have more extension staff. Therefore, I am not worried.

Let us have the vaccines and administration will be sorted. Even those few veterinary doctors in the districts, are they overworked? My answer is no. They will have full-time work and will have the animals vaccinated. Involving the cooperatives is a good idea and we shall explore it.

Hon. Jesca Ababiku - statistics about new farmers, I agree with you. We are not only thinking of traditional cattle corridor districts; we know the cows are everywhere. Just like the pastoralists were not crop farmers, I have a coffee garden. So, we are aware of that. In decisions of the Cabinet, one of the challenges is that Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) is the legal custodian of statistics management.

However, we have agreed that nothing stops any institution from collecting its real-time data. The DVOs, the parish and sub-county chiefs under Parish Development Model (PDM), will have to update homestead by homestead, for purposes of having correct returns for the vaccine distribution. If you have wrong numbers, then even corruption can come in.

On the delays in processing the supplementary, I agree with you, but we had a discussion with the Permanent Secretary/Secretary to the Treasury (PSST) this morning. We are trying to agree on a methodology that will make this faster. First of all, His Excellency, the President, has discussed with his counterpart of Botswana. They had a discussion during the Non-Aligned Movement(NAM) and this morning, our Ambassador from South Africa visited the President again. Their vaccine institute is coming here. We intend to have a Government to Government arrangement. That will cut off the prolonged procurement delays.

Since there is support from the Cabinet and this House, the PS/ST will give a letter of comfort to the Permanent Secretary (PS) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to start procurement even before the funds are dismissed. I hope we shall try to be faster with your support. I think I am done. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Please keep us updated. Next.

3.26

MR JONATHAN ODUR (UPC, Erute County South, Lira): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have listened carefully to the minister. He has made so many policy pronouncements that seem to be pointing in a new direction. I want to move a Motion that his statement plus the pronouncements be referred to the committee so that it gives Members - he has asked for the support of the House but we cannot support him without interrogating the options he has given to us.

Whereas, us from Lango, Acholi and Teso, are not so much into cattle ever since our cattle was *-(Laughter)-* but we are preparing to resume and also participate in the cattle business. Therefore, I propose that the statement of the minister is referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries so that it is properly interrogated and the report can come back and we can support the shift which he has pronounced here, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, this is a motion without notice. As a Speaker, I have the prerogative, under Rule 59(j) of our Rules of Procedure, to decide whether it is a Motion I should allow or not. Therefore, before you second and do anything - please, what Hon. Jonathan Odur is raising is a very critical point. I thought these are issues which are going to be reflected in the Ministerial Policy Statement. Most of them have to do with financing for the sector.

Therefore, once the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries is processing the Ministerial Policy Statement, which is coming soon, they would cater for all these issues. We can say, maybe, inform the committee that they should take advantage of this statement, to make the minister make more explanations when they are processing the budget for that sector. That would serve the purpose. Thank you. Next statement.

STATEMENT ON THE STATUS OF ABOUT
450 UGANDAN NATIONALS HELD
HOSTAGE IN MYANMAR BY REBEL
GROUPS, AND UGANDAN NATIONALS
IN CAIRO, EGYPT WHO WERE DENIED
EXIT DUE TO FAILURE TO PAY
IMMIGRATION FINES

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs? Honourable colleagues at 4 p.m. we have the Prime Minister's Time; I want us to have finished this statement so that we go into Prime Minister's Time.

3.29

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (REGIONAL AFFAIRS) (Mr John Mulimba): Mr Speaker and colleagues, first of all, allow me to extend my appreciation to you and to Members of the Cabinet and Members of Parliament who made it possible for Uganda to successfully conclude the hosting of the 19th the Non-Aligned Movement and the Third South Summit (G77+China).

Mr Speaker, before I provide a statement, on the welfare of Ugandans abroad, which is one of the most important constraints of our country, particularly taking into account their remittances back home, have supported the efforts in the economic transformation of Uganda. To this end, I salute all Ugandans abroad for working tirelessly and supporting their families back home.

Mr Speaker, some of our colleagues, particularly Hon. Nkuningi Muwada, Kyadondo East, and Hon. Nganda Ssemujju, Kira Municipality, have raised issues concerning Ugandans held hostage abroad. I commend them for being at the forefront of supporting our citizens abroad and bringing this matter on the agenda of Parliament. I once again commend this Parliament for supporting efforts for welfare of our citizens abroad.

Specifically, on the issue of Ugandans held hostage and trafficked abroad, as a way of responding to issues raised here on the floor of

Parliament, Mr Speaker, allow me to provide the following update:

Ugandans trafficked to Myanmar

Since the military overthrow of the Civilian Government of the State Councillor, Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi on the 1st February 2021 in the coup d'état, the political situation in Myanmar, formerly Burma, has remained tense and over 30 active rebel movements have continued to operate there. Ugandans who are reported hostage were trafficked to Myanmar to serve in these rebel movements as mercenaries.

The civil war in this country, commonly referred to as the Myanmar Spring Revolution or People's Defence War, has resulted in over 1.5 million people displaced. The traffickers recruit desperate Ugandans via fictitious websites. Most victims respond to an online advertisement for "highly paying jobs" in Thailand and Malaysia. When they embark on the journeys either by air or boats via the ports of Mombasa, they are received by traffickers at the designated places. They are then transferred to Myanmar via boats or road to rebel-controlled areas.

Currently, the known records of Ugandans in rebel territories are 30, and their names are known. They are held in two camps, namely 16 persons in Bailo compound, Kayin state, and 14 in the UK compound.

The Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, after receiving social media reports in December 2023, convened an Inter-Agency Meeting on 9 December 2023 and discussed avenues of how to secure the release of Ugandans.

The Rt Hon. Prime Minister guided that the Ugandan Ambassador in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia travels to Myanmar and engages the authorities to ensure the release of Ugandans.

The Rt Hon. Prime Minister also guided that the Ministry of Information Communication, Technology and National Guidance (ICT) starts to disseminate information preferably via social media platforms alerting Ugandans

of the dangers of human trafficking and the scams perpetrated by traffickers by deceiving Ugandans of jobs in Asian countries or the Middle East. She also directed that Police undertake investigations to identify traffickers and prosecute them accordingly.

Mr Speaker, pursuant to this guidance by the Prime Minister, the Uganda Ambassador in Kuala Lumpur requested for Shs 102 Million, to enable her team to travel and hold bilateral meetings with relevant authorities. The constraints of the resources notwithstanding, myself and colleague Ministers held multitude of bilateral meetings on the side-lines of the Non Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit in Kampala.

More specifically on the issue of Myanmar, I held a bilateral meeting on 16 January, 2024 with His Excellency, U Than Swe, the Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar, and this matter was extensively discussed. It was agreed that Uganda and Myanmar establishes bilateral relations and create cooperation frameworks in immigration and anti-human trafficking, among others.

The Foreign Minister of Myanmar also undertook to waive any fine and criminal cases that would have been preferred against those Ugandans.

Ugandans in Egypt

In September 2023, the Egyptian Government directed that all foreigners who were staying irregularly and illegally must regularise and legalise their stay by December 2023 or else leave the country. And this 3 months' grace period has now been extended to 15 March, 2024. It is unlikely that this period will be extended.

In order to regularise stay, each illegal/irregular migrant would be required to:

- a) Secure an Egyptian host; and
- b) Pay \$1000 as administrative fee.

This administrative fee would cover for all fines for over stay and costs for processing a resident

permit. Therefore, the reports purporting a fee of \$500,000 are not accurate.

The exact number of Ugandans staying in Egypt is unknown mainly because Ugandans do not register their presence with the Mission. Secondly, because those who are illegally in the country cannot have their records updated by authorities.

Some of the immigrant groups have already submitted approximately 60 Ugandans in need of evacuation and stating that they were unable to meet the conditions set forth by the Egyptian Government.

It should be recognised that every country takes measures to control illegal migrants. Uganda too certainly has policies in place to regulate the entry/stay of aliens.

Ugandans who are in this dilemma should therefore endeavour to comply with the policies of the Egyptian government. As the deadline nears, it is unlikely that Ugandans without formal employment will be able to meet the two conditions as stated above. At the moment, there is no fund to support Ugandans abroad in distress conditions and therefore, the responsibility to bring them back home rests with them or their families.

It should also be made clear that Ugandans who are unable to regularise their stay will end up being charged for illegal stay, jailed for a period of time and or be made to pay huge fines which ranges between \$16000 (Shs 60 million) and \$33000 (Shs 126 million).

In this case, my Ministry advises all Ugandans in Egypt to regularise their stay by 15 March, 2024, or if they are unable, they should leave the country. Those willing to leave should register at the Uganda Embassy in Cairo contacts will be uploaded to the Ministry's website so that the Embassy engages the authorities with a view of processing their exit.

Ugandans in India

Current reports from the Uganda High Commission in New Delhi indicate that they

have up to 200 stranded Ugandan ladies, mostly victims of human trafficking who want to return home, but are unable due to lack of funds to purchase air tickets. The Mission does not have adequate space to accommodate them. They were trafficked under the guise of jobs, which are not there.

Evacuating Ugandans by the Government either in Myanmar, Egypt, India and other locations wherever they are will require funding. My Ministry will be engaging the Rt Hon. Prime Minister on how to find the resources to execute these noble endeavours.

The funding of the consular function, which is so critical in protecting Ugandans abroad needs to be looked into and supported. It is in this regard that we find the proposal by the Hon. Ssemujju Nganda for establishing a migrant or consular protection fund appropriate, as this will enhance my Ministry's capabilities and the Ugandan Missions abroad capacities in delivering timely consular protection.

Lastly, I wish to emphasise that our diplomatic missions are unable to provide financial support to Ugandans abroad who find themselves in serious difficulties but they exert all efforts to locate and provide consular assistance. It is therefore, imperative that in the next financial year budget - 2024/2025, Parliament will appropriate adequate funds for supporting consular protection for her citizens abroad. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

3.40

MR NKUNYINGI MUWADA (NUP, Kyadondo East, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like on the onset to thank the Minister for the partial honesty, because his statement confirms that actually Ugandans are detained by rebel groups in Myanmar. Secondly, that there are several Ugandans detained across the diaspora, mostly in the Middle East.

I only wish to state that I thought the full Minister, Gen. Jeje Odongo would have used this opportunity to come and make his maiden speech. He may even be reshuffled before

making a maiden speech on such a critical matter. He has not appeared for the last two years.

Now, on the statement, Mr Speaker-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is there a reshuffle, honourable? Are you planning a reshuffle?

MR NKUNYINGI: Mr Speaker, good governance requires change of guards.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, proceed honourable.

MR NKUNYINGI: Mr Speaker responding to the report, on matters of NAM and the Group of 77 plus China, as mentioned by the Minister in his preamble, I presuppose that that may require a comprehensive statement to this House, not hiding it under the cover of this response.

Thirdly, Mr Speaker, the statement purports to leave the role of giving travel advice to the Minister of Information Communications Technology and National Guidance (ICT). Our embassies and the Minister of Foreign Affairs cannot abandon this noble duty.

Whereas there might be insecurity in different parts of the world, but the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and our embassies ought to give regular and timely travel advice to Ugandans.

Equally, on the number of Ugandans detained by rebel groups in Myanmar, the Minister has mentioned a figure of 30 without a methodology, but he was quick to add that actually there are several rebel groups. I want to state that several Ugandans are in different compounds not only the Bailo and UK Compounds. These rebels operate compounds as camps, and many Ugandans are distributed in various camps within Myanmar. We still maintain that from our counting, the number of Ugandans is 450, and are likely to be more *-(Interjection)-* we have the names though, we have not seen the annexes the minister alluded to, but we equally have a number of those names.

Also, in terms of the appropriate response and position, whereas the minister is alluding to a meeting by the Prime Minister, Mr Speaker and Members, the matter at hand is urgent because these are Ugandans in the hands of rebels. Establishing bilateral ties with Myanmar is welcome, however, we must also address the immediate concerns because establishing bilateral relations is a comprehensive and long process.

These are Ugandans who are at risk of life and death. We must look at immediate, remedial and urgent measures to rescue these stranded Ugandans.

And to this effect, it is our humble proposal that this Parliament institutes an ad hoc committee to urgently address this matter because we realize that the Cabinet and Government are failing to come up with a comprehensive statement on how to ably negotiate the release of these Ugandans. Negotiating their release may not only be with the Government in Myanmar, these are Ugandans in the hands of rebel groups so, we must find some measures of reaching out to these groups because they are holding Ugandans and this is a matter of life and death.

Second and lastly, Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us listen to the honourable colleague. If you want to speak, ask for permission, I will give you a chance to go on the microphone so that you go on record. Honourable?

MR NKUNYINGI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Their minister spoke, now I am a shadow minister and this is our position as the Opposition, which I beg that you listen to for the interest of our country and Ugandans.

On the number of Ugandans detained in India; the 200 who are stranded. We find the statement of the minister very shallow and dishonest.

You cannot say that Ugandans in India and those in Egypt are on their own and should, therefore, find means of returning on their own.

These are Ugandans under distress and Uganda has a national carrier; Uganda Airlines. When it comes to repatriating Ugandan nationals who are stranded and distressed abroad, let us discuss it with boldness and with honesty, not just focus on offering answers. These are Ugandans who are detained and we have a national carrier which does not even make a profit but at least we can use it to repatriate and support our stranded nationals.

Lastly, Mr Speaker and Members, on Ugandans who are stranded and detained in Egypt, the Minister was open that he cannot recollect the number. I want to state that so many Ugandans are in detention centres in Egypt and other parts of the Middle East. Nevertheless, when it comes to the policy measures, we talked about a fee of 500, which has been made compulsory for them to pay- *(Interruption)*

MR SSEMPIJJA: Thank you, honourable member for giving way. I want to inform the Member that Uganda Airlines has on several occasions been employed to repatriate Ugandans from outside. So, it is not something that cannot be done or that has never been done. Thank you.

MR NKUNYINGI: Mr Speaker and Members, we have also had scenarios where it has supported a single individual but we are now talking about hundreds of Ugandans.

In Egypt alone, the minister mentioned fines of \$16,000, which is Shs 60 million, to \$33,000, which is Shs 126 million. These Ugandans are largely domestic workers- they cannot pay that money.

We have been questioning ourselves for all this long; where was the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to either give advice to Ugandans or engage countries of the world, including Egypt, on better bilateral treatment and relations, especially labour-related treatment?

We want to put it on record that Ugandans are more likely to fail to comply with the 15 March 2024 deadline and in such a scenario, they may be required to pay Shs 126 million each; that is impossible and outrageous.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs cannot say or come and brief Parliament in an open statement that they are on their own and their families; that is outrageous. We must have an honest position on how best the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Government is going to address this matter.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable. You know, this is a very sensitive docket. In most Parliaments and countries, this is a docket where there is constant communication between the shadow minister and the cabinet minister because most of these issues when you open them up here in Parliament, might end up causing diplomatic problems between nations and all that.

So, to begin with, I want to encourage Hon. Mulimba to always reach out to your colleague and Hon. Nkunyingi, always reach out to your colleague. Then we can come to the Floor on issues, which we feel should come here or if one has refused to listen to the other. Being a shadow minister is a very important post and I hope we respect each other across the line.

Number two, I think it is a policy of any government and even any Parliament to encourage its citizens in foreign countries to respect the laws of those foreign hosting countries.

If we risk here on the Floor of Parliament to insinuate and give a sort of picture that the Government of Egypt has said regularise and for us, we say 'no', even if you do not regularise we shall come in to help – people must know that they have obligations where they are, then, once we find a situation, we can come in.

But, honourable minister, I will disagree with you, if you come on this Floor and you say, "No, if they do not meet the deadline, we shall come in and help" because these are people who- we shall be encouraging indirectly. Let the time elapse and then the minister will see how best they can handle otherwise; we might indirectly encourage people to remain.

I was in Bahrain and Ugandans knew I was there- I did not even know that there were

Ugandans. I voluntarily bought tickets for 28 of them. (*Applause*) Some of them, when I said I was issuing tickets, pulled out and said they wanted money – I think we met them with some Members of Parliament – some honourable colleagues joined me – Hon. Amero, you are the one who called me from my hotel to come and meet Ugandans and they told me they were stuck and I volunteered, but when I said I must give actual tickets said "No, we want money." So, these people are sharp you have to be- I am trying to be cautious with this.

Finally, on the issue of the annexe that we were sharing here, I am cautious on this record. Honourable minister, listing a name of a person publicly and openly that he is a rebel, held in Myanmar – I think that list should not be – you refer to the annexe which you did not put- you should not – you can even share or have a way of having that list confidentially handled and looked at and then compare. You can also share the one you have but without putting the names of people because we might get them in trouble. Honourable Leader of the Opposition?

3.52

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I agree we might not have to publish these names for their safety and also to make it easy as we are trying to have them repatriated. However, as you have guided, that list should be availed somehow confidentially so that it eases the process of making sure that we get these people back home.

The Speaker can guide on to whom that list should be availed. At least the list should be availed because now, as Parliament, we are getting involved.

Secondly, there is need for clarity. The minister said that our Ambassador in Kuala Lumpur requested for Shs 102 million to enable her and her team to travel and have bilateral engagements to establish the gravity and all the details of this matter. That money was not availed. The minister also said that he had on the sidelines of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) an engagement with the Deputy Prime Minister of that country and they agreed to,

going forward, have bilateral agreements so that when our nationals are in that country, they are safe and so on.

Also, that the Deputy Prime Minister promised to undertake waiving any fines and criminal cases that would have been preferred against those nationals. That was on 16 January and it is nearly a month now. We are talking about people who are being held by rebels, not on their own volition. The minister has conceded that these people were hoodwinked and now they are in a rebel camp. For over a month since that engagement, what is the update? I think the minister needs to clarify on that.

Finally, about the Ugandans who are in Egypt, the minister in his statement, at first said that there are no funds to support Ugandans abroad in distress condition. Two paragraphs down, he says those willing to leave, should register at the Ugandan Embassy in Cairo, so that the Embassy engages the authorities with a view to processing their exit. This is neither here nor there. Can you clarify exactly because these ones are in distress; they do not have money to get them back or legalise their stay because the money needed for that is a lot more and should they stay beyond the period agreed, they are going to pay a lot more money? They would like to return and you are saying that you do not have money but again, you are saying, come and we process. What does that mean? They need to know how to follow up. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, next time you are bringing a statement – does a requisition of an air ticket and allowances amount to be in a statement of plenary? These are details that we do not handle here. The Ambassador requested for US\$ 5,000 for a ticket, these are not details we handle in plenary.

3.55

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for the statement and all the speakers, including the shadow

minister. The issue of our youth being stranded in Myanmar came to my office in October and we held meetings.

I had another meeting last week with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in Italy over the same together with the President of Kenya. It is not only Uganda that has this issue, almost all East African countries and most of the people that they are taking to Myanmar are youth who are well-trained; Information Technology (IT) technicians or graduates. What they do there is havoc, so our youth are in distress.

However, IOM promised that they are going to engage – IOM means International Organisation for Migration. They are going to help us get in touch with the Government of Myanmar and see how our youth can be rescued because they have already rescued some. I am told in Uganda they have rescued four who are already here.

My appeal to all the leaders across the country is to sensitise our people not to fall victim because they are promised that they are going to Bangkok. Once someone gets to know about Bangkok which he was studying in History and Geography, they are easily swayed. Therefore, our youth should feel content with their country.

MR SSENKYONYI: Thank you, Rt Prime Minister, for allowing me to seek this clarification. We should not be in abeyance, the minister's statement which is on the record says that the ambassador asked to go and she has not been facilitated to go. The minister said that he met the Deputy Prime Minister of the country and they agreed on how to process this matter. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you are saying that you are going to engage IOM – *[Ms Nabbanja: "No, I already engaged them."]* – Your statement was that you are going to engage.

It is important that we have harmony and that is the clarification I seek. What should we bank on? Are we banking on IOM or the Deputy Prime Minister? In addition, specificity in times of time, these are people held in a rebel

camp. Even one day could be very dangerous, so we want very timely updates on what is happening.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I cannot commit in terms of time because IOM is an independent international organisation.

Secondly, honourable colleagues, I organised a meeting here in the country with our Ambassador in Kuala Lumpur. All these suggestions that the minister is bringing came up under my chair. I would like all of us to note that our children are before rebel groups. They are in captivity and so, we have to handle this issue with a lot of care because we can put their lives at stake. I do not know which other statements the minister made here because I came in a little late; we were having Cabinet meeting.

We have also involved the International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL) together with the External Security Organisation (ESO) operatives. Something is being done. It is not that the Government is just watching and doing nothing. We are doing something. However, we cannot give timelines here because we are not in charge of the Government of Myanmar and the rebels. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I am commanded by rule 41, Prime Minister's Time. Rule 41, there shall be Prime Minister's Time at 4.00 p.m. Therefore, I will entertain no other matter.

STATEMENT BY THE RT HON. PRIME MINISTER ON GOVERNMENT BUSINESS FOR THE SUCCEEDING WEEK

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, after the command of rule 41, I will allow procedure and all that, but rule 41 commands clearly.

4.01

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I move under Rule 28 of our Rules of Procedure that

requires me as the Leader of Government Business to make a statement in this House regarding the business of the succeeding week. I, therefore, submit the following businesses for the coming week, that is 13 to 15 February 2024.

1. The Constitutional (Amendment) Bill, 2023;
2. The National Tribunal Bill, 2023;
3. The Uganda Health Professional Regulatory Council Bill, 2023;
4. The Arbitration and Reconciliation (Amendment) Bill, 2024;
5. The Rationalisation of Government Agencies, Education Sector (Amendment) Bill, 2024;
6. The Rationalisation of Government Agencies, Internal Affairs Sector (Amendment) Bill, 2024; This time I am giving you true business. *(Laughter)* Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: For the record, we want to know whether you have been giving us untrue business. *(Laughter)*

MS NABBANJA: No, I have always been giving you true business. The Rationalisation of Government Agencies, (Natural Resources and Environment Sector) (Amendment) Bill, 2024; The Rationalisation of Government Agencies (Works and Transport Sector) (Amendment) Bill, 2024; The Karamoja Development Agency (Repeal) Bill, 2024.

The Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

Thereafter, the Ministry of Internal Affairs will present a statement in the House. Updating the whole country on the process and guidelines on the renewal of national identity cards as requested by Parliament.

The Minister for Presidency will also come here and present a statement on the commemoration of the late Janani Luwum Day. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

PRIME MINISTER'S TIME

4.04

PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Rt Hon. Robinah Nabbanja):

Mr. Speaker, I got a question from Dr Emmanuel Otaala Otiam, Member of Parliament, West Budama South.

He raised a matter concerning the threat posed by the Golden Dodder weed, a yellowish-orange thread-like vine that grows over leaves, branches and stems of plants in an entangled web, smothering plants, especially fruit trees and destroying wetlands in Tororo District among other parts of the country;

And the need for the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to assess the situation and strengthen the regulatory mechanisms to prevent infiltration of such plants into other parts of the country. His prayer was that I give an update to the House, which I have here.

Mr Speaker, there has been gradual multiplication of the parasitic weed known as (Golden Dodder) in West Budama South and other parts of the country which has raised concern.

This weed poses a threat to various plants, including compound trees, live fence trees and fruit crops like mangoes, oranges, avocados etcetera.

The Ministry working through District Agricultural Officers, is actively sensitising the community to prevent the spread by avoiding the introduction of the weed through its attractive flowers in nurseries or home gardens. The community is also advised on weeds - using techniques such as burning and deep burying.

Hon. Rugamayo Edson, Youth Member of Parliament, Western raised a matter concerning Ms Kemigisa Agnes who was recruited by Gopro Uganda Ltd for employment in Saudi Arabia on a tourist visa but ended up being imprisoned on 16 August 2023 on allegations

of fraud and that she has not received the necessary intervention to enable her to get justice. His prayer is a need of an update.

Mr Speaker, in 2005, the Government through the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development initiated the externalisation of the Labour Programme with two objectives:

1. To create a safe, formal and regular pathway for Ugandans who choose to seek employment abroad.
2. To establish a short-term window for addressing the unemployment challenge in Uganda.

The externalisation of the Labour Programme is regulated by "The Employment Act" and "The Employment (Recruitment of Ugandan Migrant Workers) Regulations, 2021".

Under the said Regulations, workers may travel abroad for work through the following channels:

- i. A licensed recruitment company.
- ii. Individual initiative: Here the worker sources for the job as an individual.

The Migrant workers are mostly deployed in the Middle East countries of Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Iraq, Somalia, Kuwait and Qatar.

As I speak, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a key destination for Ugandan migrant workers estimated to be more than 150,000, in different categories across the expansive terrain.

Ms. Kemigisa Agnes was cleared by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development on 5 April 2023 as a domestic worker under Gopro Uganda Limited on a work visa. She arrived in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 25 April 2023 and was subsequently deployed to her employer, Norah Abdullah Bin Fahad Alsaahali.

And it is not true that Ms Kemigisa Agnes travelled on a tourist visa as the Youth MP for Western alleges. All Ugandan migrant workers

to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are issued 90-day visas and are subsequently issued with *Iqamas* (resident permits) upon serving out their probationary contracts.

In the event that anyone travels on a tourist visa and ends up working, that is an anomaly, implying that such a person would have been trafficked.

On 29 August 2023, we received a report from Gopro Uganda Ltd that Ms Kemigisa Agnes had been picked from her employer's premises by Police on 16 August 2023 on allegations of committing fraud through her phone and was later transferred to the Women Malaz Prison in Riyadh.

On 7 September 2023, we formally contacted the Embassy of Uganda through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to follow-up on the plight of Ms Kemigisa Agnes and offer the necessary consular support.

Upon follow-up, the Embassy informed Government that Ms Kemigisa Agnes was still in Malaz women's prison as the Police conducts further investigations. She is yet to be produced in Court.

Preliminary information received by the Embassy is that Ms Kemigisa Agnes made mobile money transactions on her phone over and above what she had so earned. She is being investigated for possible money laundering. Mobile Money transfers are closely monitored in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to prevent money laundering and terrorist financing.

Mr Speaker, the Ugandan embassy is closely following up on the case and will ensure that Ms Agnes Kemigisa is accorded a fair trial by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia authorities.

Going forward, Government has put in place the following measures to assist Ugandan domestic workers in distress in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

- (i) As you already know, the bilateral labour agreement with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on domestic workers was revised in

March 2023. A joint technical committee for monitoring the implementation of the bilateral labour agreement was constituted within two months of signing the bilateral labour agreement.

- (ii) With the improved funding to the externalisation of labour this financial year, our priority areas are strengthening monitoring of migrant workers in countries of destination and establishing a greater presence there.
- (iii) We are also in the process of deploying labour attaches and the attendant support personnel will be recruited locally in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Among the local personnel, there shall be a Sharia lawyer who will provide legal aid to the migrant workers and also represent them in courts and tribunals.
- (iv) The ministry intends to set up a robust rapid response system for monitoring mechanisms, which will grant migrant workers access to an online platform for reporting complaints and receiving feedback on a 24-hour basis. The online system will be linked to a call centre housed at the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development.

Government, through the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development is committed to the attainment of safe, orderly and decent migration for all Ugandans destined for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and all other destinations.

- 3. Hon. Juliet Achayo, Member of Parliament, Ngora County raised a matter concerning the drastic drop of vanilla prices since 2016 to date, from Shs 250,000 to Shs 5,000 per kilogramme.

Her prayer was: can the Prime Minister update the House on the matter? Here is my response, Mr Speaker.

The drastic decline in vanilla is attributed to a global increase in vanilla stocks, resulting from reduced consumer demand and stockpiling

by global buyers anticipating crop failure in Madagascar.

The Government acknowledges the decline of prices of vanilla and recently tea and expresses commitment to sustaining quality gains through collaboration with farmers, district local governments, processors, and key promoters.

4. Hon. Pamela Kamugo Nasiyo District Woman Representative, Budaka raised a matter concerning the major rice growing districts in North Bukedi being left out in distribution of fertilisers to rice growers.

Her prayer was: can I update the House of the matter?

The distribution of fertilisers mentioned above was carried out under the Agriculture Cluster Development Project (ACDP) within project districts. Unfortunately, some districts like Budaka were outside the project coverage and thus did not benefit.

I wish to however note that districts in the Bukedi Sub-region will continue to benefit from other ministry initiatives including the upcoming Uganda Climate Smart Agricultural Transformation Project (UCSATP). This nationwide project aims to promote the adoption and upscaling of climate-smart technologies, greenhouse gas mitigation, and improvements in agricultural productivity and incomes.

The Government assures that these districts will be covered by the project, emphasising its objectives of enhancing climate-smart practices and improving market access for the farmers.

5. Hon. Phiona Nyamutoro, National Female Youth Representative said that the Government has contracted Lagan Dott Ltd Company to construct roads, drainage systems and fibre optics in the Kampala Industrial and Business park at Namanve, however, the company's work is not progressing and it is blaming Government entities for not playing their

part, for example, designing markings hence delaying their works.

She asked: can I inform the House how Government has failed to support the contractor yet the loan got for the project is being serviced?

Response

Mr Speaker, in 2019, the Government acquired a loan of £249 million which is about Shs 1 trillion from UK Export Finance to develop the industrial park for four years, ending in 2023.

The contractor, Lagan Dott Limited, in a joint venture established between the UK contractors, Lagan Group Limited and Dott Services Ltd of Uganda was given the contract to develop the infrastructure stated above. However, the works have delayed to be complete and the Government has extended the period for completion by two years.

The purported delays result from the floods in the area beyond us and statutory procedures that must be followed when implementing such multi-billion projects which cannot be bypassed but followed. So far, the contractor has completed 28 kilometres out of 44 kilometres and Government is as well concerned. We are working closely with the contractor to ensure that they work hard and deliver the project as required without compromising quality. The access roads have been done, the power station is in place. What is remaining is connectivity.

It should be remembered in a span of a few years, factories increased in Namanve Industrial Park from 22 to 258 factories. The plan is to have 500 factories in Namanve Industrial Park and this will be achieved.

Mr Speaker, Government is committed to ensure all outstanding issues on similar projects are settled on time so that value for money is not compromised.

6. Hon. Edson Rugumayo, Youth Representative, Western Region raised a question on the need to put in place

regulations under Section 50 of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority (PPDA) Act to provide for preference and reservation schemes that increase participation of youth, women and persons with disabilities in procurement processes.

His prayer; can the Government update the House on this matter?

Mr Speaker, my response is that the new PPDA Regulations, 2023 were launched on 25 January 2024. The new PPDA Regulations, 2023 have provisions that will facilitate direct procurement from manufacturers of aviation, industrial, agricultural, and medical equipment in addition to allowing the use of own resources for public works under the force account mechanism.

Mr Speaker, the PPDA Regulations, 2023 mark a crucial milestone in the ongoing efforts for public sector reforms, to enable transparency, accountability and efficiency in public procurement and disposal processes. Adhering to the PPDA regulations will instil confidence in the public that their hard-earned money is being utilised efficiently and effectively. The success of these regulations lies in the effective implementation and compliance by all stakeholders involved, in the procurement and disposal chain.

Mr Speaker, as I conclude, the provision for preference and reservation schemes that increase participation of youth, women and persons with disabilities in the procurement processes has been catered for in the guidelines that are pending Cabinet approval as you already know.

Part one of the regulations covers the promotion of participation of women, youth and persons with disabilities in public procurement. Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister. Honourable colleagues, we are going to pick the questions for oral

answer to the Prime Minister. I will start with Hon. Atima, Hon. Opendi, Hon. Ruhunda, Hon. Okot, and Hon. Nambooze.

4.32

MR JACKSON ATIMA (NRM, Arua Central Division, Arua): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I raise a matter that is on extortion of monies of fish traders and transporters, by Lieutenant George Ntunga, a UPDF officer deployed to the UPDF Fisheries Protection Unit at the Elegu border, on 17 January 2024.

This officer extorts Shs 3 million per truck of 30 to 50 tonnes of fish from South Sudan traders, on claims that the trucks have foreign number plates, and the fish being brought is small in size, yet not verified.

Mr Speaker, this officer asked the fish traders to pay this money to his mobile phone number, which I have here, and part of the money he received is as cash. I have evidence of him receiving this money on his mobile number 078-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, please do not read the person's number here. You will pass it on.

MR ATIMA: The phone number is here and the name on it is here. He has so far received over Shs 4,900,000 from the traders, each truck paying Shs 3 million.

Mr Speaker, as I talk now, four trucks of fish are under his custody at the Elegu border, demanding for Shs 12 million, each truck paying Shs 3 million in order for him to release them. Five trucks are still in South Sudan for fear of this extortion. The traders do not want to come to the border, because they want to see what will happen to those four trucks.

Mr Speaker, this UPDF officer has denied office space to the previous fisheries officer who was there. He has taken the office equipment away from him, the stamp and the rest. He is now using that office alone to achieve his extortion.

The second officer is at Pakwach Bridge. This officer is called Second Lieutenant Simon Tibajuka, Commander, Fisheries Protection Unit (FPU), who is extorting Shs 2 million per truck of fish that comes from either Elegu or Panyimur. As I talk now, Mr Speaker, one truck that came from Elegu, and paid Shs 3 million to the other officer, is being demanded Shs 2 million again. Two trucks from Panyimur are all parked at the police station. I received numerous calls from the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) of Pakwach and LCV Chairman. This officer cannot listen to those leaders in that place.

Mr Speaker, this officer at Pakwach, has gone to the extent of now picking Shs 100,000 from bus operators. Any bus that comes from West Nile to Kampala, he gets Shs 100,000. Any bus that returns, he gets Shs 100,000. I have received calls from bus operators.

My prayers. Before I go to my prayers, Mr Speaker, this act of these officers affects not only the fish traders and transporters but also the Government in terms of revenue loss, because those trucks which remained in South Sudan and these people who are afraid to come are losing a lot of revenue. This money he is asking for is after these traders have cleared taxes with the Uganda Revenue Authority of Shs 25 million per truck. How much money are we losing if he is chasing away traders who are paying taxes to the Government?

My prayers –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, honourable, here we do not have prayers. It should be just a very simple question. Can the Prime Minister intervene?

MR ATIMA: Can I ask the questions, Mr Speaker?

First, can the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We are in Prime Minister's Time. Now it is the Prime Minister.

MR ATIMA: Okay. Can the Government streamline the process of managing the trade in fish to be rational so that people are not robbed?

Two, can the Prime Minister, through the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs, investigate and prosecute such officers for extortion and causing revenue loss to this Government?

Number three, can those two officers be withdrawn immediately?

Number four; can those trucks, which are under his custody, be released?

Mr Speaker, this morning, over 700 traders in Arua Central Market walked to the office of the Resident City Commissioner of Arua. I tried to call your number to give you the scenario on ground. The situation was bad, but I promised them that if you gave me an opportunity, I would raise this matter and action would be taken. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, you can see the kind of - you have to bend the Rules to accommodate all this information for the Prime Minister to get the true picture of what is on the ground and for the Member to substantiate on the issues that are happening on the ground.

There is a related question from Hon. Okot Moses, very close; maybe you could handle them at once, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

Hon. Atima wanted to lay on the Table some documents.

MR ATIMA: Thank you very much again, Mr Speaker. I beg to lay on the Table a complaint with evidence of mobile money transactions between the traders and the officers so that it can help the Government to investigate. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Okot?

4.31

MR MOSES OKOT (FDC, Kioga County, Amolatar): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. My matter is related, in all manner, to the submissions of Hon. Atima, save for the actors who are different.

On the second day of February, one Molly Akelo, who possesses a fishing trading licence receipt, did make payments at Amolatar District; her truck of mature fish was impounded along Amolatar- Nakasongola Road, by one Israel Mpairwe, the Fish Enforcement Officer of Amolatar Lake Kyoga.

He impounded two trucks, went ahead while Kirya Dan, the driver was at Nakasongola Barracks, sold the fish, disposed it at court for Shs 50 million while this was in utter breach of the court procedures in that there was no advertisement, the accused person was in detention at the barracks, was not heard, the receipts were paid, the district veterinary officer did actually ask them that, between the month of January, and March, no certificates or licences are ready, even for us practicing advocates.

He ignored the same, went and auctioned the fish for Shs 50 million.

Molly Akelo is a pauper from Ochorabino Village. She borrowed the money from the Post Bank. I believe that the proceeds of this auction are forfeited to one Mpairwe and the Government, Molly would go bankrupt and the community that she has borrowed or picked fish from would hold her hostage.

The situation is no different from other 50-plus trucks that are being held at Nakasongola Fish Protection Unit, where the persons have paid for licences, but the process of processing between January and March is still ongoing, and it is not on them.

My pleas to the Prime Minister:

1. The law in which these officers are acting is the law we did pass here, but has not been operationalized because of the lack

of regulations. But persons are being charged under the same legal regime, which at the time was not operational.

2. Persons who are enforcing in the lake, which we actually stressed under section 14 of the said law, that the UPDF itself should be moved away from the lake. And they are the ones doing this. So it brings the feud and the fury from the community that we do lead.

So my plea is that:

1. Mpairwe Israel, should forfeit the proceeds of Shs 50 million that he received from one Kirya Dan in the sale of the fish worth Shs 60 million that he did auction.
2. The enforcement of the Fish and Aquatic Act that we did pass without the regulations will be stopped henceforth until the regulations have been legalised or put forth on the Floor.
3. The punitive measures were taken on the high level of connivance between the magistrate grade one and Israel Mpairwe, who sat and entertained the matter *ex parte* while the accused was being detained at the military barracks. I pray.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister-

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, I have taken note of all issues of Members and these issues affect our people directly. So using the powers entrusted to me, I direct the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs to handle the other errant officers and of course, the Ministry Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to take a note and handle their part. I so direct.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, it will be very important- because this is a matter, which I believe you can take action and we do not come back here. Okay? And with a very urgent action because you see, I want to have a room where maybe these people are going to meet the Members.

4.37

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (Mr Vicent Ssempijja): Mr Speaker, first of all, I want to oblige on the directive of the Right Honourable Prime Minister. Certainly, we are going to take steps to investigate this immediately.

I remember the last time these issues came up and all Members were up in arms on mentioning defaults by soldiers and all this. But at that time, my problem was evidence. I just want to thank the Members for at least trying now to come up with it. You can see the Members had the evidence, and we have where to start. This is a better parliamentary debate. You do not come here and just discuss rumours, but I think here we are moving on well and we are going to act very fast.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, give me an update on Tuesday on the action you have taken, but also link up with the Members.

MR SSEMPIJJA: Much obliged.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will be grateful. Hon. Sarah Opendi-

4.39

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman District Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. In this House for some time, we have talked about the ACP, the African Caribbean Pacific European Union post-Cotonou Agreement. You lead Uganda's delegation, and the Late Hon. Cecilia Ogwal was part of that delegation and has been very passionate about raising this matter alongside Hon. Acuti and I. And the Attorney-General has consistently, even while we were paying tribute, indicated to this House that Uganda will not sign that document until they have critically studied it. This morning, I looked through the website and I saw that Uganda actually signed on 8 January, 2024.

Mr Speaker, I am just wondering, with all the assurances that were given on the Floor of this House by both the Attorney-General and the

Minister of Foreign Affairs, would the Prime Minister inform this House whether there was a reversal of that decision? And if Uganda signed, can we have that document laid before this House so that the relevant committee can scrutinise it? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister-

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker and colleagues, I have an expert here. And it seems he is the one who signed. *(Laughter)*

4.41

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, (REGIONAL CO-OPERATION (Mr John Mulimba): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs did play her part, and of course you know by our Constitution, the President of the Republic is the chief diplomat. We did express our reservations. Although the post-Cotonou Agreement required ratification without reservation, we did advise His Excellency the President, that for us as Uganda, we must ratify with reservation.

Reservation to the attendant provisions, for which we thought and rightly saw were offensive in terms of our values, constitution and Uganda was- His Excellency the President directed our Permanent Representative in Geneva to ratify with reservations. Uganda is not the only country, which has ratified with reservation-, The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and the Government of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia have done so. That is the update, Mr Speaker. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Opio Acuti, do you want to add?

MR OPIO ACUTI: Mr Speaker, the Minister has stated that the ratification was done with reservation, but the information that appears on this European Union (EU) website, states that Uganda signed without reservation.

The column for reservation is blank, meaning that it is signed without reservation. We want

clarity on this matter, whether it is the EU website that is giving us wrong information or we are not understanding each other.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, you can lay on the Table the signing instrument.

MR MULIMBA: Mr Speaker, when we do ratification, we do so by instrument. We do not sign on the real document because all protocols- all treaties which are by resolution of international agencies, are not simply signed by signing a document. It is by instrument from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs depositing to the implementing entity.

Therefore, for you to say you have a column where somebody is purporting to do or to know better than we did, I think, that is simply erroneous publicity. What we did and what I am telling you is the right thing and the instrument that we sent clearly stipulates as such. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, Hon. John Mulimba, I am very interested in this matter as a Head of delegation to the Organisation of African, Caribbean, Pacific States (OACPS)-Joint Parliamentary Assembly and we are going to Luanda, Angola next weekend for a joint Parliamentary Assembly under the same arrangement of SAMOA Agreement.

will be very imperative for you on Tuesday to lay on the Table your signing instrument. *(Applause)* from the information I have, only Ethiopia signed with reservations- only Ethiopia. That is the information I have and I have been in touch with very many countries. You can help us so that we get those issues settled.

Secondly, our push is on implementation now- our focus is shifting to implementation and this is where we are going to engage strongly when we are in our joint parliamentary assembly with the European Parliament on these issues, but also, I think the way we are handling most of these issues, maybe we need more updates

from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; until we ask a question, we never receive anything from you. We do not know why you do not consider Parliament a serious stakeholder to keep updating. Until a question comes from a Member or the Speaker is asking for something, that is when you hear a statement from Foreign Affairs. Other Ministries always update us with statements.

Members of Parliament are always travelling; they go to various countries as ambassadors of the country engaging other Parliamentarians and we find them struggling for this information. Once we share, it helps us.

I will be grateful, but also the issue of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), which we are discussing-, negotiating with the EU under the East African Community Arrangement, then the European Union opted to sign with only Kenya. We want all these issues brought here so that we can engage, and we see what best we can get for our country.

Whenever we reach abroad, on these issues, I never hear voices saying I belong here; we all belong to Uganda. That is the approach we take. That is why we always want you to help. So, on Tuesday, lay on Table, honourable minister.

MR MULIMBA: Mr Speaker, you know, ratification of treaties especially this one which is very contentious like I have told you, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did her due diligence and wrote a report to the Head of State who is the Chief Diplomat, who instructed our Permanent Representative in Geneva; she is the one who deposited the instrument. This time round, not a Minister of Foreign Affairs. It would be expecting too much from me, Mr Speaker, to lay on Tuesday, and I want to repeat-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us listen to the minister.

MR MULIMBA: What I can pledge to do, Mr Speaker, is to follow up with the Permanent Representative in Geneva, but I cannot give timelines, nor can I commit on Tuesday. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, an Ambassador under you—because this Ambassador does not belong in any Ministry. How do you tell me that an Ambassador can submit this and does not report to you? And an Ambassador is just keeping it because she is a Permanent Representative to Geneva? How are we running a Government? Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, can I seek your intervention on this? I am surprised by a minister saying he cannot get a document from an Ambassador.

MS NABBANJA: I now direct *(Applause)* because we cannot keep dilly-dallying here and so, Hon. Mulimba, whether you need it or not, you will bring it here.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Rt. Hon. Prime Minister. Hon. Ruhunda.

4.49

MR ALEX RUHUNDA (NRM, Fort Portal Central Division, Fort Portal City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. During the 10th Parliament, I happened to lead a team of Members of Parliament and we did a study on tea for the whole of East Africa and we came up with a report which we presented here on the Floor of Parliament.

In that report, we observed that the Government had negated its obligation to supervise and ensure that the tea sector is regulated and the farmers are supported accordingly.

We asked the Government to ensure that they take measures of managing this sector but the Government abandoned the tea sector to private companies.

We had observed very clearly that if this is not done, we are going to have a future calamity where the quality of Ugandan tea is going to fall completely and earn Uganda the lowest price. We put that in the report, it is there—

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question.

MR RUHUNDA: My concern, as we speak now, Mr Speaker, a kilogram of Ugandan tea, has fluctuated to Shs 75 from Shs 400. The

factories are laying off workers, and as I speak now, the farmers are uprooting the tea. This is a very big national economic problem. I know we have been talking about cows and so on, but this tea sector is one of the historically biggest sectors for the economy.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question.

MR RUHUNDA: I would like to ask the Prime Minister, why did you not take into consideration our recommendations to regulate the tea sector and wait for these tea prices to reduce to the lowest level, when we now have high unemployment levels, people cannot take children to school because they are unemployed. What is this? This is really terrible. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleague, that is the problem of trying to divert and you want to quarrel. So, when you decide to quarrel—*(Laughter)*

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, it is important that I inform you on what steps the Government has taken in order to have this problem solved. Our tea is auctioned in Mombasa. The fact is that the quality of our tea went down because we do not apply fertilisers. That is the major reason.

Secondly, when our people are picking tea, they pick five leaves or even more, instead of picking the right number of tea leaves; two or two and a half.

We have been directed by the President— I am the chairperson. Somebody was wondering whether I know everything in this country. Yes, I am the Prime Minister and one who is in charge. *(Applause)* Mr Speaker, we have held a number of meetings and had some other deliberate interventions:

- i. Government is going to bring here our resolution from Cabinet to support the tea sector directly—*(Applause)*— because the Cabinet has already passed these resolutions;

- ii. We need alternative markets. The other day, I had a meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister of Italy, who is also the chairperson of the ruling party in Italy – that is not a small person. He invited factories and said the Ugandan people should go and have joint ventures with those factories in Italy, so that tea can be processed and value addition done from Uganda, so that it is destined for the Italy market, instead of going through these other places. *(Applause)*
- iii. We have linkages with Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). There is a company called Elite Agro that is coming here to put up five factories in the first phase, so that we can add value to our tea that is designated to the UAE or Emirates from here using new technologies.

Mr Speaker, those are long term plans, but for the short-term, the Government will come in to help the farmers. I request the farmers not to uproot the tea because we are going to solve the problem. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you seem to have got a lot of good news from Italy but you keep giving it to us in piecemeal. *(Laughter)*

4.55

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE (NUP, Mukono Municipality, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. In a letter signed by the Executive Director of Mulago National Referral Hospital, Dr Byanyima, dated 9 September 2023, to the Inspector General of Police, 162 families of policemen that have been staying at Mulago police barracks are due for eviction. Right now, an eviction notice has been issued for the said officers to evict themselves or face forceful eviction by Monday.

It is true that the land on which Mulago Police barracks is housed, belongs to Mulago National Referral Hospital but the police occupied it on consent and invitation of Mulago National Referral Hospital, which went ahead to construct some of the houses on it for police officers to secure Mulago Hospital and other health facilities in the city.

With time, due to housing challenges the police force is facing, various policemen have constructed, with permission, semi-permanent houses that characterise police barracks today for accommodation.

Most probably, Mulago National Referral Hospital wishes to utilise this land for a good reason. However, Mr Speaker, it would be irregular and reckless for any Government organ to summarily evict policemen from a known barracks without an alternative for relocation.

We believe that under normal circumstances, an alternative would be offered by the Government to these police officers to relocate their families. The accommodation situation of our police officers is a total disgrace.

Yesterday, I heard the Minister of Internal Affairs, whom I have the honour to shadow, telling the general public that the bad situation under which our police officers are accommodated is due to the oversize of this House; that money is diverted to facilitate us, instead of constructing houses for policemen.

Mr Speaker, these words border on incitement and the consequences of inciting security officers against politicians are known. I fear the day our policemen will lose patience over the accommodation situation they face.

For this reason, I would like to use this Prime Minister's Time to ask the Prime Minister whether she is aware that 162 police families are being evicted from Mulago National Referral Hospital land. What alternatives does the Government have for the barracks? Wouldn't it be prudent to stay eviction for now, until an alternative for these families is found?

Last year, in November, the IGP promised, at a pass-out of police officers, that the Government was going to construct 53,000 housing units for police officers with immediate effect and that it was a directive from the President. I would like to know how far this has reached.

Lastly, as a way of appeal, for now, they should stay the eviction, as an alternative place

is found for the officers who are sleeping at Mulago police barracks. I pray, Mr Speaker. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I received a petition from some police officers and we had a meeting yesterday with the Deputy IGP and some officers from Mulago. It is true that there are police officers who are going to be relocated, not evicted. They told me that they are going to be relocated.

In 2016, there was insecurity in Mulago and the Government decided to take there a police post. And the officers who are there are 54, not 120.

Mulago wants to expand, as you are aware, and develop that place. The security situation greatly improved and they are going to give them patrol police instead of police who are based there because of other negative things that came up.

The police officers will be relocated to their original barracks because we have Nsambya and many others. That is where they are going.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, it is redeployment, in short, to other areas. *(Members rose)* The problem under Prime Minister's time, we do not have that chance. Honourable colleagues, sub rule 41(8) which provides for Prime Minister's time says that we cannot exceed one hour, but rule 26 requires me again to appoint a time for Members' issues on Thursday.

I started today with Members' issues but I want to appoint another hour. However, I would like to beg for your indulgence, we have items to lay and then we continue with the issues. I will give you enough time. The Prime Minister has said that she is here and that she must answer your issues before she goes.

LAYING OF PAPERS

(I) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ON OVERSIGHT FIELD VISIT TO SOROTI UNIVERSITY, LIRA UNIVERSITY, GULU UNIVERSITY, KABALE UNIVERSITY AND MBARARA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

5.04

DR FLORENCE ASIIMWE (NRM, Woman Representative, Masindi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish to lay a report of the Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation on oversight field visit to Soroti University, Lira University, Gulu University, Kabale University and Mbarara University of Science and Technology; under Rule 34 of our Rules of Procedure, I wish to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Just a brief.

DR ASIIMWE: Mr Speaker, the Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation took on an oversight visit to these universities, made several observations and recommendations.

- (i) The committee observed that most of these universities are facing tremendous financial constraints,
- (ii) Plagiarising of innovations and research projects,
- (iii) Failure to commercialise innovations,
- (iv) Lack of review of intellectual property law,
- (v) Lack of infrastructure,
- (vi) Understaffing due to- remember, the public service put a law that we should not recruit and therefore members cannot be promoted. I brought it out the other day.
- (vii) Unclear grants under the innovation funds and, sustainability of these innovation projects because some of them take over time and therefore when money is given in bits, some of these researches are never completed.

The committee also observed that a lot of money was allocated to various projects in these universities, and some of them were never completed.

Science is not a one-off activity. Research takes a lot of time and when money is given in bits, some of the researches collapse and some of the results make no meaning because the project is not completed.

Another observation was that there are no technology parks within the proximity of these science-based institutions to enable information sharing among academicians, innovators and the industrial sector.

Notwithstanding that the private sector is not on board to commercialise these new innovations to foster socio-economic development, which is the key objective of - Under rule 34, I am supposed to read it and it is up to the Speaker to accept debate for 45 minutes. So, I am summarising-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, let me make it easy for you. When you look, I gave her 10 minutes because under rule 34(2) she is supposed to give us highlights and I will appoint time for debate. This is a unique for field committee reports.

DR FLORENCE ASIIMWE: Thank you, for that guidance. I am summarising what we observed and these are very important issues, which we need to debate at a particular time because our innovation fund was a lot of money and yet some of the research was never completed.

I hope you will give us time to debate this sector seriously because if we are looking at the development of this country under science and we do not take science seriously, we shall continue being in the analogue.

Another observation is that under these institutions, these innovators were given money under preside - you remember that saga of preside. A number of projects were

taken under preside, and some of them are still under investigation. Some of these reports, for example, sericulture has never been debated a lot of gardens are out there rotting and several farmers are affected.

That is another project that we need to discuss seriously. Remember, you had planned to have a meeting between the Attorney-General, yourself, the chairperson and the minister.

That is a very important report and a number of colleagues here have those projects, under sericulture. Hopefully, we shall get time to discuss that project.

Recommendations

- (i) Government should work up measures and guidelines on how universities and industries can work together so as to share research ideas and translate them into production for commercialisation.
- (ii) There should be the development of a one-stop centre for scientific innovations with relevant technologies to facilitate research. This will assist upcoming innovators (individuals, small and medium enterprises) to ease research and innovation.
- (iii) Government should expedite the process of establishing more hubs in regions where they Governments should expedite the process of establishing more hubs in regions where they do not exist.
- (iv) The existing innovation hubs should be upgraded to accommodate researchers and innovators in the regions where they are situated.
- (v) There should be streamlined policy guidelines on how innovation funds are distributed and utilised to minimise the unscrupulous scientists who disappear with research funds.
- (vi) Government should allocate more funds to universities to facilitate and promote scientific research and innovations in the form of support to scientists,

establishment of accredited laboratories and recruitment of staff.

- (vii) Government should put in place a regulatory framework to guide government-funded individual projects and transitioning of viable research projects into commercialisation.
- (viii) Lecturers should not be treated as civil servants, to be tired or retired when they clock 60 years of age. At 60, it is then that their expertise should be tapped into as they nurture the upcoming experts. I submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Next item - honourable colleagues, the Member started by laying on the Table and thereafter gave us the highlights. I will be appointing time for debate, most likely next week.

II: ACTION-TAKEN REPORTS
PURSUANT TO RULE 220 OF
THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF
PARLIAMENT

5.13

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (REGIONAL AFFAIRS) (Mr John Mulimba): Thank you, Mr Speaker. In accordance with Rule 220 of the Parliamentary Rules of Procedure, I beg to lay action-taken reports of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on:

- i) oversight visit to Uganda's mission in Kinshasha;
- ii) oversight visit to Katuna Border to assess the status of economic and commercial diplomacy;
- iii) oversight visit to Uganda's High Commission in London, United Kingdom;
- iv) Ministerial policy statement and budget estimates for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the Financial Year 2022/2023.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. The reports are referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs. Let it use these reports when they are processing the Ministerial Policy Statement and Budget Estimates.

III. ON UGANDA'S CLIMATE STATUS
AND INTERVENTIONS ON CLIMATE
CHANGE AND BUDGET ESTIMATES
FOR ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL
RESOURCES SECTOR FOR THE
FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Since it is only laying, Clerk, any minister can help. Even the Prime Minister is here if you have the copies here – you should be having copies, so that we clear these items. The order paper remains clogged. We keep filling it - honourable minister, it is only laying on behalf of your colleague.

5.16

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (Mr Vincent Ssempijja): On behalf of the Minister of Water and Environment, I beg to lay the action-taken reports on Uganda's climate status and interventions on climate change and budget estimates for environment and natural resources sector for the Financial Year 2023/2024.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. I refer it to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources for consideration during the budgeting process.

IV. ON INVESTIGATIONS ON
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
INTELLIGENCE MONITORING SYSTEM
OF M/S JOINT STOCK COMPANY
GLOBAL SECURITY

5.17

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (Mr Vincent Ssempijja): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg to lay action-taken reports from the Ministry of Security.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: On which item?

MR SSEMPIJJA: They did not indicate it. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let me help you, honourable minister. You can use my copy. I have copies of all those reports.

MR SSEMPIJJA: Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the action-taken reports on investigations on the implementation of the intelligence monitoring system of M/S Joint Stock Company Global Security.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. It is referred to the Committee on Presidential Affairs.

V: ON THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF
PARLIAMENT IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR
2022/2023

- a) On the state of health care service delivery in selected health facilities in Busoga, Elgon, Bukedi, Ankole and Buganda sub-regions;
- b) On the performance of Euros 10 million from the Government of the Republic of Italy to finance the Karamoja Infrastructure Development Phase II (KIDP II) under the Health Sector Development Plan;
- c) On the assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on HIV/AIDS services delivery in the country;
- d) On the report of the Auditor-General for the Financial Year 2020/2021;
- e) On the magnitude of road traffic injuries reporting to public hospitals in Uganda and the cost of treatment;
- f) On the petition on salary enhancement discrepancies for nurses and medical interns;
- g) On the field visits to West Nile and Northern Uganda to assess the scope of works executed by BMK Uganda Reproductive, Maternal and Child Health Services Improvement Project (URMCHIP) – LOT 6;
- h) On the Ministerial Policy Statement and the Budget Estimates for the Health Sector for Financial Year 2023/2024;
- i) On the field visit to Kasese to assess the status of Kilembe Mines Hospital;
- j) On Resolution to urge Government to prioritise investment in Health Centres IV;
- k) On Resolution to urge Government to prioritise interventions into the nodding

disease syndrome in Northern Uganda; and

- l) On resolution to urge Government to prioritise and improve mental health and psychiatric care in Uganda.

VI: THE ACTION-TAKEN REPORTS
OF THE HEALTH SUB-SECTOR,
FOLLOWING THE RESOLUTIONS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF
PARLIAMENT IN THE FINANCIAL
YEAR 2022/2023

5.19

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Jane Aceng): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the action-taken reports of the Health sub-sector, following the resolutions and recommendations of Parliament in the Financial Year 2022/2023.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. It is referred to the Committee on Health for consideration during the budgeting process.

URGENT QUESTIONS

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, as I guided earlier, we are going to resume with Members' Time. I start with Hon. Eddie Kwizera followed by Hon. Jonathan Odur.

5.19

MR EDDIE KWIZERA (NRM, Bukimbiri County, Kisoro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am raising an issue where the Rt Hon. Prime Minister and the Deputy Speaker are witnesses regarding the state of roads in Bukimbiri County. They are so bad that they are denying Uganda the income that would be there if they were good.

We have 72 kilometres from Kisoro to Nkuringo - Rubuguri and Muko. Government of Uganda identified a company, Dott Services. However, this company they have been telling us about comes when there were no provision for budget and studies.

We would like the Government to tell us how they identified the company they were telling us would undertake that load when they had not completed their financials.

Secondly, we have a road, which is 10.8 kilometres connecting Kisoro and Kanungu from Nteko to Buhoma. Bukimbiri County is landlocked. There is no exit, as the Rt Hon. Prime Minister knows. When the community decided to mobilise its own resources to open up that road from Nkuringo to Buhoma. The Government stopped the community from making the road because they had said they do not have money. We have been waiting for the Ministry of Works and Transport. I am happy Hon. Musa Ecweru is here. Our prayer is, can the Government allow the people of Bukimbiri to mobilise its own resources and make that 10 kilometre road from Nkuringo to Buhoma as they plan their own resources.

Lastly, I want to emphasise that all the international guests who come here, a number of them who visit the Head of State, are sent to Bukimbiri to visit. Even when they go by helicopter, at times they wonder, is this a resort because Bukimbiri is one of the counties where you find accommodation at about \$1,000 a night.

If accommodation is \$1,000 a night in a hotel, we have about five hotels which charge \$1,000 a night, meaning that there is a relationship between the hotel rates and the income to the country. Can't the Government look at this as a very important issue? Recently we had all of the ambassadors *-(Members timed out)*

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

5.20

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker and colleagues, like the Member has been telling you, I have been to Bukimbiri, I know those areas of Lubuguri and many others. Working on roads in Bukimbiri is a priority by the Government. We call them "tourism roads."

Since the Minister of Works and Transport is here, I would request that he comes here.

Before he comes - yesterday I wanted to inform, Mr Speaker, like I told you, that the Internet cable is going to be taken to those tourist areas. We already have money from the Ministry of Information, Communication Technologies and National Guidance (ICT). We have the money; we are going to work on that. It is in the process.

Yesterday, after here I called the National Information Technology Authority-Uganda (NITA-U) Executive Director, and asked him why we are delaying. Those people must have the internet when they come to our hotels in Bukimbiri and the Rubuguri areas. Therefore, Minister for Works and Transport, I request that you come and give concrete answers.

5.23

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Musa Ecweru): Mr Speaker, they want me to provide concrete answers. Muko Road that my honourable colleague has talked about, DOTT services had indicated to us that they had the capacity to pre-finance. It is on that understanding that we thought, okay, let us commit you to do the job.

However, it looks like DOTT Services had bitten more than what they could swallow. They have been found to be unable to do the job. What has now happened is, it is back to our drawing board to identify a company which is competent. Either we mobilise resources within ourselves, that is our consideration, since it is going to be part of the tourism roads. DOTT Services promised us they were going to do the job, but they were found wanting. That was the unfortunate bit.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, Bukimbiri Road - why did anybody stop the local people who wanted to do the road? The thinking was, yes, we know how desperate the situation is, but we also are a Government. There is no way we can say, you people, we are unable, you can now do this. It will set a very bad precedent.

What we have decided to do is to put into place all what we call tourism roads in that area. I am sure, as we conclude the process of budgeting, it will be reflected. My only challenge is, I am saying this with a heavy heart, my friends from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development who sit next to me here sometimes - we agree on so many things. Once we agree, then sometimes the releases do not match the kind of agreements that we make.

Finally, Mr Speaker, we have agreed with the Rt.Hon. Prime Minister that we meet on Tuesday. I know Members are going to raise a number of issues. In the last quarter, there was zero release, even for maintaining the already bad roads that we really urgently need to make interventions on. Therefore, we have agreed that we meet with the team from the finance ministry under the Chair of the Prime Minister on Tuesday, so that we will come to this House and explain precisely the state of affairs and why we are not seen to be doing what we are supposed to be doing. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development was here last week, and he told us that this February they are going to add money to the Ministry of Works, and Transport; he committed on the Floor. I hope they do. Honourable minister, the problem with that road - the tourists who are buying gorilla trekking permits, are tourists of a certain level who do not want that kind of discomfort.

That is so valuable. You remember the former Attorney-General of Kenya, Hon. Charles Njonjo, had to be thrown, put on a stretcher at 100 years. He celebrated 100 years, tracking gorillas in Bwindi. It is to that extent people who want it because he said, I want to die after I have done this and a few months after - may his soul rest in eternal peace - he died.

You can see the kind of people; he flew in, they brought in a special stretcher, carried him until they got Gorilla. He said, now I have peace, at 100 years. Therefore, the kind of people you

are hosting in that area are people who can manage the budget of being charged by our neighbours nearly three times more than what we charge for our permits.

The reason as to why we are charging less, is because we are not providing services. That is why we are providing extreme discounts. Others are charging over \$1,500 but we are charging around \$600 because we do not have facilities and other countries have. When you look at money coming from that area, it is like milking a cow you do not want to feed. Whatever milk you get out, you go and dispose of in other places and you do not want to feed that cow, and I understand your dilemma. I hope Tuesday you will get a solution to this. I thank you.

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, allow me, since we have ended the Prime Minister's Time, and are in Member's issues, when a minister is here, I do not disturb you, I pick on the minister, then when you want to add on, you always have that right away. Hon. Jonathan Odur?

5.29

MS JONATHAN ODUR (UPC, Erute County South, Lira): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question to the Prime Minister is, is there any chance that the President is serious about his weekly threats to fight corruption in this country? If he is, as the Prime Minister in charge, when are we likely to see action on the high-profile cases of corruption that has bewildered the regime? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister -

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker and colleagues, it is the NRM Government that put in place all these agencies that fight corruption, for example, Inspector General of Government (IGG), the State House Anti-Corruption Unit, among many others. I believe the President has the authority to use those anti-corruption agencies to fight corruption seriously. He is not just issuing threats, he is serious and you will see.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: In the question, honourable also did not go further to give examples and that is Hon. Jonathan Odur, he is always cautious before making that statement. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I hope you picked the point seriously.

Yes, Hon. Andrew Ojok Oulanyah and then Hon. Balimwezo. Procedure from the honourable member from Iganga.

MS KAUMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In your earlier communication when we were starting the House, you said that persons with or colleagues with matters of national importance will come in at the Prime Minister's time.

It has always been a tradition that we come to your office and we book. However, you are not reading our names, you are just choosing randomly and I personally booked in your office, so you are not looking *-(Laughter)* - are we proceeding well yet you promised us that we would come in Prime Minister's time?

I have a concern and I am lucky that the Prime Minister is here, the honourable Minister for Health is here, the Minister for Energy and Mineral Development was here and he has moved out and my issue is touching. Are we proceeding well?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I have an issue with Ministers. They come in and once they address their issue, they run out. They come in when they are on the agenda and so sometimes you find it is really difficult. Maybe you can ask them, when the Prime Minister is in, she needs the support, they should remain, at least to give support. And I want to appreciate the ones who are here who have remained to give support- *(Applause)*- Because she cannot know each and everything. It is very important.

Honourable, as you can see even Hon. Andrew Oulanyah was no even standing up, I picked him. Why? Because I am reading from the list of those who submitted. Hon. Atima the one I started with - many Members were standing, I did not pick them, I started with him. Okay?

So I am following what we agreed. Only that I have not yet reached you. But do not mind, you are going to be given an opportunity.

5.33

MR ANDREW OJOK (NRM, Omoro County, Omoro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. 18 months ago, we had an extensive debate here on the motion raised by the Kitgum Woman MP regarding the need for the Government to prioritise Nodding Disease Syndrome in northern Uganda. Despite all those reminders, there is no clear action being taken. Among the recommendations that are being made was the need for us to work on the rehabilitation of those centres where those children were initially housed.

The second one was for them to research and share those findings. Despite all this time of 18 months, we have lost several children and we still do not know what is happening.

It is my request to the Government to share what they are doing about this because we are in the budgeting period, we need to know whether there is money are allocated to those who are victims of the nodding syndrome. I want to thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister for Health-

5.34

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Jane Ruth Aceng): Mr Speaker, allow me to start from the point that we have managed to eliminate river blindness from that fossil in the north and there are no more parasites in the black flies.

Number two, to indicate that the scientists in Mulago are continuing with their research.

Number three, to indicate that finance since then has not provided any money for nodding disease following the unfortunate incidence of failure to account for money. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Really on this one, I will allow clarification. Hon. Andrew, because honourable minister, your answer

is not giving hope to the people who are still having issues maybe- We are here to work out to get a solution. Hon. Andrew.

MR OJOK: Thank you. I would like to seek clarification from the honourable minister. You mentioned that you have eliminated the cause. Does that mean that there is no more infection? What would happen to the current victims?

Secondly, you mentioned blanketly that there was an issue of corruption. There was no one who accounted for the money. It would be good to know if it was the district or the Ministry of Health, who did not account for the money so that we can at least have some comfort?

However, also that should not be grounds for there not to be money for those who need it. I beg to submit.

DR ACENG: Mr Speaker, let me start from the accountability. Many of you will recall that there was a heated debate here and Parliament decided that money for nodding syndrome should be given to the districts directly, not through the Ministry of Health.

Over Shs 1.5 billion was transferred to the affected districts. No money was accounted for; no intervention was done on the ground.

And up to now, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is still asking for accountability not from us, not from the Ministry of Health; it is from the districts directly.

Mr Speaker that issue is between the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the districts because the money went directly to the districts.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, this is where you usually come in and you take serious action. The people are suffering because of people who have failed to account.

DRACENG: Number two, Mr Speaker, on the children that are already disabled due to brain damage, they need support, physiotherapy,

rehabilitation. Their situation cannot change. Putting up rehabilitation facilities has been a commitment of the Government since that time. We need resources and it is between the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development and the Ministry of Health. If resources are provided, we are willing to undertake the activity.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Chairperson Committee on Health, I saw you standing up.

5.37

DR CHARLES AYUME (NRM, Koboko Municipality, Koboko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Health Committee visited the four districts in Acholi sub-region, and has come up which we are yet to present next week once given space on the Order Paper. But the issue of nodding disease right now majorly points towards rehabilitation and nutrition. We have made recommendations that money should -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, rule 80 limits you, this is a committee report until it comes here. I am going to give you space on the Order Paper on Tuesday. So that we can - colleagues for now, let us handle it on Tuesday. Let us extensively handle this.

Honourable minister on Tuesday or Wednesday, which day do you think? I usually need you here and I know some days where you have serious obligations as per note. Can I do Wednesday? This is an urgent issue. Thank you. Wednesday, (*Member rose*) please when I guide, I have guided, and I know why. These are issues we shall discuss after receiving a report that has more details. Now we are discussing prematurely. There is a report.

On Wednesday, that is when we shall handle. I request you, Hon. Komakech. Thank you. Hon. Balimwezo.

5.39

MR RONALD BALIMWEZO (NUP, Nakawa Division East, Kampala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, on 17 April 2023, the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia appreciated the Uganda

Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF)'s battle group 35. It awarded them with medals and also paid their allowances.

Unfortunately, these officers in uniform have not received all their allowances. That applies to battle groups 35, 36, 37, and 38.

These we appreciated for their selfless service in creating peace in Somalia. *(Interjection)*- Yes, I am speaking with authority because I know the subject matter.

My question is, can you update this House on why there are delays and yet Africa Union (AU) paid the officers' allowances?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Usually, I do not envy the one who faces Hon. Balimwezo's face when he is asking questions. *(Laughter)*

MS NABBANJA: Hon. Balimwezo is a friend. Those of us who know him, he is a very good friend of almost everybody.

Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, it is true that the African Union provides funds which are paid to our men in uniform on duty in Somalia.

They have not paid for the last four months but what the Government is doing is giving them a small honorarium of \$100 and food – at least they are sure of food and salaries back at home. They do not use their salaries on the other side because you know what is happening in Somalia. I think that salary is the one that keeps their families and once AU pays money, the Ministry of Defense will pay those servants of ours.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Max Ochai?

5.42

MR MAXIMUS OCHAI (NRM, West Budama County North, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity.

Mr Speaker, we recall that on 14 January 2021, the people of West Budama North, whom I represent in this Parliament and the Bukedi Subregion at large overwhelmingly voted the NRM Party into government largely on account of the upgrade of Tororo – Nagongera–Busolwe Road to join Namutumba, Butaleja and Nabumali.

On 4 December 2021, the late, your predecessor, Rt Hon. Jacob Oulanyah, at the memorial service of Dr Tanga Odoi's mother in Tororo, committed to ensure that the road be upgraded.

On 17 July, 2022, when we were interring the remains of the mother of Hon. Fox Odoi in Tororo, you committed to follow up on the upgrade of that road.

I am glad that last year, about three months ago, our Rt Hon. Prime Minister woke up Uganda National Road Authority (UNRA) to ensure that the feasibility study and detailed engineering design of Tororo –Nagongera –Busole Road be done.

May I take this opportunity, to ask the Prime Minister to give us the status of that feasibility study so that our people get comforted?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister? There is a minister here, Hon. Musa Ecweru.

5.44

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Musa Ecweru): Mr Speaker, the truth is that yes, they had initially done a design on the road, but because of the delay of getting resources, the original design was overtaken and when the Prime Minister met the team, we agreed that they redesign the road to meet the present challenges that may have occurred to it over time and that is being done now.

I want to report to this House that all these leaders, including yourself and right from His Excellency the President have committed that we must look for resources to make sure that that road is done and that is a commitment.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your time frame for the design, so that - Hon. Akamba – let Hon. Akamba add something on the same because I know it is your area.

5.45

MR PAUL AKAMBA (NRM, BUSIKI COUNTY, NAMUTUMBA): Yes, Mr Speaker. I would like to know, for the sake of Namutumba -Butaleja -Nabumali Road, whose designs are complete and the assessments for compensation undertaken- at least on the Namutumba side, but from that time nothing has happened. I would like to know what exactly is stalling the progress of that road. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, and the timeline Hon. Max Ochai wanted for the feasibility study.

MR ECWERU: Mr Speaker, first of all, this is a complete loop. It comes from Nabumali and ends in Namutumba and we could not do it piecemeal until we complete the whole thing then we present it as one project. I would like to say that I need to check with the teams that are on the ground, particularly the agency UNRA and find out how far they have gone because I did not come here with that information.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, we are waiting for your statement. You know, we agreed that you are going to bring us a statement on the status of roads and I expect it next week on Wednesday; these are the clear details we want in terms of if they have done the design, you tell us and maybe project it and we shall honestly look at it truthfully because we do not want to judge you. You cannot sell your goats to go and do roads. So you know – no, you can borrow goats from your honourable colleague, Hon. Sauda?

5.47

MS SAUDA KAUMA (NRM, Woman Representative, Iganga): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

My concern is about the unstable and interrupted power supply to our general hospital; Iganga

Hospital. It is good that you know the hospital I am talking about because it sits along Iganga-Tororo Highway; it is a highway hospital.

This hospital delivers around 600 to 650 babies per month –(*Interjection*) - that is it, even, the honourable Minister for Health can attest to that. The hospital I am talking about has been ranked the best general hospital for over five years.

Mr Speaker - yes, we have a standby generator which is now acting as the major supplier of electricity instead of Umeme.

It has a care unit for preterm babies, commonly known as the premature. These babies are always in oxygen concentrators - I think they call them incubators and need full-time oxygen because they are kept there for some time before they are discharged.

We always get around 60 to 120 –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, we do not need to go into all those details, let us go –

MS KAUMA: Mr Speaker, the problem is electricity. Remember, we have always been on the Floor asking for referrals. If the referral has failed, at least let them come in– the last Parliament, when the Rt Hon Prime Minister was Minister of Health - I think, she visited that hospital and she helped with the cost of electricity because they had a huge bill that they had failed to pay. But now, they are still facing that problem because most of the time the electricity is off and they are using the generator and yet the budget is small so, they end up using all the money to buy fuel. The electricity is off at the hospital and yet it is in town.

So our prayer is that we need a dedicated line supply for that hospital if we know that life is a priority in the country. Thank you.

Another concern is about the X-Ray. It is idle. I hear National Medical Stores (NMS) is the one that is supposed to supply the digital films

that run that machine. But it is idle because the films are not there. Our people are sent outside and they end up being knocked down because they are going to access X-Ray services. Let them come to our appeal because the blame is put on your Members; they think we are not working and we want to come back here. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: But above all, you want to save lives. Hon. Okasai?

MR OKAASAI: Mr Speaker, we are aware of the constraints in hospitals and we are working with the Ministry of Health to upgrade the electricity supply to the general hospitals under the guidance of regional referral hospitals. We have a project which is dedicated to that. We signed a Memorandum of Understanding MoU with the Ministry of Health to guide us on where we should take electricity and the quantity of electricity we should deliver to the hospital.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, this is not a regional hospital.

MR OKAASAI: Regarding that, I work under the guidance of the Ministry of Health and I always deliver electricity where she says there is inadequate electricity. She is saying now, but the MoU is between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development. We work under the guidance of the Ministry of Health. For example, when the Minister of Health said we needed a dedicated line to Mbale Regional Referral Hospital, we actually have it now. Therefore, it depends on the grading of the Ministry of Health.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Okaasai, I do not think that the Ministry of Health should come in and first tell you that where you have electricity, ensure that you have a consistent supply. Whether it is a home or not, consistent supply should be because the Ministry of Health is coming to you on the big ones which need special attention.

Therefore, the other ones, like this hospital, should be up to you to ensure that there is

consistent supply of electricity. This is a hospital, what can we do? However, Rt Hon. Prime Minister would like to supplement on this.

MR OKAASAI: Let me clarify this. For all hospitals, we are putting three phase. For this type of hospital, we shall have a three phase and for the other hospitals that have heavier equipment, will actually have a dedicated line.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister has said that is what she wanted to supplement, so we can save time.

5.53

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Rt Hon. Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I have been to Iganga like five times, the issue is that we have been giving them little money. That is why they have been clamouring to be upgraded to a referral so that their budget can go up. The same applies to Mityana, Gombe and many other hospitals. The machines that we give them consume a lot of power and so, the money we give them is not enough.

Secondly, I think we need to come up with a way of paying electricity directly. From the Central Bank to the – because once it goes to these corners, it passes through many hands. I was of the view that if you give me time, I will handle this matter together with the ministries concerned so that Gombe Hospital, Mityana Hospital, Iganga and even Bugiri. I have been to Bugiri and they are also complaining about the same. I have not been to Pallisa though I was there as a Resident District Commissioner (RDC). However, Masafu Hospital in Busia is suffering in the same way. Whenever they put on the machines, the electricity takes all the money. I think that we need to redesign and make sure that we give these people enough money that can run those machines. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I am really happy to hear that Rt Hon. Prime Minister, because the other day, we were discussing here the issue of utility bills. We guided that start deducting for – Rt Hon.

Prime Minister, I needed your attention. On the issue of utility bills, let us deduct money from the source so that we pay. When you look at the water supply companies, when they get this money, right away they go and do water projects.

When some of these institutions; Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) receive money for utilities, they first pay allowances, they reprioritise and the utility bills come next. They know that when you discount a hospital, Members of Parliament will come here, shout and all that and then we say, “No, no reconnect.” When you discount a police – there is no way you can go and discount a barracks. Under whose security to go and discount them?

It is very important, like how you did with the internet. You no longer hear issues of the internet. Deduct money at the centre and give it to the utility service companies and you will find that you even get good discounts.

We should also look into the issue of the budgets. I think here in Parliament, the money which you have been putting for utilities, we have been giving it. When we are passing a budget here, we have never reduced the money for utilities. Therefore, it is on the side of the Executive, like the Prime Minister has said, study it, revise and get adequate budgets. We shall then be able to support it from here. You will deduct at the centre and give it to the utility companies.

5.57

MS MARIAM NAIGAGA (NRM, Woman Representative, Namutumba): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: On the issue of X-rays, anyway, these are issues which –

MS NAIGAGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In 2018, the Minister of Health who is seated here with us issued alerts warning Ugandans on the dangers associated with using facilities that have asbestos roofing, mainly those that had run out of shape. Last year in August, Hon. Otaala from Tororo raised the same concern because

Bukedi and Busoga have quite a number of schools that are still roofed with asbestos and are out of shape.

The honourable minister pledged to work with the Ministry of Education and Sports, to come up with a list of these schools and they get supported. To date, nothing has taken place and these schools are still using the same facilities with asbestos roofs. The parents are scared because one of the issues that the Minister of Health raised was the cancer of the eye.

As we talk now, in one of the schools in Namutumba District, two pupils were diagnosed with cancer of the eyes. We do not want to rule it out because we are not experts on this; whether the cause was the roofing, but we would like this to be sorted out as per the promise of the Rt Hon. Prime Minister. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We even had some money in the budget for entities that had asbestos roofs. I remember Kyambogo.

5.59

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, we agreed to work on this issue in a phased manner. Busoga has a department in the Office of the Prime Minister and a number of iron sheets were bought last financial year. I am aware that distribution has been taking place by the Minister of State, Office of the Prime Minister (Luweero Triangle-Rwenzori). I will come up with a brief or request the minister in charge to come up with a brief and maybe involve the Members of Parliament so that we can have this issue solved.

Otherwise, in the Office of the Prime Minister, we budgeted for iron sheets to exactly do that.

6.00

MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, my question is to the effect of double-charging of insurance money in commercial banks.

More often than not, many of us go to banks for credit either for capital purposes or ease the distress of the people. As we get a loan and go back for a top-up loan, you are charged. People should know that when you go for a loan, you are charged interest and most times it is two per cent.

When you pay the loan halfway and go for a top-up loan, you are again charged interest over the whole amount. Yet some money is retained by the bank. We all know that such amount of money attributes no risk because it is retained by the bank.

This cheating of people by almost all banks has gone on – where they charge for insurance fees over money that has no risk at all which the banks have retained and yet we know that commercial banks are supervised by the Bank of Uganda.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, can we know from you why Government has continued to preside over such cheating of people and what we can do to be able to protect people's money being depleted by people who are simply cheating people to benefit themselves? Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I cannot give a definite answer now. I request the Member to put this in writing so that I can get the answer next Thursday.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you have officers here and they have captured it. Let them include it as part of- she has done her part. So let it be answered next Thursday.

6.02

MR ENOS ASIIMWE (NRM, Kabula County, Lyantonde): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question goes to the Prime Minister relating to the national backbone infrastructure; I understand that you are transferring the infrastructure to Uganda Telecommunication Company Limited and yet this company is going to be sold to a private operator. Why would we transfer a national asset of that nature to a company that we are going to privatise in a few days to come?

My second question goes to the Minister of Health; the 13th of February is the International Condom Day. Lyantonde District has been selected as the host district. Isn't it important that she brings us on board on such national days and what we need to do as politicians to support their efforts? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Did you lobby for it to come your side? *(Laughter)* My first time to hear about that day. Is this a Government programme, honourable minister?

MR ENOS ASIIMWE: The Permanent Secretary is the chief guest.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Should we say that you chose the right district to host?

6.03

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Jane Aceng): Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the honourable member is right. The National Condom Day is commemorated annually. It is true that people know about condoms but many do not use it for protection. It is held as an advocacy to remind people to use condoms for protection.

The Member is requesting that we bring a paper here on that issue. Mr Speaker, I will leave that to your discretion. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: On a very serious note, protection is one of the preventive measures promoted by Government. So, I do not know what we are laughing about. Only that it is a day I have never heard of being celebrated.

However, Parliament is a platform which we use to inform and educate the public about these issues. So, honourable minister, please bring a statement on this or else the Government drops it as one of the policies it promotes.

I know, honourable colleagues, you use condoms. Some of you are even complaining about the sizes. Maybe it would be the time for us to highlight to the public that this is very critical in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

6.05

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Rt Hon. Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, allow me to get more information on the question asked by the Member.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

6.06

MR RONALD KANYIKE (NUP, Bukoto County East, Masaka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Government, through the Minister of Energy, promised to avail this august House with the power purchase agreement which was signed between the Government of Uganda and the Government of Southern Sudan.

As the Shadow Minister of Energy and Mineral Development, I and the rest of the Ugandans are very concerned and need to know the update because we did not receive that agreement in the House. We want to know the fate of that agreement. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. For the record, we do not have the Government of "Southern" Sudan. We have the Republic of South Sudan. And they take it seriously because it was the Government of Southern Sudan before they held a referendum and declared independence. After independence it became The Republic of South Sudan.

6.07

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (ENERGY) (Mr Sidronius Okaasai): Mr Speaker, I have just come back from South Sudan, where we were discussing that same agreement which you were talking about. There are two agreements; one for distribution of electricity within the neighbouring communities at the border post. We are now negotiating the principal agreement of bulk selling of electricity to South Sudan. Next week, I can lay on the Table the distribution agreement that was signed late last year.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

6.08

MS VICTORIOUS ZAWEDDE (Independent, Woman Representative, Nakasongola): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Nakasongola District has got two constituencies, that is, Budyebo and Nakasongola.

However, Nakasongola District has got only one functional Health Centre IV which serves as a district hospital.

This health facility handles over 500 mothers for antenatal care, 100 mothers for delivery and 35 mothers for caesarean sections. Sometimes mothers are sleep on the floor while others are discharged before the right time.

The newly-born babies end up being infected after being admitted on the floor. We have written to different offices, kept on following up with different offices and the responsible office, but all in vain.

Through you, Mr Speaker, to the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, may I know when Government is constructing a standard and well-equipped maternity ward at Nakasongola Health Centre IV so that it can really serve the available population? The other information I want to give -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister of Health?

6.10

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Jane Aceng): Mr Speaker, the situation in Nakasongola is not unique to Nakasongola. All honourable members here have similar problems in their constituencies. We have discussed this issue several times here in this Parliament; all we need are resources. My humble appeal is that resources are mobilised so that we can address the issue once and for all. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think, honourable minister, you need to assess. You might find all of us are in need but some are in more need than others. From the reports I have been getting, Nakasongola seems to be among

those that are doing extremely badly. Maybe you could send your team to assess with a view of seeing if you have any intervention you can make. At least in this House, we go with hope. Okay? Thank you. Youth, Northern?

6.11

MR BONIFACE OKOT (NRM, Youth Representative, Northern): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I am concerned about the plight of most youth-farmer cooperatives all over the country, but more specifically, the ones in Balla, Ayer and Akalo in Kole that received support under the Agriculture Cluster Development Programme and they had machines for value addition installed since 2019. However, up to now, there is no electricity extension, no water access and most of the machines have wrong specifications.

When will these project sites, that is, Ayer, Balla, Akalo, and others across the country get connected to electricity and other critical utilities for agro-industrialisation?

6.12

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (ENERGY) (Mr Sidronius Okaasai): Mr Speaker, we are aware of the challenge of those facilities which were established under that project. They were actually planned though it was not a joint planning - but we have taken it up. We have surveyed over 105 facilities all over the country, and we have developed a detailed budget to connect them to electricity. It goes beyond 150 million.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries can only afford to connect about 20 of the facilities to electricity. So, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development has actually taken it up to develop a proposal for connecting electricity to all those facilities. We are covering it under Electricity Access Scale-up Project as a priority. We have actually started commissioning and connecting some of the facilities. I will take it up with him.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is money; there is everything. Honourable minister, remember our statement on the status of electricity projects. I need it next week. We shall have it on the Order Paper next week on Tuesday, so that we extensively discuss this sector.

6.14

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, ministries have been planning in isolation; they have been working in silos. Therefore, we came up with a programme approach which is under my chairmanship. Therefore, the ministries of health, water – because there are some water points that were connected and they do not have electricity, so they cannot pump water yet much money has been spent on them. The President directed that we use a programme approach where many ministries come together and plan for a project as a programme.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Isaac?

6.15

MR ISAAC ETUKA (NRM, Upper Madi County, Madi-Okollo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, in 2011, five people drowned in River Ora. Two men, who were carrying a mother across the river to be delivered in Oyima Health Centre III, fell in the river. The two men died, and the woman who was carried on a bed also died. That same year, two school children – pupils – also died. Cumulatively, we lost 15 lives.

Last year, we also lost about 13 pupils in a primary school in that same river. Just as the schools reopened on Monday, a Primary One pupil of Endebu Primary School also drowned. In the morning, they were taken by the parents, at lunchtime when they were going back home, one of the young pupils, seven years old, also fell in the water and drowned.

When the five people died in 2011, I brought it to the attention of the Ministry of Works and Transport and the ministry sent Eng.

Richard Odongo to carry out a comprehensive inspection of all the bridges in Upper Madi. This is because cumulatively in 2021, we lost about 56 people in various spots on that river.

Even earlier than that, I brought it to the attention of the President. Mr Speaker, you guided that before we bring some of these issues, we should exhaust it with the line ministries. I did it with the office of the Minister of Works and Transport. I even approached the Permanent Secretary. After all of them could not help, I brought it to the attention of the President. The President has given a number of directives because we had a number of meetings.

On 6 August 2021, the President, in a letter signed by Dr Kenneth Omona, directed the – of course, it was addressed to the Minister of Works and Transport on the state of roads and bridges, and this never worked. In 2020, the same directive from State House, and even 2019, leave alone the ones of 2016 - This issue has been on this Floor, and I have exhausted all options.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when do you expect to save the lives of these children? This is the only health centre in Okollo Subcounty where mothers have to go.

When we were in Kyankwanzi, I met Hon. Musa Ecweru over the same. I met the Minister of Finance (Hon. Matia Kasaija) to see that we really get a solution to this.

I beg to lay a number of documents for which this thing has stolen – all this – I, first of all, want to lay a copy of the inspection report of selected bridges in Upper Madi County by Eng. Richard Odongo dated 21 January 2022.

I also wish to lay a presidential directive in a letter dated 6 August 2021 addressed to the Minister of Works and Transport. I beg to lay.

I beg to lay another presidential directive in a letter addressed to, among others, the Minister of Works and Transport, dated 8 July 2020, on submission of key issues in Upper Madi County. One of the issues was the Ora 3 Bridge.

I also beg to lay a letter dated 8th of November on the state of roads and bridges in Upper Madi County. This was signed by Molly Kamukama, the then Principal Private Secretary to the President.

Lastly, I beg to lay a letter dated 6 August 2021. This was signed by Dr Kenneth Omona, on the state of roads and bridges in Upper Madi County, Madi-Okollo District.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Works and Transport. No, please, it is very clear.

6.20

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Musa Ecweru): Mr Speaker, first of all, it is unfortunate that lives continue to be lost in different corners of the country and then in this particular area because of these challenges. I beg that I receive this communication from the different corners of the Government, and then we see what we can do. What I can say with certainty is that, yes, we do have a department responsible for bridges, both in the ministry and in Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA). However, sometimes there are constraints that I have already indicated to you, but we will go and look at what can be done, so that we can see how to intervene.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, do you want to supplement?

6.21

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, there are two bridges. There is Ora I. Ora I has a steel bridge, which is a bit old, and has outlived its usefulness. Is that what you are talking about?

There is another bridge called Ora II. The designs are complete. We are looking for money because we have had a meeting with the President. Like you have said, it is true that he directed. We are looking for money and that bridge will be worked on.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Sekabira.

6.22

MR DENES SEKABIRA (NUP, Katikamu County North, Luweero): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

On 22 November 2022, the Government presented a request to Parliament to borrow \$331 million that would come with a grant of \$276.5 million, as a grant from the World Bank to help in the distribution or connection of power in different parts of the country. I supported the loan because I thought Katikamu North would benefit from the same. May I know the status of that loan, and if that loan came through?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

6.23

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (ENERGY) (Mr Sidronius Okaasai): Mr Speaker, that project is up and running. It was actually launched at the national level last Tuesday, in Mitooma District, and all MPs were invited to attend. Equally, the ministers were all informed about it, and the Rt Hon. Speaker participated in the launch. Since there were no MPs, he represented the MPs. You were ably represented during the launch.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, the project was launched on Friday, for the record.

MR OKAASAI: Yes, I will correct it. It was Friday. Thank you for being there.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We also had some MPs coming, because the MPs from the ruling party were in their caucus in Entebbe. As a Government project, it was launched, I can confirm. I am sure they are going to move quickly because the money is available, the World Bank wants them to move, GIZ is coming in; so, let us follow it up. The statement which I

expect - I shared with your senior minister - the statement should almost be ready, so that we can discuss it in detail. Hon. Lamwaka?

6.24

MS MARGARET LAMWAKA (Independent, Chua East County, Kitgum): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

On the fifth of this month, 40 South Sudanese gunmen attacked a village called Lakore in Okuti Parish, Chua East, where they raided goats. In the process, the soldiers and locals followed them. Unfortunately, they shot one man – a civilian – and he died on the spot. I applaud the UPDF for rescuing the rest and making sure that all the goats which were raided were recovered.

Mr Speaker, we have lost very many people, and every now and then, we keep losing people to the neighbouring country, South Sudan. We sat last year with the Prime Minister and all Members of Parliament from areas that border Karamoja and South Sudan. We agreed on many things. Among them were security roads, which up to now, there is nothing and there is even no sign. We also agreed to boosters for all connections. People around Locom use their phones for music. They cannot call. In that also –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Prayers?

MS MARGARET LAMWAKA: Let me just make –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Prayers?

MS MARGARET LAMWAKA: My prayers are that the Prime Minister first visits that place and sees it with her eyes.

Two, the people who are being killed by the South Sudanese should be compensated.

Three, our Prime Minister or the Government of Uganda should hold a diplomatic meeting with the Republic of South Sudan because – *(Member timed out)*.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, you know, some of you were complaining about my model, where I used to give you one minute to ask a straight question, and I would accommodate as many as possible. I became democratic and listened to you. You wanted more time, and you can see that I can only pick a few Members. Do you see the challenge of sitting here? Let us just be straight so that we can accommodate as many Members as possible.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

6.28

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker and colleagues, it is true we had a meeting with the Members of Parliament and the district leaders. We also went to the site some time back with the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs; the Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, and many others. We came up with resolutions which are being implemented except that they started from the other side.

I request Hon. Ecweru to tell us how far they have gone. However, the districts neighbouring Karamoja will be served with security roads so that our troops can effectively curb these criminals.

We also agreed that some of these private companies like MTN and Airtel, would help us to put up their masts. They started from other districts. I will make sure that I cause another meeting to remind them to cover that area.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ssempijja?

6.29

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (Mr Vincent Ssempijja): Mr Speaker, it is not true that since that meeting, the Government has not done anything. On our part – defence and UPDF – as everybody knows, one of the resolutions was to add numbers and the Commander-in-Chief clearly authorised us. And we even changed the

commanders; we added other things, and there is a lot of difference as we speak now. But on security roads, we are supposed to go with him one of these days. Some work is being done.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Stella?

6.30

MS STELLA ATYANG (NRM, Woman Representative, Moroto): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Honourable Prime Minister, I would like to inform you that there is a deteriorating food security situation in Moroto District following the prolonged drought experienced in that district for the last three years. Over 20,000 households with over 95,000 individuals in that district are being affected by food insecurity. The IPAs indicates that Moroto is in the third phase – that is a serious phase with many people affected.

Moroto District Local Government in August last year, wrote a letter to your office indicating about the situation and requesting for food assistance to save these lives but up to date there is no response. I would like to know when you will provide for us a positive response with the aim of saving lives before things go acute.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, what I know is that we have been supplying food to Karamoja under the Office of the Prime Minister, including Moroto. I cannot have the numbers of kilogrammes that we have given out because I know even in January there were trucks going to that side. And remember, after supplying you with the iron sheets, the second consignment was for food. So let me come back. Maybe you and I can meet so that we can see how to arrest the situation. We cannot allow Ugandans to die.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member from Mbale?

MS NABBANJA: I beg your pardon. Honourable members, supplying food by the Government to Karamoja all the time is not

sustainable. So, what has the Government done? The Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries has come up with fast-maturing seeds for that area. Because of the drought, like she has said, we are coming up with a big dam which can accommodate billions of litres of water in that area.

I am forgetting the names of the dams we are currently undertaking. But in your area, there is Lakonyen and many others. And so that we can collect all this water that comes when it rains and it is just washed away, put it in dams and also protect the dams because I am told that dams are silted by animals.

6.33

MS MIRIAM MUKHAYE (Independent, Woman Representative, Mbale): Two weeks ago, a truck that had four people and three boda boda cyclists fell off the bridge of Nambale, that is on Mbale-Tororo Highway. Those people did not die, but they sustained injuries simply because that bridge has no rails. The Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) has worked on it, but left the bridge bare. They put some stones to guard people, who pass on that road, but recently, because of the rains, those stones fell off, and that is why those people fell in.

This is a very busy road. We know it serves many trucks that go to Sudan, so many road users on that road, including women and children. And it is posing a very high threat to the people of the district.

I request our Prime Minister and the Minister to update us on when the guard rails will be put on that road to save the people of Mbale District.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: - Hon. Nyanzi, I have been sitting here since 2 p.m. Kindly settle down; you are not from Mbale. These are issues of Mbale. I will give you your own chance. I do not like it when you start putting me under pressure, from making signs and most of you I give a chance, after speaking, you leave me here. Some just enter and start causing chaos and making signs to me but these ministers have been here since 2 p.m. So,

when you start putting me under pressure for you to speak and go, and you leave me here- So please allow me – I know when to pick you.

6.36

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Musa Ecweru): I am very happy that the colleague has indicated that the bridge was fixed except the guard rails. I want to let this House know that I am going to direct the team that is working on it to quickly put the guard rails. That should not need a big budget.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: PWD, Hon. Mpindi-

6.36

MR BUMALI MPINDI (Independent, PWD Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Right Honourable Prime Minister endeavoured to respond on the issue of the police officers that are being reallocated or evicted from Mulago, but she did not comment on the issue of compensation. I was a resident of Tufnell Drive in Mulago, and I still have my property there, and I saw how those police officers struggled to construct those houses, and they did so with the permission from the authorities.

However, when the Prime Minister was responding to Hon. Namboozee's question, she did not talk about the compensation of these officers. She simply said they are going to be relocated to Nsambya and other police barracks. You know some of those residents are just Unipots. So those who had constructed their houses with permission from the authorities, what is their fate?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

6.38

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Ruth Aceng): Mr Speaker, when a police post was opened in Mulago, at that time we had requested for not more than 15 officers. Subsequently others, because of lack of accommodation, came into the hospital. And they were allowed to construct temporary units. It was very

clear. “This is not your place of abode. We can accommodate you temporarily. When time comes, you will go.” And that was the agreement.

The Inspector General of Police (IGP) is aware that the agreement has come to an end. We need that place so that we can put up our water tanks to supply the hospital. How do we start compensating people whom we just helped? I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member from Kassanda?

6.39

MR FRANK KABUYE (NUP, Kassanda County South, Kassanda): I thank you, Mr Speaker. My question to the Rt Hon. Prime Minister is about the status of the procurement of the road units for Kassanda District. Since Kassanda District was formed, we have been under a serious lack of road units. We used to borrow from Mubende but they no longer assist us. We used to borrow from Mityana, but we can no longer access due to the country-wide need because of the heavy rains which will be the same situation soon.

So, we need to know about the status so that we can update our people about the status of the procurement of the road units in Kassanda.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt honourable –

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker and colleagues, the 16 new districts- there are machines which are already in the country. We are only going to commission them after bringing others because they are not a complete unit and the Minister of Works can testify to this. Be patient, Kassanda is going to be handled.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member for Rukungiri.

6.40

DR ELISA RUTAHIGWA (NRM, Rukungiri Municipality, Rukungiri): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question to the Rt Hon. Prime Minister is on decentralisation and specifically

on the recruitment of secondary school head teachers and teachers.

Today, if you go to the Ministry of Education, on the fourth floor where the human resource department is, it is flooded with people from upcountry. The other day I was there; you could find ladies with babies seated on the floor, breastfeeding, with cakes and the like.

The issue comes in because recruitment of secondary school teachers was never decentralised and I wonder why it is so. When you look at other departments in the districts – agriculture and health – are all recruited from the district.

My question to the Prime Minister is why is it that the Ministry of Education and Sports is holding on to the recruitment of head teachers and teachers for secondary schools?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister for Education and Sports.

6.42

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS) (Mr Peter Ogwang): Thank you, Mr Speaker and the Prime Minister. Colleagues, I begin by thanking this House for giving us money to recruit 4,000 teachers. And I want to confirm, the Education Service Commission did recruit 4,000 teachers. The function of recruiting secondary teachers is vested in the Education Service Commission and for that matter, the recruitment has taken place.

What the colleague is talking about is that those teachers have come to pick up the appointment letters to be ready to be deployed in the respective schools across the country to support our education system. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, the Member is saying you should consider decentralising that role.

MR OGWANG: Mr Speaker, we are using the Education Service Commission, and I also want to tell you that there are disadvantages in

decentralising that system. You already know what we are facing with the District Service Commission in terms of how jobs are bought, and sold within the local government. As of now, I want to appeal to this House that let us allow the Education Service Commission to do its work. If you have any complaint against the Commission, raise it to us at the Ministry. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Paul Akamba?

6.43

MR PAULAKAMBA (NRM, Busiki County, Namutumba): Mr Speaker, my question regards the fake products on the market. I would like to know from the Rt Hon. Prime Minister; which strategies do you have to stop the ever-increasing fake products like seeds, fertilisers, herbicides, pesticides, electronics, fabrics, et cetera. Why have we allowed this to be on the increase as if we do not have regulating entities and the farmers and consumers are suffering? Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we would like to know what strategies you have put in place to curb this serious problem.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister of Trade -

6.44

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (TRADE) (Ms Harriet Ntabazi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank my colleague for that question. It is a very critical situation that was reported to the Cabinet, and the Rt Hon. Prime Minister is here. The Cabinet has taken a decision because of the pesticides and all those agricultural chemicals that UNBS could not take care of.

A unit is going to be created under the Minister of Agriculture to purposely take care of the medicines related to agriculture so that we get a fully-fledged one like we have NDA taking care of the medicines in the hospital. We have a unit taking care of acaricides and all those in the Ministry of Agriculture.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let the Committee for Trade follow up on this matter because it is beyond agricultural products.

MS NTABAZI: The Committee for Trade will follow up. Most obliged.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Moses Kabuusu.

6.45

MR MOSES KABUUSU (FDC, Kyamuswa County, Kalangala): Mr Speaker, I want to ask the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, whether she is aware of the seed secondary schools that were built under the UgIFT loan facility.

Those of Kalangala District, whereas some were built and completed, no teachers have been sent to run them. For the few where teachers have been deployed by the ministry, they just get to know it is in Kalangala and you cross using a wooden boat and they do not report there. What is the Government going to do such that our children who should study in those seed secondary schools also get to study?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister of Education.

6.46

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS) (Mr Peter Ogwang): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank my colleague for the question.

First of all, it is true. We are aware that we have hard-to-reach districts in this country and Kalangala is one of them. There are case-by-case areas where we discuss how specific teachers can be recruited in that specific area. Still, it is the Education Service Commission that does the work, not the District Service Commission.

Secondly, I might not be aware of the case of some of our UgIFT schools, which might have not been completed or do not have teachers. However, as I have said here, we have 4,000 teachers that we are deploying. I implore my colleague to come to the Ministry of Education,

tell me the name of the school, and then we look with our human resource department to find out how many teachers have been deployed in that specific school. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Patrick Nyanzi.

6.48

MR PATRICK BINGI (NRM, Butemba County, Kyankwanzi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, as you are aware, the Kafu Bridge along Hoima-Kampala Road was washed away in the recent heavy rains, and the Government was fully notified. The UNRA team came, and they promised to rehabilitate that bridge when the water levels subsided. When the water levels subsided, the team came, and what they did was simply makeshift rehabilitation.

On the roadsides, there are no guard rails and have wide gullies. Motorists cannot overtake because there is just a narrow part of the road that is being used currently. I am worried that –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question, honourable member?

MR BINGI: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when is the Government going to work on this bridge? Because the next rains will soon set in and the bridge will – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister for Works –

6.49

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Musa Ecweru): Mr Speaker, Kafu, like Katonga and all these other bridges, suffered these hydrological challenges that we recently witnessed in the country. What we did was to first ensure that there is motorability. We put what he describes as “makeshift crossings” but all of them now have an elaborate design like Katonga. We can now move but we are preparing to build a permanent bridge. The same applies to Kafu.

6.50

MS NAOME KIBAAJU (NRM, Sheema County North, Sheema): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question to the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, is about my constituency, where a range of hills pass from Buhweju through Sheema to Igara. These hills supply stones as building materials. People have been digging into these hills and have developed cracks.

Recently, heavy rains exacerbated the problem. There is a big hill in a village called Ekijogoma and there is a very big crack, both in the hill and on the ground, and water is gushing out. Sheema District leadership formed a committee which wrote to your office, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, but nothing has been done.

My question is; When is something going to be done before a catastrophe occurs? Thank you.

6.51

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robina Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I was practising that word, “*Ekijogoma*”. *(Laughter)* I have taken note of the Member’s concern. I will definitely, together with other people concerned from the local government and the ministry, go to Ekijogoma in Sheema. I have been to Sheema about three times.

In addition, I would like to advise the Member to sensitise the people to plant trees, so that we can save our environment. Thank you.

6.52

MR DAVID LAGEN (NRM, Agago County, Agago): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question is directed to the Rt Hon. Prime Minister. Agago District is very big with 26 administrative units, and there are 10 subcounties without a police post, which is a very big risk. When the people want to access services of the police, they have to travel long distances.

I would like to find out how best and quickly the Prime Minister can help us for police posts to be placed in Agago. Thank you.

6.52

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robina Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, the President wrote to me, guiding on how to deploy police officers across the country. The policy now is that every subcounty should have a police post. However, we shall handle this in a phased manner.

6.53

MS PHYLLIS CHEMUTAI (NRM, Woman Representative, Kapchorwa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to ask the Prime Minister this question: Prime Minister, you have interacted with us several times on this issue of the Mount Elgon National Park and the people of Sebei.

Recently, Uganda Wildlife Authority people came to our region. They stormed the communities surrounding the national park and slashed down their crops. After our people had got the Parish Development Model money, they slashed their crops and everything which was found there. I do not know how our people will pay back the PDM money to the SACCOs.

My question, therefore, is: Prime Minister, could you kindly give us the proper boundary?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, stop engaging the Prime Minister. She needs to listen to the Member.

MS PHYLLIS CHEMUTAI: Give us the proper boundary between the communities of Sebei and Mount Elgon National Park. That is the question I have.

6.55

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, like I have already told you, the President guided last year that we relocate people from Mount Elgon to safer places because some of those people are in those dangerous enclaves. In fact, we want our people to move down.

We have started from other areas. We partnered with one of the NGOs from America, which is paying Shs 7 million, yet the Government is paying Shs 10 million to those people. We shall also provide them with some land – at least two acres. We started from Bududa to Bulambuli, and these other areas. The NGO is called “Give Directly”.

I would like to allay the fears of my sister. I am aware that UWA was there and the Benet people were treated badly. We are saying as we move like this, we shall definitely reach that area. Mount Elgon National Park must be protected for the good of those people in that place.

6.56

MR FRANCIS LORIKA (NRM, Moroto Municipality, Moroto): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mine is directed to the Minister of Health. Recently, there was a situation in Moroto, and it was raised by my colleague, Hon. Faith Nakut, regarding a mother who died after being referred to Mulago National Referral Hospital.

I am glad that the ministry acted immediately and a team was constituted to carry out investigations independently, and also give a report on the same matter. However, as leaders, we moved in immediately and had an engagement with the management of the hospital. A lot of issues were raised that I find very important.

Moroto Regional Referral Hospital was established in –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, your question.

MR LORIKA: What I would like to know is; as a regional referral hospital, it is meant to handle specialised cases. To our surprise, we found out that Moroto Regional Referral Hospital does not have an Intensive Care Unit. We would like to know when the Government plans to do this because many people are referred to the hospital but they cannot accommodate them. That is why they also keep

referring them to Mulago National Referral Hospital. Thank you.

6.58

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Jane Aceng): Mr Speaker, the ICU equipment for Moroto Regional Referral Hospital is available. We are only mobilising resources to construct the building in which to install them.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Zijjan.

6.58

MR DAVID ZIJJAN (Independent, Butembe County, Jinja): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Yesterday, while we were here in session, a company called MM Mining blasted a rock in their quarry in Nakanyonyi Village and Buleeba Village, sending rocks flying and smashing people's homes. As a result of that, seven families are homeless.

We face a situation in our communities whereby when such a thing happens, the affected people run to the area Member of Parliament to help them. I am faced with seven homeless families, homes smashed and the peace of the dead is disturbed because one grave was hit and rendered open.

I have two prayers: The Prime Minister has mentioned that they have a programme for *mabaati* in Busoga. Can a special arrangement be made to at least intervene in the circumstances of those seven families, so that they can have shelter as a temporary measure?

Lastly, that these investors are prevailed upon so that the rights of the community members are not rendered null just because we have investors who blast rocks with impunity. I have Mzee Sera's house, Bankyaaye, Reverend –
(Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MR ZIJJAN: Thank you.

7.00

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Rt Hon. Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, the iron sheets for Busoga are for institutions that have asbestos roofs. Therefore, individuals' iron sheets are not in my office – apart from those and the other side of Karamoja.

I would like to suggest that we use our investigative arm of police and prevail over the investor to compensate these people.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. House adjourned to Tuesday at 2.00 p.m.

(The House rose at 7.00 p.m. and adjourned until Tuesday 13 February 2024 at 2.00 p.m.)