



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

THIRD SESSION - FIRST MEETING

TUESDAY, 15 AUGUST 2023



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

THIRD SESSION - 17TH SITTING - FIRST MEETING

Tuesday, 15 August 2023

Parliament met at 2.20 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, welcome back from the recess. I hope you utilised it very well; and you went to your constituencies and checked on your families. Next time, we will give more guidance on recess so it is respected. Otherwise, I saw some committees kept you busy. Next time, during recess, committee business will not be allowed to take place so you can have more time to check on your families.

I have observed that some committees have retreats during plenary days. I would like to caution all chairpersons of committees that there should be no retreat during plenary days. In fact, I have heard that the Committee on Budget has a retreat tomorrow.

Honourable colleagues, we have serious business to handle here in plenary. Do not process your own business, bring it to plenary for handling, yet when others bring theirs, you are away for a retreat. So, who will handle yours if others go for retreats? These retreats must stop.

Clerk, work with the chairpersons to ensure these retreats are postponed. Retreats should take place during weekends; from Friday, so we have time to handle business.

Honourable colleagues, I have also received complaints from some members of the Frontbench, that is, ministers, that they are called to several committees over the same business. They are saying, when they have finished addressing an issue, a standing committee or sectoral committee can both call them to address the same issue.

We are going to work out this with the Clerk and the Chairperson of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline, to see how best to harmonise. This will help us to avoid situations of having repetitions all through so we do not keep Government officials rotating from one committee to another on the same matter. We shall find a middle ground of working together to avoid such situations.

Honourable colleagues, in the Distinguished Strangers' Gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation from the National Assembly of Zambia Savings and Credit Cooperative, who are on a benchmarking visit to the Uganda Parliamentary Savings and Credit Cooperative Society. They include:

1. Mr Obrey Katungu – Chairperson of the Board;
2. Mr Sage Samuwika - General Manager;

3. Dr Mweemba Muungo – Chief Accountant;
4. Mr Kaite Siachiwena – Operations Manager;
5. Mrs Aggie Mumbi – Secretary; and
6. Mrs Felistus Kabambe – Treasurer.

They have come to observe the proceedings of this House on top of other functions that brought them here. Please, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

Also, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have members of the Wakiso Miraa Growers and Dealers Association Limited, an umbrella body of khat/miraa growers and dealers in Uganda. I hope they have not brought some to this House. They have come to observe proceedings of this House. Please, join me in welcoming them.

Without further ado, I am going to handle matters of national importance. Let us have Hon. Milton Muwuma, Hon. Ssemujju. I had seen Hon. Nandala-Mafabi. He also rose. I do not know why they sit far apart from each other. Hon. Ssemujju?

2.27

MR IBRAHIM SSEMUJJU (FDC, Kira Municipality, Wakiso): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The procedural issue I am raising relates to a matter before court and I have raised that matter in this Parliament before. It is to do with serving military officers involving themselves in partisan politics.

The time I raised it, Mr Speaker, I sought your guidance - you attended a party of Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba. This weekend, again, we saw both of you, our leaders, escorting and receiving someone who has been accused of committing a crime under the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces Act, rendering this Parliament vulnerable. We may wake up to find both our Speakers summoned either as witnesses or co-accused. Otherwise, the matter is already before the High Court, of a military officer being involved in partisan politics.

The procedural issue I am raising is: I had intended to renew that matter - I am in a very difficult position with both of you, our leaders involved. I would like to seek your guidance, Mr Speaker, on what to do? This matter should have been handled by Parliament, but now, both our leaders are receiving a military officer who is committing crimes under the UPDF Act.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, the Rt Hon. Speaker of Parliament held a thanksgiving ceremony this weekend. In the two-day thanksgiving, we had the first day at her home with Members of Parliament. On the second day, in the same district, the thanksgiving ceremony was held at a certain venue with her voters, Members of Parliament and other guests including myself.

I do not know whether army officers are not allowed to attend thanksgiving ceremonies. What we had in Bukedea was a thanksgiving ceremony and the Speaker had, among other guests, some military officers. So, I do not know whether the law says military officers are prohibited from attending thanksgivings. Until I get that clarification, I will be constrained, honourable colleague, and I must say, we missed you at the party. *(Laughter)* Your seat was well reserved. So, next time, join us because we participate in thanksgiving ceremonies of colleagues.

Colleagues, if any of you has - and I do not mind whether you call your party president - as long as it is a thanksgiving, I will come. So, the Rt Hon. Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, and Members of Parliament never participated in activities of politics. We participated in thanking God and the people of Bukedea for voting their beautiful daughter to the Parliament of Uganda, where they saw her capacity and also made her a Speaker of the august House.

MR OTIM GIW: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Most of us, Members of Parliament here, are affiliated to a party. Those who are not are Independents. Over the past few weeks, the media has been awash with what has been happening on the Forum for Democratic Change bench. For that reason, some of us

are a little bit confused where some of our Members lie.

Wouldn't it be procedurally right that Hon. Ssemujju, at this moment, clarifies to us where his affiliation is so that in case we are mobilising Members to vote, we know where to go. *(Laughter)* I would also like to inform him that this is his area. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ssemujju belongs to the FDC and he is still a member, as far as I am concerned. However, I am sure he can give more clarification on such issues in the corridors.

2.23

MR RONALD AFIDRA (NRM, Lower Madi County, Madi-Okollo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on your communication in regard to the two week recess we have really fully enjoyed. During these weeks, much as you alluded to the fact that in future, we shall have more guidance given, some of us and I, in particular, tried to use the two weeks to reach out to my parishes for the Parish Development Model.

With your good guidance, last financial year, we were promised by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development that all the money for the PDM would be released. This is the first quarter of this new financial year. However, the findings during my –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your procedural matter, honourable colleague?

MR AFIDRA: It is reaction to your communication, not procedure. My issue is, could we allot some space for Members to hear from the Ministry of Finance in regard to the PDM money that was released because some was not. Given ample opportunity, we can be able to give feedback for this important PDM that we are looking forward to. That is the guidance I need from you. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable colleague. Any time you have that space, under rules 41 and 42, you can ask the

minister. You have been in the constituency and found A, B, C and D; so the minister should be able to clarify.

MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI: Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity. I rise on a point of procedure. Before we adjourned for recess, in that last sitting of Parliament, the Speaker directed the Clerk to Parliament to ensure that in the next sitting, our motion seeking to amend the Public Finance Management Act is put on the Order Paper. I checked today and that was not done. I am seeking your indulgence.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Speaker has been thanking God; so, we have been - *(Laughter)* Anyway, I have taken note of it. I am going to crosscheck so that we see if it can be provided for tomorrow. Clerk, please take note of what the Speaker directed at that time.

2.35

MR PAUL OMARA (Independent, Otuke County, Otuke): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is reaction to your communication to the House, specifically regarding the meeting of the three committees of the House tomorrow.

The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, last week, communicated the position of the World Bank regarding funding of certain aspects of our budget. He indicated the urgency for this Parliament to review our budget in line with actions, which have already taken place by the World Bank.

Given that background and relating to your guidance on committees to consider having meetings when we are not sitting here, wouldn't it be procedurally right, in light of the challenges that we have as a country relating to our budget funding, for the Ministry of Finance to meet the Committees of Finance, Budget and National Economy tomorrow so that we address those issues? I submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I do not know why you are panicking as if the country is going to shut down. We made a decision here and knew it would have repercussions. We are prepared and

strong about the decision we made as a House. *(Applause)* The moment we show any signs of weakness and panic, it means we did not know what we were doing and what was coming. We knew threats would come, people would try to do this and that. Please, let us be calm. When the Minister of Finance or the Executive - and I saw the communication of the President. He said they are engaging the World Bank on this matter.

At any time when the Minister of Finance or the Executive feel they want to do anything in regard to reviewing the budget, they will come back here and inform us.

Therefore, statements like, “I would urge the Committees of Finance and Budget, Minister for Finance, to come and explain because World Bank has withdrawn funding...” You are pressing the panic button for nothing. Executive, do your work; manage foreign relations with the World Bank. Whenever you feel Parliament should come in, you will inform us and we shall come in to play our role.

2.38

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish to inform the House that the meeting we had planned with the Committees of National Economy, Finance and Budget had nothing to do with the current developments with the World Bank. However, it came to our attention that Wednesdays are days of Parliament. Therefore, we asked the leadership of Parliament, through the Office of the Speaker, that this activity be postponed to Friday, 1 September, to which the leadership has complied. We are moving along those lines.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for understanding, honourable minister.

Ms NALUYIMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. As you mentioned that we were in recess, many of us were caught in between the sectoral committees and the standing committees’ meetings. We beg for your indulgence, once again. Let it be

clear to our committee chairpersons so that the days for standing committees and those for the sectoral committees are clear. Many times, it is the same time and we are needed for both. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We are going to administratively handle that, working with the committee leadership.

2.40

Mr NATHAN NANDALA–MAFABI (FDC, Budadiri County West, Sironko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to inform my colleague, Hon. Omara, that a budget is expected income and expected expenditure. If you do not realise the income, that means there are expenditures, which will be affected.

I, therefore, request the House that if the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has not complained – and, at an appropriate time, when they complain and tell us that instead of Shs 52 trillion, they have Shs 10 trillion, we should deal with the Shs 10 trillion. This business of looking panicky means we want to amend the law that we passed.

I plead with you, Mr Speaker, to advise Members of Parliament that the budget they passed was expected income and expected expenditure. When we get the actual income, we shall also have the actual expenditure. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, for complimenting my submission.

MR SSEWANYANA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In your communication, you talked about the short recess. However, as a matter of inquiry, before we broke off, the House was informed that it would never sit until an answer had been got in regard to the elections of LCs 1 in this country.

Since then, Parliament has not been officially informed about what transpired or the solution got in order for us, as Members of Parliament, to know what to tell our constituents.

Mr Speaker, I beg to understand it further. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I read a story in the *New Vision*, where they discussed the performance of Members. Some of you said that we do not give you time to speak – that you do not catch the Speaker’s eye. Now, you can see that Hon. Ssewanyana has been focusing on an important issue. However, it is an issue where a statutory instrument was brought on the Floor of Parliament, debated, passed and disposed of – but he is still waiting for it. *(Laughter)* I am very sure that at the time, he was not in prison. *(Laughter)*

Nonetheless, honourable member, we handled that issue. You can crosscheck the *Hansard*.

Honourable colleagues, I urge you that when you do not attend plenary, always get the *Hansard* to know what transpired.

Honourable colleagues, we do have a lot of issues to handle today. So, I do not want to waste more time. However, I have just been reminded by Hon. Moses Kabuusu - can I have order in the House? I have been reminded by Hon. Moses Kabuusu about the nasty accident, where a boat capsized on Lake Victoria and 30 people drowned; 15 bodies were retrieved and two are missing. This is very sad.

So, I, first of all, request you to observe a minute of silence and, thereafter, I will allow a minute for Hon. Moses Kabuusu because it seems there is a comment he wanted to make.

(Members rose and observed a moment of silence.)

2.45

MR MOSES KABUUSU (FDC, Kyamuswa County, Kalangala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. While we were on recess, a boat carrying passengers from three fishing villages, while travelling to Kasenyi in Wakiso was involved in an accident. On board were around 30 people. However, nine of them survived and the others died.

As of now, 14 bodies have been retrieved, some bodies are still missing and the families are still waiting for nature to take its course so that their bodies are washed to the shore.

Mr Speaker, whereas it was tragic in nature, we demand that the Government or the Ministry of Works and Transport always issues guidelines relating to changes in weather on the lake and how our people can manage them.

Accidents are accidents and nobody is to blame for them. We pray for the souls of the departed ones. For those of us who come from island constituencies, these things happen quite a lot. We call upon the Government to fulfil its commitment to giving us safe means of transport like it does for road transport.

If possible, Mr Speaker, like it has been done elsewhere, our people have asked us to lobby for those families so that the Government can somehow reach out to them. I will use that language of “reaching out” to those people who have lost their loved ones.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Woman Member of Parliament for Kalangala, do you want to add something?

2.47

MS HELEN NAKIMULI (NUP, Woman Representative, Kalangala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank my colleague for raising the issue. Like he said, I agree and request the Government, if it is okay, to reduce the cost of the life jackets.

When it comes to the health sector, they say Kalangala District has the highest HIV prevalence rate, at 18 per cent, which is much higher than the national rate – and we are given free condoms. If the Government can give us free condoms, they can also give us free life jackets because you cannot say that you are protecting the lower part and you are not going to protect the upper part. *(Laughter)*

Life jackets are worn to protect the upper body and they also save lives. So, if condoms save lives, the Government should also consider

giving us free life jackets or at least reduce the taxes on the life jackets.

Mr Speaker, for your information, a very good life jacket costs around Shs 100,000, but with the army on the lake, our people have been impoverished and they cannot access or buy them. If the Government can at least protect the upper part of the body by giving us the life jackets, we shall be very grateful. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

2.49

MR PETER OKEYOH (NRM, Bukooli Island County, Namayingo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank my honourable colleagues from Kalangala. The islands are really disadvantaged and, like my colleagues have stated, it is time that Government looked at the transport in the islands. For example, the Government has now put up a policy that you should not travel at night. These are places that, sometimes, when you are halfway the journey, the engine breaks down and you have to float. The idea should actually be that the Government should help us with a number of safe transport means.

My colleagues are talking about life jackets, but there is even the issue of boats. We pay taxes, but – if the Government could inspect the boats, there is wear and tear.

The islands pay a lot of taxes because even the consumption of fuel is high. What you would require to travel from here to Jinja is about 10 litres. However, on water, it would be 25 litres. So, we pay a lot of taxes. It is time that the Ministry of Works and Transport on water. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Now, honourable colleagues, I do not want to open up this issue, I want us to focus. Issues have been raised, but I have heard an issue of saying that some people are always remembered. Government Chief Whip, the families of the victims who get into accidents- the MP is saying that if they could also be remembered. Anything you would like to say on that, Chief Whip?

2.51

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Thank you, Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues. First and foremost, welcome back from recess.

Mr Speaker, let me join you in welcoming our fellow Africans from the Parliament of Zambia.

In line with the issue raised on the accidents on the water, first of all, on behalf of the Government, we extend our condolences to the families that lost their dear ones. Just like the honourable member stated, I want to amend that there are accidents that can be prevented and those that may not be preventable.

Mr Speaker, I wish to undertake on three fronts:

1. To notify the Minister of Works and Transport, where possible and with your permission, to hold a meeting with Members of Parliament from such areas, such that they are able to discuss deeper, into finding lasting solutions to the challenge of accidents on our water;
2. To notify accordingly, the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, who leads Government business in Parliament, on the request put forward by the members of Parliament from this area on Government, considering supporting the families of the bereaved. This has been the practice; I hope it will be honoured. Let me undertake to report accordingly;
3. On the question of free life jackets, this is an issue that can be discussed in a meeting with the Minister of Works and Transport, such that they are able, probably, to come back to Parliament and inform us of the lasting solution they have agreed in that meeting. I beg to submit. Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, procedure -

MRSSEMUJJU: Mr Speaker, Hon. Obua is the Chief Whip. His duty under the Administration of Parliament Act, is attendance. I hear him

now assigning ministers who are at the same level as him.

The procedural issue I am raising; because in our rules, if he is here as a Leader of Government Business, they should have notified you and you invite him accordingly.

Mr Speaker, did the Government write to you that, today Hon. Obua is the Prime Minister, and therefore, can even assign other ministers at the same level?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Now, when you look at Hon. Obua as the Government Chief Whip, from only the angle of the Administration of Parliament Act, then you will get it wrong because the Appointing Authority also appoints him as a minister to do the work of the Executive. That is why he has an office at Parliament, but I was also informed officially that he has an office at the Office of the Prime Minister. Therefore, he can handle issues of Parliament here and issues of the Executive on the other side.

So, he has spoken as a minister. Honourable, thank you for exercising your authority - *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Tom Aza.

2.55

MR TOM AZA (NRM, West Moyo County, Moyo.): Thank you, Mr Speaker and my dear colleagues. I rise on a matter of national importance about the issue of ferry operations across the Nile at Laropi in Moyo District.

Mr Speaker, there is a letter dated 10 August 2023, to the effect that there is going to be temporary interruptions of Laropi ferry operations for maintenance, which is supposed to commence on the 21st of August to 10 September, which will last almost 20 days.

Mr Speaker, this will have serious repercussion to the people of West Nile in general and Madi Sub-region in particular, in the sense that the cost of doing business will increase due to long

distance. There will be scarcity of commodities and the cost of living will also increase.

Not only that, Mr Speaker, normally, school children, civil servants, nurses, teachers, and so on, ply between Adjumani and Moyo from Monday to Friday. Once the operation of the ferry is stopped, then all these activities will also stop.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Prayers.

MR AZA: Mr Speaker, our prayers are as follows:

First, we request the Ministry of Works and Transport and the Uganda National Roads Authority, to fast-track the procurement process for the construction of the bridge across the Nile.

Secondly, we request that a standby ferry or vessel is placed around Laropi so that it can help in ferrying the people across the river as we wait for the maintenance of this ferry.

Lastly, we have pontoons or ramps, which are normally assembled to form a ferry. These pontoons are found in Kasana-Luweero, Mpigi, and other places like -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Aza, please -

MR AZA: Buvuma Islands and so on. If these could be assembled temporarily to help our people cross the river. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Government.

2.58

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Mr Speaker, as we wait for fast-tracking the construction of the bridge and consideration for a standby ferry, I wish to state that, honourable colleagues, we have just been discussing accidents on water. These are machines that require routine maintenance and in some instances, repairs.

I beg to state with clarity and humility that it would be important for us to accept to be inconvenienced for a while in order to give the operators time to service the machines or to repair, other than hearing of another accident on water.

I pray that, honourable colleague. The Uganda National Roads Authority has been generously communicating almost to all ferry points. Recently, we had one of Masindi Port where they also closed for some time in order to allow for routine maintenance. Kindly accept, with humility, to be inconvenienced for a while such that the machine can come back well serviced. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Chief Whip, I think next time it will be a matter of linking up with the leaders in the convenience of the day and if there are temporary means for that period, it is an issue that can be discussed with the minister and the honourable colleagues. Hon. Muwuma.

MR MILTON MUWUMA (NRM, Kigulu County South, Iganga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance.

During the two weeks' recess, I was approached by the local leaders of Nakalama Sub county and the School Management Committee of Nakalama Senior Secondary School, which is Government-aided, and the matter is to do with land grabbing and land encroachment by individuals who are acquiring illegal titles with the help of some officials from the Ministry of lands, Housing and Urban Development.

Mr Speaker, we have four prayers:

1. The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development should urgently visit the land in question to establish the facts on the ground;
2. Cancellation of illegally acquired land titles be effected immediately because the public is not happy with what is happening;

3. The minister assists the two Government institutions, that is, the Nakalama Sub-county and Nakalama Senior Secondary School to have their land titled; and
4. Stop the illegal processing of titles on the affected land that belongs to the Government.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development visit the area and report to the House on Tuesday on the action that has been taken.

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Mr Speaker, before you get a land title, the neighbours must sign on that form so we know the people who encroached on the school land and those who signed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is why the minister should go on the ground. This is also why the Member said they think the ministry officials are involved. Once the people who should be cross-checking are involved, they skip that part. This is why we need the minister to go on the ground and take action.

Hon. Abdallah Kiwanuka – [*Members rose*]

Honourable colleagues, for matters of national importance, report to my office. I do not pick Members from here.

3.02

MR ABDALLAH KIWANUKA (NUP, Mukono South, Mukono City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Around 19th May, His excellency the President issued a directive which was called an “executive order”, banning charcoal business in Northern and North-eastern Uganda. What remains is the implementation of the directive.

What transpired is that the people working under the Ministry of Water and Environment are trying to execute the said directive across the country. Among other regions is Mukono,

Buikwe, Nakasongola, Luwero and Wakiso. They have gone ahead to even confiscate the merchandise of traders.

We would like to know from the minister, who is seated right here, whether that directive was to operate in the whole country. What alternatives have been put in place to replace charcoal as a source of energy in this country? As you are aware that electricity is expensive and the yellow gas, which was being distributed, is nowhere to be seen.

Honourable minister, since charcoal and firewood have been banned, what alternatives have been put in place to ensure that Ugandans survive in this country?

3.04

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER AND ENVIRONMENT (ENVIRONMENT)

(Ms Beatrice Anywar): Mr Speaker, I would like to thank Hon. Abdallah for raising this issue. The presidential directive came as a result of massive degradation. It followed a letter I had personally written, starting with a small area of operation. We started with Gulu, then went to the whole of northern, eastern and then the presidential directive.

Mr Speaker, the Member should understand that it is for their own good. With the effect of climate change, we should join hands and conserve our environment. I appreciate Members who are doing due diligence to ensure our voters conserve our areas of operation. You should have been happy and joined hands to conserve Mukono, Kampala and the whole country.

On the issue of the alternative: in the directive, which was given, we are mindful, as Government, that we do not have an immediate alternative. We actually said, “for domestic consumption”. The other one came as a result of exporting charcoal to Kenya, Saudi Arabia and China. So, charcoal had gone commercial. In fact, we have actually remained lenient on domestic use as we get an alternative.

The alternatives in the offing are:

i. As Government, we have promoted energy-conserving new technologies, which is actually in most of the energy-saving stoves;

ii. We are expecting gas -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, sorry for interruption. Would you mind, preparing a statement on this issue? Come and I will give you space on the Order Paper so that Parliament debates and gives you its proposals. Would you mind that?

MS ANYWAR: Most obliged, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. We have agreed on that. Honourable minister, is one week enough? Otherwise, you already have a paper that you took to Cabinet. So, just pick from the paper that you took to the Cabinet. Do you require two weeks or one week?

MS ANYWAR: Mr Speaker, I pray that I am given two weeks because I am going for a conference in Canada.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Two weeks granted. [*Members rose*] We shall handle it and Uganda will not stop because of the two weeks we have availed her. Sometimes, it works better that way; when you give colleagues time to handle an issue to its logical conclusion.

3.08

MS HOPE NAKAZIBWE (NRM, Woman Representative, Mubende): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance considering the disaster that befell our people in Kibalinga Parish, which affected five places namely; Kasana, Kazo East, Kazo West, Lubugumu and Nakasagazi.

These were badly hit by a hailstorm. Gardens of cassava, sweet potatoes and bananas were badly destroyed. Amongst these were animals and birds, which died because the hailstorm was heavy.

It is very clear to us and we all know, as the august House, that the previous season did

not do well because of the drought that was experienced countrywide. They had vested their hopes in the crops that had remained. Now, as the season begins -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Prayers?

MS NAKAZIBWE: My prayer is that the Ministry of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees comes to our rescue and provides people with a few relief items to help them go through this small period and provide them with seeds as they prepare for the next season.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Government has entered. *(Laughter)* Thank you, Rt Hon Prime Minister. Now that you have entered and I already had issues, let me ask Hon. Hope Nakazibwe to use one minute so you can respond to her.

3.10

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, allow me to welcome you back from recess. I can see my brother, Hon. Ssemujju and everybody. I am happy to be with you. I have been watching my sister, Hon. Grania on my phone with this technology, which was brought by the NRM Government. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you sound and look happier than usual. What has happened? Where are you coming from?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, we have been treated to a number of scenarios, some from FDC, which is almost dying. My brother, Hon. Nandala-Mafabi and other have been doing a number of activities.

Hon. Hope Grania, the area was hit by a storm and the Office of the Prime Minister is already on the ground to assess and then we will send relief to the affected people. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

3.12

MS MOURINE OSORU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter regarding the installation of high voltage electric poles, to be specific, along the border stretch from Odramacaku to Lia custom, in Arua City.

I would like to inform this august House that indeed, there were contractors who went down to Arua City to install the high voltage electric poles. However, they did not do well in other areas. They went deep inside people's land and the people were not given adequate information that they were not supposed to do any economic activity where those poles lie. In the West Nile, most of our land is customary and small in size.

Now that that information was missing, people are causing a lot of problems and they need the intervention of the Ministry of Energy to realign with the original plan.

We do not know if the contractors were trying to save some material, because going beyond 30 metres on somebody's land yet it is small in size, leaves him/her with nothing. This is the concern I have from the people of Arua city.

Secondly, we have been having electric poles; both utility poles and the electric poles for the last five years, without any electric wires and even the ones with electric wires do not have power. I request the Ministry of Energy to intervene in this matter.

The compensation was done very well; they compensated for the crops, buildings and at the same time the fruit trees. However, going beyond the original plan is what is causing a problem.

May we also know when the West Nile is going to be connected because our people think we are lying and keep changing the deadlines. Please assure us. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the issue of poles, which are just lying in areas, is happening to many

of us, including myself. Some people in the constituency are saying, “No, this will be done in 2025 when we are going into campaigns. He is not allowing it to be connected because he wants to show that he has delivered towards that time.” This is destroying the image of many Members of this House. So, we need your intervention, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the Honourable Member from Arua City, has brought a very pertinent issue. I request that you allow me get in touch with her, together with the Ministry of Energy and other Members of Parliament from Arua City, and we handle this matter conclusively.

The poles without wires are almost everywhere in the country. We were told in the Cabinet recently that some Members of Parliament last time got in touch with REA and REA tried to give poles to Members of Parliament then, but these poles were not catered for in our budgets then.

However, with the money we have got under the just concluded approved loan, we shall do that work and conclude it, district by district. Thank you .

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Colleagues, I know this is an explosive issue. I urge the Committee on Natural Resources to take it up seriously and I am glad that the Rt Hon. Prime Minister is also burdened and you have seen it. I hope we give it the serious attention it deserves. I am going to ensure that we follow up on it.

MR ODUR: Mr Speaker, in the last session of this House, the issue of electricity connection came up and I remember you were the one presiding. When Members sought to interrogate the Ministry of Energy, you directed the minister to bring a comprehensive report detailing all the villages that the project under electricity access scale-up project is going to handle.

At the time, you had directed the minister to come in about one month. It is now over six

months. Wouldn't it be proper, now that this matter has come up and the project is yet to commence, that the minister lays before this House a full report so that all Members of Parliament can then determine the equity in the distribution of the connections that have been passed by this House? I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I have remembered when we raised that issue. Let the Rt Hon. Prime Minister follow up then on Tuesday next week, the minister will lay on the Table and we upload on our system for the consumption of all Members.

Colleagues, in the Public Gallery this afternoon we have teachers and students of Good Hope Primary School, Nabulagala, Mengo. They are represented by Hon. Shamim Malende and Hon. Aloysius Mukasa Talton Gold. Are these your names including Gold? Wow. They have come to observe proceedings of this House, please join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)* Thank you.

Honourable colleagues, I have matters of national importance, which were recorded in my office as such. Whatever you record with my staff, I have to verify and see what qualifies to be an urgent matter. I have referred some to the Prime Minister so that they are handled under Prime Minister's Time. So, if I do not pick on you, please know that.

Two, we record these matters so it will be bad for me to receive some of the matters from here when demanding others to come to office. Those of you who have sent me chits, I have received them, but I will not pick you because I would be unfair to the others who took the burden to come and raise these issues in office.

However, Hon. Maximus Ochai, the issue which I had said you raise on Thursday - since the Prime Minister is here, you can raise it now. *[Hon. Nandala-Mafabi rose]* What is the procedural matter?

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Mr Speaker, thank you very much. The procedural matter, of course, was partly asked by my brother,

Hon. Jonathan Odur. We have issues of power, which is being generated, but not being evacuated - like in Aswa – yet every month, we pay for that power. Wouldn't it be procedurally right that the Prime Minister tells the minister to report, when he comes on Wednesday, on that power which they are generating and we are paying for, yet it is not being evacuated? Who is responsible for that?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think it would be procedurally right, Hon. Nandala-Mafabi, if you wrote a question for the Prime Minister to come here on Thursday and answer it. I do not need - because we are going to mix very many issues.

She will be very able to give you a very good answer as the Prime Minister. So, do it that way. On Thursday, she will answer you. I had allowed Hon. Max Ochai to raise a very important issue. I do not want to mix issues.

3.22

MR MAXIMUS OCHAI (NRM, West Budama County North, Tororo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I rise to make a follow-up on a matter that was referred to the Ministry of Works and Transport pertaining to the delayed feasibility study for the upgrade of the 44km Tororo-Nagongera-Busolwe Road.

At the beginning of this financial year, the Rt Hon. Speaker requested the Minister of Works and Transport to follow up with UNRA over the non-responsiveness pertaining to the conclusion of that study. May I use this opportunity, therefore, since the Prime Minister is around, to request that she updates us on the status of that feasibility study? The people of West Budama County and Bukedi, generally, are craving for that road.

It is a strategic economic road for Bukedi subregion. Being a very poor subregion, that road would actually facilitate trade and ensure an increase in household income in Bukedi.

3.23

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (MS Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I forgot to congratulate my brother before I can answer him. Allow me to congratulate the current whip of FDC. *(Applause)* We are also praying for our brother, Hon. Nandala-Mafabi: you will go through this. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does that mean you have a side, Rt Hon. Prime Minister? *(Laughter)*

MS NABBANJA: Our brother, the whip, has brought some life into FDC. The honourable member talked about Nagongera-Tororo Road. I request that I get in touch with the ministry so that we can give him a conclusive answer. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, last time you promised us that you would share a guiding statement on the response to the Anti-Homosexuality Act. That is so that MPs, once they are representing the country abroad, can speak with one voice. I do not know whether you have worked on it. Please, I have just reminded you. Let me conclude with Hon. Bwanika.

3.24

DR ABED BWANIKA (NUP, Kimaanya-Kabonera Division, Masaka City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. We need Shs 4 billion only to provide seeds to our farmers in all the constituencies of Uganda. The rains have started. Two weeks before we went for recess, I raised this issue on the Floor of Parliament. The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development committed to go and look for the money. We need to hear from the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development whether the money is ready so that we can take seeds and ensure food security for our people in this country. Thank you so much.

3.25

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

(Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, we have sent money through the Parish Development Model.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. That is what he has. Hon. Ethel, you had your issue on local governments? It should not be this issue of seedlings. Do not mix issues.

3.26

MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso):

Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. As the shadow minister for local government, I have two matters concerning local councils, that is, LCs I and II. We handled the extension up to 10 January 2024 and that is when we shall, again, have the expiry. Won't we run into another crisis if we do not have that matter handled?

That aside, the local council officials, as we had earlier discussed, have not got their Shs 120,000 given to them. Now, given whatever is going on, can we get assurance that by the end of the year, these LCs I and II, whose tenure of office has been extended up to December, are going to be catered for? Thank you.

3.26

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

(Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The matter that Hon. Naluyima is bringing up relates to ex-gratia payments for local councils. We have provided for this in schedule one of the supplementary request, which I will be taking to Cabinet soon.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Acrobert Kiiza? Next item.

**BILLS
FIRST READING****THE EXPLOSIVES BILL, 2023**

3.27

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi):

Mr Speaker, in keeping with Rule 128(2) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, I beg to move that the Explosives Bill, 2023, with the attendant Certificate of Financial Implications, as required by the provisions of Section 76 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015, be read for the first time.

I beg to lay the Bill on the Table.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Is it seconded? *(Members rose)* It is seconded by the Government Chief Whip, Hon. Komakech, Hon. Kolu, Hon. Olanya, Hon. Joanne Okia, Hon. Itungo, Hon. Engola – and many honourable colleagues in the House. Thank you.

The Bill is referred to the Committee on Internal Affairs to process it in accordance with rule 129 – within 45 days. Thank you.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS ON:**D) CATTLE RAIDS BY SUSPECTED SOUTH SUDANESE IN LAMWO DISTRICT**

3.29

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi):

Mr Speaker, this statement is about incidents that happened in July. A little bit of time has passed, but nevertheless, it has finally found space on the Order Paper and I want to report back as follows:

Reference is made to the matters of national importance that were raised by Hon. Dr Okullo Aabuka, the MP for Lamwo, concerning the above issue. Lamwo District, being at the border with South Sudan, has faced some challenges regarding cattle raids.

1. Cattle theft in Pobura Village, Madi-Opei Sub county; this occurred on 15 June 2022. The soldiers from Aspirit Detach followed the footmarks and recovered the animals at the borderline before they entered Sudan. These cows were handed over to the chairman of the area.

It should be noted that the owners of the cattle took a long time to realise that their cattle were missing because they were freely grazing. The cattle belonged to Fred Komakech who had four; Okee Brazil Lusima, who had three; Owenye Willy, who had three; Ludega Livingstone, one; Watmon Godfrey, one; Akena Francis, four; and Omon James, one; totalling to 17 herds of cattle.

2. On the night of 18 December 2022 - these are incidents in the past that were complained about - suspected South Sudanese warriors attacked Madi Opei Sub county and raided eight heads of cattle and the UPDF pursued them and recovered all the eight cattle within the sub county near the border and one warrior was put out of action.
3. On 4 May 2023, at midnight at Lagaya village, Waligo Sub county, an estimated number of suspected South Sudanese, with some local people within the community, burnt seven huts, raided four bulls and looted essential commodities from the households. The soldiers pursued them, but no recovery was made.
4. There was an incident on 5 May 2023, in Kadomera village, Nyimur Sub county where 56 heads of cattle were taken. The cattle owners found they had been stolen when they went to check on them. The army pursued the intruders and recovered all 56 heads of cattle towards the borderline.

The other actions taken to solve this challenge are:

1. More deployments of personnel have been effected along the borderline in South Sudan, notably at Kadomera Detach, in Lagaya Trading Centre. Waligo Detach has got more armoured vehicles, Agoro Detach and Ngomoromo Detach, among others, were also reinforced by the UPDF.
2. The UPDF has also made other reinforcements along the borderline, which have led to reduced raids by the South Sudanese.
3. Besides that, the Uganda police deployments in Waligo, Ngomoromo, Aspirit Border Post and Madi Opei are also there. However, the manpower is still insufficient and efforts are being made to beef up police deployment along the borderline.

It was also discovered that there were collaborators within the community, and these were tracked by security, and many have been arrested.

Civil joint security meetings have also been held to discuss the problem of cattle raids from Sudan. During these meetings, identification and arrest of collaborators and beefing up security along the borderline have helped to reduce these incidents.

Relatedly, several diplomatic engagements have also taken place between the authorities in Uganda and their counterparts in Sudan. The idea is to reinforce collaboration so that this problem is resolved. These kinds of engagements have improved coordination between the agencies of both sides, Uganda and South Sudan.

I beg to submit, Mr Speaker and honourable members.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is Dr Okullo, who raised the matter, around? Let me pick the Members of Parliament from the affected area; Hon. Amos and Hon. Nancy.

3.34

MR AMOS OKOT (NRM, Agago North County, Agago): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the statement. Indeed, he has captured most of the issues that were presented to his attention.

However, the illegal armed people who constantly move using a motorcycle, in that part of the country, Lamwo, part of Kitgum, even in Agago; it is not something silent. One person called Bosco Ukiru, also from that part of Madi Opei, went to do his business and indeed, he had some money. According to the information that he gave me, it was close to \$3,000 and he had been doing business on his own. He was tracked down. Two guys on a motorcycle followed him and the traces of all these people are from South Sudan. The moment they commit those atrocities, they enter South Sudan area to the extent that people who are supposed to do business, fear for their lives.

Mr Speaker, the activities which those people are doing are not only limited in Lamwo. Across the border, when you go to Amuru, you find a similar thing. So, we urge the Government to continue doing the work, especially the army men and the police whom they deploy, to do the work. Let them do their work and not wait until something has happened, then react to it. Doing patrols and being assertive to the issues around will help to give confidence to the people who are living there. Thank you so much.

Lastly, this issue has affected production – *(Interjection)*– of course, you can thank in between. Thank you so much.

3.37

MS NANCY ACORA (Independent, Woman Representative, Lamwo): Thank you, Mr Speaker and colleagues. I would like to thank the Minister of Internal Affairs for the statement well stated.

As you have heard from a well-written report from Lamwo, later than that, on the 10th of July, on the border of Obworo village, in Lelabul,

Nyimur Parish, Lukung East Sub county, we lost four people who were killed by our brothers from South Sudan, and they were on their farm. Later on, on the first of this month again, we lost another four people who were also killed innocently in their gardens.

We had several security meetings with Brig. Gen. Katungi, the 5th Infantry Division Commander, which has not yielded very good fruits, because the meeting was after life was lost.

The people of Lamwo are very furious because we are hosting refugees who have come from South Sudan and there are about 95,000 South Sudanese who are settled peacefully in our district.

The people of the Acholi Subregion are very peaceful, not just only in Lamwo. We feel so burdened and we have had several interfaces with the Ambassador of South Sudan, with the commissioners, and nothing has been done.

Therefore, on behalf of the people of Lamwo, there were several meetings that we had with the cultural leaders and the local communities. They wanted to take the law into their hands. First of all, if the leaders of Lamwo had not stopped our communities, by now the resettlement in Palabek would have been burnt down. But we had to settle them and talk to them.

My plea to the Government of the Republic of Uganda is, because the South Sudanese claim that the Ngomoromo border is already in South Sudan, which is not true - even our people who were killed were killed 24 kilometres inside Lamwo District -we want to appeal to the Government to give a clear demarcation of where Lamwo starts and ends.

When you go by GPS - our security men, the Resident District Commissioner, and the LC V chairperson, who went to pick up the dead bodies, while using GPS, found that our people were killed within 24 kilometres. So, we wonder why the South Sudanese are disturbing us when we are giving them refuge in our country.

Two, Mr Speaker, we want the families to also be compensated like those in other districts that got something little. One person among those who died left three women and 26 children. I have been taking things there, but I cannot sustain it anymore. The Government of Uganda should come in, especially on issues of food. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Strictly, two minutes.

MS KABASHARIRA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We neighbour South Sudan. It was also recently admitted into the East African community. At times when you watch television - our drivers have been killed when taking goods to them. These South Sudanese live with us, but there is nothing that happens to them. We are crying all the time. Now, they are even killing our people inside Uganda.

The procedural matter that I am raising is: should we continue having these people in the East African Community when they are just killing Ugandans and we keep quiet? *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleague, each country can have some wrong characters. We cannot attribute this to every South Sudanese. I can tell you, for example, that if you told our people to get out of South Sudan, you would find a problem. Many of them would ask you, "Where do we go when we get out of there? What do we eat?" However, that does not mean that as Government, we do not demand for the protection of our people who go there.

There are always such wrong characters across borders. We have been having problems with some of the warriors from Kenya. I think our warriors from the Karamoja side might also be crossing over to Kenya. So, we can have such situations, but we should not use it to judge the whole country by saying that the whole of South Sudan or her people are very bad. Otherwise, I know the pain and I can understand where you are coming from.

3.42

DR GEORGE BHOKA (NRM, Obongi County, Obongi): Thank you, Mr Speaker and the minister for the report coming from a bordering district. Just a couple of weeks ago, Obongi District underwent a similar situation where the use of small arms by errant individuals that are reported to have come from South Sudan, happened. They threatened the lives of people, looted and to some extent became a security threat.

My prayer is that we intensify surveillance because of the porosity of the border. Community policing and security mechanisms are key and the local defence systems used to be very important. We request the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the security apparatus to intensify community security mechanisms.

Last, but not least, indeed South Sudan is a neighbouring country. The men and women from there are brothers and sisters. Within the spirit of the East African Community, I pray that we strengthen cross-border engagement - political, civic and military, including business engagement - to ensure we create an enabling environment for us to operate between South Sudan and Uganda. I thank you.

3.44

MR CHRISTOPHER KOMAKECH (Independent, Aruu County, Pader): Thank you, Mr Speaker and the minister for the elaborate report. In Acholi, cows are kept for prestige. It is a reserve for wealth in a way that should fate befall one, they run back to the cows.

Northern Uganda has suffered a lot. When you look back at the LRA war times and when change of Government took place, people lost their animals. We used to have more animals than Western Uganda. The commercial activity that most Acholi would do was to sell their heads of cattle.

Right now, there is no commercial activity going on in Northern Uganda, to the extent that if Komakech is, for example, to marry, he is expected to pay 20 heads of cows. However,

these are not there anymore and young men are not marrying.

I would request the Government – *(Interjections)*– I would want to interest this Parliament –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you married, honourable member?

MR KOMAKECH: I am not. Where are the cows? *(Laughter)* I want to interest the Government, as we demand for the compensation of the lost heads of cattle, to take keen interest in protecting the few heads of cattle that are left in Acholi. Otherwise, we will look at Acholi as a devastated region that has been abandoned by this Government, which is not true. Thank you.

3.46

MR GIBERT OLANYA (FDC, Kilak South County, Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Some of us who border South Sudan have had problems with the South Sudanese for quite long. This time, I would like to implore the honourable minister to advise Government to engage the Government of South Sudan. These people are very arrogant and rude and it is very difficult to bring them to a common understanding. However, through constant engagement, I know they will understand, as time moves by.

Honourable minister, you have to take the idea of engagement very seriously. Let our security personnel take serious concern at our borders. Right now, in my district of Amuru, we have very many porous borders and these people take every area bordering South Sudan as their personal land. They can move with their guns from South Sudan into Uganda because our security personnel are only concentrated at the border. For example, at Elegu Border Post, the security personnel are just in the barracks.

Honourable minister, Government should deploy heavily to protect our environment. Otherwise, we need to engage these people. They will understand as time moves by. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am trying to get MPs who border that area.

3.48

MR JOSEPH KOLUO (Independent, Toroma County, Katakwi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The issue of cattle raids is a common phenomenon, especially in Teso, more particularly the districts of Katakwi, Amuria, Kumi, Bukedea and Kapelebyong, and extending to that side of Abim to Agago, and on this side, to Sebei and Kapchorwa.

Mr Speaker, many people have lost cows in my area, especially in Magoro Sub-county and in a place called Angesa. To make matters worse, these people even killed the LC1 Chairman for Angesa. The name of that chairman is Orukit. He was also the chairman for the education committee in Magoro Comprehensive Secondary School.

Mr Speaker, is there a way Government can compensate the people who have lost their cows?

I thank the UPDF because they have tried to recover some of them, particularly when the Third Division Commander, Maj. Gen. Nabasa, was brought in; he has done some good work. However, more effort is needed; I also applaud the Government. If –*(Member timed out.)*

3.50

MS SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam): Thank you, Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, that is the problem of rotating a lot.

MSALUM: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. The issue of cattle raids brings a lot of uncertainty and fear, not only to the people in the districts where it happens, but even to those in the neighbouring districts.

My district borders Acholi and when my people heard that again rustlers from the east and northern part had come, they were very scared because there is a lot of life being lost

and the livelihood of the people has been interrupted. In the district, we also see a lot of South Sudanese coming to do business with us.

The Minister of Internal Affairs has really given us a very good report, but when I look at the submissions of many Members, I notice that this matter touches the internal affairs ministry, the regional affairs ministry and the foreign affairs ministry. Therefore, I request that these other ministries also come on board so that the issue is handled once and for all. Mr Speaker, I thank you.

3.51

MR PHILIPHS LOKWANG-ILUKOL (NRM, Napore West County, Karenga): Mr Speaker, I am very glad for this opportunity. My district borders South Sudan in the north; that is Karenga District. First, I take this opportunity to thank the UPDF for bringing about change in the Karamoja Region. This change has enabled the reduction in cattle rustling incidents I am hearing about. The raiders are not getting any meaning in the activity they do because the army is present and it has made it useless for them to have guns. That is why you see some of them handing over guns voluntarily.

However, I only want to say that this should be continuously carried out. They should not stop because once they get to know that it is profitable to do this, they will continue.

My district borders the southern part of Sudan and my story is relatively different because I do the engagements - though it may not be official - with the Members of Parliament of South Sudan. When there is a problem, I talk to them. They come around and I also go there.

However, what has happened is the absence of immigration forces - I ask the Minister of Internal Affairs to *—(Member timed out.)*

3.53

MS MELSA AVAKO (NRM, Woman Representative, Yumbe): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. Allow me to thank the Minister of Internal Affairs for this important statement. I happen to come from Yumbe District, which is one of the districts

bordering South Sudan. The district is globally known for hosting the largest number of refugees in Uganda and in the world.

Mr Speaker, allow me to bring to the attention of the Minister of Internal Affairs the issue of security threats along borders, which is affecting our people in terms of economic development. In Yumbe District, we have two subcounties; Kochi Subcounty and Kerwa Subcounty. Most of the people in these subcounties who majorly base on agriculture cannot go to their gardens because those gardens are along the border. When they try their level best to farm for the sustainability of their families, the South Sudanese encroach and chase them away from their gardens. At night, their animals are also raided; it is a serious issue.

I really appreciate and bear witness that the Government of Uganda normally engages the Government of South Sudan on issues of security. However, I suggest that this engagement should not only be to investigate what is happening; there should be action taken. For example, we have always talked about opening border security points so that our people know where they belong and when they can settle down to do their work. Thank you so much.

3.55

MR ANTHONY ESENU (NRM, Kapelebyong County, Kapelebyong): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to concur with the previous speakers, but I want to emphasise or rather shed more light on the fact that the insecurity spoken about on the Floor of this House may not have the same impact like the affected households down in the communities. A life lost is a family perhaps destroyed forever.

Therefore, I would like to implore the Government; we need a comprehensive solution as opposed to just going forward and being reactive; waiting for people to come and then we follow the raiders, the insurgents and try to put some out of action yet in the process, people have lost lives and animals. That needs to be addressed by the Government as a proactive measure.

Secondly, the worst effect is the economic impact. With the Parish Development Model right now being put down on the ground, it is difficult for these areas to gain the benefits of the Parish Development Model while there is insecurity. Therefore, I urge the Government to take this matter to a higher level by going beyond just being reactive and proactive. Thank you.

3.57

THE CHIEF OPPOSITION WHIP (Mr John Baptist Nambeshe): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Minister of State for Internal Affairs has drawn special attention underscoring the several diplomatic engagements and discussions, which is true. I am reliably informed that, courtesy of those engagements, on 12 September 2019, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Uganda and Kenya and a disarmament exercise was supposed to be conducted on both sides. While Uganda has complied, Kenya has hardly done this, even in a phased manner, which had been an undertaking by their minister for interior.

Disarmament has continued in Karamoja. There are similar diplomatic discussions between Uganda and South Sudan, but such a memorandum has not yet been signed. What again draws one's concern is the statement already lamenting about the insufficient manpower to deploy. I must salute the minister for honesty because the truth of the matter is, if we have the UPDF in five countries; in the Central African Republic, in the DRC on joint Operation *Shujaa*, in South Sudan –(Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude.

MR NAMBESHE: They are overstretched and so, indeed, we have very thin deployment on ground and that is why these raids will continue and lives will continue to be lost, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, allow me to seek some clarification from the minister because we are talking about suspected South Sudanese raiders, but there are also suspected UPDF officers who successfully

trace and recover the cattle, but share among themselves and do not take it to the owners.

Honourable minister, your investigations should be comprehensive enough to cover even those officers and men who are adversely mentioned for sharing the loot from the *wanainchi*.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR NAMBESHE: I am concluding with this one, Mr Speaker. There was a pledge by the Government last year, by the way, to construct security roads. However, up to now, there is not even a sign whatsoever that such construction – in fact, roads would have helped to nip in the bud some of these invasions and raids. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister?

4.00

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank you, honourable members, for your candid submissions on this problem. I acknowledge that while we dealt with the one I talked about earlier, we still have some enduring aspects of the challenge.

That said, I pledge that the Government will invest more in prevention than reaction, going forward. To that end, we shall use the broad spectrum of the instruments of national power – diplomacy included – and of course force.

I, therefore, urge that Members should not succumb to the temptation to resort to xenophobia against the South Sudanese that we host as refugees. Otherwise, we have done a lot and we will do more. We have had changes of command both in the 5th and 3rd Division and the results are showing. We have also done reinforcements of manpower.

On the issue raised by the LOP, if there are some rogue elements within our ranks, we shall deal with them, as we have always done. On

LDUs as the first line, I think it is a matter we need to think about because you cannot deploy in people's homes – and that means a budget.

So, along with the defence ministry, which is in the lead ministry in this issue, although it is an internal security issue, we shall work out a concept, which we may revert to you on to help in terms of resourcing.

On security roads - indeed, security roads are key, but it is also a budget issue.

On compensation for those who have lost lives and animals, fortunately, my boss was in the House although she has walked out, but we may have to take it up.

On the border issue, we have a bilateral framework with South Sudan to resolve it and I think it is time to rekindle that effort. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I made my communication and I was waiting for two critical items, which I needed to make part of my communication. They delayed reaching my desk, but they have come. So, allow me time and I can read them, as required under our Rules of Procedure.

This is a communication from the President and it reads:

*“The Rt Hon. Anita Among,
The Speaker, Parliament of Uganda.
24 July 2023*

I have received the Competition Bill, 2023 for my assent. However, there is a clause that needs to be reviewed by Parliament.

Clause 4 establishes the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission. The Bill that was introduced by the Executive provided for it, being administered by the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives.

The justification for having the Bill administered by the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, instead of a commission,

is to comply with Government policy on rationalisation, where the Government has frozen the establishment of statutory bodies.

In addition, the establishment of a commission by Parliament is contrary to Article 93(a) (ii) of the 1995 Constitution, which prohibits Parliament from proceeding on a Bill or an amendment, unless it is done on behalf of the Government, which imposes a charge on the Consolidated Fund or other public funds of Uganda.

In accordance with Article 91(3)(b) of the 1995 Constitution, I am hereby returning the Bill to Parliament for reconsideration of the clause mentioned above.

*Yoweri Kaguta Museveni,
The President.”*

In line with Rule 143(1) and (2) of the Rules of Procedure, I refer the Bill to the Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry for expeditious reconsideration.

The second communication reads:

*“State House, Kampala
1 August 2023.*

*The Rt Hon. Anita Annet Among
The Speaker, Parliament of Uganda*

Re: National Local Content Bill, 2023

I received the National Local Content Bill, 2023 for assent. However, I note that Parliament has not fully addressed my earlier concerns, which I would like to reiterate that they should be reviewed in order to facilitate the proper regulation of the local content.

These include:

- a. Clause 1(g) of the Bill (application), which provides that the National Local Content Act shall apply to a local content entity whose activities are financed through public borrowing or any such similar arrangement, is not practical since each*

development partner has its own policies and guidelines that are negotiated before the commencement of the project.

We review this to allow the responsible ministry to negotiate local content in the agreements to the extent possible.

The argument that these donor funds are recoverable from taxpayers does not take into consideration the permutations of international relations or even funding.

- b. *Clause 2 of the Bill (prohibition of subcontracting) is ambiguous and should be amended to read: "Prohibition of subcontracting by a subcontractor."*
- c. *Clause 4 of the Bill (priority to goods and services) from member states of the East African Community during procurement) should be harmonised with clauses 5, 6, 7 and 31 of the Bill.*
- d. *Clause 6 of the Bill (reservation of goods or services to be exclusively procured from member states of the East African Community), should be harmonised with Schedule 2 to the Bill, that is, the list of goods and services to exclusively be supplied by Ugandan entities and citizens.*
- e. *Clause 7 of the Bill (preference of goods or services readily available on the Ugandan market), is contrary to the Government agenda on import substitution.*
- It should, therefore, be amended to give preference to locally manufactured goods or services on the East African Community market and not based on mere availability.*
- f. *Clause 10 of the Bill (prohibition of subcontracting).*
- g. *Clause 11 of the Bill (requirement to subcontract at least 30 per cent of the public works contracts or activities) is not feasible for every works contract*

and should be amended to provide for subcontracting of up to 30 per cent of the public works contracts or activities to provide for some flexibility.

- h. *Clause 21 of the Bill (procurement Planning) should be amended to exclude supplier, provider and contractor because they do not have the power to include local content as one of the criteria for the evaluation of bids.*

Therefore, in accordance with Article 91(3)(b) of the Constitution, I am hereby returning the Bill to Parliament for reconsideration of the above clauses.

*Yoweri Kaguta Museveni,
The President "*

In the same vein, and in line with rule 143(1) and (2), I refer the returned Bill to the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development for expeditious handling.

I know some work has already been done, but let us have this expeditiously done. By the end of this week, we should be able to do some of these issues. Next item - point of procedure?

MR ALLAN MAYANJA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Wouldn't it be procedurally right to also get a communication either from the Attorney-General or from the Office of the President?

As you may recall, we passed the Employment (Amendment) Bill, 2023 and the President is given only 30 days, but it is coming to almost 60 days and we have not got any communication about that Bill. I sit on that Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development. Ugandans are waiting for this Bill to be assented to. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will cross-check. Usually Bills must have a Certificate of Compliance before we clean up. So, I do not know when it was communicated to the President. I need to first cross-check with the Clerk; we shall liaise with the responsible

officer to ensure we receive communication. Thank you. Next item?

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER ON THE
CONTRACT BETWEEN M/S SICPA SA
AND UGANDA REVENUE AUTHORITY
FOR THE SUPPLY, IMPLEMENTATION,
TRAINING, COMMISSIONING, SUPPORT
AND MAINTENANCE OF A TAX
VERIFICATION AND QUALITY AND
SAFETY SYSTEM

4.11

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is a statement to Parliament in response to issues raised on the Floor of Parliament, regarding the Contract between M/S SICPA SA and the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) for the supply, implementation, training, commissioning, support and maintenance of a tax verification, quality and safety system.

Mr Speaker and colleagues, during the Parliamentary sitting of Thursday, 4 May 2023, while considering the Tax Procedure Code (Amendment) Bill, 2023, Hon. Mohammad Muwanga Kivumbi, the Member of Parliament for Butambala County, raised the following issues regarding the contract between the Uganda Revenue Authority and M/S SICPA SA for the supply, implementation, training, commissioning, support and maintenance of a tax verification and quality, safety system;

- i. The actual money collected by URA is very minimal because the agreement between URA and M/S SICPA SA gives SICPA a portion of the total sum of the revenue collected for no work done;
- ii. SICPA is tax-exempt; and
- iii. SICPA was not sourced competitively.

This is our resolution of the issues as framed and raised by Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi:

1. The actual money collected by URA is very minimal because the agreement between URA and SICPA gives SICPA a portion of

the total sum of the revenue collected for no work done. Colleagues, on 4 October 2018, URA and SICPA signed a contract for the supply, implementation, training, commissioning, support and maintenance of a tax verification, quality and safety system, a digital tax stamps solution. The contract was cleared by my office. The consideration for the services is set out in the table below. We have itemised things like water and the amounts per unit.

The purpose of the above contract is for SICPA to develop and supply a digital stamp solution to enable URA to audit Excise Duty taxpayers and track excisable goods for purposes of collecting the Excise Duty Tax. The introduction of tax stamps has its origins under Section 19(a) of the Tax Procedure Code Act 13, 2014, which states, 19(a), tax stamps:

- i. *“A person dealing in goods whether locally manufactured or imported shall affix a stamp on any goods locally manufactured or imported as may be prescribed by the minister in subsection 3.*
- ii. *The Commissioner shall prescribe the manner in which a tax stamp is to be affixed to goods.*
- iii. *The minister shall prescribe by statutory instrument the locally manufactured or imported goods on which the stamps shall be affixed.”*

Regulation 3(1) of the Tax Procedure Code, Tax Stamps Regulations, Statutory Instrument No. 53 of 2018 provides that every package of prescribed goods manufactured in or imported into Uganda shall be affixed with a tax stamp.

Regulation 6(3) of the same regulations, states that the manufacturer or importer shall pay for the stamp fees.

Pursuant to Regulation 7(1) of the same regulations, the Commissioner-General is mandated to set the fee to be paid for the tax stamps by notice. In accordance with this mandate, the Commissioner-General issued

General Notice No.77 of 2022 setting the prices for tax stamps for specified product categories.

Honourable colleagues, it, therefore, follows that the tax stamp fees paid to SICPA are not part of the tax collected by URA. The tax levied by URA is in accordance with Schedule 2 of the Excise Duty Act, 2014 and it is collected into the Consolidated Fund.

On the other hand, the consideration payable to SICPA under the contract is payment for the digital stamps and its cost is borne by the manufacturer and importer. It is, therefore, not true that SICPA is paid a portion of the tax collected under the Excise Duty Act.

2. That SICPA SA is tax-exempt.

Mr Speaker and colleagues, it is an established principle that tax exemption is by law. The information we have received from URA indicates that SICPA remits Value-Added Tax, Income Tax, Pay-As-You-Earn and Withholding Tax in accordance with the law applicable to tax. It is, therefore, not true that SICPA is tax-exempt. The contract does not provide for tax exemption to SICPA.

The issue that SICPA was not sourced competitively - Mr Speaker and colleagues, URA procured the services of M/S SICPA through the direct procurement method in accordance with Section 85(2) of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act, 2023 and the regulations made thereunder.

SICPA is, therefore, procured in accordance with the law. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Statements of this nature are provided for under rule 52. I may or may not allow debate, but for this one, I will only allow Hon. Muwanga-Kivumbi to see if he is satisfied with the response.

4.19

MR MUHAMMAD MUWANGA-KIVUMBI (NUP, Butambala County, Butambala): Mr Speaker, first, let me start with the last issue. The minister answers in

affirmative that SICPA was not competitively procured. So, that is the truth of the matter.

Secondly, in this document, he refers to a contract, which he does not lay. So, we are incompetent to judge his narrative without the contract being laid. In every provision he quotes clearly where the tax laws are clear, but he does not quote any provision of the contract.

My humble view is that this Parliament cannot admit a document that quotes a contract he does not lay on the Table and so, we cannot ascertain whether his narrative is authentic or not.

In my humble view, Mr Speaker, it would be hard for us to admit this document without laying the accompanying contract of SICPA since he has not quoted any provision. If he had quoted a provision that this is what the contract says in this section of the provision - He simply says there is a contract, which we do not have.

Mr Speaker, this statement is extremely incompetent to speak to and verify whether the matters raised are well conversed by this document. Otherwise, we do not have that contract. Unless he lays on the Table that contract, we are incompetent to ascertain and rely on his narrative. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The lack of the contract being laid here does not make the statement incompetent, but I get your concern, honourable colleague. For example, he says SICPA pays taxes, but the Member said that they do not pay taxes.

Attorney-General, show us how much tax they have paid. Can you get for us that statement? Payment of taxes is a public matter and there is nothing to hide. So, Attorney-General, on Thursday, please lay on the Table a copy of the contract and a statement of taxes so far paid by SICPA. That is when we shall be able to comment on the matter.

MR KAFUUZI: Much obliged.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us first leave it at that. The person who raised the question has said he is

not able to engage due to lack of documents. So, let us give it time.

LAYING OF PAPERS

(I) REPORT OF THE DELEGATION OF THE PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT AT THE 2ND ORDINARY SESSION OF THE 6TH PAN AFRICAN PARLIAMENT AND RELATED MEETINGS HELD IN MIDRAND, SOUTH AFRICA

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Eric Musana. I also have issues with this SICPA, where a jerrycan of 20 litres is charged the same rate as 100 grammes. Hon. Jonathan Odur has reminded me about Thursday, but we have issues. So, Attorney-General, come knowing there are many people with issues and that even the presiding officer will ask questions. *(Laughter)*

4.24

MR ERIC MUSANA (Independent, Buyaga East County, Kagadi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Pursuant to rules 33 and 37 of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Uganda, I hereby lay, on the Table the report of the delegation of the Pan-African Parliament at the Second Ordinary Session of the Sixth Parliament of Pan-African Parliament and related meetings held in Midrand, South Africa, and the resolutions and recommendations of the Second Ordinary Session of the Sixth Parliament of Pan-African Parliament. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will allow you to only give a summary.

MR MUSANA: Mr Speaker, pursuant to rule 37(2) where a Member shall present an executive summary of the resolutions, the procedure of Pan-African Parliament that gave this guidance, which sits in Midrand, South Africa - the session was held under the African Union theme, "Acceleration of the African Continental Free Trade Area."

The official opening ceremony of the session was graced by the Chairperson of the African Union, His Excellency, President Azali Assoumani, the President of the Union of the Comoros. The session also received messages of solidarity from the invited guests.

The major issues deliberated during the session included the implementation of the acceleration of the African Continental Free Trade Area, climate change, justice, dialogue with the Pan-African justice network and status of peace and security on the continent.

In addition, Members of Parliament debated the report on the performance of the Pan-African Parliament and the reports from permanent committees.

Pursuant to Rule 9 of the Rules of Procedure of the Pan African Parliament, eight new Members of the Pan-African Parliament were sworn in and subscribed to the Oath of Office.

The session considered and adopted eight resolutions and seven recommendations.

Prior to the session, the committee meetings were held by the various permanent committees that PAP Members are assigned to. The following reports of permanent committees that were adopted in the first ordinary session of the Sixth Parliament of PAP will be uploaded by this Parliament for our own consumption. These are:

1. Report on the Women's Caucus;
2. Report of the Committee on Trade, Customs and Immigration Matters;
3. Report of the Committee on Audit and Public Accounts;
4. Report of the Committee on Rural Economy, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment;
5. Report of the Committee on Transport, Industry, Communication, Energy, Science and Technology.

6. Report of the place and traditional medicine in African health system; of a military approach only to bring about lasting solutions.
7. Report of the Committee on Gender, Family, Youth and People with Disabilities, Mr Speaker allow me to present the recommendations, and these are:
 1. Inclusion of the digital world, among others, to empower women and girls through meaningful access to the internet and digital technologies to build businesses and access to education as well as health;
8. Report of the Caucus on Youth; and
9. The performance review report on the African Parliament.

Allow me just to highlight the resolutions of our session. On climate policy and equity in Africa among others, we urged developed countries to fulfil their obligations to provide adequate, predictable and sustainable finance, technology transfer and capacity building support to developing countries, especially African countries to enable them to adapt to climate change, mitigate their emissions and address loss and damage.

On the Pan-African Parliament's support to the financial transactions tax on climate action, among others to encourage regional and national parliaments, together with their Governments, to effectively lobby the European Union to adopt the financial transactions tax on climate action.

Thirdly, on the peace of traditional medicine in African health systems to, among others, facilitate a consultative process with regional health institutions to foster collaboration between traditional and conventional medicine practitioners.

Fourth, on accelerating the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area to, among others, sensitise national and regional Parliaments, Judicial bodies, financial institutions, citizens, and other relevant stakeholders on the benefits of accelerating the implementation of AFTA emphasising job creation and mobilising investments in Africa.

Lastly, on the promotion of peace and security in Africa to, among others, use in its mandate to ensure that conflicts in Africa, especially those that are threatening regional stability, are addressed urgently, in a holistic manner instead

2. Labour migration governance in Africa and, among others, to improve on socio-economic and political governance in order to create employment opportunities for young people and fight against poverty in all its forms; and

3. Cyber security and cybercrime in Africa for member states and, among others, to develop policy regulatory and legislative frameworks to enhance cyber security and tackling cybercrime that such frameworks are developed with involvement of all relevant Government and non-Government actors, from the onset.

Mr Speaker, allow me to briefly comment on Uganda's hosting of the Pan-African Parliament in October, 2023.

Article 17 of the Protocol of the Constitutive Act of the African Union relating to the Pan-African Parliament states that the Pan-African Parliament may convene in the territory of any member state at the invitation of the member state. Uganda, through the Rt Hon. Speaker of Parliament, was given the green light by the PAP Bureau to host the Fourth Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Pan-African Parliament in October this year.

Hosting the Pan-African Parliament session in Uganda is one of the avenues of popularising PAP and its agenda, bringing PAP closer to the people of Uganda and East Africa, bringing members of PAP from other regions to visit and have an experience of the East African Region and also market Uganda, "The Pearl of Africa" as a tourist destination country.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the Rt Hon. Speaker and the Pan-African Members of Parliament, for this initiative and we also call upon the support of the entire Government, especially the Legislature, to gear up for this important event in preparation for hosting a successful and memorable Fourth Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Pan-African Parliament. For God and my country.

Thank you, Mr Speaker and I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable colleague, and your delegation, for the good job.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND
INNOVATION –FIELD VISIT ON THE
SERICULTURE PROJECT MANAGED
BY THE TROPICAL INSTITUTE FOR
DEVELOPMENT INNOVATION (TRIDI)

4.34

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION (Ms Florence Asimwe): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. Under Rule 34 of our Rules of Procedure, I wish to lay a report of the Committee of Science, Technology and Innovation on the Sericulture Project managed by the Tropical Institute for Development Innovation (TRIDI). I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The Chairperson, Committee on Agriculture, Industry and Fisheries, prepare yourself. You can give a summary.

MS ASIMWE: Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. As a Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation, based on our mandate, we took a visit to a number of projects where TRIDI undertook the sericulture project.

Sericulture is the growing of silk worms and silk worms are fed on mulberry leaves. This is a project that came into being under the Innovation Fund, which His Excellency, the President advocated for saying we should give more funds to scientists to innovate.

One of the principal investigators wrote a project, which was successful, titled, “Evaluating the Utility of Sericulture and Apiculture Technologies and Innovations as tools for Household Wealth Creation and Employment Generation in Uganda.”

This project was carried out in 24 districts. I am sure some of you, Members, could be having a lot of information about some of these projects, which are in your districts. So far, Government has injected Shs 31,235,912,000.

As part of our mandate, we noted that there were a number of management challenges and so, we took it upon ourselves to go and visit these projects. We had also received a petition from Sheema Sericulture project because of the way the project was being handled. It is based on this background that we visited the areas of Bulambuli, Mukono, Kayunga, Kamuli, Iganga, Kween, and Sheema.

The report is already uploaded. Members can have a look it. Because of time, I am going to go straight to the observations and later, I will go to the way forward.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, honourable, the rules do not allow you to do that. You are not presenting a report; you have five minutes for the summary.

MS ASIMWE: The summary is that this project is a viable project, if well managed. Unfortunately, it was scattered all over the country and the principal investigator failed to work hand in hand with the Ministry for the Presidency; that is the Secretariat of Science, Technology And Innovation and as a result, money was stopped because there was lack of accountability.

Therefore, as we speak, the members who worked on these mulberry gardens have been paid, but this project is at a standstill because they do not have any more funds at the moment. What we should note is that this project is viable and, under the PDM, it could be taken on. That is why we are asking the Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation to take up

our recommendation and iron out all the issues that we raised so that we can bring this project on board.

We are of the view that the stakeholders, especially the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, should be highly involved with this research. Therefore, the Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation should work hand-in-hand with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to see how this project can be promoted, but on a small scale first and later, it can be expanded. Otherwise, at the moment, the gardens are everywhere and they are rotting yet we have put Shs 31 billion over and above in this project. I wish to stop here. We have come up with several recommendations, but the Members can read them.

The minister is also aware. Hopefully this project will not be left to die. As a way forward, we urge the Government not abandon sericulture on the basis of the previous experience in the country, but rather carefully study the sector, begin on a small scale and expand gradually after proven successes in this regard.

Therefore, TRIDI should be allowed to scale down to two sites and prove the profitability of the project before Government embarks on the expansion. During this period, TRIDI should revert to its status as a research and development project.

We should not inject any more money until the legal framework is put in place. Otherwise, the project is viable.

I beg to submit. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, such field visit reports are provided for under Rule 34 of the Rules of Procedure, where the chairperson is supposed to lay and then give just a summary. However, under rule 34(3), I am supposed to be appointing a time for debate. We have just received this report; it has been laid. Therefore - LOP, do not interfere with the presiding officer. I am conversant with the rules that I am applying.

I am supposed to appoint time, but since the report has just been presented, I would like to give Members time - because it raises very critical issues, especially issues of accountability, yet the project looks viable. Therefore, use this week to read through it. I will appoint time for debate on Tuesday next week. We shall have 45 minutes of debate on this item. *(Applause)* Honourable chairperson, I hope that will help you to clarify many issues.

I have been in touch with the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development and item six is not yet fully ready. So, we should go to item seven.

**MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY
AND FISHERIES ON THE PETITION BY
COFFEE NURSERY OPERATORS TO THE
GOVERNMENT TO PAY UGANDA SHS
42 BILLION ARREARS FOR SUPPLIED
COFFEE SEEDLINGS**

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chairperson, 20 minutes are enough for reading the report

4.43

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Ms Jane Okori-Moe): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg to lay, on the Table, the report of the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries on the petition by the Coffee Nursery Operators to the Government to pay Shs 45 billion arrears for supplied coffee seedlings.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Sorry, committee chairperson. When we are debating the report of the Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation, the Minister of Science and Technology and Innovation should be in the House. It has been long since I last saw her here. Government Chief Whip, ensure your minister is here so that we do not have these cases of the minister saying: "I was not in." Hope that is enough notice.

MS OKORI-MOE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In the same vein, I would like to lay on the Table, minutes of the meetings that we held while the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries was considering the coffee petition. I beg to lay.

Mr Speaker, this report was processed as per the mandate of the committees, enshrined in Article 90 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and rules 156, 159, 187 and 189 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, the report was uploaded in May. It is a brief report and I believe Members went through it, and so, I may not read it word for word.

Anyhow, pursuant to Rule 36 of the Rules of Procedure, the Rt Hon. Speaker of Parliament directed the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to consider the petition by Devoted Coffee Farmers' Initiative – Uganda (DCOFU) on the non-payment of coffee seedlings, amounting to Shs 42 billion in arrears to coffee nursery operators, who supplied the coffee seedlings to farmers during Financial Year 2021/2022. The committee considered the petition and now wishes to present its report to the House.

Mr Speaker, Uganda is the leading coffee exporter in Africa and the second largest coffee producer in Africa, after Ethiopia, having exported over 6.5 million bags of 60 kilogrammes between April 2021 and March 2022 – that is according to the Uganda Coffee Development Authority Report of 2022.

The report by the International Coffee Organisation indicates that Uganda can attain this production through the efforts of over 1.7 million coffee farm household producers that are part of the coffee value chain, and offering employment to over five million households engaged in coffee-related activities.

In the past 20 years, coffee exports have held a strategic position as Uganda's leading foreign exchange earner, contributing to approximately 20 per cent of foreign exchange earnings.

However, despite the economic importance of coffee to the economy of the country, it still has several challenges that negatively influence the coffee value chain. Some of these challenges are either procedural (that is, administrative), quality and standards or trade policy issues.

Other challenges such as skills development, trading dynamics or trade policy issues also affect the coffee value chain.

Mr Speaker, pursuant to the coffee roadmap, Uganda has a vision of reaching a production target of 20 million bags of coffee by 2030, up from the current 6.5 million bags exported. This, therefore, requires availability of coffee seedlings to farmers, to enable them meet this target. Over time, the Government has always ensured availability of coffee seedlings to the farmers during planting season.

Allocation of these coffee seedlings is done always after verification by Uganda Coffee Development Authority (UCDA) on the number of seedlings required countrywide, and confirmation of the readiness by farmers to plant by digging holes before the commencement of the planting season and upon farmers' application.

Point number 1.2 is about objectives, 1.3 is about the scope and the methodology that the committee used in coming up with this report. Let me go to 2.0, on findings.

The Devoted Coffee Farmers' Initiative Uganda (DCOFIU), who are the petitioners, formally presented their petition before to committee. This is an organisation comprised of a consortium of coffee nursery operators' associations who hail from all the eight coffee growing regions of the country, as categorised by UCDA.

This organisation was formed in 2022 as an association of coffee farmers, registered coffee nursery operators and operators of coffee gardens, and coffee traders. The association is registered and incorporated under Section 18(3) of the Companies Act, 2012.

During its interaction with the committee, the committee learnt that Cabinet directed, in September 2022, that UCDA and other officials conduct the coffee distribution exercise between October and November 2022.

However, due to the bureaucracies that were involved in identifying and verifying farmers plus the procurement process, the actual distribution commenced late October 2022, a period when rains were almost over; distribution was stopped. The seedlings have since remained in the nurseries and are overgrown, yet farmers had been identified and verified to receive them.

The UCDA has been certifying, procuring and paying nursery operators for coffee seedlings distributed, on behalf of Government of Uganda since 2014 as per the 15-year Uganda Coffee Roadmap, which is purposed to increase Uganda's coffee production to 20 million bags by 2030.

The coffee seedlings distribution arrears for the financial years 2020/2021 and 2021/2022, have remained outstanding to date. This has constrained operations of coffee nursery operators to the extent of some losing their pledged property. Families have remained homeless, death arising from financial obligations, disputes and litigation costs against UCDA for unpaid arrears. This resulted into closure of businesses by coffee nursery operators due to cash flow challenges and unpaid farm inputs, such as wages for those employed to manage these coffee nurseries, the shade nets, water bills, among others.

The dead stock of coffee seedlings arrears after the planting season of September/November 2022, supplied under the directive of Cabinet stands at Shs 45 billion. These arrears comprise Shs 26.03 billion for September/November 2022 coffee seedlings supplied, and Shs 15.97 billion carried forward as at 30 June 2022, in respect to the previous planting seasons.

DCOFIU, the committee was informed, followed up the matter on the non-payment of coffee seedlings arrears with UCDA, but no

response had been received, allegedly due to lack of funds released for payment of coffee seedlings arrears for the last three quarters of the Financial Year 2022/2023, the time when this report was being considered.

The committee also interacted with:

- i) The Uganda Coffee Development Authority;
- ii) Forum of Parliamentary Coffee Champions, composed of 178 members from coffee growing districts, who shared their concerns about the outstanding arrears of the coffee seedlings that were supplied by the coffee nursery operators; and
- iii) Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and who also acknowledged that there is that unpaid arrears of Shs 42 billion to the coffee nursery operators.

During its interaction with both the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the committee also learnt that even the Shs 30 billion that had been appropriated to support implementation of the coffee roadmap, including paying arrears of Shs 15.97 billion to suppliers of coffee seedlings, as aforementioned, was never released.

UCDA's release requirement for the period of July 2022 to March 2023, was Shs 54.29 billion. However, only Shs 22.38 billion was released in that period, representing 34 per cent release against the appropriated budget of Shs 64.94 billion. The release of Shs 22.38 billion did not include the Shs 30 billion appropriated by Parliament, as I have already informed you.

The committee was informed that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries had written to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, requesting for a provision of Shs 42 billion in the Financial Year 2023/2024, for payment of the outstanding seedlings arrears. There was no response at the time the committee interacted with the ministry.

Presentation by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, is under 2.5 in which they also acknowledge the seedlings arrears of Shs 42 billion that is unpaid.

The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development officials said that at the end of the Financial Year 2021, coffee seedlings arrears stood at Shs 15.97 billion. During the planting season B, 2022 from September to December, coffee seedlings worth Shs 26.03 billion were distributed to farmers at parish level. Currently, the accumulated arrears stands at Shs 42 billion and this was acknowledged by the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development by 31 December 2022.

The rest, Mr Speaker, was the narrative that the committee received from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

Observations

1. The committee observed that the Government of Uganda, through UCDA, certified 1,675 nursery operators as at 31 December 2022, to supply coffee seedlings - that is, Robusta and Arabica – to farmers throughout the country.
2. The committee also observed that non-payment of coffee seedlings supplied had resulted in a number of litigations, petitions and loss of property by coffee nursery operators to moneylenders and financial institutions due to non-payment of loans secured to start up and operate coffee nurseries.

Some coffee nursery operators had even failed to send their children to school and meet other family obligations. The coffee seedlings nursery operators are totally burdened and some have even died when they are still being tossed up and down.

The committee was informed that at times, some of these affected coffee nursery operators choose to camp at UCDA offices demanding

to be paid, causing a lot of restlessness at the entity.

3. The committee also observed that Cabinet Memorandum CT (2022) 126, Min. No. 30 (CT-22) on distribution of verified coffee and tea seedlings was to be on deferred payment terms. This could have delayed the effects of the seedling payments.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development contends and recognises the coffee seedlings debt arrears of Shs 42 billion; a quotation that was also corroborated and presented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and so was the UCDA and also the petitioners. The accrued coffee seedlings of Shs 42 billion was as a result of change in policy and work methods. The agricultural ministry by then, when the committee was considering the report, had written to the finance ministry to include the debt arrears in the budget of the Financial Year 2023/2024. Sometimes these things are said, but not implemented.

Uganda is committed to the coffee roadmap of producing 20 million bags by 2030, and yet there is no clear plan of availing coffee seedlings to the farmers. Likewise, coffee nursery operators are still grappling with the payment issues, which is demotivating and crippling the coffee subsector.

4. The committee also observed overgrown coffee seedlings, especially in the northern parts of the country. The recent visits by the committee in February 2023 equally revealed that the seedlings were overgrown and some of them had become trees in the nurseries.
5. The committee observed a lack of a planned and streamlined way of coffee seedling supply and distribution, thus leaving a lot of seedlings to go to waste. We have just had a coffee summit where an upcoming coffee grower who has been beyond Uganda – Tanzania – is supplying coffee seedlings free to the farmers as a way of increasing the coffee production.

Mr Speaker, much as UCDA is promoting coffee in 126 districts in the country, the committee observed that there is a need to improve on the yield and outputs. For instance, the yield per coffee tree in Uganda is just 1.6 kilogrammes as compared to Vietnam, where the yields are five kilogrammes per coffee tree, and yet Vietnam learnt from Uganda in its journey to coffee production and is now the second to Brazil.

Recommendations by the committee

1. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should prioritise the settlement of the arrears of Shs 15.97 billion to coffee seedling suppliers as a matter of urgency;
2. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should prioritise the phased settlement of the domestic arrears of Shs 26.03 billion, which accrued from a Cabinet Directive for the Financial Year 2023/2024 and 2024/2025;
3. Government should take coffee as a strategic investment and ensure availability of coffee seedlings to farmers in sufficient quantities and on time. Coffee is aligned under the Parish Development Model as a high-value crop, and therefore, coffee seedlings' availability and distribution should specifically be addressed distinctively. At least Shs 30 billion should be allocated to coffee seedlings annually as a subsidy to farmers for the next five years;
4. In order to have timely seedlings' distribution, continuity and consistency, Government should endeavour to avail funds and ensure their release on time to enable proper preparations, availability, and issuing of purchase orders before the commencement of the planting season. Sometimes, these things come late when the rains are going off;
5. Regulations and policies be put in place to avoid the fire-fighting approach of handling the issue of coffee seedlings, and yet we are committed to the coffee roadmap;
6. Safeguards be put in place to avoid recurrence of non-payment to coffee seedling service providers. UCDA should only distribute seedlings for funds that have been budgeted for and can be paid in the same financial year; and
7. As a sustainability strategy, the committee recommends that a cost-sharing approach – whereby farmers contribute 20 per cent of the cost of coffee seedlings and the Government contributes 80 per cent of the cost – needs to be developed and adopted. This approach will also benefit the farmers who are not in the Parish Development Model category and will equally ensure that quality seedlings are distributed by nursery operators.

In conclusion, there is a need to expedite the matter of clearing the Shs 45 billion to the coffee nursery operators to clear any hurdles that could deter the pursuance of the coffee roadmap that is purposed on boosting coffee production in the country.

It is also the considered opinion of the committee that the coffee roadmap secretariat under the Office of the Prime Minister and chaired by the former finance minister, Hon. Dr Ezra Suruma, should be submitting annual or biannual updates to this Parliament on the progress of the implementation of the coffee roadmap, as we progress towards producing 60 million bags by 2030. It is important for us to know how we are progressing rather than waiting until 2030, then we find out that we have a challenge that cannot be addressed.

Mr Speaker and honourable members, I would like to thank you for the attention. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, committee chairperson. Before I open up the debate, finance minister, the recommendations are clear that you provide money. Now,

agriculture minister, you do not have money – No, it can be your sector, but when you are poor. So, I am going to allow you – yours is of a policy nature. I know if the finance ministry had given you money, you would have paid. Those things can be sorted out right.

5.07

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, this matter is well known to us. I want to undertake that we are going to pick it up among our outstanding domestic arrears and find a solution.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, would you like to say anything?

5.08

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (AGRICULTURE) (Mr Fred Bwino): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I agree with your comment that this is basically a budgetary matter.

However, allow me to make just three observations to solidify your comment further. During the Financial Year 2022/2023, there was no release to UCDA by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development of any funds with respect to the settlement of arrears for payment of coffee seedling suppliers.

Secondly, whereas the Cabinet resolution was that payment of the suppliers that did supply after the Cabinet decision of September 2022 would be made in two instalments starting with the Financial Year 2023/2024, there is no provision whatsoever in the current budget towards that. I just wanted to emphasise that.

Finally, the chairperson of the committee rightly put it that during their tour, most especially in Northern Uganda, they found that seedlings had overgrown. I want to give an explanation that at the time when we were distributing the seedlings last year, the season for planting coffee in Northern Uganda and

some other regions, particularly the Elgon Subregion had expired. It was not the time for planting coffee in those areas, whereas it was time for planting coffee in central, western and some other subregions.

For that matter, it was not possible for us to distribute coffee seedlings in Northern Uganda and in the Elgon Subregion. Instead, we postponed the distribution of coffee seedlings in those areas. This is the cause of the overgrown seedlings in Northern Uganda.

During Season A of 2023, we distributed some coffee seedlings, but not all. The result of the distribution of some coffee seedlings in those areas – Northern Uganda – is that there were further arrears created of Shs 3.25 billion.

My prayer is that as the Minister of Finance considers the arrears created because of distribution in other regions, the arrears created because of distribution in Northern Uganda amounting to Shs 3.25 billion should also be considered. I beg to move. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Colleagues, just wait a bit. I remember Hon. Enos raised this issue here and we went into a very big battle with the Minister of Finance.

The nursery bed operators had petitioned and I remember someone came and talked to me and said, “Mr Speaker, the way you are pushing, do you operate a nursery bed?” I said, “No, I do not, but I am with colleagues on this issue.”

They said, “No, just give us a commitment so that our seedlings do not overgrow in the beds then go and look for money.”

Now, I am usually cautious, honourable colleagues and I work extremely cautiously because I always want to work within my mandate. I have a fear of where we would be taking the House. It looks like for you to be paid, you must first petition Parliament. It is as if Parliament is the one managing the cash flow of the Government. I want us to know where we stop as Parliament – where our powers lie. That does not mean I am saying Parliament should not question.

Usually, I do not want to sit here and make decisions in futility. I tell the Minister of Finance to go and pay and he says, "I have not collected the money." Now they have even an excuse of the World Bank. That is why when I was reading through the report last night on how the committee handled – I love the language you used. You were very cautious.

What is very critical is for the Minister of Finance, first of all, to acknowledge this as a domestic arrear because the moment you finish coffee, tomorrow, the ones of tea are going to come. The ones who supplied stationery or utilities are going to be here because they will know that for you to be paid, you have to petition the Parliament. And of course, once a petition comes here, we must process it.

So, in our debate, I would want us to caution ourselves to leave the Executive some latitude to do their work because they are also managing some difficult situations. I just wanted to give guidance before I could open up.

Let me first hear from Hon. Enos who raised the issue, then this man of Bugisu Coffee Cooperative Union. I am going to allow you, honourable colleagues. Three minutes each.

5.15

MR ENOS ASIIMWE (NRM, Kabula County, Lyantonde): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I absolutely support your clarification on this matter. First of all, the nursery operators came here kneeling to Parliament to allow them to supply to Government and then wait for the payments at a later date. That one is very clear.

It is unfortunate that they had to petition Parliament again to push for payment yet they knew that Government had no funds at that time. However, what gives value to their petition is the fact that even when we promised that in this financial year – in this budget cycle – we would provide for their payment, Finance never brought it forward or the Ministry of Agriculture could not have pushed it through to make sure that the payments are catered for in this financial year, as we had promised. That gives their petition some value.

Mr Speaker, I want to put it to you that this side of the Executive has actually given up on the coffee sector because there are many policy issues captured in this report that if we do not push them as Parliament, the coffee sector is dead.

First, they made a decision – and I believe that is the basis on which we allowed coffee to be taken on credit – not to supply seedlings suddenly without notifying them. That one we agreed and we pushed for this.

But then, even after taking that decision, there is no commitment to pay them. That is unfair because when you look at the budget provision, there is nothing.

The coffee sector had a road map. We agreed on the roadmap of 2017 that we shall be supporting coffee farmers with seedlings because there is no way they are going to be supported under the PDM as the Cabinet wants us to believe.

They are saying that the money for seedlings was sent to the Parish Development Model, but when you look at the seedlings for one acre of coffee, you require Shs 1.2 million, but under PDM, the maximum one can borrow is Shs 1 million. That means I cannot plant coffee on one acre based on the borrowings from the PDM.

Therefore, taking a decision not to –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I think, colleagues, we shall need one thing; we shall need the minister – I do not know whether it is Agriculture or Finance or Local Government – to come here and indeed give a thorough explanation on how money for PDM can be used to purchase inputs. As you see, we are always referred to PDM. Can they come and explain so that it goes on record and we know that this is what you decided and – because there are people who are not benefitting from the Parish Development Model.

There are villages where if people were to benefit from the Parish Development Model,

each one would get like Shs 50,000 – the big parishes, especially in towns – yet they also want to plant coffee. So, can we discuss that issue of inputs being financed by the Parish Development Model and we get a way forward?

5.19

MR NATHAN NANDALA-MAFABI (FDC, Budadiri County West, Sironko): Mr Speaker, thank you very much. I would like to make one correction that for coffee, when planted, you do not need to plant it, again, the following year. *(Inaudible)* has 59.5 million acres. If we carried out an audit and confirmed how many coffee seedlings we have distributed in this country, we would have planted them even inside Parliament here.

An example I want to give on this arrears – and that is why we are saying the people who are distributing coffee may not be giving us the right quantity. If you are talking of Shs 42 billion divided by Shs 100 – a seedling – you come to 420 million seedlings. At 400 seedlings per acre, you would be talking of over a million acres. Tell us that land that has one million acres. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, I am a coffee farmer – *(Interjection)* – I am giving you an example; that is how it is in our place. *(Interjection)* Yes, yours is different. I come from Bugisu and I am a coffee farmer.

Mr Speaker, the coffee I am selling and making money out of was planted by my grandfather. Now, if there are new people who are giving more seedlings, they should come and demonstrate because we have been giving about 10 million seedlings per year. Is it true that they are the right ones?

Mr Speaker, the earlier the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development gets up and audits these seedlings, the better. The reason I am raising this is that there were two entities that were giving seedlings: UCDA and Operation Wealth Creation. Whose seedlings are which seedlings? You will get somebody bringing maybe 10,000 seedlings and saying they are 100,000 seedlings.

Mr Speaker, if you are making seedlings, land the size of a football pitch would take 300,000 seedlings. You will get somebody saying that “I have supplied three million seedlings”; did he plant them on land the size of 10 football pitches?

We should not blame the Ministry of Finance, but we should blame even UCDA and the Ministry of Agriculture. When they come here and say we never budgeted and are lamenting to us – the budget you bring comes from the Cabinet to us. If you have not argued your case in Cabinet, you do not come and blame us in Parliament. You cannot blame Parliament that they never put the money. The first person who should have put the money is the Minister of Agriculture.

Mr Speaker, if we use Parliament as a clearing house, we are going to have a problem. You have mentioned it well. They should stop bringing debts. Debts should be taken to the Ministry of Finance because it is the one responsible for payment – and the entity which took the goods.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Mr Speaker, I want to conclude with this one –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, Hon. Nandala.

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Mr Speaker, give me an opportunity.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, you are accessing the microphone without my permission. You know that I stopped Hon. Enos and I do not have the justification for allowing you to continue. So, let us be fair, honourable colleagues. Let us have another Member.

5.22

MR LAWRENCE SONGA (NRM, Ora County, Zombo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. On the coffee, I am on record, even in this House: I come from a coffee-growing district and we grow Arabica Coffee in Zombo. I have 1,184

farmers, who have prepared their gardens and are waiting for seedlings. We could not plant last year because it was already a dry season. That is one part of it.

On the issue of the arrears, yes, I agree with Hon. Nandala that sometimes people were inflating the figures of seedlings. At one time I also proposed in this House that it would be better to go to the field and see exactly what is planted and we verify from there other than someone signing that “We have received this number of seedlings.” The question remains: What do we do with the current nurseries with seedlings and the farmers are waiting for these seedlings because this is the planting season in northern Uganda? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, when we were pushing for money for the seedlings, we agreed with the minister here that nursery bed operators must know that the Government had stopped buying seedlings. It was here and we said whoever continued with nursery beds would not petition us. That one, we made extremely clear on the Floor. So, I do not know how we can allow such an issue to come up again.

Now, the other problem we are getting – and which is very clear on seedlings – is that the moment distribution of seedlings is supply-driven, not demand driven – the moment it is driven by nursery bed operators...

In my district, I remember there was an old woman who ran to the chairman and said: “They have brought a truck-full of seedlings and dropped them at my door. Now, what do I do?”

You see, they come with some money and say: “You sign that you have received.” Okay? Then, they take the papers to go and demand. So, that is supply-driven, not demand-driven. We have to be very cautious on these cases, honourable colleagues. What Hon Nandala raises is a very pertinent issue – issues of accountability – before we say: “Pay these people.” I am sorry for debating. (*Laughter*) Rule 77 prohibits me.

5.25

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Thank you, Mr Speaker. We are talking about a foreign exchange earner for our country – coffee – of which the whole country is proud, including even regions that do not grow it. When I learnt that coffee was earning lots of money for the country, I said that my people in Napak would not be excluded. I decided to open a demonstration farm for coffee and it has already grown. The farmers in Napak have been demanding for the seedlings.

It is unfortunate that at such a time when we know where money is and where our people can earn income from, the seedlings will not be supplied to certain parts of the country that missed it because we are now developing a new strategy. That inequality alone is not good – that at such a time, the UCDA can no longer commit. I have been reaching out to them on this matter, but they can no longer commit because they also fear the issue of the arrears.

So, in terms of equalising Uganda economically, we should not be shy to invest in things that will bring income to every part of the country. Coffee is one of the things to invest in and there is no competition on it because it is something we can export. No region should say, “We are being overpowered by another.” So, let that be in our mind as we discuss this thing called coffee. We should not say: “Why is Karamoja speaking?” I have planted it in Napak and it is doing well. So, if it can grow in Napak, why can’t it grow in Karenga or any other part of the country?

Mr Speaker, even if we have PDM, as a matter of strategy, let us be deliberate on coffee for the economic reason of it being an equaliser so that those people who are excluded economically can also join in the market economy. Let us be deliberate.

Hon Enos has explained one thing which I would like to expound on. The Parish Development Model gives you Shs 1 million. The coffee farmer requires Shs 7 million before he earns from one acre. Realistically, the two

do not meet and so it can no longer be a reason for not giving seedlings to those regions that missed it at the time of supply. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Lillian Paparu.

5.28

MS LILLIAN PAPARU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was disappointed when I heard the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries giving reason why the people of northern Uganda did not plant; that time caught up with them. It is as if the country or the ministry knew that in northern Uganda, the seasons for planting were all of a sudden.

I also would like to re-echo why the seedlings in West Nile – I mean in northern Uganda – overgrew; it is that when distributions were being made, we were receiving seedlings in trucks. Under Operation Wealth Creation, Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, the local farmers who were certified to make their nursery beds in northern Uganda, especially West Nile; their seedlings were never bought.

We were receiving seedlings in trucks that were coming to West Nile at the wrong time, others already overgrown. So, our local farmers who tried to put up their nursery beds, their seedlings were never bought.

We are here fighting that people's arrears should be paid, but the people of northern Uganda, first of all, did not supply. Are you going to pay them? Was it their fault that they tried their best to raise nursery beds and you decided to ferry seedlings from other places?

It is very disappointing that those who planted at the right time that the Government was ready to buy should also be looked into and they should also be paid because it is not their problem. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Seedlings brought from other regions was very unfortunate; when you had nursery bed operators.

5.30

MR ALEX BYARUGABA (NRM, Isingiro County South, Isingiro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I had an opportunity to read a book titled, "*Rural Development: Putting the Last First*" by Robert Chambers. It explicitly and clearly puts across almost what we are talking about; disjointed linkages in every sector, everywhere.

We are talking about people more than willing and ready to supply seedlings to people who are ready and willing to ensure that they produce coffee and a population willing to earn a lot of money and improve their livelihoods and have transformation as is clearly being sung every day, in every forum and at every other opportunity given.

However, here we are discussing to inject some little money. Is it Shs 40 billion? And yet at the end of the day, we are being told to be less selfish, to think about the locals, the people who sent us here, to talk on their behalf. And look at what we are being told; "Go to the Parish Development Model."

It just started the other day, and half of the money has not yet been paid out to the beneficiaries. We are not going to wait. Look, if there was a very serious person somewhere in the ministry in charge of planning for this country, maybe they should be the ones forcing us to look at the budget immediately, make changes here and there. The circumstances are changing; look at what the World Bank is doing; bullying us and yet we are here failing to do what we are supposed to be doing.

Whatever Hon. Nandala said, I do want to agree with him. He is a very good guy. He understands those figures very well. But it is done; we should have done it before. Let us start from a clean page and say: "Before you supply, we want to audit."

Somebody will claim that I did, but they died in somebody's gardens. How will you audit that? It is important that we start afresh, but commit ourselves to ensuring that we buy these seedlings from wherever they are, pay for

them, encourage them, and try to undermine the World Bank that is forcing us to do what we are otherwise not interested in.

The PDM is very good, but it is not going to buy you seedlings – look at ourselves – *(Member timed out.)*

5.33

MS BETTY ENGOLA (NRM, Woman Representative, Apac): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Apac District knows about cassava, beans, but not coffee. I am, therefore, appealing to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and Uganda Coffee Development Authority (UCDA), to seriously talk about coffee growing and promote it, so that Apac District can also join the other districts, so that we can achieve the millions of bags of coffee in the future. Our soils are very fertile.

I do not see how Uganda is committed to the coffee roadmap because of the issues that the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries brought out. I fully support the Ministry of Finance, which is the key to all these issues, to take action so that the monies which were not paid to the coffee nursery operators be paid to them so that things run normally. Thank you.

5.36

MR SIRAJI EZAMA (NRM, Aringa County, Yumbe): Thank you, Mr Speaker. On this issue, I concur with what Hon. Nandala-Mafabi said. Coffee seedlings have been supplied even to farmers who have not prepared their gardens. In this respect, we waste Government money and adopting seedlings for the purpose for which the people do not intend to do.

In my constituency, a farmer prepared coffee seedlings because the farmers were not in position to ask for the seedlings. He was moving around in the homes, asking people whether to supply them coffee seedlings.

Without the knowledge of how those seedlings are planted, how they are prepared, farmers were taking them. Automatically, they could not maintain them, and Government money

has already been spent on what cannot yield anything.

In this respect, we now need to strategise to see that when we are going into this venture, that the President is now trying to advocate for all over the world, to see that we go into where we can add value, and the Government can get money.

We need to strategise on what is being supplied and can earn us money, not just spending anyhow. Thank you very much.

5.38

MR GODFREY ONZIMA (NRM, Aringa North County, Yumbe): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to make two comments: One, when the Government engages in an activity, that activity must have been budgeted for and the money must have been provided. Many times, when we are in the budgeting period, we see a lot of money going for domestic arrears yet money for domestic arrears are not paid; these monies are not paid to the people.

In one way, we are weakening local capacity. We have been talking about local content, but we can achieve local content if we build the capacity of our local entrepreneurs. Therefore, I propose that we should not continue with this. Some of these people borrow money from banks and this causes a lot of problems to them. Others lose their property in terms of buildings, among others, yet the Government does not pay them.

When you compare the local people who have engaged in business with foreigners – some of these foreigners access soft loans from their countries as opposed to our businessmen. I think we need to build the capacity of our people.

Secondly, when we engage in activities, we should aim at achieving a lot for this kind of activity. We had field visits to Lwengo, Kitagwenda and Kabale, but we found very many abandoned coffee seedlings and they were drying there.

During the Operation Wealth Creation, the emphasis was about supplies. Ideally, there should have been connectivity between the person who is supplying and the end user. The best should have been: Who are those supposed to plant these seedlings?

5.40

MR JOEL LEKU (NRM, Terego West County, Terego): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join colleagues to discuss the nightmare of coffee seedlings growing into trees. This is not the only issue. We have seedling of mangoes which have grown into forests in West Nile. They are struggling how to get to the Government and negotiate for their money. This is a continuous case.

On the issue of coffee seedlings being supplied at the parish level, which the chairperson mentioned, there are coffee seedlings which came into my constituency, but was a drop in the ocean. You cannot feel them anywhere. I will take Members through what we do for tobacco.

Tobacco seedlings are not given free; they are given as a loan. Even the fertilisers are given as a loan. Here, we are, busy distributing coffee seedlings, which dry up before they reach. This is the mess we are in as a country. Why don't we remove the bottlenecks that hamper tobacco growing especially for West Nile so farmers grow their tobacco? Otherwise, it has no financial implication on the Government. Everything is done by the farmer. It is the farmer that buys the seedlings, the fertiliser; everything.

I would like to submit that we should avoid free giving of coffee seedlings. If there are no subscriptions on it, farmers will demand and pay for it. Thank you.

5.44

MR MICHAEL KAKEMBO (NUP, Entebbe Municipality, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to add my voice to colleagues that have shown disappointment in the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. Indeed, the agriculture ministry

has proved to be a shame to this country for mismanaging this very good project.

Mr Speaker, you guided that it should be demand-driven, but the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries went ahead to sign a contract and delivered quite a number of seedlings that the ministry could not absorb.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries is not prepared. The Government has a lot of land in this country where the agriculture ministry can invest like any other country. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries should be telling us they have over 1,000 hectares of coffee. They would order, deliver, and the Government can plant their own *shambas* of coffee. However, they depend on farmers who are not prepared, not trained and do not even have *shambas*.

A colleague told me they supplied seedlings in Amuru where farmers do not even know how to plant coffee; they do not even practise coffee farming. It is not even part of their culture. They do not know anything. So, the minister did not even bother to train our farmers on how to plant this coffee. So, it was a waste. The Government has lost a lot of money under the so-called technical staff of the agriculture ministry.

Mr Speaker, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries owes us an apology for mismanaging taxpayers' money. They are not prepared; they do not have a plan for this country on how to develop agriculture. The Government has a lot of land so they can even apply for this land we have. We have a lot of land in the ranches, but it is dysfunctional. We can have our own plan – *(Member timed out.)*

5.44

MR DENES SEKABIRA (NUP, Katikamu County North, Luweero): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I have two issues. One is a question I would like to address to the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development because the answer he gave was an ambiguous one when he was asked on how

and when this money can be paid; the Shs 42 billion.

These people mortgage their land, houses, and so, we cannot give a flat answer that the Cabinet is looking into this. Mr Speaker, this is money that was supposed to be budgeted for. As Members of Parliament from all sides of this House, we cannot move the Government to include any monies in the budget. So, I would like him to answer.

Secondly, coffee is very important and it is a very good project that I think has been touching so many lives in this country. In Katikamu North, out of the Shs 100 million that was supposed to come through the Parish Development Model, the Government only released between Shs 25 to Shs 27 million in some parishes. I do not think it is very possible for any farmer to access this money to grow coffee in their farms. I think where one would need over Shs 1 million-plus, it is very impossible for people to access this money and at the same time return it since PDM money is supposed to be returned in a very short time.

Coffee needs more than two or three years to be harvested – it is actually seven years. So, it is practically impossible. I would like to ask the Government why they halted the giving out of seedlings? Otherwise, this is something that had picked up. I think we shall not realise the target of the desired production. Thank you very much,

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development it is very critical that whenever you release money for the Parish Development Model, share that information with Parliament. I do not know whether we should do per quarter.

Honourable colleagues, we are in a situation where a Member stands up here and he says they have received this much, then you hear that others have received much. You find Members do not know. Look at how the National Medical Stores informs Members of how much has been released. So, if you could

publish the release per parish or per district in the papers, it would be easier for us to know what has been received.

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, in the Financial Year 2022/2023 which closed on 30 June 2023, the release to the Parish Development Model was more than Shs 100 million, plus the prior year releases for all the parishes in this country.

Mr Speaker, I undertake to avail information to all our colleagues at the earliest opportunity so that every Member of this House is updated.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The earliest opportunity can be tomorrow, sir. So lay on the Table.

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, tomorrow afternoon, I will lay on the Table all information pertaining to releases we have made to the Parish Development Model.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, that will help a lot. And if you could do quarterly, we shall be grateful.

MR GILBERT OLANYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Gilbert, you had spoken earlier on. Let us start with those who have not submitted anything today. Please, let us be fair. You know, when we agree on a policy that covers all of us then I can get some time to pick some of you, but we shall give chance to everyone. Yes, honourable member, I will pick you. We are going like this.

5.48

MS PASKA MENYA (Independent, Woman Representative, Pader): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. We appreciate the vision of the Government in looking at anything concerning perennial crops. Coffee seedlings have been supplied in Pader District. I want to speak for the people of Pader.

In Pader District, as a colleague has mentioned, we have not known coffee growing as much as in other regions, but we appreciate the

support that they are sending us. However, as the leaders of the country – as Parliament – let us look around for things that will bring returns. When we talk of return on investment, whatever has been sent to the community of Pader in form of seedlings to be grown might not reap results. Why? Because the people still do not know how to grow coffee.

We would rather request the ministry to first start by sensitising us. Wherever they feel they would want to take seedlings, first go, sensitise the community and show them what to do before sending seedlings. But when you start by sending seedlings before educating the people who are taking the seedlings, that means you are not being fair to the country because we need a lot to help our country.

Secondly, we have farmers who want the seedlings, but how to get the seedlings from where they are being raised is not easy. We would also request the Government to think about growing or raising the seedlings region-wise because transporting them from the central might not be a good idea. By the time you are picking it up from Kampala –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Namugga?

5.50

MS GORRETH NAMUGGA (NUP, Mawogola County South, Ssembabule): Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is an opportune time for departments and agencies of Government to wake up and start strategically thinking about what they do in these agencies. When it goes to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, specifically on issues of coffee, we have adopted the top-down planning and we have not planned well from the bottom – That is the villages where we come from.

Mr Speaker, go back to the structures of the ministry. Go to the extension workers. With due respect, the extension workers no longer do anything at that level. They come to offices and sit. If you tell us that you have given out coffee worth Shs 40 billion, go down there and look

at the productivity. Is there value for money for the coffee that we have supplied so far?

I think the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and all the agencies and departments of the Government are sleeping on the job. When you get, for example, to Mawogola, people want coffee. People have tried their best.

My colleague was talking about sensitisation. UCDA – yes, they may not have the money for the seedlings. Can we see them down on the ground, training our people on how to take care of the coffee and how they plant? All those sensitisation engagements no longer take place.

Therefore, even before we get the seedlings again, can we see you down there? The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries; you have been giving out tractors, yet you do not even follow them up. I think there is a lot to do. A lot of money has been wasted. I should say it is wasted because productivity is not seen.

We have just hosted the G-25 Africa Coffee Summit. Everyone is committed to coffee as a strategic crop, but what are you doing as the ministry? I do not agree with the fact that our money in agriculture for coffee was put in the PDM. I should say we need to revisit the PDM to ensure – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

5.53

MR DENNIS NYANGWESO (Independent, Samia-Bugwe Central County, Busia): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I would like to thank the committee for the report. I have two issues: The first issue is about Government expenditure. As part of the Government's financial reforms, it introduced a commitment control system where the accounting officer must ascertain the availability of funds before procurement proceeds to the last stages.

I wonder how we reached this level; Shs 40 billion in arrears passed and approved by the accounting officers. Possibly there is

something the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development needs to inform the House about.

Secondly, the Budget emanates from the Cabinet. We have heard from the minister here that the Cabinet resolved that they would pay these arrears in two instalments this financial year and the minister has also confirmed to the House that indeed no funds are available in this Budget to fulfil their commitment in the Cabinet.

How do we help the Executive, because they are looking very shabby? They sit, resolve and then come here to lament that even the funds are not available in the budget. Who helps them at this angle? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Cabinet, why didn't you provide that money in the Budget and yet you agreed that they supply and you are going to pay them in two financial years?

5.55

MR ALLAN MAYANJA (NUP, Nakaseke Central County, Nakaseke): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. My concern is about the vision of increasing Uganda's coffee production to 20 million bags by 2030. In my constituency, I am a coffee farmer and a member of the Kamuli-Kiwose Coffee Cooperative.

Sometime back, the Government used to supply fertilisers and pesticides and right now it is no longer providing seedlings. This is false hope. How are you going to attain this vision, seriously speaking?

As you look at the solutions, I suggest that the Government should use organised institutions like the Buganda Kingdom that brought a programme called "*Emmwanyi terimba*" under the leadership of *Katikiro* Charles Peter Mayiga. They are doing very well under that programme supplying coffee seedlings and fertilisers. They can use other kingdoms like Bunyoro and Busoga because they are more organised than the Executive.

Lastly, about the arrears of about Shs 42 billion, I suggest that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should commit and at least say that under the supplementary schedule, this money is provided because our – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kanyike?

5.57

MR EVANS KANYIKE (NUP, Bukoto County East, Masaka): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I am of the view that it takes the Government's commitment. When we were in the budget process, Shs 37 billion was allocated to add value to coffee. Even though it had contestation here and there, it was put under "classified".

If the Government allocated that Shs 37 billion to add value on coffee and he is now coming up and saying they do not have the Shs 15.9 billion to the coffee seedling suppliers, it is very unfortunate.

In Greater Masaka, we are coffee farmers. Although a resolution was taken to stop giving out seedlings, I think it needs to be reconsidered. In Masaka, we used to get the seedlings from Masaka Cooperative Union, but you are much aware that many of the cooperatives are now incapacitated; they can no longer supply the seedlings to their farmers. Therefore, such a resolution needs to be reconsidered so that we provide seedlings, especially to areas which are well known, since independence, to be coffee-growing areas. Thank you.

5.58

MR ISAIAS SSASAGA (FDC, Budadiri County East, Sironko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I grew up while making the nursery beds and I come from Bugisu, where we grow a lot of coffee. If you look at most of the coffee we have – from our parents and grandparents – it was not supplied by the Government. Instead, the farmers were given knowledge of how they could make the nursery beds.

The seeds are readily available and very cheap. If you go to NARO, you will get quality seeds at around Shs 6,000 to 10,000. For the one acre somebody was talking of, even under the Parish Development Model, that farmer who gets Shs 200,000, has the capacity to raise a very good coffee garden as long as he has the knowledge of where to buy the seeds from and how to raise the nursery bed.

If you bought two kilogrammes of the dried bean – the parchment – to raise the nursery bed, you can supply more than an acre – *(Interjection)*– I do not need the information.

Secondly, the nursery bed operators need to be paid. In making a nursery bed, there are two types: You can make one nursery bed for your domestic garden – and that one is very cheap; you do not need the potting materials. However, once you have been committed to make a nursery bed for commercial purposes, it must meet the minimum standards; you must do the potting, spraying, there is a bit of procurement, a lot of transport and all that. That one becomes a little bit expensive.

What I could implore the – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are the only one I am going to allow to conclude.

MR SSASAGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I implore the ministry that as they pay off the arrears, they should plan to stop there. What people need is for them to be trained on how to make the nursery bed, nurture it and be told where to get the good quality seeds from.

We were in the G-25 coffee summit as participants and we interacted with other countries. When you go to the countries where coffee has been grown, for example, Ethiopia, the Government does not supply seedlings. It has trained people how to make the nursery beds and plant. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I know it is an extra burden on you, but for colleagues coming from coffee-producing areas, this is very humble advice

– I have tried it myself; I am making nursery beds to give free seedlings to my people. I am just giving humble advice: It is better than the ambulances we buy, to tell you the truth. This is because it is going to help people to earn and they will appreciate you.

The biggest problem is – and I had raised it much earlier when I said: “We are going to stop the distribution of seedlings, but have we prepared a few nursery bed operators in the communities to prepare quality nursery beds to produce quality seedlings for people to even buy?” The honourable colleague has told you that coffee, which has been distributed in their area, has been coming from another region. It means you have not given incentives and attracted the local people to produce the seedlings.

In my area, you would find that seedlings are coming from, for example, Ishaka. If I am to transport seedlings from there to my village area of Ruhinda North, transport alone will take away all the money.

How are we preparing? Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, you need to help us on this. When you stop this and say we go to the Parish Development Model which money was taken to the villages, how have you prepared people in the villages to set up quality nursery beds for seedlings? They are not there. If they are not, what are people going to do?

People do not even have where to buy the seeds from, despite you giving money. The little money they will get from the Parish Development Model SACCOs will be used for transport. This brings out the issue raised by Hon. Enos who said that we have more or less given up on the coffee roadmap.

6.04

MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am happy that I am speaking after Hon. Ssasaga. We should have it at the back of our minds that many of our people follow Government programmes to make investments because Government is the biggest consumer.

When Government started procuring seedlings from people – remember, they have said in the report that Government “identified and qualified” – people knew that the Government was buying seedlings and, so, they invested in that area. When we stop suddenly, we affect people that had gone into that area.

We should not blame these people for coming to us at that time when their seedlings were overgrowing. In that regard, we should also not blame them for coming to us when they are not paid because they could not envisage that the minister was not going to plan for them the following year. I am disappointed and pray, Mr Speaker, that you put it to the minister to make a formal commitment to this House on when he is likely to pay these people.

The second matter is that I agree with Hon. Nandala-Mafabi that there was oversupply. A lot of seedlings were supplied. In the backyards of some of the homesteads and even at subcounties, you would find trees that were drying up. The biggest question is: Isn't there demand now? There is. Should people now suffer consequences of the inefficiencies of the ministry? At that time, they just supplied anyhow, but now that there is demand, there is no supply.

I pray that our people should not suffer because of the inefficiencies in the ministry. No one should lie to us that the PDM is solving this problem. The PDM is for people in subsistence production. They even have a sorting mechanism in their system. If you mention that you have land anywhere, you do not qualify. Now, this is a self-defeating policy. It is for people who do not –(Member timed out.)

6.06

MS JOANNE OKIA (NRM, Woman Representative, Madi-Okollo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I also thank the committee for the report. I would also like to thank the Government for identifying such a lucrative enterprise in coffee. When you look at maize, it produces maybe Shs 500,000 per acre in a year, but coffee can produce Shs 2 million, if it is done in a traditional way and

about Shs 17 million if it is done with modern agronomical practices.

Having said that, the minister himself said that central Uganda, western Uganda and eastern have been studied, but no study or training has been done in northern Uganda. Looking at PDM as a means of helping our people to come into wealth creation, coffee is one of the best enterprises. Madi-Okollo has a lot of land, but when I looked, I could not tell people to start with coffee because the soils had not been tested and trainings had not been done.

Therefore, I would implore the Government to take special interest in northern Uganda because we have vast land. We can produce the 20 million bags that the Government is looking for, but there needs to be testing of the soils. The Members of Parliament have said that they have done it on an individual basis, but can we have a strategy by the Government for northern Uganda, especially areas that have a lot of land like Madi-Okollo, to help the farmers also enter wealth creation? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Bwanika?

6.07

DR ABED BWANIKA (NUP, Kimaanya-Kabonera Division, Masaka City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will begin by giving some clarification: We have two species of coffee; Arabica and Robusta. The prices for Robusta are completely different from Arabica. The seedlings for Robusta are not the same as Arabica, where you take a seed and put it in a pot, and the next day you have coffee.

For Robusta, we use cuttings. Each cutting is Shs 1,500. I know the Speaker has a nursery of Robusta. Also, in your area –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I stopped.

DR BWANIKA: No, I mean your nursery; I am not talking about the business. I also run a nursery, but an ordinary farmer cannot manage the amount of money that you invest in that nursery; it is a huge investment. I distribute

almost 200,000 seedlings every season in my constituency and that is a lot of money.

Therefore, for Government to simply abandon the roadmap for coffee and say it is the Parish Development Model, and the farmer is going to supply these seedlings – the countries around us, in that coffee conference – Tanzania and other countries are going to take over. I heard what they said. They are giving seedlings to their farmers while we have abandoned them.

This was a very good programme for Government, first of all, for the economy, and also the individual families at home. I implore Government –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, doctor.

DR BWANIKA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I implore the Government that before you abandon the farmers, let us put in place at least one or two years and ensure that we have the coffee nurseries in every locality, where we target to produce coffee in this country. This will ensure that people produce coffee and we can meet the target of 2020 – I am now hearing 2030, but it was originally 2025. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Minister for Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries?

MR BWINO: I thank you, Mr Speaker, and I thank Hon. Bwanika. This being a policy revision or reversal, I need to be given time so that I take it back to Cabinet to study, discuss and come up with a decision. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Finance minister, do you have anything to add?

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, I just have one point to add: We shall not make any further payments. What we are struggling with is clearing these arrears and then we put it to rest. We are convinced that the monies we are sending to the Parish Development Model will take care of all these issues, as long as

clarity has been made on the issues that you have raised and those that have come from the debate. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, agriculture minister, let us give you two weeks. You will come to this House with a comprehensive statement on how agricultural inputs are covered under the Parish Development Model. You will show us clearly so that we debate it and give our input. We want to know the projections; how you think it is going to impact the development of all the critical sectors that we have been supporting from cassava to tea to maize to coffee.

Then, the President had also touched on the issue of subsidising fertilisers; the cost of fertilisers here is still high. Other neighbouring countries are subsidising it. The ones who are lucky and are near the border of Kenya are finding a way of buying a bag from Kenya to support them because that is what we have.

Our focus is on the people who have been working only for the stomach – who are under subsistence farming – and we are saying that we want to support them to grow both for the stomach and also the pocket. So, this is extremely critical.

Honourable colleagues, with all those very many issues, I do not want to disturb my committee chairperson because she did a good job and the questions were for the ministers who are around.

I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries on the petition by Coffee Nursery Bed Operators to Government to pay Shs 42 billion arrears for supplied coffee seedlings, be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, we give you three months to bring an Action Taken Report on this matter.

Honourable colleagues, tomorrow, we are going to start with a very critical item. I have received very many calls from very many people when we will handle this issue; the Narcotic Drugs Bill. This is a very critical item for the country and they are watching. Drugs are finishing our people. As we talk, we do not have any law. I think the drug dealers are having a field day and the Government quickly assembled the Bill together. We have to handle it tomorrow and ensure that this lacuna that we have in society is settled.

If you remember, the law was struck out on a technicality for lack of quorum. So, I appeal to the Whips; the Government Chief Whip, the Chief Opposition Whip and the Dean of the Independents to mobilise your colleagues tomorrow at 2.00 p.m. to be here so that we can focus on this extremely critical Bill. Members of Cabinet, kindly inform your colleagues so that we raise quorum tomorrow and handle this critical Bill.

The House is adjourned to tomorrow at 2 o'clock.

(The House rose at 6.15 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 16 August 2023 at 2.00 p.m.)