



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

SECOND SESSION - THIRD MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 19 APRIL 2023



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

SECOND SESSION - 28TH SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Wednesday, 19 April 2023

Parliament met at 10.03 a.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, we are continuing with the ministerial policy statements right away. Chairperson Committee on East African Community Affairs - Clerk, call the statement.

PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS ON THE MINISTERIAL POLICY STATEMENT AND BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE FY 2023/2024

10.04

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (Ms Noeline Kiseembo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I am here to present the Report of the Committee on East African Community Affairs on the ministerial policy statement for the Financial Year 2023/2024, for the Ministry of East African Community Affairs.

Before I present the report, allow me to lay, on the Table, a copy of the report and a file containing minutes of the committee proceedings while we processed the ministerial policy statement. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS KISEMBO: Mr Speaker, I seek your indulgence to present only the executive summary of the report since it is already uploaded on the iPads.

The Committee on East African Community Affairs, in accordance with Article 155(4) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Section 12 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015 and rules 149(1) and 189 of the Rules of Procedure has reviewed the part relating to Vote 021 - Ministry of East African Community Affairs and now reports.

Background

The Ministry of East African Community Affairs was established in 2007, under Article 8(3)(a) of the EAC Treaty (Amended), which enjoins partner states to establish ministries responsible for EAC affairs.

The mandate of the ministry is to steer Uganda's regional integration agenda, in accordance with the objectives of the Treaty for the establishment of the East African Community.

The Summit of the East African Community Heads of States agreed to appoint ministers

solely responsible for East African Community Affairs, resident in the partner States' capitals as means of expediting the regional integration process towards the EAC political confederation.

According to the EAC Treaty, the regional integration processes envisaged to proceed through four pillars, namely:

- i) The Customs Union;
- ii) The Common Market;
- iii) The Monetary Union; and
- iv) The Political Confederation.

An Overview of the Pillars of Integration and key achievement

The Customs Union Protocol

This protocol came into force in 2005. Under this protocol, the partner states agreed to have zero tariffs on goods produced within the region and a common external tariff for goods from outside the region.

The Common Market Protocol came into force on 1 July 2010. It provides for the free movement of goods, the free movement of persons, the free movement of labour or workers, the free movement of services, the free movement of capital, the right of establishment, and the right of residence.

The Monetary Union Protocol was signed on 30 November 2013. It outlines the roadmap for the establishment of the monetary union and provides for a progressive convergence of their currencies into a single currency in the Community.

Under the Political Confederation Pillar, the 18th Summit of the EAC Heads of State adopted the East Africa Political Confederation as a transitional model for the East African political federation, and the consultations are ongoing.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chair, this way we shall not be able to finish our reports by tomorrow. Please go straight to the vote.

MS KISEMBO: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the guidance. Under the key achievements, we can read what has been achieved by the Ministry under these pillars - the Common Market, Customs Union, the Monetary Union and the Political Confederation; they are already enumerated.

Allow me, Mr Speaker, in that case, move to page 19 of the report where we have committee observations and recommendations.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: And the Chairperson of the ICT committee, wherever you are, you are next.

MS KISEMBO: Committee observations and recommendations

Inadequate allocations of funds for core activities

Observation

The committee noted that during the consideration of the National Budget Framework Paper, the Budget Committee made several recommendations to provide for additional funding to the Ministry of East Africa Community Affairs to enable it to undertake various activities, which included the following:

One, Shs 1.762 billion for countrywide data collection and verification of all claimants of the defunct EAC employees using the existing district local government structures. This exercise is to be concluded within one financial year.

Two, Shs 2.2 billion to facilitate the Ministry of East Africa Community Affairs to participate in key regional mandatory and statutory meetings and ministerial engagements.

Three, Shs 1.4 billion to facilitate the Ministry of East Africa Community Affairs to source for market information to effectively carry out public sensitisation, and awareness of the EAC integration and trade opportunities for the benefit of all Ugandans.

It also provided Shs 0.460 billion to facilitate the Ministry of East Africa Community Affairs for coordinating regional and national efforts towards the drafting of the EAC Political Confederation Constitution in the Financial Year 2023/2024.

There was also Shs 3.25 billion for coordination and promotion of Swahili as an official language.

Then there was Shs 0.680 billion to enable the Ministry to participate in international engagements.

However, Mr Speaker, none of the recommendations that were adopted by this House was considered by the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development.

The committee, therefore, reiterates its earlier recommendations to provide funding for the above priority areas.

Payment of EAC gratuity for pension arrears

Observation

On 12 April 2023, the House adopted the report of the Committee on the payment of former employees of the defunct EAC in which the Ministry was instructed to hold the countrywide verification and validation of pensioners and the reconstruction of files for pensioners whose files were incomplete.

Because of this directive, the Ministry of East Africa Community Affairs will require a provisional sum of Shs 10 billion to pay former employees whose files will have been fully verified or fully reconstructed.

Mr Speaker, even if I do not go into the details; I can read the recommendation since this was discussed.

The committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development avails Shs 1.762 billion to facilitate the Ministry of East Africa Community Affairs

for the verification, and validation exercise of former employees of the defunct EAC.

In addition, a provision of Shs 10 billion should be made for payment of eligible former employees whose files will have been fully verified and/or fully reconstructed.

Low sensitisation and public awareness of East African Community integration matters

The committee observed that despite the earlier recommendation to enhance awareness, there is still low public awareness and sensitisation of Ugandans on EAC integration, which continues to disadvantage Ugandans from benefiting from the EAC integration.

Mr Speaker, on this, the committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development avails Shs 1.702 billion to facilitate the Ministry of East African Community Affairs to effectively carry out public sensitisation and awareness of the EAC integration for the benefit of Ugandans.

Inadequate funding for implementation of EAC resolutions and directives

The committee observed that the implementation of EAC resolutions and directives continues to be curtailed by the apparent inadequate funding, which consequently hampers the implementation of the integration agenda in Uganda.

Additionally, the lack of a legal framework mandating the Ministry of East African Community Affairs to compel affected ministries, departments and agencies to domesticate EAC resolutions and directives into policies, laws, budgets and programmes continue to frustrate the integration. The ministry only performs a coordination and supervisory role, which is not only critically underfunded, but also EAC resolutions are not often given priority by most ministries, departments and agencies.

The committee, therefore, recommends that ministries, departments and agencies

should prioritise the implementation of EAC resolutions passed by the Council of Ministers and the summit. All MDAs should work towards domesticating and implementing all EAC resolutions and directives into policies, laws, budgets and programmes.

EAC mandatory and statutory meetings

The committee was informed that the Ministry of East African Community Affairs has on a number of occasions failed to participate in key regional meetings due to lack of funding. Attending regional meetings and participating in bilateral engagements, joint permanent commissions and trade negotiations is key for Uganda to benefit from the EAC integration. Lack of participation in these meetings greatly affects Uganda's position in the negotiations.

The committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development avails funding of Shs 2.2 billion to facilitate the Ministry of East African Community Affairs to participate in the key ministerial statutory and regional mandatory meetings.

Development funds/Retooling of the Ministry of East African Community Affairs

The committee was informed that upon recruitment of new staff in the Ministry of East African Community Affairs, the ministry requires Shs 0.215 billion for retooling to enable the newly recruited staff to perform their duties.

Furthermore, the committee was informed that Shs 1.78 billion is needed to purchase one vehicle for the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for East African Community Affairs, two pick-up vehicles to boost the first Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of East Africa Community Affairs security, two motor vehicles for technical officers and two vehicles to complement public awareness campaigns.

The committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development avails Shs 1.995 billion to facilitate the

Ministry of East African Community Affairs on this development expenditure.

The table on page 24 summarises the funding gaps for which the committee calls upon the House to support the ministry with this budget. The total funding gap is Shs 23.449 billion.

On page 25, we have the table of supply. The committee recommends that Parliament adopts this report and approves a budgetary estimate as follows for the Financial Year 2023/2024:

- i) Shs 1,285,111,000 for wage,
- ii) Shs 36,380,231,000 for non-wage and
- iii) Shs 215,180,000 for GOU development.

Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can you read the total?

MS KISEMBO: Mr Speaker, the total supply is Shs 38,361,231,000. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Chairperson of the committee and your members. I will pick five colleagues to speak to this matter and then we go to the next item. We have many statements. If I pick you for this, I will not pick you to speak on the next item.

10.19

DR ABED BWANIKA (NUP, Kimaanya-Kabonera Division, Masaka City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson for a very good report.

Last year, in April, the Democratic Republic of Congo joined the East African Community and this is a huge market because it provides opportunities for trade and the growth of Uganda's economy. This nation has invested heavily in the infrastructure in terms of roads, and providing security. I wanted to hear, in this report, how Uganda has come up with a strategy to benefit our people and the funding towards that strategy.

In the report, it is very clear that they did not provide money for market information, and yet this is very critical for our traders and the people of Uganda in order to harness and also benefit from that market. I am seeking clarity from the chairperson and the ministry about our strategy.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, regarding the gratuity and the pension of the workers of the defunct East African Community, most of them are now dead and those living are at their tail end. They have been waiting for ages to be paid. They even went to court and the court ruled in their favour, but they have not been paid. We seem to have not provided them funds in this ministerial statement. I pray that the Shs 10 billion becomes a priority so that these old people and their families benefit from the work of their hands. I so submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, when we are submitting, we have to limit ourselves to the priorities that were covered in the ministerial policy statement. We cannot introduce new items at this stage. You have to ensure that your submission is in line with the priorities that are covered in the ministerial policy statement. Otherwise, if you make a recommendation that is not within the priorities, we cannot introduce a new item at this stage - whether funded or not, they were captured as priorities.

10.22

MR IBANDA RWEMULIKYA (INDEPENDENT, Ntoroko County, Ntoroko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson for the good report.

Mr Speaker, I am very surprised by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. When recommendations made by the committee are not taken into consideration, it is very hurting. The chairperson told us what happened in this financial year that is ending; they made a recommendation of Shs 1.4 billion to be set aside to help with the market information.

Mr Speaker, East Africa is growing big. The Democratic Republic of Congo is now part of us; we have South Sudan and other countries. We have the potential of selling our products in these countries, but people lack information. So, I would like to urge this Parliament to prevail over the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development so that money is provided to implement these recommendations that are made.

The second issue is about Kiswahili. Swahili is something that we should go for as East Africa. We have traders who go to Tanzania and Kenya but they need middlemen to help them in connecting with the other traders. Sometimes they are cheated. So, I urge the Government, through Parliament that Shs 3.5 billion be provided. Even as Parliament, we should have a session in Kiswahili so that we have a language that unites us as East Africans.

The last issue is about integration awareness. Mr Speaker, people do not know about East African integration. It is just on paper. When you go to our areas, it is like a myth. Shs 1.7 billion should be provided so people get to know what East African integration is, such that they are able to own the mission and work towards that goal. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I had picked Hon. Nyamutoro. [*Member rose*] Hon. Silwany, I have already picked Members to speak on this and you have just entered. I request that you are patient. I will pick you.

10.25

MS PHIONA NYAMUTORO (NRM, Youth Representative, Female): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Last year in July, Cabinet passed a resolution under the revised curriculum that the Swahili language be made compulsory in both primary and secondary schools.

Mr Speaker, Members of Parliament representing the youth make routine visits to different schools on a surprise occasion. There are barely any Swahili teachers in these schools. The students are confused on

what to do because they have to sit tests and examinations at the end of the day, and they have nothing to attest to.

My plea, to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is that priorities such as education, which is fundamental in the country, should not be neglected. The finance ministry has over time, cut down the education budget at the expense of the young people that are in schools.

Mr Speaker, Shs 3.25 billion to support the ministry to enrol Swahili as a programme and have teachers trained across the country is not something this Parliament can fail to appropriate. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should do its job, because we have done ours; the education of our children cannot be compromised at any cost. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Nyamutoro, we still have job to do. We have not done ours. We have discretionary funds under the budget and if we find it a priority, we shall go through those discretionary funds and provide money. That is when we shall have done our job. Otherwise, at this stage, the finance minister can bring corrigenda but within the budget provided to us, we can still take action. So, I think it is very important to know that we have not yet finished our job. We are still doing it.

I am not seeing committee chairpersons. I need committee chairpersons in so they present their reports and we finish. If they are in the corridors, please, whips, help me. I need committee chairpersons in so they can present the reports and we finish. Hon. Lillian?

10.27

MS LILLIAN PAPARU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson for a good report. Participating in key regional mandatory and statutory meetings is not an area that has been prioritised and to me, this is a key area. I come from a border district, where

there is a lot of illegal trade within the border districts.

The people within the areas of West Nile bordering Congo trade illegally because they believe that some items in Congo are cheaper than those in Uganda. So, they trade in fuel, sugar and other items. Congo has joined the East African Community and we are looking forward to common markets and rates across the East African Community countries.

In the processes of this illegal trade, people have lost lives because, along the way, Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) interjects and at times, we end up losing lives in such confusion because these illegal traders at times end up being shot by the URA operatives. So, participating in the statutory regional meetings should be financed so that we add our voice to the common East African regulations, especially in the areas of the market.

I also want to add my voice to the issue of awareness of the existence of the East African Community. I got interested when they said they needed to buy two vehicles to complement public awareness. I would like to understand what this public awareness is. Do you need vehicles to do public awareness and campaigns? Mr Speaker, to me, this is redundant. Such monies should be allocated for better activities within the ministry.

There are also common terms like ‘retooling’ which is running across our budgets and is also here in this report. Retooling means so many things to different ministries. When we were assessing the previous budgets, we realised those as redundant terms that people can easily use for anything and call it retooling. So, as Parliament, it is very important to be specific on areas so people do not end up misusing the funds we appropriate. Thank you. *(Mr Silwany rose)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Under what rule, honourable member?

MR SILWANY: Mr Speaker, I move under the privilege of a Member of Parliament to raise a procedural matter. The procedural matter I am raising is that from yesterday when we started receiving the ministerial policy statements; from the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, and now we are receiving the Ministry of East African Community Affairs budget -

Mr Speaker, when you look at the proposals, they are the same that were given in the previous financial year and they were never respected. I am looking at the budget performance –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, can you first take your seat? Points that disrupt a debate are provided for under rule 78. Rule 59 is for motions. *(Laughter)* Please, I do not want us to do guesswork. Whom had I picked? I had picked Hon. Enos. Honourable colleagues, there are many ways of approaching me but when you try to be clever, then it is wrong.

10.32

MR ENOS ASIIMWE (NRM, Kabula County, Lyantonde): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee, headed by the chairperson for a good report.

However, I would like to seek guidance, Mr Speaker. On page 22, the committee noted the lack of a legal framework mandating the ministry to compel affected ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) to domesticate the resolutions from the Community.

I am wondering why funding should limit us from doing this work – bringing in laws that can mandate the ministry. Unfortunately, the minister is not here – I do not know whether there is somebody representing the ministry.

I think this is something we can do without waiting for the budget. We can work with the little resources within the current budget to, at least, bring laws that allow us to domesticate the resolutions of the Community.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, I would like to add my voice in supporting the committee on funding mandatory and statutory meetings. Uganda is one of the countries that has been spearheading the integration of the Community and supporting all the protocols. It is very unfortunate that we cannot fund the mandatory meetings. Every time we do not attend these meetings, we are not showing our commitment to the cause. So, I would like to compel the Committee on Budget to provide resources for these mandatory meetings. Thank you.

MR SILWANY: Thank you for your ruling, Mr Speaker. Next time, I will consult; it was an oversight. I rise under rule 78 -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, just raise your point.

MR SILWANY: Mr Speaker, the point I was raising is that when you look at the budget performance for the previous proposals that were made in different ministries, nothing was done. Actually, 40 per cent, or even less, was respected.

Today, the Ministry of East African Community Affairs is coming up with very good proposals – promoting Kiswahili, promoting trade and integration – and attaching a budget to them. When we pass these proposals, as Parliament, they are not respected.

Mr Speaker, wouldn't it be procedurally right for you to, first, invite the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development here to commit himself? Actually, if we had reviewed and seen the achievements we made in the previous years, it would even be better. We are passing the budget, but these proposals are not going to be respected, yet the committees have taken their time to look at all these documents.

The minister for finance should, first, come here and commit that they will respect what we are passing here. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, this is a valid concern; otherwise, you would think we are supplying air. The only limitation

I have is that for the reports we are considering now, the processes are clearly provided for under Rule 149 of the Rules of Procedure. I cannot go outside rule 149 – whereby we receive the reports here, debate and refer to the Committee on Budget. However, I think it is very critical for the Committee on Budget to emphasise this and get that commitment before we pass the budget here.

That is why I was saying we do not need to do - there is a practice which I used not to appreciate, of stampeding the budget – the Committee on Budget is signing a report and the Speaker is here waiting for the budget and the Speaker also handles a report which he or she has not read.

Now, how do I handle a report which I have not read and I am going to guide the House to commit trillions of shillings? We have made it very clear that the Committee on Budget must finish the report in time, we upload it, give it a day of debate and pass it when Members know what they have passed.

At that stage, we shall be able to, first, make the minister commit. Hon. Jonathan, did you want to add something?

10.37

MR JONATHAN ODUR (UPC, Erute County South, Lira): Mr Speaker, in 2020, we underwent the same process. I remember we were seated outside in the tent. We raised this matter about the recommendations made by the different committees and the implication of adopting some of the recommendations in the minority report on the budget.

At that time, the then Deputy Speaker, the late Rt. Hon. Jacob Oulanyah, was chairing. He made a proposal that we should have carried forward – to review some of our rules and the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA).

The Executives' argument at that time was that the resource envelope was already determined and that they would not be able to accommodate the recommendations within the

budget, but that in the subsequent years, they would consider those recommendations first.

That is where Hon. Silwany is coming from. Where the Executive is constrained to accommodate a recommendation, in the subsequent years, they will have time to integrate proposals by this House. I think that is the direction that we should take to move forward.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Also, the alternative budget was submitted in time. So, I hope the Committee on Budget and the committees have considered the views in the alternative budget. This helps us, especially on issues of minority reports. So, I hope they consider them, especially when they are doing consolidation. They should look at the priorities when doing reallocation of proposals.

Honourable colleagues, I would like us to move because we are holding ourselves back.

MR ENOS ASIIMWE: I rise under rule 50, which requires ministers to attend the House to answer questions. Mr Speaker, I would like you to compel the Government Chief Whip to call the ministers to this House because we need answers to some of the issues we are discussing right now.

Unfortunately, when I was raising my issues, Hon. Silwany was talking to you. I was asking a question, as to why we are failing to domesticate the East African Community resolutions.

Such a question would be well answered if the minister is here because it is not about the budget constraints. I believe she can use the little money that she has to push for the domestication of these laws.

So, is it procedurally right for us to continue discussing these ministerial policy statements without the presence of the ministers in charge of the ministries?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Government Chief Whip?

10.40

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Mr Speaker, the Office of the Government Chief Whip endeavours, every day, to officially notify all ministers to be personally present in Parliament.

In this particular case, including this morning, ministers were notified – and I have it on record – to be present, listen to the reports of the committees, sector by sector, and respond to the issues raised.

Maybe it is high time we invoked the rules. The rules of every game are set before and we have the rules. If there are people who are failing to comply, the Rules of Procedure of Parliament can be invoked.

Just like in any game you can be warned – given a yellow card – but if the fault is great, you can even be given a red card.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Now, this is very good clearance from the Government Chief Whip, but also – anyway, the rest are a bit administrative: we shall talk.

However, after the lunch break, honourable Government Chief Whip, I will give you time, before we go to the statements, to lay on Table – and give some little bit of detail – the rota which the ministers have worked on so that we know which minister is supposed to be appearing on a given day so that we can hold them accountable.

10.42

MR FRANCIS MWIJUKYE (FDC, Buhweju County): Mr Speaker, I know that some ministers are in hiding because of the work the police is doing; but that cannot stop us from proceeding as Parliament. That is why we do not see the ministers of finance and many others. However, we are concerned by the way they frustrate our work as Parliament. Even as we proceed now, it is as if passing these statements as a ritual, because of how late they bring the statements - 15 March is the deadline but they can bring them at the end of February; they bring them towards the deadline.

We would be using the whole of March to process them and the first two weeks of April to debate so that all members have enough time. But now we have just five members debating; others have to wait yet we all do not sit on all the sectoral committees. And so, at the end of the day, when they do not do their work on time, it affects us.

We need to put it very clear that this is the last time, we shall allow them to bog down our work – and it is very deliberate to bring them towards the end so that they bog us down. So you need to make it clear that this should be the last time to bog us down. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I totally agree with the LOP. Hon. Government Chief Whip, in the afternoon any minister who is not here, I will not admit their ministerial policy statement on the Floor. *(Applause)*

That means, I will not refer their committee report to the Committee on Budget. What that means is that the Committee on Budget will not process a budget for that ministry. That is very clear and there will be no negotiation about it. Let us be lenient and give them up to 1.00 p.m. Any minister who will not be here after 1.00 p.m., I will not admit their report and I am finishing tomorrow.

I am not going beyond the deadline, which is tomorrow. And it is good everyone knows it. This is an activity that happens once in a year. So, if once in a year, you cannot find a day for Parliament to process your budget, then how are you going to run a ministry without a budget? Where is the Chairperson of the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development; I need this chairperson in the House.

Secondly, I expected LOP to appreciate us because these policy statements used to be bundled together. They would report and then bundle them together, but now we have decided to give each sector, at least 10 minutes. So, I am just constrained by time. Otherwise, ordinarily, I would not have picked on only five Members. Next time, we shall ensure we make up to 10 members. But also we are

being tactical because there are sectors, like infrastructure, health and other service-related sectors, we will ensure they get more time.

MR MWIJUKYE: Mr Speaker we appreciate the pain you are going through, and the circumstances under which you are working. We appreciate and we are only saying that it is not your fault; it is the fault of those ministers who are not here and those that do not do their work well, and those who are hiding from the police.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us first hear from finance, then defence and internal affairs.

Honourable colleagues, I am sure the issues were very clear. There was nothing controversial. So, I now put the question that the Report of the committee on East African Community Affairs on the Ministerial Policy Statement for Financial Year 2023/2024 for the Ministry of East African Community Affairs be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Congratulations Chairperson of the committee and members, the report is referred to the Committee on Budget for processing.

CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT
OF THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE,
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT ON THE MINISTERIAL
POLICY STATEMENT AND BUDGET
ESTIMATES FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR
2023/2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, chairperson of the committee – okay, point of procedure.

MR SILWANY: Mr Speaker, we have been debating the report for the Committee on East African Community Affairs.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, we are not debating; we are done with it.

MR SILWANY: It is true we are done, but Members raised issues that needed responses – *(Interjections)* – now, where does that fall.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, I told you - I listened properly - most of the issues they raised were not of a financial nature. When processing ministerial policy statements, anything to do with the submission on the debate must have a financial implication because we must refer all matters to the Committee on Budget to either look for money or reduce the money. So, issues of policy nature are not for this stage. I guided since yesterday on issues of policy nature. Where I feel there are issues to do with financing gaps, I ensure they are attended to.

Secondly, I have not received any communication from the Minister for East African Community Affairs or her representative – the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is different from the Ministry of East African Community Affairs. I do not want to mistake Hon. Mulimba's being here as representing the Ministry of East African Community Affairs, because I have not been informed that he is standing in for that minister.

So, I want that to be very clear. What if I call and there is no minister showing up? So, when you have a minister representing you, it is good to inform the Speaker of who you have delegated to handle your docket. I cannot use guess work on that front. And that is why I called the Government Chief, who would have informed me that Minister of State for Regional Cooperation is standing in for the Minister for East African Community Affairs. So, as far as I know, the Minister for East African Community Affairs is not here.

10.50

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Dr Keefa Kiwanuka):

Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development to present its report. I have prepared an executive summary of the report. The full report has also been uploaded.

Mr Speaker, Article 155(4) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Section 13 of The Public Finance Management Act, 2015 and Rule 148 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, the Sectoral Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development was tasked to process a ministerial policy statement for 15 votes.

In light of the above, I now take this opportunity to present to the House, for the consideration and adoption of the Report of the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development in respect of the ministerial policy statement for the financial year 2023/2024.

The report is structured in three parts. The first part is the introduction. The second part is an overview of the sectors budget performance for the Financial Year 2021/2022, and the first half of the Financial Year 2022/2023 –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, point of procedure.

MR MOSES ALEPER: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am raising a point of procedure, but I also want to inform you that I am a Member of the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development. The point of procedure I want to raise, while also seeking guidance from you, is that yesterday when we were debating, one of the Members of this House referred to the Rules of Procedure; rule 183 highlighting the roles of sectoral committees.

One of the specific and key roles of the committees is to ensure that we have a detailed analysis of the submissions from the ministries, departments and agencies so that what comes out of these ministerial policy statements and the recommendations therefrom inform the budget that we are preparing.

Now, I want to seek guidance from you, Mr Speaker, in a situation where the MDA has not provided the necessary information that can ably make the Members of the committee to assess, evaluate and recommend to this House the proposals from that particular MDA. Is it

procedurally right to go on with less informed recommendations? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable, satisfaction is a relative word because the people who signed the report are satisfied with the information they got. Those who did not sign it are probably not satisfied. Therefore, in such a circumstance, where you are not satisfied, you should write a minority report. However, we have a deadline which we must meet.

If the report is not signed by Members, then I would have a problem but it is a report signed by Members. This means that some were satisfied while others are still not yet satisfied. Now, these are issues that we bring here, debate and make recommendations to the Budget Committee. That would be my guidance. Mr Chairman, continue.

DR KEEFA KIWANUKA: The report, as I was saying, is structured in three parts. The first part is the introduction. The second part is an overview of the sector's budget performance for the Financial Year 2021/2022 and the first half of the Financial Year 2022/2023. This covers real sector monetary fiscal performance and then physical performance. That is from page nine to page 33.

Part three is an overview of the sector's budget proposal for the Financial Year 2023/2024. That is from page 34 to page 57. Part four is the committee's observation and recommendation, which are from page 58 to page 87.

Mr Speaker, the 15 Votes under the committee and their respective mandates are presented from page two to page five of the report. For the record, there are 14 Votes under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. The other Vote is the Office of the Auditor-General which is part of Parliament with its mandate under the committee's jurisdiction.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Chairman, you have 20 minutes so start from page 58.

DR KEEFA KIWANUKA: Okay. On page 58, we have the general observation.

Programmatic approach to planning and budgeting

The committee observes that whereas the National Development Plan III migrated from sectoral to programme-based budgeting, Parliamentary Analysis Vote Budget remained under sectoral committees. This matter was referred to the sectoral Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs on the 29th of January, but no report has been brought to the House for consideration.

In effect, the committee, being the lead committee that covers the development plan implementation programme, did not interact with some agencies that contribute to the programme. Such agencies include the Office of the President, the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Local Government, the Ministry of Kampala and Metropolitan Affairs as well as Kampala Capital City Authority.

Recommendation

The committee recommends that the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs expedites the task of advising Parliament on aligning sectoral committees as provided for under rule 189 to accommodate programme-based budgeting and processing of budgets for spending agencies of the Government.

Ministerial Policy Statement

The committee observes that the provision of Sections (13), (14) and (15) are instructive on what committees ought to consider during the processing of ministerial policy statements. Given the short period to the committee to process 15 ministerial policy statements almost at the same time to also initiate the processing of Tax Bills, it becomes hard for a thorough analysis of the policy statement.

The committee further observed that there is total silence on counterpart funding for

loan projects presented in ministerial policy statements. A further observation is made on the lack of separation of donor and domestic development financing in the work plans produced off the programme budgeting system (PBS).

The committee recommends that in the next budgeting round, Votes should submit their draft ministerial policy statement to the Office of the Clerk, pending formal laying at a later date, as provided for in the Public Finance Management Act. This would enable the committees with many Votes to have reasonable time to go through the costed work plans and seek clarification from spending agencies ahead of the formal hearing in Parliament.

The committee further recommends that PBS should expressly provide counterpart funding where there is need for one.

Economic modelling

I think I will skip that.

These are the Vote specific issues.

Vote 008: Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Chairman, you do not need to read the whole detail in terms of observation. Ensure we get the picture and then recommendations.

DR KEEFA KIWANUKA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The committee observes that in the Financial Year 2023/2024 budgeting cycle, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has laid before Parliament fiscal documents not backed by any empirical studies to guide policy making. Specifically, the entire tax proposals in the Tax Bills were not based on any single study to assess the effect on revenue collection as well as the economy.

I will read all this because it is a point of contention. The committee has established from the Ministerial Policy Statement of the Vote that the macroeconomic policy department in

the ministry has an annual budget of Shs 1.724 billion to support the macroeconomic model, which never produces any estimates to guide tax policy.

The committee also observes that the ministry is not able to demonstrate any tax policy studies undertaken by the tax policy department for any other department, including the macroeconomic policy department. This failure to undertake tax policy studies has fed into the committee's inability to quantitatively guide the House on the effect of changes in the tax policy on tax efforts and the economy.

The committee, therefore, recommends that the minister ensures that the macroeconomic policy department supports the tax policy department to produce impact studies on all the current tax heads as well as the proposed tax measures to be included in the Financial Year 2024/2025 Tax Bills.

The committee further recommends that the macro modelling team is supported with all the necessary tools to produce studies on topical issues like the impact of capitalisation of Post Bank, Agricultural Credit Facility, Uganda Development Bank, as well as other programmes like the Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP), *Emyooga* and the Parish Development Model (PDM).

The next part is on the Parish Development Model. We note the pillars of the PDM, and the challenges. I think we have heard a lot on this recently.

On that, the committee is recommending that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development continues to engage the responsible local governments to ensure that the errors of omission and commission around still unfunded PDM SACCOs are addressed. There are a number of SACCOs that have not yet received the money. We are recommending that this is expedited in liaison with the different Government departments that are responsible.

The committee further recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should immediately disperse at least Shs 50 million to each of the 9,760 SACCOs that have passed the requirement for disbursements. This will bring the total amount of money released to each of the SACCOs to Shs 75 million each for the period up to the third quarter of the Financial Year 2022/2023.

Financing of Uganda Development Bank

The committee is recommending that Uganda Development Bank be capitalised with additional resources to serve more Ugandan enterprises.

On accumulated gold exports, the committee recommends that the relevant committee inquires into the circumstances that led to the write-off of accumulated revenue of Shs 573 billion and the implication of that to the current legal provision on the resource mobilisation potential for the country.

The committee also recommends that URA should undertake to collect all tax arrears due from the export of gold, following the enactment of the Mining and Minerals Act, 2022.

Vote 130: Treasury operations

The committee recommends that Parliament together with the Executive identifies Shs 877 billion be reallocated within the entire budget, as costs are statutory and therefore unavoidable, but to be paid on the dates when they fall due.

Here, there are a number of statutory obligations, which should have been budgeted for. This includes the payment of promissory notes for Lubowa Hospital, ROKO Ltd and a number of other expenses. They are not budgeted for, but are being shown in the budget as unfunded priorities. The committee is recommending that the issue is resolved because these are statutory obligations that have to be paid.

National Planning Authority (NPA)

The committee recommends that an additional Shs 5.8 billion be allocated to NPA for the support of Critical Africa Peer Review Mechanism activities.

Financial Intelligence Authority

It is important to note that we are just still recovering from the effects of being on the grey list. The activities of the Financial Intelligence Authority will get Uganda off the grey list. Because of that, we recently passed a number of legislation that went a long way in addressing what was being required in order for us to be removed from the grey list; but the agency remains underfunded.

Here, the committee recommends that an additional Shs 2 billion be allocated to the Financial Intelligence Authority for conducting financial due diligence.

The authority has an operational shortfall as a result of staff recruitment of Shs 1 billion, which we are recommending is provided.

There is the budget for travel abroad. The committee is recommending that restrictions on travel abroad should have regard to Financial Intelligence Authority-specific circumstances and an additional Shs 0.5 billion be allocated to the FIA for travel abroad.

The FIA has a requirement for ICT equipment which is Shs 1.5 billion. We are recommending that Shs 1.5 billion is allocated for the enhancement of their ITC system in the Financial Year 2023/2024.

The FIA has a shortfall of Shs 4.5 billion for retooling. The committee is recommending that an additional Shs 4.5 billion be allocated to the Financial Intelligence Authority for its returning project.

They have a wage shortfall of Shs 1 billion and the committee is recommending that an additional Shs 1 billion be allocated to the

Financial Intelligence Authority to enhance the salaries of lower-level officers.

Office of the Auditor-General

The office has a shortfall in capacity building of Shs 1.8 billion. The committee is recommending that that is made available to the Office of the Auditor-General to enable them to undertake capacity building for the staff.

Expanding the range and the scope of audits

They have an expanding range and scope of audits. This is because of the new local administration structures, the PDM, the new structures that have been created. All these have added to their scope of work, but this has not been followed up with corresponding resources.

The committee is recommending that an additional Shs 19.61 billion be allocated to the Office of the Auditor-General for the expanding scope of audit in light of the PDM, the value for money audits - Parliament has asked them to do some forensic audits, the 20 forensic investigation, infrastructure audits. Generally, the scope of work here is increasing, but it has not been matched with corresponding resources and that is what this recommendation is about.

They have a requirement for field vehicles to replace the ageing fleet of Shs 7 billion for field vehicles to replace the ageing fleet, which we are recommending to be made available.

They also have an issue with audits of missions abroad. Now, in last year's budget, because they were not given enough money for the audit of missions abroad, they just sampled - they audited some and did not audit others - which is very risky for the public money. So, we recommend that Shs 2.5 billion be made available for that work.

For stakeholder engagement and international obligations, they require Shs 0.92 billion. We recommend that it is made available.

For the upgrading of ICT infrastructure – it has become obsolete – we recommend that hardware and software, including servers -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chairperson, I do not see the urgency in your submission; you are very comfortable and I do not have much time.

DR KEEFA KIWANUKA: Okay. On page 78 – I have just a few pages to go. On the development of an in-house audit management system, the committee recommends that an additional Shs 5.4 billion be allocated to the Office of the Auditor-General for the development of this system.

They require the acquisition of additional land for the construction of a Centre of Audit Excellence, where we are recommending Shs 1.8 billion.

The Office of the Auditor-General Impact Assessment Perception Survey requires Shs 1,203,000,000, which we are recommending should be made available.

Uganda Investment Authority

The committee recommends that Shs 251 billion be allocated to Uganda Investment Authority for the development of industrial and business parks.

Setup of regional one-stop centres and the implementation of automated eBiz services require Shs 4 billion, which we are recommending should be made available.

Enhancing foreign direct investment and DDI development in the country requires Shs 2 billion, which we are recommending should be availed.

Enhancement of viable investment opportunities requires Shs 2 billion, which we are recommending.

Implementation of the Kabale Industrial Business Park Namanve Project requires Shs

9 billion, which the committee recommends should be made available.

Under Capital Market Authority, there is a small budget required.

Uganda Revenue Authority - under Rental Tax Compliance Management System, they have a deficit of Shs 14.785 billion, which the committee is recommending should be made available.

For specialised audits, they require Shs 16.72 billion, which the committee is recommending should be made available to them.

Uganda Bureau of Statistics

Uganda Bureau of Statistics has a big shortfall regarding the population census, which is this year – actually, it was supposed to have been in August. Shs 160 billion has not been made available for their preparatory activity. It will be in the next financial year, so, the budget is in the next financial year.

However, they have not been given the Shs 160 billion for the preparatory activities. The committee is recommending that all possible measures be explored to see that that is identified to support the population census activity. Without it, the population census activity may have to be deferred.

The others are about Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority – Mr Speaker, I think I should leave the rest for the Members to read for themselves. Those are the key highlights.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, can I have the total amounts you want? How much are you recommending per Vote – and then the total that would go to the sector?

DR KEEFA KIWANUKA: It is not summarised because of the rush, but I can do it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, let us be debating, but ensure that you do it. That is what is critical because, here, we are looking

at figures and referring them to the Committee on Budget.

In addition, Mr Chairman, I think you did not lay the minutes. I would need a copy of the report as well as the minutes to be laid.

DR KEEFA KIWANUKA: I have it in my hands, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: And the minutes too.

DR KEEFA KIWANUKA: They are being delivered.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will allow you to lay the report and the minutes before we adopt it.

DR KEEFA KIWANUKA: Okay. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I know I have put you, honourable colleagues, under pressure, so, it is not surprising. Please, communicate to the Clerk, who should be the custodian of the minutes.

The report is already here - and we also need a table showing the figures per Vote. What is the total per Vote - even if you do not go to the recurrent and development figures? Give us the totals per Vote and the total for the whole sector and we refer to it the Committee on Budget.

Honourable colleagues, I am going to open debate. I will start with Hon. Ferigo Kambale, the Member for Nakasongola, Hon. Osoru, Hon. Kugonza, the Member for Oyam and then the whip of DP. Let us use two minutes each.

11.20

MR FERIGO KAMBALE (NRM, Kasese Municipality, Kasese): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee chairperson for the report.

Mr Speaker, the committee chairperson, in the report, recommended that there is a need to expedite the issue of collecting gold tax arrears.

The other time Hon. Kivumbi mentioned that from gold tax arrears, we were supposed to collect around Shs 600 billion.

I request that this recommendation be taken seriously. We cannot leave tax arrears worth Shs 600 billion when the taxpayers are clearly specified and known; Shs 600 billion is a lot of money.

Minister for finance, please, let this issue be taken very seriously. If possible, we would even agree on the timeline. We should even get updates on how far these colleagues have gone in collecting the Shs 600 billion.

Mr Speaker, when the committee chairperson was presenting, he recommended that certain Votes should be given money. For example -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is the committee that recommends, not the chairperson.

MR KAMBALE: The committee recommended, for example, that the Auditor-General should get money for the expanded scope of work. Now, my concern is that the committee has not told us whether there are certain areas we to be declined in this report. Is the report saying that we should get extra funding to that sector, so that we reorganise what was declared as the total resource envelope? Or is it saying that recommendations and adjustments should be within the resource envelope so far allocated to the sector because the report is silent about that. So, without wasting time, those are the two issues I want to clarify on.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, on the issue of gold, which Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi touched, I am waiting to see the energy sector asking for more money, when they gave away all that money. I am just waiting to see whether they will also be asking for more money.

But what is so interesting with that sector is that even after revising the law, and I think we put 200 per kilogramme, they have gone ahead - there are companies, which are paying, I think

three companies but there are three companies that have refused to pay. They have instead petitioned the minister and it seems there is some consensus being given to allow them not to pay even the 200.

Some are paying, others are not. First of all, leaving alone the one of the arrears, we are talking about the current ones. Some are paying, others are not. It seems the ministry is agreeing with those ones who are not paying, by allowing them not to pay.

However, one reason as to why that tax is considered on Gold - if you do not, it means you are not registering and clearly certifying your Gold. If you are doing it, then you should pay tax. Otherwise, that is regarded as gold laundering and it is one of the reasons why the UN was watching us. In fact, it is one of the reasons why we are on the grey list; due to gold laundering; because money laundering is usually done using precious materials. Yes, Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi.

MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI: Mr Speaker, on this we need to be very tough as Parliament. First, we need to investigate this minister, who after knowing that there were arrears of Shs 616 billion, still went ahead and issued an instrument and effectively because of that instrument, brought is down to 43. We need to investigate this minister.

The second issue is about the whole mineral revenue. It is so suddenly, when you go to Mubende, Busia, Karamoja and everywhere - it is amazing that the minister comes to a committee and confesses that we did not earn any money from minerals. The mineral revenue for this year is zero, yet, all over the country, there is mining going on. Our people are being displaced. So, some few individuals are pocketing this money. We need to be very tough as Parliament, on this issue.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: On Tuesday the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development – because I want this considered before we can discuss the budget. This is a resource envelope, so, the minister should bring a statement:

One, clarifying how we wrote off arrears to reduce from Shs 600 billion to around Shs 42 billion. They should give an explanation to the House because that tax was based on a law. It was not based on their discretion or comfort; it was based on a law.

Two, we need to know if the current taxes are being paid. Otherwise, how do we capture zero as the revenue from minerals? If that is the case, then it means we are just making people rich, without paying taxes. How are we going to widen the tax base? If you cannot get taxes on Gold, which goes via the airport; it is certified and precious but you cannot even collect money on it? We need to know the status of the payment of the current tax. Who is complying and who is not and why?

And three – because we need to first pick on the issues of Gold, which are clear. However, even on other minerals, why aren't we collecting taxes from them? Who gave them exemptions and were they based on the law? Government Chief Whip, please ensure the Attorney-General is present in the House.

Tuesday, I have two very critical statements; one on the potholes in KCCA - I cannot forget that one because we might handle it when the “expo” has ended –(Laughter)– we want to handle this when the “expo” is still going on. I have seen a statement from KCCA. Honourable Minister for Finance, kindly prepare a clear response because KCCA is saying it has no money yet we appropriated money to do that work. And I also know you go through the same potholes.

MR OJARA OKIN: Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: If it is to add on the recommendations -

MR OJARA OKIN: It is to add on what you have just been ruling on, Mr Speaker. Thank you, Mr Speaker. I recall in this very House, I raised the concern about the deposit and mining of Gold in this country. I also recall very well that from a very reliable source, there was even an exploration done that the Gold deposit

in this country is actually worth \$14 trillion, which is over and above the oil deposits, which we are trying to exploit.

Therefore, in regards to your ruling, Mr Speaker, I would like to request that the minister in charge should get the overall portfolio of mineral deposits in this country and lay that record in this Parliament.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR OJARA OKIN: We need the mapping showing which mineral is found where and in what quantity, and how is the level of exploitation. This will help us to determine whether we are really doing the right thing because most of these minerals seem to be mined under cover.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR OJARA OKIN: So, while I would like to concur with your directive, allow me add that we need to have a record showing the whole mapping of minerals in this country laid before this Parliament so that we are able to determine the right thing. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. But honourable colleague, on Tuesday, I would want us to focus on the revenue component. This because I do not want us to get lost in many things and but what you are raising is very critical. For example, we passed a loan in the last term, from the Spanish Government for the aerial survey of Karamoja, and it was to be done by Excalibur from Spain. It was a highly concessional loan and the report should be ready by now. We should be given an update because we gave you €20 million to go and do a survey of Karamoja. What did you find and how are you going to utilise it? Is it also going to be given to some individuals or you are going to run a public auction like it is done in other countries? You indicate our findings and then we invite interested developers to come and mine them.

So, Hon. Okin Ojara, I have taken note; I will also require the Minister to do that, but for

Tuesday, since we are in budgeting time, let us first look at the revenues, so that we do not get lost.

MR ODUR: Thank you, Mr Speaker. On that matter of the revenue from Gold, you remember that the Prime Minister made a statement here, and I questioned the projection on revenue for the Financial Year 2023/2024 that was captured at Shs 10 billion. If the two years had tax arrears of up to Shs 600 billion, what would inform the Government to project and reduce from 600 to 10? That is the first question which should be clarified.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, in the 10th Parliament, I attempted to ask that this House considers assigning the responsibility of examining statutory instruments, specifically to a committee that should report to us. For instance, we have the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs. This old waiver was done under the statutory instrument; we do not know whether that statutory instrument was actually brought here and laid because it is performing a delegated responsibility.

The final responsibility of making the law lies with us. It means we must ratify that instrument. If it is made, it must be brought here so that we examine and confirm that, that is the intention that we had given to the minister.

Therefore, on Tuesday, I request the minister to come with that instrument. I do not know whether it was laid here before or not, but it should come here. In addition, the Attorney-General should come up with an opinion on that very instrument so that we test its legality. The moment the instrument is defective, then that waiver falls square; it falls on its floor and we shall then have to move to recover that. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, why don't we discuss it on Tuesday? A statutory instrument cannot amend a law passed by this House and assented to by the President. All statutory instruments should be brought here.

Leader of the Opposition, did you have something to say? - Because I do not want us now - we are in the last 30 minutes allocated to the committee; I am about to put the question.

MR MWIJUKYE: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your guidance. As we look at the law, we also have to look at who is mining the land. This is because when you know that, you will know why they are not paying taxes. In Buhweju, it is Modesta, Lokeris' daughter, doing the mining. She has brought down all the roads - she is the daughter of the Minister of Energy -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister for Minerals.

MR MWIJUKYE: Yes. His daughter is in Buhweju mining and you are asking, "Why are they not paying taxes?" It is because people in Government are doing business with the Government. We can look at the taxes but we also need to know who is mining because there are people who are mining and they believe they must not pay taxes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. It will be helpful on Tuesday. Honourable colleagues, collect as much information as possible so that, for example, if someone is mining here, we can table evidence for colleagues who do not know about that person and all that; it would be very helpful. Hon. Wanzala? (*Hon. Bataringaya rose*) Hon. Basil, you are a Member of the finance committee.

MR BATARINGAYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. When you talk of a write-off of Shs 616 billion, it points to how much total output is being generated, and therefore, how much revenue is coming from this entity.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: That was based on 5 per cent. The law we had passed was a 5 per cent tax on refined gold. The Shs 600 billion was only 5 per cent.

MR BATARINGAYA: It shows you how much is in that mineral sector. Now, the issue I am raising here is that more often than not, under Section 79 of the Public Finance and Management Act, very many people get charged for causing financial loss. When you unilaterally write-off a tax in this manner, I wonder whether it does not tantamount to causing a financial loss to this country. I am seeking your clarification, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, you cannot get it from me because the statement is coming on Tuesday. You are now debating a statement that is going to be brought here on Tuesday. What if whatever you are saying, she says, "I did not do", what will I do? Nonetheless, on Tuesday, that will be a very good question to answer and you will put it directly.

11.36

MR NOAH MUTEBI (NRM, Nakasongola County, Nakasongola): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the Chairperson of the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development, for the report. The committee has recommended the allocation of Shs 2.5 billion for auditing our Missions Abroad. This is a serious matter and I entirely agree with them.

I am a Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. We have tried to go to some Missions Abroad and I want to mention a few; we went to the Missions in Algiers, Cairo, Addis Ababa, and so many others. However, when you go there, there are a lot of challenges. You find that the accounting officer and the ambassador are fighting; the ambassador has taken over the powers of the accounting officer and he is the one managing the finances. This has come up because they are not audited since they are far.

I, therefore, entirely agree with the committee that this money be allocated; the Shs 2.5 billion, so that our Missions Abroad are audited in order for us to have value for money in those embassies. It is very important to go there - the Auditor-General's office, and of course, audit them because there is a lot of dirt at the embassies since they are abroad.

Secondly, on the Shs 1.8 billion for capacity building, there are a lot of changes in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. When they are paying our districts, they are using tier one, tier two, tier three, or even tier four. Therefore, without capacity building, we are going to have problems in the finance ministry. I entirely agree that this Shs 1.8 billion be identified so that our people are mentored on how to utilise our funds. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable. Let me conclude with Hon. Osoru.

11.38

MS MOURINE OSORU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate the chairperson for presenting a report on finance. However, I have concerns.

First of all, I appreciate the committee for having stated rightfully that under the Parish Development Model, we should have continuous community mobilisation and sensitisation. I understand that the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development had trained more than 20 people; those are Trainers of Trainers (ToTs) who later on went ahead to train more than 885 officers in all the local governments.

However, the messages that are passed by the officers and also the different guidelines that are issued by the different ministries do not actually match. If you go to the masses down there, there is a lot of confusion. I think we need to do a lot when it comes to training because we understand that we are in the planning process.

At the same time, if you are to take Emyooga and the Parish Development Model in all the funds that we do appropriate here, there is no money or there is no budget available for the technical staff. For example, there are many commercial officers at local governments, but most of them end up using their money for applications and follow-ups.

I think, as we plan for the Parish Development Model and other projects, we should also think of putting aside money for the operation funds such that the projects that we are relying on do not go to waste. Thank you.

11.41

MR EMELY KUGONZA (NRM, Buyanja East County, Kibaale): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the report that has been ably presented to Parliament. I have picked the issue of the industrial parks because the industrial parks and the business parks are one of those strategies that have been approved to promote industrialisation and Shs 254 billion, in my opinion, is a budget that is way below what is actually needed.

We need to support this at the beginning because our country deserves it. If you look at the new wars, it is not going to be the guerrilla type. It is around poverty, unemployment water poverty and these are things that we need to address.

Also, industrial and business park development has got to go along with the support of marketing. Many countries have invested in industrial parks but failed to provide resources for marketing them. At the end of the day, they have turned out to be “white elephants”. We need to ensure that the investment in industrial parks is matched with investment in the marketing of the industrial parks.

The proposal around the setup of regional one-stop centres in the report is a very good issue; it should be taken as a priority because this is what also will facilitate the local investors to take part in the industrial parks.

Many countries have realised that after coming up with this good strategy, it is foreigners that have taken advantage because the locals remain ignorant about what happens. So, the regional one-stop centres will be able to inform the locals about the opportunities. I beg to Summit.

11.43

MR GEOFFREY OKELLO (DP, Nwoya East County, Nwoya): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson of the committee for the report. My attention is drawn to one particular very serious matter of counterpart funding.

The chairperson said that the ministerial policy statement was silent on counterpart funding by the Government. Mr Speaker, depending on the implementation cycle where counterpart funding is required, it can affect a programme or project in very many ways. In the beginning, it can frustrate take-off; during implementation, it can stop, and it can lead to no completion of programmes and projects.

Therefore, may I request the chairperson to name the projects and programmes that require counterpart funding so that we deal with the matter here and now so money is provided where it is required? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. If we do not get that now, we will handle it at the time the Committee on Budget interfaces with the report. I picked the Member for Oyam and Hon. Mwijukye.

11.44

MS SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. Allow me also to thank the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development for coming up with this report. However, it seems there are very many unfunded priorities. I would like to know: among these very many unfunded priorities, what are your priorities?

Let me start with the issue of the population. The committee has presented that there is Shs 1.790 as an unfunded priority for the population census. Mr Speaker, planning should be based on the population. If this money is not provided and it remains under unfunded priorities, then what will be the basis of planning for this country?

You wonder whether we do planning yet here we are, with a report given and what is supposed

to go for planning. We see a lot of money being mentioned as unfunded priorities. I support the committee that money for population census must be provided.

On the issue of the Parish Development Model, the committee stated that Shs 50 million is needed for the 9,660 SACCOs all over the country; we have been told that the Parish Development Model is a magic bullet, and a lot of money is going down there – *(Member timed out.)*

11.46

MR FRANCIS MWIJUKYE (FDC, Buhweju County, Buhweju): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mentioning that we have a shortfall of money for the census does not go well with me because this may lead to the postponement of the census.

Census, as my colleague has just said is the basis for planning for development, electoral processes, and demarcation of polling stations and electoral areas. This is the basis for democracy and good governance in this country. Therefore, you cannot talk about planning electoral processes without it. I request that money be provided so that it is not postponed, otherwise, we shall be planning in vain. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. What Hon. Mwijukye raised is very critical. If we do not update our figures - honourable members, I have been doing my census in my constituency. How do I do it? I buy exercise books and give them to LC1s to write the names of each household. This is an activity that I have tried. When - I went for Government figures, it was extremely troublesome.

And where the official figures show around 16,000 households, I have 23,000 and they are growing. It is very critical that we provide money for the census.

I am happy that you have touched on the issue of investments. We are talking about sectors which will generate more revenue for this

country. So, honourable minister, take note of the issues raised by honourable colleagues.

11.48

MR MUHAMMAD MUWANGA (NUP, Butambala County, Butambala): I happen to come from the central region where I am the chairperson. We are very keen on the census for obvious reasons. Look at the Parish Development Model; our region, which has the biggest population, is receiving the least amount of money.

The reason given is that we have fewer parishes. Mr Speaker, parishes are demarcated not based on demography. Two, we are the biggest region with the number of voters but with the least number of constituencies.

I have MPs like Hon. Medard Lubega-Sseggona, representing over half a million people; a huge population with voters. We are disadvantaged even in secondary schools.

I know of a district that got four first grades and it has 28 sub-counties. That means, according to the development model of this country, this district has got a secondary school in every sub-county with four first grades. Who will occupy those grades? Mr Speaker, this is why if there is any money we need urgently, it is the money for the census.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I totally agree with you. Committee on Budget and the finance minister, I am sure are going to respond to these issues.

11.50

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to begin with the census. The shortfall we have on the census relates to this financial year for preparatory activities.

In the budget we are debating now for the Financial Year 2023/2024, we have a provision of Shs 175 billion for the census. However, we are making all the effort to provide funding for

the preparatory activities for this year because we need these numbers. Time and again, when we tell you about economic growth, we base on these numbers – these numbers help us to provide projections for the economy. Therefore, I would like to assure the House that funding for the census will be provided because we cannot afford to postpone the census.

On counterpart funding, this was a problem in the past. Now, we are promoting good planning. We do not want poor planning to continue causing unnecessary emergencies. If you know you do not have counterpart funding, why do you go ahead with the project? We are saying that projects, which do not have adequate counterpart funding, should be stayed until there is adequate counterpart funding. I would like to –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, sorry for the interruption. I know we agreed that any loan – because loans are presented by the ministry for finance, clearly with a certificate of NPA and the commitment that counterpart funding will be provided. Now, if the finance ministry, along the way, does not provide the funds yet the loan is running and we are paying interest on undisbursed funds, where is the problem? The problem is not with the sector, but with the finance ministry, which made the commitment.

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, you and I are on the same page. I know where the Member is coming from. Probably, he is talking about the UgIFT programme, which started way back before this anomaly was addressed. In all the stages we go through to pass loans, the requirement for counterpart funding is one of the conditions that must be satisfied.

We are careful and that is why we are saying no projects should pass without counterpart funding. We require the support of Parliament so that we all move in the same direction.

On the issue of gold, the minister for energy will respond. Also, when we come to present the tax proposals for this year, we could give more highlights on this.

On the tax studies, yes, we have an expectation gap in the sense of what our stakeholders, including Parliament, want us to do vis-à-vis what we think should be done. However, this is a matter we continue to debate. Our proposals are largely informed by the information we gather from various sources. I see Hon. Kivumbi is looking at me with a funny face. *(Laughter)*

I am trying to tell the House what I have been discussing with him. This is not something we shall address now, but it is something we need to keep explaining to each other so that at some point we come to a middle ground.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, conclude.

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, I have actually concluded. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable committee chairperson?

DR KEEFA KIWANUKA: Mr Speaker, there was a question from a Member regarding our recommendation which was not backed by the source of revenue. We are working with the Committee on Budget to make sure that the budget is harmonised. That is why we wanted more details from the finance ministry.

Mr Speaker, thank you for allowing us to present the summary.

Vote 008: Ministry Finance, Planning and Economic Development – Shs 2,420,235,953,000.

Vote 123: National Rotaries and Gaming Regulatory Board – Shs 14,181,604,000.

Financial Intelligence Authority – Shs 30,592,063,000

Uganda Investment Authority – Shs 168,666,237,000

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I hope these are the figures from the draft estimates.

DR KEEFA KIWANUKA: Yes, these are the total estimates.

Uganda Revenue Authority – Shs 622,208,515,000

Capital Markets Authority – Shs 9,286,883,000

National Population Council – Shs 12,905,601,000

Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) – Shs 250,424,704,000

Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Authority (PPDA) –26,026,433,000.

Uganda Free Zones Authority – Shs 12,178,402,000

Uganda Micro Finance Regulatory Authority – Shs 10,148,820,000.

Uganda Retirement Benefits Regulatory Authority – Shs 14,587,057,000.

National Planning Authority – Shs 49,802,151,000

Vote 131: Auditor-General – Shs 97,250,294,000.

Treasury Operations – Shs 18,747,153,591,000

The total is Shs 22,485,648,309,000.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Kivumbi.

MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI: Mr Speaker, I heard you say that these are draft estimates. I would like to seek clarification because if the draft estimates from the ministerial policy statement as they are and we adopt them as draft estimates that consequently means we have dropped all the other recommendations made by the committee.

My humble opinion is that the figure he reads must be the total sum for all those agencies, capturing the recommendations, as they have been made in his committee report, which

the Committee on Budget will harmonise, alongside those that are in the budget estimates and those that have been recommended by plenary to the Committee on Budget for harmonisation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi, the practice has been, at this stage, the committee can only call and read out those which are given in the draft estimates, and the other ones remain as recommendations. The Committee on Budget will then go and review them and add on because they drop some and accept some. And that is what we have been doing; that is what we did yesterday; and that is what we are continuing with. So, I do not think we can change mid-way.

MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI: Mr Speaker, I believe - because the Committee on Budget considers matters referred to them by the plenary. Now, if that has been the practice, then it has been a little bit in error. This is because my humble view, as it were, is that once the figures are recommended to the committee by the plenary and are adopted by the committee for harmonisation then you have consequently ignored all the estimates which you have put in your recommendation.

If that has been the practice, I do not know how that fares, with what we do. I know we go back -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Kivumbi, we do not only recommend the figures, but we also adopt the whole report plus its recommendations before it is referred to the Committee on Budget. The Committee on Budget does not only pick figures.

Hon. Musasizi, would you like to clarify?

MR MUSASIZI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In fact, that is the point I want to make. Here we are adopting the committee report with all its recommendations. But for emphasis, and in order to help the Committee on Budget engage in focused discussions, we are saying begin with the estimates as provided for and as laid in the House. Then beyond the estimates, the

Committee on Budget will seek to evaluate and consider the recommendations that the committees will have passed. And together with this table, they will evaluate and see which ones can be taken and which ones cannot.

In the past, we had instances where we have even reduced - the Committee on Budget can increase or decrease - even between now and when we get to the Committee on Budget. I want to lay the corrigenda before this House, which will revise these estimates further. And all this together will go to the Committee on Budget, we harmonise our numbers, and we come back here to debate and supply.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sure! So, to satisfy Hon. Kivumbi, the Committee on Budget considers the report in full and not only the figures we had considered here. The figures are part of the report. Chairman, can you lay the other document?

DR KEEFA KIWANUKA: Mr Speaker, I now beg to lay the signed report of the committee. I also beg to lay the minutes together with some of the documents, which may be of interest to Members, and which were laid by the agencies that we met.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Chairman. I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Finance Planning and Economic Development on the Ministerial Policy Statement for the Financial Year 2023/2024 to 2027/2028, be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Congratulations, Mr Chairman. The report is referred to the Committee on Budget for processing.

Mr Chairman, now, I want your committee to concentrate on the Tax Bills. You know, we need them as urgently as possible. Maybe we shall discuss further on how to manage the process. If some are ready, you should bring them.

However, there are very many controversial proposals that have come from the Government. Some of the proposals I know of were dropped last year due to too much pressure, but they are back now. I have been reading through the proposals. They are causing a lot of mayhem and uncertainty.

So, please take time, to allow the various groups to present before you, and allow the finance ministry enough time to explain so that we have very clear tax proposals that will finance the budget without crippling the economy, especially the private sector.

DR KEEFA KIWANUKA: Can I just mention that we are working around completing the process by the end of this month?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Next item.

CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT
OF THE COMMITTEE OF ICT ON THE
MINISTERIAL POLICY STATEMENT
AND BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE
FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Chairperson of the Committee on ICT, you have 15 minutes.

12.08

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Mr Moses Magogo): Mr Speaker, I stand to present the report from the Committee of ICT and National Guidance that was laid before Parliament for the Ministerial Policy Statement for the Financial Year 2023/2024 for the Digital Transformation Programme 11, in accordance with the Public Finance Management Act and the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

In the interest of the 15 minutes, I will only mention that in facilitating the budget approval process of Parliament, the committee conducted in depth analysis of the policy statements. It is important for us also to mention that

the sectoral committee on ICT and National Guidance covers Vote 20 for the Ministry of Information Communication Technology and National Guidance and Vote 126 for the National Information Technology Authority of Uganda.

However, it is also important to mention that we cover up public corporations and state enterprises including Uganda Communications Commission, Uganda Broadcasting Corporation, Uganda Posts Limited, Uganda Institute of Information and Communication Technology, the Media Council, the Media Centre and the Vision Group.

I would also like to mention that the committee analysed the ministerial policy statements in compliance with the law. In NDP III, we found that the programme performed below the overall compliance being 64 per cent yet the programme had been rated at 62 per cent.

That was also tested against gender and equity compliance, and environmental issues as well. But I would like to interest you in page 11, which talks about the performance of the Budget for the Financial Year 2022/2023. Although it is indicating half-year, we have been able to analyse it against the release at the end of March.

There was a good performance in terms of payment of the arrears which was 100 per cent; that is for the former workers of the Uganda Post and Telecommunication Corporation. There was also a good performance in wages and overall performance of 75 per cent budget release.

The committee noted with concern the drastic fall in the budget allocation to the ministry, and yet in the strategic priorities, it is listed among the key drivers of the economy to full recovery. The allocation cannot support the much-needed infrastructure development and maintenance to enable ICT penetration and usage for private sectors to deepen the application of ICT.

The committee accordingly recommends that Government walks the talk by allocating

sufficient funds to prioritised programmes in the budget allocations.

We also looked at key achievements of the ministry. I will concentrate on one of them, being the extension of the National Backbone Infrastructure countrywide under the last mile connectivity. A total of 30 ministries, departments and agencies and district local governments and target user sites had been connected to the National Backbone Infrastructure. This particular programme is cross-cutting with the bulk of the works being undertaken by NITA-U.

I would also like to mention a few challenges and one of them being the insufficient and inadequate release of funds, especially in Quarter one and Quarter two which left critical activities not undertaken. A case in point was UBC where the acquisition of critical broadcasting and communication equipment for TV and radio was affected -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson, do you have two copies of the report so that you first lay one and I use it to follow?

MR MAGOGO: Thank you for the guidance, Mr Speaker. I beg to lay the copy of the signed report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Continue.

MR MAGOGO: I was talking about the challenges; the second one being the non-payment of satellite charges and fees to Intelsat due to reduced performance of internally generated revenue by UBC.

I now go to page 23, in the interest of the time allocated to me. This is about the ICT consumption items: ICT expenditure across the Government MDAs continues to be procured, maintained and charged by the different Vote levels where Government has prioritised the use of the e-services under e-governance.

The budget items consumed on ICT-related services have not related to the desired savings

given the investment and strategic direction in revolutionising the digitalisation of the economy.

The recommendation of the committee is that ICT budget items be re-centralised and given prominence in acquisition, maintenance and disposal through an appropriate government agency that is ICT dominated.

The observations and recommendations of the committee

In the interest of time, I will concentrate on the recommendations, especially Vote 20: Ministry of ICT and National Guidance. The committee recommends that the Government allocates Shs 4.9 billion to the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance to boost the digital transmission program.

The committee also observed a funding gap in the Directorate of Information Dissemination and National Guidance. The committee recommends that Government allocates Shs 23.77 billion to the Directorate of Information Dissemination and National Guidance for the Financial Year 2023/2024.

The agency of the Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC)

UBC intends to expand the Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) and radio broadcasting network, digitise, archive, and commercialise local content and data by acquiring equipment for additional DTT and upgrading the existing TV and radio sites to ensure redundancy.

Relatedly, the need to enhance financial releases to UBC was stated by His Excellency, the President, in a letter to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development on 12th April, where he had directed the UBC to be allocated Shs 30 billion annually. There has also been another follow-up letter recently on 6th March to the Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

The committee also observed - and this is very critical - that Shs 9 billion was appropriated in the current Financial Year 2022/2023 for purposes of installing directly to homes and

renovating and re-equipment of the Master Control Centre in Kololo, which is dilapidated for the free-to-air signal distribution, but this has not been released by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. This has resulted in Ugandans being subjected to an indirect television tax by private couriers for free-to-air channels.

The committee recommendation is that Shs 9 billion is immediately released during this existing financial year to UBC for the implementation of direct-to-home. Honourable colleagues, the direct-to-home means that the users of this service will be able to receive free-to-air television signals across the entire continent; up the hills, down the valleys without paying.

At the moment, the entire country has actually been switched off. It is only Kampala that is receiving free-to-air television channels without paying. This means that the entire country must pay for them to be able to receive the free-to-air channels that are given a license by UCC to be free, but being paid for because that is the only way the signal can reach upcountry.

We also recommend that Shs 30 billion is provided for the Financial Year 2023/2024 to UBC to enable it to improve and expand its services to the country so as to enhance the performance of the national broadcaster.

The committee recommends that the Government enhances the wage bill of UBC by paying Shs 6.5 billion from the Financial Year 2023/2024. The committee further recommends that this payment be made through the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance.

There is also the issue of the Vote. UBC is a national broadcaster fully owned by the Government of the Republic of Uganda with a mandate to inform, educate and entertain the population on matters of national importance, but it is operating as a subvention under the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance.

Efforts to have UBC allocated a Vote can be tracked back to 16 June 2020, to a letter from the Minister of ICT National Guidance to the PS/ST on the need to provide UBC with a Vote Code. The letter of even subject was written on the 20th of February for a Vote Code, which was unfortunately rejected by the PS/ST.

The committee is, however, of the consideration of the opinion of availing a Vote code to UBC; that this will allow ease of resource mobilisation and the acquisition, recognition by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the Parliament of Uganda and proper identification during planning, budgeting and budget execution.

Having a Vote Code will enable UBC to be self-accounting and enable efficient utilisation of resources and ensure consistency of funding from Government as well as implement development projects with the development partners.

The committee recommends that UBC be provided with a Vote code for the Financial Year 2023/2024 to enhance performance and productivity.

Management of the debt of UBC

UBC has over the years accrued a debt that currently stands at Shs 87 billion and thus the details of it are provided in Table 11 which is attached. This has affected operations and consequently service delivery at the corporation. The liability arises from tax arrears of URA and penalties thereof, NSSF, Umeme, and National Water and Sewerage Cooperation whose debts are carried forward including those from the old entity - Radio Uganda/ Uganda Television

It should also be appreciated that UBC has not been allocated funds to cover these obligations. Therefore, the committee recommends as follows:

- i) The tax arrears that UBC owes to URA and the penalties thereof should be ascertained and written off; and

- ii) The penalties NSSF imposed on UBC should be ascertained and written off. the cost of the internet would reduce to \$35 starting Financial Year 2023/2024.
- iii) Government should take over the remaining UBC debts and work out schedules and timeframes of payments of outstanding liabilities as indicated in His Excellency the President's letter to the Rt Hon. Prime Minister and the Leader of Government Business in Parliament dated 6 March 2023, on the issues at UBC. The committee recommendations

Mr Speaker, the other entity we looked at was the Uganda Communications Commission. The committee recommends that the Cabinet expedite and fast-tracks the process of approval of the communications tribunal.

There is also the issue of the levy on the gross annual revenues of licensed operators. Mr Speaker, UCC collects 2 per cent of the gross annual revenue, of which, 50 per cent is always remitted to the Consolidated Fund.

The committee notes with concern that the resources remitted to the Consolidated Fund from the ICT operators are not directly ploughed back to facilitate ICT development, but rather form part of the national resource envelope, yet the ICT sector which is grossly underfunded has areas that the programme should be funding.

The committee recommends that the levy collected by UCC in this regard be earmarked and ring-fenced for purposes of ICT development and rural communication as provided in the Uganda Communications Act.

We also looked at the cost of the internet. The cost of the internet to the public sector has reduced over the years as a result of the extension of the national backbone infrastructure across the country.

While the cost of internet supplied by NITA-Uganda to the Government stands at \$70 per Mbps, this is still viewed as an expensive cost in relation to the private internet connectivity providers. The committee was informed that

i) The Ministry of ICT and National Guidance through UCC puts in place guidelines to operationalise the national broadband policy to ensure infrastructure sharing among internet service providers in the both private and public sectors. Of course, this would bring down the operational costs.

ii) There should be deliberate inter-programme coordination between digital information and energy development programmes to ensure that electricity is extended to most of the areas of the country as a measure to address the lack of access to electricity in some of the places in the country that has spiked the cost of the internet.

The other agency we looked at is Uganda Post Limited.

The recommendation of the committee is that Uganda Post Limited is allocated Shs 7.24 billion for the Financial Year 2023/2024 and roll out the establishment and operationalisation of the service centres across the country and also a commitment be made by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to further fund the subsequent three years in order to raise the Shs 23.679 billion required for this.

Uganda Institute of Information Communication and Technology

Since there is unexpected funding that has been received, the financing of the budget is proposed to be through a grant and counterpart funding. The Ministry of ICT and National Guidance and the Ministry of Education and Sports has identified international cooperation world leader in Virtual Reality, (VR) that is based on knowledge transfer in education and industry to provide funding through a grant

guarantee programme. This will however require the Government to counter-fund to the tune of Shs 6.6 billion for the grant to be released.

The committee's recommendation is that Shs 6.6 billion be allocated to the institute for the full operationalisation of a specialised centre of excellence.

There is also a further recommendation that the Government allocates Shs 2 billion towards ICT skills to the institute.

Vote 126: Uganda Information Technology Authority (NITA-U)

The committee recommends that Shs 4.344 billion is allocated to NITA-U for the operationalisation of the data protection centre which is provided for by law.

There is also an enhancement of the national data centre.

The recommendation is that:

- i) Shs 12 billion be allocated to NITA-U for the enhancement of the national data centre.
- ii) The Government should put in place a policy that ensures that NITA-U hosts all applications and systems as opposed to the current arrangement where MDAs build private data centres and instead centralise application systems management. With NITA-U in charge of all these finances and processes, it will make it cheaper and more effective.

There was the consideration of the provision of ICT services to additional 700 sites. The Government through the finance ministry has from Financial Year 2016/2017, consolidated ICT to the tune of Shs 15 billion under NITA-U for the provision of services to the MDAs, such as internet bandwidth, data centres hosting services, and software licenses.

However, with an additional 781 sites, MDAs, hospitals, schools sports stadiums and tertiary institutions that are connected under the Last Mile Project, NITA-U will require an additional Shs 22 billion to cater for service provision for these sites connected to the National Data Transmission Backbone Infrastructure (NBI) and provide accumulation of arrears.

The committee recommends that Shs 22.7 billion be allocated to NITA-U for the provision of these ICT services to the additional 780 sites connected.

The supply table

In light of the above, the committee recommends that the House do adopt the report and approves the budget estimates for the Ministries, Departments and Agencies under the Digital Transformation Programme contained herein for the Financial Year 2023/2024 as follows:

Vote 20: Ministry of Information Communication Technology and National Guidance

The proposed total budget for both recurrent and development is Shs 94,847,091,000.

Vote 126: National Information Authority-Uganda (NITA-U)

The proposed budget for both recurrent and development is Shs 139,216,461,000 and a total of Shs 234,063,552,000 for both votes.

In conclusion, it is the committee's humble prayer that the funding needs for the digital transformation programme are considered for appropriation as this will increase ICT penetration and the use of ICT services for social and economic development in the country and ensure the achievement of the objectives of NDP III. I beg to report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Chairperson and members of the committee. You have done a very deep analysis of the sector because some of us are concerned. Chairperson, had you finished laying?

MR MAGOGO: I beg to lay the minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Chairperson. Some of us are concerned about the slow pace of digitalising our country.

One easiest way of fighting corruption is digitising; reducing human interaction. The moment you reduce - all this appreciation you have been extending for passports, and driving permit is because of reducing human interaction. Colleagues, remember when you used to pass through brokers to get a permit? *(Laughter)* Those days were interesting. Some people could, first, get a permit and then go and learn how to drive - because a broker could do anything. I do not know whether the testing has changed, but I think a lot has improved. So, I hope we support NITA-U on this.

I happened to have attended the Mobile World Expo in Barcelona, where you could see governments exhibiting where they have reached with digital transformation. So, we really need to do a lot on this.

I am really concerned about UBC. I know every government must support their public broadcaster, but we are giving UBC too much comfort. It is making money - I do not know whether I can go to UBC and get a free advert.

I do not know why, if you are covering the whole country and have the support of Government, why can't you make money? For us to recommend that we write off NSSF arrears - this is money for the people; this is statutory money. Who will pay for it? When we write it off, it means we have to pay. We write off taxes, we give - aren't we making them too comfortable?

I am even concerned about the issue of giving them a Vote. We would want UBC to make business; UBC should make money. I am really concerned when we make Government agencies comfortable. What is it that other private sector players, are doing that UBC is not doing and they are registering billions in profits? They do not even have equipment and support from the Government.

So, honourable minister, I support the fact that we need to give more adverts to UBC, but not exclusively to UBC. I saw the President's letter. I think you need to share with him that if you kill private broadcasters by giving all adverts to UBC, then you are killing the media industry in the country. This is something you should share with the President and I am sure he is very reasonable - once you explain to him.

We are making UBC extremely comfortable. Honourable minister, you need to give them strong targets. I will require the committee for ICT to go and see the underperformance to the extent of UBC wanting to be babysat all the time, yet new entities are coming up and making much more money. They should explain why they are not making money.

On the issue of UCC - more support - honourable minister, I know this has no financial implication, but the issue of interconnection fees - I saw President Ruto with President Kagame announcing that they had removed- interconnection fees on calls between Rwanda and Kenya. However, we still have interconnection charges for local calls. That is why you find me carrying three phones so that I am able to cheaply call MTN to MTN, Airtel to Airtel and UTL to UTL. Why?

Honourable minister, by a stroke of a pen, you can stop it. Why do I need to be charged for calling locally - a charge between the two telecoms? Honourable minister, we beg you: do it for us - and I know you have the power - *(Laughter)*- we gave you the powers; you are a very strong Mukiga man. You do it that way and we remove interconnection fees. That is number one.

Number two is the issue of the expiration of bundles. Whom do they go to when they expire? Who determines that these bundles are rotten and expired and if you consume them, you will get a problem, you are going to get sick - so, you might fill Mulago because you have used expired bundles? *(Laughter)* Honourable minister, do for us those two things and we shall be grateful and support your sector. Isn't it the case, honourable colleagues?

Please, let me open up the debate. I am trying to see those who were here early in the morning. She was here early in the morning. Enos was here in time – no, I know when you came; all of you came late. Hon. Kazini – Hon. Rwemulikya, you were here, but you spoke. Hon. Solomon, you spoke twice. Then, we shall have Hon. Allan Mayanja and Hon. Judith Achan.

Honourable colleagues, let me tell you – I know it is not on this, but – what I usually do is to, first, give priority to those who have not yet spoken at all. Then, I will do a round because I have people I started with at 10 o'clock - like Ferigo Kambale. So, I will give them rewards for coming early so that tomorrow, by 10.00 a.m., you are all here. Let us do two minutes each.

12.36

MS CHRISTINE KAAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for bringing in and sharing their compliance with environmental issues. However, the environmental issue very pertinent to this ministry is the radioactive emissions from the network masts and the monitoring of the economic activities around the masts, especially the safety of the people. They carry out environment and social impact assessments for these establishments - but following up with them, I think, stops at the establishment of the masts.

We would like to urge the sector to incorporate some fees for monitoring compliance. Otherwise, people are not safe. They also have to provide us with a waste disposal plan for ICT-related gadgets. It is missing. People just throw radios, and phones – and a lot of emissions come from them. We wanted to hear that from the committee.

Mr Speaker, you have talked about UBC. At the beginning of this term, we started by getting information on the need to rationalise entities. When we start requesting for Votes for some of these entities – I thought the reason for rationalisation was to reduce expenses. When we request for Votes for some of these entities,

I feel we are going back. The most important to note is that, for example, UBC is a sister company to many private entities that generate a lot of money. So, we – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. If we give UBC a Vote, the implication will be that all the money they collect must come to the Consolidated Fund and they become purely public. Remember, when you are a media of that nature, you have to pay commissions, for example, to people who are soliciting adverts and all that. How will you cover it? They will be stuck. In fact, a Vote might end up becoming a problem to UBC, if they are to make money as an entity.

Honourable Christine has raised a very critical issue, committee chairperson and honourable colleagues, which we should pay attention to: e-waste. If you go to your school, all computers that are old - in fact, start with your home. You will find computers and even fridges – I am told fridges are even more dangerous. Computers, like at Makerere University – I remember when I was on the council, we had a whole floor full of computers and we had nowhere to put them. E-waste is a very important issue, whose funding must be considered.

12.40

MR FRANCIS TWINOMUJUNI (NRM, Buhaguzi County, Kikuube): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I thank the committee chairperson for the report.

Mr Speaker, I want to add something small on UBC. In fact, when you compare these other televisions –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Switch on the microphone.

MR KAZINI: When you compare other televisions with UBC, UBC is the worst, yet it is owned by the Government. This Parliament, through you, Mr Speaker, can help UBC by making all Government adverts compulsory to go through it to help it boost its revenue. Otherwise, I do not support the idea of writing off their taxes and debts.

Secondly, there are properties that are in rural areas, especially in Hoima, and they are idle. Actually, you find goats playing around in their compounds; they should utilise them using their resources because they are their properties. Because the Government has spoon-fed them especially UBC, they are now like babies; they want to be helped in everything.

I would request that the ministry and UBC, learn to be self-sufficient and work for themselves. They can have other businesses other than asking to be baby-sited all the time. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: In fact we should be getting revenue from them; they should be contributing money to the Consolidated Fund. Yes, Hon. Enosi.

12.41

MR ENOSI ASHIMWE (NRM, Kabula County, Lyantonde): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to support the committee and emphasise the recommendation on IT expenditure across Government ministries and departments. You realise that as we process the budget, every MDA has a budget for IT consultancy, at least in the sector where I am involved. The other day, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development wanted Shs 50 billion for IT related services. URA wanted something in the range of Shs 45 billion.

I want us to support the team to recommend that we centralise these services. For example, NITA Uganda, one of its strategic objectives is to provide IT services to Government agencies. Why can't we get all this money to this agency or other agencies working in that sector and we empower them to reduce on these expenses to foreign companies? That is my take on that.

Number two, Mr Speaker, is to emphasise the issue of the data centre. Honourable minister, kindly put in all the efforts that you can, and of course with the support of the budget committee, to provide money for the data centre. It is very hard, now that we are moving into the IT era and digitalising the entire

Government agencies, there is no way we can have our data in the hands of private operators. Time will come and we will be in trouble with this. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Judith Achan?

12.43

MS JUDITH ACHAN (NRM, Woman Representative, Nwoya): I want to thank you, Mr Speaker. I also want to thank the chairperson and the committee for presenting a rich report.

Mr Speaker, I want to thank the committee on the issues of digitalising information or the data system that we have in Uganda. As we plan to go for insurance services for our people, let us try to look at the information system that we have today.

For example, if I am admitted at St. Mary's Hospital Lacor, and they refer me to Mulago National Referral Hospital, there is no information or data system that shows I have been referred to them. Therefore, I would like to join my other colleagues in supporting the committee on putting up a data information system.

Take another example: if someone is arrested in and detained at Kiryandongo Police Station, that person can easily escape through the porous borders because the information is only registered in counter books and not in a digital system. So, it is very difficult to trace such a criminal because we do not have an information system to support us on this front.

Right now, we have so many criminals within the country. They are robbing people on the way but when they are arrested, the police cannot track them when they sneak out of the country. For example, at Mutukula Border, criminals are escaping with motorcycles and vehicles but their data is not in the system. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Allan Mayanja.

12.44

MR ALLAN MAYANJA (NUP, Nakaseke Central County, Nakaseke): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. My concern is about the communication tribunal. I concur with the committee's recommendation that this communication tribunal be approved as soon as possible.

Secondly, I need some clarification from the minister, since he is here. Since 2015, this tribunal has not been approved. What is the challenge? What could be the problem? The media houses are suffering because of your pronouncements and guidelines. So, the tribunal should be implemented as soon as possible.

My second, about Facebook, it is good that the minister is here. Why don't you lift the ban on Facebook? It has taken too long; students are suffering. People cannot market their goods. So, you need to give us a genuine reason why the ban on Facebook is not yet lifted.

Lastly, let me talk about the Shs 2 billion that the committee has recommended going towards ICT skill development and initiatives. I concur with the committee and this money should specifically solve this problem in universities and other institutions of higher learning. Students are suffering; they are paying a lot of fees towards the e-learning platforms. There is a certain university that I will not mention; they are charging a lot of money from these students towards these e-learning platforms. Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is very critical. Honourable minister, for example, all your universities and institutions of higher learning in the country are supervised by National Council for Higher Education. We have a system for public universities - I have forgotten, but I remember it was developed by Kyambogo University and finance supported it. Why don't we, for example, standardise that for all universities, - because it manages marks, finances, timetables and the registration process, so that we can have it standardised?

Some universities do not have anything - that system also manages IDs and the students can pay subscription fee like for the Integrated Financial Management System across all Government entities to manage money issues.

This would be one way of standardising systems and many universities in other counties are now doing it that way. Instead of having a multitude of software. It becomes even cheaper when you allow many users and institutions on it; it would be one way of supporting IT. If you bring it here, we will support you. Please work it out and we will support you.

The youths are the ones who are on ICT, and on the issue of Facebook, as the honourable has said, it generates money for the country. Do you know we have very many young people who are running businesses on *Twitter*, *Instagram*, and *WhatsApp*?

A person can just go to St Balikuddembe Market. They identify very good jackets, they clean them and put their pictures on their *WhatsApp* status, or their *Twitter* page or *Instagram* for sale, and those are the clothes we put on. We buy them; that is how we get designer coats and jackets. That is how we can support such young people. So, we need to deeply look into the issue of Facebook, honourable minister, so that we open e-commerce for our young people because it is one way of enabling a side hustle.

12.49

MR BONIFACE OKOT (NRM, Youth Representative, Northern): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I salute the good report from the Committee of ICT. I just have two quick concerns. One is on the issue of Uganda Institute of Information Communication Technology.

Certainly, the centrality of ICT skills development and specialised ICT training cannot be underestimated especially in post-COVID era. COVID-19 trained us that we need to go virtual and the President has been seen and heard, multiple times suggesting, even in the State of the Nation Address, that the

ICT sector is one of the four core sectors that we should prioritise for our transformation, as a country.

In the interest of creating jobs for our young people, I highly support that the counterpart funding of Shs 6.6 billion be offered to the Institute of Information Communication Technology. However, the institute should be able to decentralise to all the regions of Uganda so that there is equity in this training.

Mr Speaker, what you were speaking about is ideally the idea of start-ups. Many countries around the world have legislative incentives to support start-ups and innovations. This is the way to go. As a country, it is unfortunate that we still do not have a national start-up Bill.

I also implore the ministry that this should be one of the considerations for this particular - *(Member timed out.)*

12.51

MR FERIGO KAMBALE (NRM, Kasese Municipality, Kasese): Thank you for the opportunity, Mr Speaker. Mine is to emphasise one of the points that has been presented; the release of Shs 9 billion to the Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC) this financial year so that Signet is able to switch on the free-to-air services -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is very critical.

MR KAMBALE: It is now over six months since all these rural sites were switched off, and yet Shs 9 billion is provided for in the running budget. I request the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to consider this so that our people's signals are switched on.

Secondly, on recommendation of the consideration of ring-fencing what is being collected by the Uganda Communications Commission, which is being transferred to the Consolidated Fund, I think we should emphasise it.

Whereas we are babysitting UBC, it is one of the entities under ICT remitting a lot of money to the Consolidated Fund. If we ring-fenced some percentage and it is taken back to the ICT organisations like UBC, we may not just be looking at giving them money and yet they are already remitting money to the Consolidated Fund. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

12.53

MR FRANCIS MWIJUKYE (FDC, Buhweju County, Buhweju): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for a good report. The committee talks about expediting the composition of the tribunal and of course we are concerned. Honourable minister, where is the tribunal? What is the problem? Where can we assist you because it is very important? We have seen very many conflicts between the media and Government, but we do not know how they are resolved.

Two, on the issue of Facebook, we cannot have a minister who accesses Facebook illegally. The Members of Parliament, the ministers and the public are accessing Facebook illegally; it is criminal. We need to know what to do, as Parliament, as we adopt and pass this report. Bringing down the cost of ICT devices is also very expensive. If we digitalise them, then we have to bring them down.

Finally, I would like to salute the committee on the recommendation of bringing down the cost of the internet. The students are suffering and yet nowadays, learning is done online. Even the people in Kibanda North, where Hon. Linos comes from, also know the internet. At the time they –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Even Hon. Linos knows it –

MR MWIJUKYE: At the time they had just started knowing it, it becomes very expensive. We need to assist them. Buhweju is now a bit better because of the good leader, but we also need the support.

Otherwise, I would like to thank you for the report and we hope the minister can clarify some –(Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. It seems that it has become legal to illegally access Facebook. What is painful is that some people abuse us; some people misinform others, and some of us are not able to go on it because I cannot be seen to be there illegally.

The people in my constituency tell me that they send me messages on Facebook and I tell them, “but I cannot access Facebook.” I ask them how they do it and they answer, “We access Facebook but it is only you not accessing it.” Therefore, honourable minister, please help us address the concerns. You can just use three minutes to summarise.

12.56

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also add my voice to thank the chairperson and members of the committee for a very good report, which we support. I also thank the Members of Parliament for their overwhelming support to the sector of ICT. I think we are moving together and we should support the sector so that we realise digital transformation in this country.

I have taken note of the issues. A number of them are pieces of advice, like one that my sister, the Woman Member of Parliament of Kiboga was raising; the issues of e-waste and looking at the radioactive emissions. I take note of all these issues and we shall definitely act on them, as a ministry.

UBC, like the chairperson noted, inherited debts and liabilities from Uganda Television and Radio Uganda and a number of them have not been covered. I agree with you that UBC should run like a business and compete with the private sector. I have made that point to the management, but they need some support to waive off some of the debts, get some injection of resources and get going.

Indeed, the President has directed that all government departments should run their adverts on UBC. Together with the Prime Minister, to whom the directive was given, we are discussing how this can be meaningfully implemented. On the other side also, if you were to put all the adverts, then UBC would just run adverts. We are discussing it to see how to implement this directive, but it is intended to support UBC to have resources in order for it to run and be able to stand on its own eventually.

The challenge of UBC is the resource envelope; being cut off by the international satellite company is a challenge. That is why the other upcountry stations have been switched off.

I also add my appeal to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to find money so that we take back the stations, but also we complete the migration process so that the free-to-air service covers the whole country.

At the moment, like the chairperson said, majority of Ugandans have to hook on the pay TV like DSTV and GOTV in order to access UBC, and yet it is a service which everybody should access without paying through the pay TVs.

There were points about UCC. Indeed, they are correct; that we raise money through UCC. The law stipulates that 50 per cent of the money is remitted to the Consolidated Fund. Therefore, we expect the finance ministry and the Government to remit back substantial amounts in order for us to extend ICT services to the country. We hope that through this engagement with the Committee on Budget and Parliament, we will be able to get more resources.

On construction of data centres, we recently passed a loan which is going to be implemented by the National Information and Technology Authority - Uganda (NITA-U), supported by the World Bank. We have a provision for constructing additional data centres because we currently have one in Jinja and another one in Kampala, but as you know, we generate a lot of data. There are countries which store their data outside; in other countries. We do not

want to go that way. We must be in charge of our data. Therefore, through the project under NITA-U, we are going to construct additional data centres so that we can hold our own data.

Regarding the communications tribunal, the UCC Act provides for the establishment of a tribunal. This tribunal will work as an appellate court where decisions taken by UCC or the minister of information can be appealed if the affected person is not comfortable with the decision. Unfortunately, the tribunal is not yet in place. We have done the preliminary work by preparing a Cabinet paper which we submitted to the secretariat.

As I said last time, the discussion on the creation of the tribunal is being made alongside discussions of rationalising Government agencies. I would like to inform the House that the tribunal is appointed by the President with advice from the Judicial Service Commission (JSC).

As a ministry, we have prepared what is required, and done the budget estimates. We need Shs 6 billion to start off the tribunal. The paper is before Cabinet. I take your concerns as Parliament and I will definitely raise them again in the Cabinet to prioritise but also with the President who has the responsibility to appoint the tribunal with support from JSC [Member rose _]

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: At this stage, I do not accept points of clarification. Honourable colleagues, we do not have time. Otherwise, we need to break out for lunch after handling the report of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources.

DR BARYOMUNSI: Mr Speaker, the process is ongoing and I will keep you updated on that tribunal.

Facebook conflicted with the Government a few years back and the State closed it. For clarity, I am not on Facebook like the Rt Hon. Speaker said. I do not access communication and transactions on Facebook. Those of you on Facebook are on it illegally. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, the Government established an arrangement led by UCC to start engaging Facebook because all these platforms are here on our invitation and should also play to the terms set. I have had a report from - and UCC agreed on a number of issues. They were just remaining with two sticky issues. The message I take from Parliament is that they should resolve them and we open Facebook as soon as possible.

Mr Speaker, I take the concern. We shall work around the clock to have these issues sorted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, conclude.

DR BARYOMUNSI: The chairperson did report that the cost of internet beginning next financial year will drop from \$70 Megabits per second (Mbps). This is a drop from about 300 in 2016 so it has been coming down. It will drop to \$35 but this is still high. So, we will be coming up with proposals and seek your support so that we extend the national fibre to the rest of the country.

One of the reasons internet cost is high is because fewer people are hooked to it. If we can expand connectivity to the rest of the country and have many users that will automatically bring down the cost of the internet plus other measures which we shall bring. We seek your support so that we work together to see that every Ugandan is able to use internet connectivity. Otherwise, this is now the way to move forward.

Finally, on the issue of the Academic Management Information System which was developed by students of Kyambogo with support from the ICT ministry through the innovation fund, I agree with you but the challenge has been that when the finance ministry took it over, some conflicts happened. I think the students went to court so we have been trying to resolve those conflicts.

The way forward is that all public universities and if possible, the private ones should adopt this system so that they can have automated

systems across the ministries which improves their efficiency and effectiveness.

Once again, I would like to call upon your support to continue working with us. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, I will cross-check with you on Tuesday on the release of money to SIGNET. We need that money released urgently.

On the issue of the tribunal - when you have an existing law, you cannot fail to implement it because of an anticipated amendment. Honourable minister, take up the issue of the tribunal and guide the Cabinet that it is necessary. In fact, ask for a waiver because this tribunal is extremely important before conflicts finish us.

MR MAGOGO: Mr Speaker, you have clearly guided on the issue of SIGNET. Honourable colleagues, UBC has dual responsibility; there is an issue of being a media house but also carrying free-to-air channels to the country.

As we castigate them as being a business entity that can generate resources from the operations of the media, there is the responsibility of ensuring that the television signal of free-to-air is delivered across the country so we need to support that.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I put the question that the report of the Committee on Information, Communication, Technology and National Guidance on the ministerial policy statement and budget estimate for the Financial Year 2023/2024 be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The report is referred to the Committee on Budget for further consolidation. Congratulations, Mr Chairperson and members of the committee.

We would like to thank you for finishing on time.

Honourable colleagues, it seems you are doing a good job. I am really happy. By the close of business today, we shall have broken a record. Let us go to the next.

Honourable members, we cannot go for lunch before we finish another report. It is still early. I woke up at 3.00 a.m., honourable colleagues. I actually sent a message to a colleague asking for something and he asked me: "Don't you sleep?" In fact, I should be sleepy. Colleagues, we are going to be here until we push because we must meet the deadline.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT
OF THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL
RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT ON
THE MINISTERIAL POLICY STATEMENT
AND BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE
FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/2024**

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chairperson, you have 15 minutes of presentation and 30 minutes of debate. Honourable colleagues, we shall break out for lunch at 2.00 p.m.

1.09

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCE AND ENVIRONMENT (Dr Emmanuel Otaala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Before I dive into the report, I would like to lay on the Table the minutes and other accompanying documents of the proceedings for the scrutiny of the ministerial policy statement. I beg to lay.

Mr Speaker, before I go into my report, allow me to state two important issues. My committee oversees the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development (Vote 017) and the Petroleum Authority of Uganda (Vote 139) as well as the Ministry of Water and Environment (Vote 019) and the agencies under that ministry, namely: National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) (Vote 150; National Forest Authority (Vote 157) and; Uganda National Meteorological Authority (UNMA) (Vote 109).

We also have the following subventions: National Water and Sewerage Corporation; Atomic Energy Council; Uganda Electricity Credit Capitalisation Company, and; Electricity Disputes Tribunal.

Mr Speaker, these two sectors are cross-cutting and, so, whereas they should be generating income, I must say that the funding is still low – although they have been prioritised by the Government. That is why you find that my report contains quite enormous gaps in funding.

Mr Speaker, I thought I needed to highlight this. For example, if we could give adequate funding to the mineral sub-sector alone, we would be able to generate -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, go to the report.

DR OTAALA: We would be able to generate about Shs 3 trillion per year. I have enormous funding gaps, which I would like to call upon Parliament to recommend to the Government for consideration.

Mr Speaker, I am presenting this report following Article 155(4) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Section 12 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015 and Rule 149 of the Rules of Procedure.

I have already talked about the Votes that we are considering. The methodology that we adopted is as indicated in our report. The structure that we followed is the one given by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

Now, allow me to move to the Energy and Mineral Development sub sector. Under this sector, we oversee the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development (Vote: 017) and Petroleum Authority of Uganda (Vote: 139). These Votes contribute to three NDP programmes, namely; Sustainable Energy Development, Mineral Development, Regional Balanced Development and Sustainable Energy Development.

When we scrutinised the ministerial policy statement for this sector, we found out that it was in compliance with the PFMA and the details of compliance are as indicated on page 7. In those details, there is also gender compliance. The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development is showing an upward trend in its compliance with gender issues, moving from 64 per cent this current financial year to 73 cent -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Chairman, go to issues to do with financial implications – and I briefed you before you went there. Once your 15 minutes are done, please, I am cutting you off.

DR OTAALA: Most obliged, Mr Speaker. The mandate of the ministry is as indicated on page 8. The proposed budget for Financial Year 2023/2024 is indicated in Table 3. Table 4 shows the proposed allocations by programme, that is, the three programmes; Mineral Development, Sustainable Petroleum Development and Sustainable Energy Development. The half-year performance of the sector is indicated in Table 4.

I now move to the Uganda Petroleum Authority. The strategic objectives are as indicated on page 10. The MTEF budget for the next financial year is indicated in Table 5. The Half-year performance is indicated in Table 6.

Observations and recommendations

Community Development Action Plan for Karuma and Isimba

Mr Speaker, whereas the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development planned and disclosed various Community Development Action Plan (CDAP) interventions to project host communities under Karuma and Isimba, to date, only 5 per cent and 50 per cent of these interventions have been implemented.

We also observed that one of these dams is already functional – Karuma is about to be functional. These communities could actually benefit from corporate social responsibility

other than saying we continue to pursue the Government to provide for the construction of schools, health centres, tree planting, etc., yet the Government does not have the money.

So, although Shs 45 billion is required for CDAP activities under Karuma and Isimba hydropower plants, the committee recommends that Shs 5 billion be availed in Financial Year 2023/2024.

Electricity Access Scale-up Project

Mr Speaker, this is the project for which we passed a loan in this House recently. The details of the progress made so far are as indicated in the table on page 12 that crosses over to page 13. I must say that progress is being made, most importantly on the project coordination unit in the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development as well as Uganda Energy Capitalisation Credit Company.

We, therefore, recommend that the Government expedites the establishment of the project implementation unit to enable seamless coordination and execution of project activities.

Uganda Rural Electrification Access Project (UREAP)

The Uganda Rural Access Project budget allocation this financial year is Shs 28.5 billion despite the fact that it is expected to be closed in the fourth quarter of the next financial year.

My committee, therefore, recommends that, in addition to the Shs 28.5 billion which is provided, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development provides Shs 47.5 billion to enable the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development fully settle outstanding obligations under UREAP-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, Mr Chairman, I want to guide you – to make your work easy because I can see you have seven minutes. The report will be adopted and referred to the Committee on Budget. Now, when it is referred to the Committee on Budget, they deal with the issue of money only.

The Committee on Budget cannot go into these other recommendations of “establish this”, “expedite this” or “do what...” No.

Therefore, read for us only recommendations that have financial implications because they are what the Committee on Budget will handle. For the rest of the recommendations, you, as the sectoral committee, will continue following up with the entity – because I can see that you have very many recommendations that have no budget implication.

DR OTAALA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your guidance. In view of your guidance, I will omit 6.3.4 and move to underfunding of the Atomic Energy Council.

On this, the committee was informed that the Atomic Energy Council has a budget provision of Shs 22 billion in the next financial year, leaving a budget shortfall of Shs 37.3 billion.

More funding is required to procure radiation detection and inspection equipment, as well as field vehicles for use in the day-to-day regulatory work.

The committee, therefore, recommends that Shs 5 billion be reallocated from the retooling project to the Atomic Energy Council and that the Minister of Finance grants Vote status to the Atomic Energy Council given that its output cuts across so many sectors namely, health, agriculture and many others.

Regarding the preparedness of UEDCL to take over from Umeme, I would like to report that Cabinet approved a roadmap for the power sector reforms in the country. Among the key reforms was the takeover of the Umeme at the expiry of the concession agreement in 2025. My committee, therefore, recommends that the Ministry of Finance avails funding to UEDCL to commence investment in the distribution network.

Further, that the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development should engage UEDCL and Umeme to resolve the issues on lease fees, because UEDCL is losing about Shs 19 billion

right now by not charging Umeme lease fees, for using its infrastructure. Umeme should pay the amount of lease fees to UEDCL to facilitate the rehabilitation of the distribution network.

Let me now move to the buy-out amount for the Umeme concession. Mr Speaker, the committee was informed that the buy-out amount for the Umeme concession is based on the Umeme investment approved and verified by ERA that is not yet recovered from the tariff.

The final buy-out amount will be determined towards the end of the concession and will largely depend on the additional Umeme investments in the network. As of 31 December 2021, the buy-out amount was \$215.6 million.

My committee recommends that Government carries out a comprehensive network diagnostic study to ascertain the status of the network before the takeover to ensure a smooth transition after the exit of Umeme.

Delayed completion of the Isimba Hydropower Plant

Mr Speaker, just last week, I presented to the House a report on the status of Isimba and so, I just want to highlight the recommendation that the contractor should be penalised for non-performance as per the contract.

The Government of Uganda should expedite all pending -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The budget committee chairperson cannot do anything about that, please. The Committee on Budget deals with money. Honourable member, there is what we call “verbosity”.

DR OTAALA: Most obliged, Sir. Regarding the late commissioning of Karuma, Mr Speaker - that is also mainly on policy.

Okay, let me now move to the Mineral Development sub-sector which is on page 20

Regarding inadequate funding to the mineral sub-sector that has already been articulated

in my introductory remarks, the committee recommends that Government provides Shs 127 billion for various interventions under the mineral development programme to enable us to collect revenue to the tune of Shs 3 trillion per year.

Mr Speaker, I now take you to page 23 of my report, regarding the LPG supply, promotion and infrastructure intervention project, with a budget allocation of only Shs 10.5 billion in the next financial year. The project requires an additional Shs 92 billion.

The cooking energy mix in Uganda today is fundamentally skewed with 94 per cent of the 10 million households using biomass. My committee, therefore, recommends that in Budget Framework Paper Government provided Shs 92 billion for the project and this should be the same in the final budget for the next financial year.

Mr Speaker, regarding inadequate funding to the Petroleum Authority of Uganda (PAU), the Petroleum Authority of Uganda is monitoring and regulating six key projects being implemented concurrently. These include the Tilenga Project, Kingfisher Development Area, the East African Crude Oil Pipeline, Kabale Refinery Project, Kanywataba and Ngassa Deep and Shallow Exploration Contract areas, but they have a deficit in their funding. So therefore, the committee recommends that Government allocates an additional Shs 22.44 billion to enable the Petroleum Authority of Uganda (PAU) effectively execute its regulatory role in the oil and gas sector.

The Ministry of Water and Environment

Mr Speaker, Table 7 shows the compliance of the ministry with PFMA. Table 8 shows gender compliance; unfortunately most of the Votes are on the decline in gender compliance, although NFA has shown an improvement. The mandate is as indicated on page 27 – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is because your time is up, chairperson, but let me add you five minutes to conclude.

DR OTAALA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The proposed budget estimates for the Ministry of Water and Environment are indicated in Table 8. The locations of the programme are indicated in Table 9 and the half-year performance is indicated in Table 10.

Mr Speaker, I now move to Vote 157: National Forest Authority. No, I move to Vote 150: National Environment Management Authority (NEMA). In there, table 11 shows their financial projections for next year and the half-year performance is as indicated in Table 12.

Let me now move to National Forests Authority. In here, Table 13, shows their budget estimates. Table 14, shows their half-year performance.

And under the Uganda National Meteorological Authority (UNMA), Table 15 shows their estimates for the next financial year and what is approved this year. Table 16 shows their half-year budget performance.

Committee observations

Water Supply and Access in the tourism districts; that is a policy matter that we are recommending.

Under the restoration of the environment through tree planting, we observed that very little money was allocated for tree planting. Only Shs 2 billion is provided for tree planting activities.

The committee was informed that the Ministry of Water and Environment requires Shs 20 billion for raising tree seedlings and Shs 10 billion for unpaid certificates for seedlings already supplied. The tree seedlings will be used for the restoration of forest cover and degraded wetlands.

We, therefore, recommend that the Ministry of Water and Environment be provided with a total of Shs 30 billion for the restoration of the environment through tree planting.

Regarding inadequate budgetary allocation to the Deconcentrated Regional Centres, we recommend that Government provides an additional Shs 15 billion for the above projects, namely:

- i) Shs 6 billion for project implementation for Water and Sanitation Facility – South West;
- ii) Shs 3 billion for water supply development under the Water and Sanitation Development Facility in the East;
- iii) Shs 6 billion for water supply development under the Water and Sanitation Development Facility in the North.

Inadequate budgetary allocation to urban water and sewerage services

We recommend that the Government provide Shs 15 billion for Project 1532 (Service Coverage Acceleration Project), which has a real impact on the provision of improved water supply services to the urban poor population countywide.

Repair and maintenance of boreholes in rural areas

The committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development provides a total of Shs 30 billion specifically for the purpose of repair and maintenance of the already existing boreholes.

Improvement of water storage and network expansion countrywide

We recommend that the Government provides an additional Shs 50 billion to support the improvement of water storage and network expansion countrywide.

Support to rural water project source per village

We observed that over 21,410 villages have no single safe water source. We, therefore, recommend that an additional Shs 50 billion be provided for the rural water project.

Solar water irrigation and the water supply scheme commonly known as Nexus Green

This requires counterpart funding and Uganda has never even put a drop towards that cause.

The committee recommends that the Government provides Shs 22 billion as counterpart financing required for the Nexus Green Project under the Ministry of Water and Environment and this project is national – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, chairperson; you are moving well.

DR OTAALA: Thank you. Regarding the outstanding financial obligation under Water Service Accelerated Project under the National Water and Sewerage Corporation, I just want to state that these are domestic debts. National Water has already implemented a number of projects and most of them are exiting, but we have not honoured our obligations.

The committee recommends that the Government should prioritise the provision of Shs 40 billion to the National Water and Sewerage Corporation to clear outstanding financial obligations for the various contractors, which I have indicated above on page 38.

Outstanding obligations under Kampala Sanitation Project (KSP)

This is again another domestic debt. We recommend that the Government provides Shs 50.4 billion to National Water and Sewerage Corporation to clear outstanding financial obligations under the project.

Outstanding obligations under the Integrated Water Management Development Project

Again under National Water, this is another outstanding obligation. The Government should provide Shs 17.18 billion to National Water and Sewerage Corporation to clear outstanding financial obligations for various contractors under the project.

National Forestry Authority

We have quite a number of recommendations regarding the budget shortfall for the provision of tree seedlings under NFA - there are tree seedlings under the ministry but also under NFA. We recommend that NFA expedites the creation of the national tree planting project, which was the project idea at the start.

We further recommend that the Government allocates Shs 4 billion to provide tree seedlings under NFA.

Re-surveying and demarcation of central forest reserve boundaries

The committee recommends that the Government provides Shs 1.5 billion for the re-surveying and demarcation of forest boundaries.

The Ministry of Water should amend the National Forestry and Tree Planting Act.

National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)

The committee recommends that the Government allocates Shs 5.9 billion to enable NEMA to recruit additional staff, especially for operations under the oil and gas subsector. They have a very dilapidated fleet of vehicles; therefore, the committee recommends that the Government provides Shs 4.5 billion to NEMA to purchase vehicles for environmental monitoring.

The automation of environmental social impact assessment studies that NEMA undertakes

The committee recommends that the Government provides Shs 11.25 billion to NEMA for procurement of the environment monitoring and licensing system.

Uganda National Meteorological Authority (UNMA)

The Uganda National Meteorological Authority is responsible for establishing and maintaining

weather and climate observing station network countrywide.

The committee recommends that the Government provides Shs 11.25 billion for the following:

- i) Shs 10 billion for procurement of a supercomputer to improve the modelling and development of weather patterns and forecasts so that they can report with a high degree of accuracy;
- ii) Shs 1 billion for dissemination of weather forecasts; and
- iii) Shs 0.25 billion to revamp and operationalise the upper air station at Entebbe.

Otherwise, very soon, if we do not do that, aircraft will be stopped from landing at Entebbe.

Mr Speaker, in summary -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Table 18.

DR OTAALA: The budget estimate for the Financial Year 2023/2024 by Vote:

Vote 017: Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development

We request that this House approves these estimates - Shs 96,633,000,093 -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just read the totals, Chairman.

DR OTAALA: Okay, Mr Speaker.

For the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, I am requesting this House to approve these estimates of Shs 1,714,203,000,333.

Vote 139: Petroleum Authority of Uganda
I request that this House approves Shs 82,376,000,508.

Vote 019: Ministry of Water and Environment
I request this House to approve Shs 1,405,572,000,189.

Vote 109: Uganda National Meteorological Authority
I request this House to approve Shs 14,217,000,587.

Vote 157: Uganda National Forestry Authority (NFA)
I request this House to approve Shs 24,208,000,938.

Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Have you read NEMA?

DR OTAALA: I am sorry, Mr Speaker.

Vote 150: National Environment Management Authority
I request this House to approve Shs 40,142,000,961.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, chairperson. I am sorry I kept interrupting you. I caucused with you but then you did not follow what we agreed upon, I had to come in. Take your seat, chairperson - no, the rest are okay. Just take your seat; you have finished reading the figures.

DR OTAALA: Mr Speaker, there is a minority report to our main report. It will be presented by Hon. Christine Kaaya Nakimwero, the Shadow Minister for Water and Environment.

Unfortunately, I must observe that she was with us on the committee throughout but she never raised any objections to our discussion. It is also being raised by the Shadow Minister of Energy and Mineral Development, Hon. Nyakato Asinansi. Unfortunately, she was absent during our discussions. *(Laughter)*
I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Next time, when someone is raising a minority report, I will look for the attendance book of

the committee. If I find you have not been attending, then there will be no way you will come with a minority report. Since I have not checked, I cannot rely on that, but a Member is supposed to attend committee proceedings.

Secondly, chairperson, you are saying I request the House to approve but at this stage, we cannot. That will be brought by the Committee on Budget because there is more money you need. If we approve this, yet you need more money, then you are gone; your unfunded priorities are gone. At this stage, we only receive the figures supplied under the budget estimates. I am sure that is what you have used, not the ones in the ministerial policy statement because the figures for the budget estimates came later.

Once we take it to the Committee on Budget, it will consolidate it to see whether it can address some of the unfunded priorities, and then it comes here and requests for the House to approve.

Hon. Christine, please come, but do not mind going into so many details. Otherwise, the practice at this stage is that we adopt both reports and send them to the Committee on Budget. Do not be scared that we shall leave your issues behind.

1.41

MS CHRISTINE KAAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am presenting this minority report under Rule 205 of our Rules of Procedure. Our points of dissent are few but for our benefit. One is the need for us to incorporate a budget for conducting boundary surveys, demarcating, restoring, and gazetted wetlands, and evicting encroachers.

According to our budget, it did not have money. We, therefore request that it is considered and so, we are recommending that at least an allocation of Shs 15 billion for wetland survey, wetland demarcation and registration is provided. We also recommend that at least 10 wetlands per district are surveyed.

The second issue is under water and the environment and it relates to the National Forestry Authority. Tree planting has been emphasised but the issue of establishing tree nursery beds is wanting. We request serious additional allocations to establish at least a tree seed nursery bed per subcounty in Uganda this coming financial year. Those are some of the related water and environment options.

I call upon my colleague, the Shadow Minister of Energy to also raise the points of departure. *(Applause)*

1.43

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO (FDC, Woman Representative, Hoima City): Thank you very much, my colleague. And thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving us this opportunity.

Another point of dissent under the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development is the Project-Affected Persons (PAPs) who have not been paid since 2018 to date and yet the evaluations were done and people are still complaining.

We recommend that Shs 400 billion is allocated to ensure that all PAPs – in both the EACOP and Tilenga project - are compensated.

We also recommend operationalising the existing national fuel reserves and operating regional reserves. We recommend that Shs 10 billion be allocated to fill that gap.

The third is prioritising the exploration and mining of iron ore to supply raw materials for iron and steel industry. We recommend Shs 15 billion to be allocated-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, when presenting a report, a point of clarification cannot come in. We shall debate; so, I will allow you during the debate.

MS NYAKATO: Finally, there is the issue of increased access to renewable energy. We recommend that Shs 1 trillion be allocated to connect at least 300 new connections per

district both in rural and urban centres. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I now open up the debate and I start with Hon. Naome Kibaaju, Hon. Tom, Member for Madi-Okollo, Hon. Osoru, and Hon. Pius. Chairperson of the Committee on Budget, here, I will not give you chance because they are coming to you. Members, it is two minutes each because we want to break for lunch.

1.46

MS NAOME KIBAAJU (NRM, Sheema County North, Sheema): Thank you. My observation is that much as we appreciate the minority report, I would like to know whether these points were brought to the committee and rejected. That would save us from having to present a minority report here in the House.

Secondly, I would like to thank the chairperson for the report. However, I want to emphasise that NEMA has not done its work efficiently. Yesterday, I came from Mbarara; we followed huge buses but they take advantage of their size and keep throwing bottles, *kaveera*, and food, everywhere. I do not know what can be put in place –(Interjections)– *Kaveera* is polythene paper.

On tree planting, we are not doing as much as we should. I recommend that money be given for that purpose. Recently, I was given tree seedlings to take to my constituency, and in a very short time, they were taken. This shows that people are hungry for these seedlings to plant. That would go a long way in helping our environment. That is all I wanted to say. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I want to guide on the issue Hon. Naome Kibaaju has brought up - and I know she will agree with me and support it.

To complement Government efforts, we can coordinate with the Minister of Water and Environment to provide us with seeds and we try to raise the seedlings in our communities

as Members of Parliament. I know someone will say, “Where will the money come from?” But as part of our community corporate social responsibility, I am sure a nursery bed - I have done it before. A nursery bed is not that costly. It is actually very easy to transport. However, for quality purposes, we could coordinate it with the minister.

Minister, engage Members on this issue; those interested will come to you and you provide them with seeds so we put up nursery beds and then distribute the seedlings. Otherwise, what you give us from here cannot be enough. Who else did I pick? Hon. Tom Bright?

1.48

MR TOM BRIGHT (NRM, Kyaka Central County, Kyegegwa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the chairperson for a good report. I would like to concur with the committee on page 36, point number 9.65: Repair of boreholes and maintenance is very true. Some places are water-stressed areas like Kyegegwa District and many districts are suffering due to lack of clean water.

I really support the Shs 15 billion to be given to the water sector so that we can improve our livelihood. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for Madi-Okollo?

1.49

MS JOANNE ANIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Madi-Okollo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson and the committee for the report.

My comment is also on the Shs 50 billion for the rural water – for fixing boreholes. Many women and children spend a lot of productive time in search of water. So, this will go a long way in solving that problem. However, I would like to get clarification because a lot of these boreholes are made by contractors who use inferior materials, especially deep down in the villages, so that you find that after three months, some of these boreholes are non-functional. In such cases, I believe motorised

boreholes would benefit the community better, as they have a longer lifespan.

On the issue of rural electrification, the Government is now using concrete poles, but in some very swampy areas, they have continued to use wooden poles. I hope that that has been catered for – that some of these wooden poles would be replaced with concrete poles, especially in areas where we have seasonal rivers, which last maybe eight or nine months – like in Madi-Okollo. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for Terego?

1.50

MS ROSE OBIGAH (NRM, Woman Representative, Terego): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I applaud the committee and the chairperson. You touched my heart.

Mr Speaker, I want to be on record that I am planting two million seedlings to be given to my community so that we really change the environment.

Mr Speaker, we need total help to NEMA. We need NEMA to have our backs to ride on. Many people are encroaching on wetlands – they are not doing service to this country. We are poor and hungry because we have refused to plant fruits and because we have refused to be part of the environment.

The day we decide to give all the monies that NEMA needs, we will be able to change the face of this country and feed our community. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Pius?

1.52

MR PIUS WAKABI (NRM, Bugahya County, Hoima): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have a few comments to make. One is about the money provided to NFA for tree planting. Whereas I support it, more emphasis should be put on preserving the natural forests.

Mr Speaker, we are talking about planting more trees, but if you visited Bugoma Forest right now, it has been totally destroyed. So, I think more emphasis should be put on preserving our natural forests.

On power connections, more money has been provided, but my request is for us to have a balanced policy so that power connection is across each and every constituency because some constituencies have benefited more than others. You find that in a constituency represented by a minister, power is almost in each and every home. When you visit constituencies represented by us, it is a problem. *(Laughter)*

I request that, this time, let us have a clear policy; if we are to connect power in 10 villages per constituency, let it be very clear.

The last note is about the Petroleum Authority of Uganda. This authority is in charge of controlling and monitoring these oil companies. I visited some oil companies – like Tilenga – in Buliisa. The authority is supposed to control costs because all expenses are supposed to be recovered in the future when oil is out. I just visited the dining hall – that Tilenga project is employing 9,000 people, but when you visit them, you may think you are in Serena Hotel. I think a plate of food costs about Shs 100,000 – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Osoru?

1.54

MS MOURINE OSORU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua City): Mr Speaker, thank you very much. I appreciate the chairperson for the report he has given us.

My concern is that if you go to some districts, you find there are poles that were installed four years ago and there are no electric wires on them. We wonder what could be happening.

Secondly, there are those towns that were made cities – like Gulu City, Arua City, Mbarara City and others. I understand that the Government

normally gives one borehole to every subcounty every financial year. However, since we became a city, we have been cut off. Now, it is National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC) that has to extend water to all these urban centres.

Mr Speaker, our people do not have water and the water that is extended by NWSC is very expensive. However, for the money that the committee is recommending, I do not think I have anything against it. I support the committee on that one, but the cost of national water in urban centres is very high, knowing that some of our cities are still in rural areas. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I remember that issue came up in the 10th Parliament. There is a strategy which we shared, whereby – I think I was on the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. They brought their case and justified it. It is more or less the urban people subsidising the rural ones – so that we have a wide water coverage.

What hurts me is to find that projects which are performing well, you are not giving them money. If you have given an entity a loan, they have performed and they have exited and you do not pay – and you know for these contractors, the moment you delay payment, they get a lot of money in interest. We are losing a lot of money – the other day we were discussing UNRA. So, what is your strategy as the Government? Did you want them to delay? How do you reward entities? How do you make entities work harder to absorb the money that comes under projects? This is very critical. Hon. Isaac?

1.56

MR ISAAC OTIMGIW (NRM, Padyere County, Nebbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the report.

I would like to thank the ministry for commissioning the Olwiyo Substation earlier, which is a big step towards bringing electricity to West Nile. However, I would still like to inform the House that the deadline of

September 2022 and that of March 2023 have still not been met by the ministry in terms of bringing electricity – the national grid – to West Nile and the people of West Nile are concerned. We welcome the Shs 35 billion, which has been put for this.

Mr Speaker, we passed a loan amounting to about Shs 1.7 trillion and districts were allocated new connections. However, to date, it is actually slow; surveyors are not on the ground. We need to have a follow-up on that.

On the aspect of water, we are a bit concerned about the slow pace of providing safe water to most of our villages. At the moment, I understand that 21,000 villages are not connected to safe water. That is very concerning.

As a House, we need to know – which are these villages being connected? Let us be provided with the list. You are saying you need more money to connect more villages; which village is next? Can we also know and have an input on that?

On that note, we have the issue of Northern Umbrella in most of the areas in West Nile and NWSC also. Those are all entities under the same ministry, competing to provide water within the same district. In Nebbi, Northern Umbrella is competing for some subcounties, while NWSC is also competing for some subcounties. Can we align the service providers, please?

On the issue of the tree seedlings, I can see that NWSC is requesting for Shs 30 billion and at the same time, NFA is also requesting for Shs 4 billion. Those are entities within the same ministry. Why can't we just – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister?

Honourable colleagues, I have been having peace since 10.00 a.m. We agreed on six people per committee report – and it has been followed. So, if you have just come, please, allow us to continue with how we were doing business.

Minister of Water and Environment, I need to break for lunch; I have been seated here since 10.00 a.m.

1.59

THE MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENT (Mr Sam Cheptoris): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the Members for their comments; most of them were very positive.

I would also like to thank my colleague, the Shadow Minister for Environment. I am very grateful for the comments you made; you supported us in requiring Shs 15 billion for tree planting. I also thank you for suggesting that we restore at least 10 wetlands per district. This is a very welcome comment.

Since my Minister of State for Environment is here, I am going to answer questions on only water. I will give an opportunity -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, we want you to speak in terms of money; general policy will be later.

MR CHEPTORIS: On repairing boreholes, I would like to request that the recommendation given by the Committee on Natural Resources of Shs 15 billion be accepted. One of the Members was saying that contractors use inferior material and suggested that we should motorise these boreholes.

I would like to inform the House that the Ministry of Water has embarked on motorising all these boreholes to ensure that they serve a larger number of people in an area; we have already motorised some of the boreholes.

On National Water and Sewerage Corporation, I would like to request that we support this entity. We had this project called 100 per cent Acceleration Project, which was meant to extend water even to underserved areas and poor people in urban areas.

I would like to inform the House that the cost of water for the poor members of our community

is now Shs 50 shillings per jerrican. That is what NWSC charges. However, it is unfortunate that sometimes some of the people who sell this water overcharge it.

However, when you go to your areas, please ensure that the people who sell water to the poor members of our communities, charge only Shs 50 shillings per jerrican.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, for the record; National Water takes Shs 25 and then Shs 25 goes to the operator, making it Shs 50 shillings.

MR CHEPTORIS: It is true, Mr Speaker; NWSC takes Shs 25 and the other Shs 25 goes to the vendor who is selling the water. I think those are the questions which were related to water. Let me now ask Hon. Beatrice Anywar to come and respond to questions relating to the environment.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Anywar, only two minutes, please.

2.04

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER AND ENVIRONMENT (ENVIRONMENT) (Ms Beatrice Anywar): Thank you, Mr Speaker and my senior minister. I also would like to appreciate the shadow minister and the whole House for always standing up on the issue of environment; on environment, we speak as one and I greatly appreciate that.

I appreciate the budget additions, especially those that have come from the Opposition. This is really commendable and I pray, that these monies are provided for. And for the seeds, we shall provide the seeds to you, Members of Parliament and to your areas so that you are able to get seedlings from nearby rather than transporting them from a different location.

So, if we can have money for seeds provided, we are ready to give out those seedlings. We have been giving on a small scale and have been hard-up now.

Please, let us have that money provided for as suggested by my shadow minister and the whole House approves it; we shall do the needful.

Mr Speaker, as a ministry we have tried for the people who keep throwing items from the vehicles; it has almost cut across and it is nasty because even vehicles for the “big” people have not been spared. And NEMA has come up - actually in my car, I move with a dustbin. And to you, Members of Parliament, I pray that you lead by example. And NEMA has already advised that even big vehicles like buses should have -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, issues of a policy nature are not being handled now.

MS ANYWAR: Okay, thank you, Mr Speaker. Lastly, there was an issue on Bugoma Forest. I also would like to inform this House that it is a thorn in our flesh for sure. The President has just made a directive to the Prime Minister to go and handle this together with the ministry. So, we stand together to save our environment. Do your part; we shall do our part. Thank you, heartily.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources on the ministerial policy statement and budget estimates for financial year 2023/2024, be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The report is referred to the Committee on Budget. Like I had guided earlier, we usually adopt both reports and refer to the Committee on Budget for reconciliation and consultation.

Honourable colleagues, I also put the question that the minority report of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources and the

ministerial policy statements for Financial Year 2023/2024, be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is equally referred to the Committee on Budget to scrutinise their proposals.

Honourable colleagues, we are breaking off for 45 minutes for lunch. And after lunch, we shall start with the Committee on Presidential Affairs, followed by Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs as we continue with the rest of the committees.

With the way we are moving, I need each and every committee - there is no committee that is going to be allowed to present tomorrow; I need all committee reports today. If time allows, we shall handle.

All committee reports need to be here. If we do not handle it, Members will read through and we shall handle it tomorrow. But we need all of them finished today because tomorrow is the deadline by law.

So, at least we must have all reports today. I do not want it to be the way things happened in the morning, when I was running around, calling chairpersons, looking for who to begin with at 10:00 a.m.

(The House was suspended at 2.08 p.m.)

(On resumption at 2.56 p.m., the Deputy Speaker presiding.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I had told you that once we resumed, I would give two to three minutes to the Government Chief Whip to lay on the Table and give more information on the rota for ministers attending the House. We want to be serious on this issue so that we are able to know the timetable of ministers. He will explain how they generated it. Government Chief Whip?

2.57

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Mr Speaker, in compliance with your directive, I beg to lay on Table the schedule of ministers for plenary sittings. This list was generated from each and every MDA; we wrote to the senior ministers, they wrote back and we compiled them.

I beg to lay, for the second time, for the record of Parliament – and this letter was signed on 6 April 2023. It was addressed to the Clerk. This was in line with the 23rd Sitting of the Third Meeting of the Second Session of the 11th Parliament, where you directed that the rota for ministers' attendance be uploaded on the parliamentary system. I wrote and also copied the leadership of Parliament. I beg to lay.

As permission is granted, I would like to read MDA by MDA, highlighting which particular ministry will be in Parliament on Tuesday, Wednesday, and then I conclude with Thursday.

Under the Office of the Prime Minister, on Tuesdays, we expect the following ministers: Rt Hon. Justine Kasule Lumumba, Hon. Denis Hamson Obua, Hon. Dr Ongalo Clement Obote, Hon. Agnes Nandutu, Hon. Namuyangu Jennifer and Hon. Esther Anyakun.

On Tuesday, for the Ministry of Defence and Veterans Affairs, we have Hon. Vincent Ssempijja. The Ministry of East African Community Affairs has Rt Hon. Rebecca Kadaga and Hon. Magode Ikuya. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has Hon. John Mulimba. In the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, for the first week, we have Hon. Sarah Mateke; second week, Hon. Peace Mutuuzo; third week, Hon. Hellen Asamo and; fourth week, Hon. Peace Mutuuzo.

The Ministry of Health will have Hon. Margaret Muhanga. The Ministry of Internal Affairs will have Maj. Gen. Kahinda Otafiire and Gen. David Muhoozi. The Ministry of Education and Sports on Tuesdays will have Dr J. C. Musingo and Hon. Janet Museveni.

Under the Ministry of Local Government, we have Hon. Raphael Magyezi for week one; Hon. Victoria Rusoke, for week two. The Ministry of Public Service will have Hon. Grace Mary Mugasa. The Ministry of Works and Transport, first and third week, Gen. Edward Katumba Wamala; second week, Hon. Musa Francis Ecweru; fourth week of every month, Hon. Byamukama Fred. The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development will have Hon. Okaasai Opolot. The Office of the President will have Hon. Milly Babalanda, Hon. Beatrice Akori, Hon. Rose Lilly Akello, Hon. Diana Mutasingwa.

In the Ministry of Security, we will have Maj. Gen. Jim Muhwezi. The Ministry of Kampala Capital City Authority and Metropolitan Affairs will have Hon. Minsa Kabanda and Hon. Kyofatogabye Kabuye on Tuesday. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries will have Hon. Frank Tumwebaze and Hon. Adoa Hellen. The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Attorney-General's Chambers will have Hon. Norbert Mao, Hon. Kiryowa Kiwanuka and Hon. Jackson Kafuuzi.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development will have Hon. Matia Kasaija, Hon. Henry Musasizi, Hon. Amos Lugoloobi, Hon. Evelyn Anite and Hon. Kyeyune Kasolo. The Ministry of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance will have Hon. Godfrey Kabbyanga while the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development will have Hon. Judith Nabakooba and Hon. Persis Namuganza.

The Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities will have Col Tom Butime, and Hon. Mugarra Martin. The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives will have Hon. Francis Mwebesa, Hon. Harriet Ntabazi, and Hon. David Bahati. The Ministry of Water and Environment will have Hon. Beatrice Anywar. The Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, Dr Monica Musenero.

This is the rota for ministers who should be attending Parliament on Tuesday.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Government Chief Whip, aren't we taking too much time? What we can do - You have done your part so it should be uploaded on Alfresco for honourable colleagues to follow up. Also, you need to be updating yourself so that on a certain day, when we are looking for a certain minister and he or she is not here, we are able to say, "It is so-and-so."

I would like to thank you very much for the job well done. (*Applause*) I hope this will help us now since we shall know exactly who to send to the rules. Yes, we are going to take serious disciplinary action. Honourable colleagues, between me and you, the Constitution is very clear. The major role of Parliament is to process Government business.

If we are processing Government business and the ministers are not present to process their businesses, shall we sit here as backbenchers? Sometimes the shadow ministers want to step in for their colleagues - that is the only time they call them "colleagues". They say "I can step in for my colleague."

Honourable ministers, this is not aimed at harassing you. No. We just want cooperation to process your business. Imagine processing a ministerial policy statement; a budget of a minister when he/she is not there. How will you run a ministry without a budget? This is all aimed at working together so that we do not have gaps here and there. Now, let us go to the ministerial policy statements.

CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF
THE COMMITTEE ON PRESIDENTIAL
AFFAIRS ON THE MINISTERIAL POLICY
STATEMENT AND BUDGET ESTIMATES
FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Madam Chairperson, as you come, the practice is very clear. It is only 15 minutes maximum and straightaway go to the observations, recommendations and the totals so that we pick just six contributions from Members.

3.05

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON PRESIDENTIAL AFFAIRS (Ms Jesca Ababiku): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is our report. We have the Office of the President, State House, Office of the Prime Minister, Minister of Kampala City and Metropolitan Affairs, Uganda AIDS Commission, Uganda Industrial Research Institute, Directorate of Ethics and Integrity, Kampala Capital City Authority, Internal Security Organisation, External Security Organisation and the Science, Technology and Innovations.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the guidance. Under the Office of the President - Our report has been uploaded.

Let me go to page 6: Investiture ceremonies and patriotism

We have a funding gap for investiture ceremonies and patriotism. The funding gap is Shs 9.1 billion and that is what we are requesting for.

Inadequate office accommodation for RDCs

Mr Speaker, we have a funding gap of Shs 7.2 billion and that is what we are requesting for.

Procurement of medals for awards

This is very necessary because, as a country, we host Heads of State and they do the same to us when our President visits them. We have a funding gap of Shs 4.23 billion and that is what we are requesting for.

Facilitation for presidential advisors

Mr Speaker, these positions are provided for by the Constitution. They have been appointed and we have to facilitate them. We have a funding gap of Shs 5.1 billion and that is what we are requesting for.

Under monitoring and evaluation under the Office of the President, we have a funding gap of Shs 10 billion and that is what we are requesting for.

Under monitoring manifesto implementation, we have a funding gap of Shs 1.5 billion and that is what we are requesting.

Lack of funding for Intelligent Transport Monitoring System

Mr Speaker, this country took a decision that we must ensure safety of everybody. Therefore, there is a need to have a tracking system. We cannot do this if we do not have the infrastructure to aid it. Therefore, we are requesting for Shs 1.5 billion.

Under continuous capacity building of members of the Cabinet – we are aware that these members get appointed and reshuffled. Therefore, their capacity needs to be continuously built – regular inductions are needed. We have a funding gap of Shs 1.3 billion.

Maintenance of National Leadership Institute (NALI)

We thank Parliament for having given money to do some work at NALI, but the maintenance requires Shs 2 billion and that is what we are requesting for.

Facilitating the Resident District Commissioners

They are in place by the empowerment of our Constitution and have to be facilitated. We have a funding gap of Shs 4.5 billion and that is what we are requesting for.

Support to the Afro-Arab Youth Council

Mr Speaker, our country is blessed; we are going to have the headquarters for Afro-Arab Youth Council in Uganda. We have been given the condition to buy land. We appreciate the support given by this House. The money needed for 50 acres is Shs 15 billion. We have already got Shs 4 billion and have a balance of Shs 11 billion – and that is what we are requesting for.

State House

Presidential donations

This country benefits either directly or indirectly through other institutions like the churches and cultural leaders, but we have a funding gap of Shs 30 billion. That is what we are requesting for.

Logistical and administrative support to the Presidency

We need to support the Fountain of Honour and we have a budget gap of Shs 8 billion. That is what we are requesting for.

Retooling State House

We need to ensure that State House is at a benefitting level because that is the face of our country in one way or the other. We also have State Lodges for renovation. We have a funding gap of Shs 35.42 billion for State House, Entebbe and Nakasero as well as the State Lodges. The cumulative figure is Shs 35.42 billion and that is what we are requesting for.

Uganda AIDS Commission

Mr Speaker, we are aware that there is increasing rate of infection among the young people and the adults. We are requesting for Shs 1.94 billion to ensure that dissemination of well-packaged information is done across the country.

Monitoring and mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS guidelines

Mr Speaker, we discovered that some of the information given out is misleading. Especially, we were concerned – and are still concerned – that others preach that HIV/AIDS does not kill. Therefore, we have advised Uganda AIDS Commission to review the package and this has to be disseminated. For these guidelines, we have a funding gap, which we have already stated.

For recruitment of human resource and support services for HIV/AIDS messages to trickle down, we have a funding gap of Shs 2.73 billion and that is what we are requesting for.

Uganda Industrial Research Institute (UIRI)

Research and development

For research and development, UIRI has a funding gap of Shs 2.14 billion and that is what we are requesting for.

Wage and utility costs

Mr Speaker, under this, we have a funding gap of Shs 4.466 billion.

Ethics and integrity

On page 27, we request for a correction of an anomaly. There was Shs 3 billion meant for development, but it was put under wage. So, we request that it be corrected in the coming financial year.

Establishment of Vote – that is a policy matter.

Lack of funding to Pornography Control Committee

Mr Speaker, we have a committee to control – with what is happening, especially the homosexuality issues, we feel this committee needs to be empowered. They need Shs 4.2 billion.

Dissemination of anti-corruption laws

Mr Speaker, we feel we need to do more. Ethics and integrity needs to move from the headquarters up to the lower level, including to our schools and other institutions, to talk about corruption as well as the laws which are meant to manage corruption. We are asking for Shs 2.85 billion.

Internal Security Organisation (ISO)

Our major priority is to ensure transport equipment for ISO. Our request cuts across.

We are requesting for motorcycles and motor vehicles. The funding gap that we want to address is Shs 10 billion.

Facilitation to Internal Intelligence Collection by ISO

Mr Speaker, for our safety and management of our peace, we feel ISO's intelligence work has to be enhanced. We have a funding gap of Shs 10 billion – that is what we are requesting for.

Enhancement of technical infrastructure

Intelligence surveillance cannot be done if we do not equip our infrastructure to aid surveillance. The money we are asking for is Shs 15 billion.

Construction of the Institute of Security and Strategic Studies

Mr Speaker, we have been losing a lot of money yearly, because our staff are being trained outside the country to the tune of Shs 3 billion per annum. We would love to get support to have our own institute to reduce this recurrent expenditure. Therefore, we recommend that this facility is constructed – it requires Shs 123.9 billion.

Under the construction of the transport equipment workshop, we are requesting for Shs 8.3 billion to ensure security service cars are not serviced in ordinary workshops because anything can be put in those cars, and they can be tracked. Therefore, we are asking to have our own workshop.

External Security Organisation

Mr Speaker, we have our observations and recommendations on page 36.

Foreign intelligence collection

We recommend that this be enhanced and the budget gap is Shs 15.7 billion; that is what we are requesting for.

<p>Retooling of External Security Organisation</p> <p>Mr Speaker, on this we request for Shs 28.8 billion.</p> <p>Budget enhancement to administration and finance</p> <p>Our budget gap is Shs 7.112 billion and that is what we are requesting for.</p> <p>Construction of ESO Headquarters</p> <p>Mr Speaker, ESO has its headquarters, but it has been challenged because many of the structures surrounding it are now taller than what we have and that causes a security threat. We need our country and the people to be safe. So, we are requesting for Shs 31.324 billion.</p> <p>Science, Technology and Innovation</p> <p>In regard to this, our observations and recommendations begin from page 41.</p> <p>Lack of budget provision for aeronautics and space</p> <p>Here, we have a budget gap of Shs 5 billion, and that is what we are requesting for.</p> <p>Inadequate budget provision for the pathogenic economy</p> <p>In regard to this, we have a budget gap of Shs 10 billion, and that is what we are requesting for.</p> <p>Inadequate budget provision for sericulture</p> <p>On this, we are requesting for Shs 16.45 billion.</p> <p>Inadequate funding to the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology</p> <p>For this, we have a funding gap of Shs 15 billion, and that is what we are requesting for.</p>	<p>Proposed budget allocation to Kiira Motors</p> <p>Mr Speaker, we want Kiira Motors to move into commercialisation. And so, we are proposing Shs 20 billion to be appropriated to support their activities.</p> <p>Ministry of Kampala Capital City and Metropolitan Affairs</p> <p>Mr Speaker, our observations and recommendations begin from page 48.</p> <p>Policy, Planning and Budget Services</p> <p>Our major concern here is about the planning, which we want to enhance. The committee recommends that Shs 4.4 billion be provided to ensure that critical physical studies are coordinated to enhance the implementation in the Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area.</p> <p>Retooling of KCCA</p> <p>Mr Speaker, we need to equip our office but also facilitate the ministry. For this, we have a funding gap of Shs 2.3 billion.</p> <p>Kampala Capital City Authority</p> <p>Our observations and recommendations start from page 51. Our major recommendation regarding this is on the implementation of the presidential directive on city markets. We are requesting for Shs 2.3 billion to ensure good implementation of this directive.</p> <p>On the issue of roads, we apologise – as you had earlier guided, it is the Committee on Physical Infrastructure that handles issues of roads.</p> <p>Staff wages and related costs</p> <p>Under this, we have a funding gap of Shs 35.791 billion, and that is what we are requesting for.</p> <p>Physical planning of the city</p> <p>We have a funding gap of Shs 2.5 billion, and that is what we are requesting for.</p>
---	---

Office of the Prime Minister

Our observations and recommendations regarding this entity start from page 55.

On budget enhancement for strengthening Government-wide coordination, monitoring and evaluation; this is a constitutional mandate, and we have a funding gap of Shs 15 billion.

Operationalisation of the Disaster Risk Management Plan

The ministry has ever shared this plan with us. We are planning to operationalise this plan to ensure issues of disaster are minimised. We are requesting for Shs 20 billion as a starting point.

Refugee protection and management

Here we are only restricting ourselves to the resettlement of internally displaced persons because these are our citizens. We have cases in Kyangwali, including other places, and we are requesting for Shs 7.7 billion to ensure our people are resettled.

Uganda Red Cross Society

This entity plays an auxiliary role and we have been appropriating to it some money, through the Office of the Prime Minister. They have a funding gap of Shs 12.5 billion, and that is what they are asking for, but we are requesting for Shs 5 billion out of the Shs 12.563 billion.

Facilitation of Prime Minister's Delivery Unit

Mr Speaker, for this entity, we have a funding gap of Shs 9.727 billion, and that is what we are requesting for.

Mr Speaker, this marks the end of our presentation. Please allow me to table copies of our report and the minutes. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable chair. *(Applause)*

I now request you to read the budget allocations Vote-by-Vote with the totals because that is

what the Committee on Budget is going to be mainly dealing with.

MS ABABIKU: My – was compiling.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see it as part of the report on the copy that I have. Maybe it does not have totals – I do not know if that is what you are waiting for.

MS ABABIKU: Mr Speaker, Vote 001: Office of the President

Recurrent budget - Shs 228.1 billion

Development expenditure - Shs 22 billion

Vote 002: State House

Recurrent budget - Shs 401 billion

Development expenditure - Shs 21.7 billion

Vote 003: Office of the Prime Minister

Recurrent expenditure - Shs 87.1 billion

Development expenditure - Shs 135.3 billion

Vote 023: Ministry of KCCA and Metropolitan Affairs

Recurrent expenditure - Shs 7.8 billion

Development expenditure - Shs 45.6 billion

Vote 107: Uganda AIDS Commission

Recurrent expenditure - Shs 15.9 billion

Development expenditure – Shs 619 million

Vote 110: Uganda Industrial Research Institute

Recurrent budget - Shs 11.9 billion – *(Interruption)*

MS PACUTO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The procedural point I rise on is that at this point, we are supposed to capture the figures as they are. When you read “Shs 15.8”, for record purposes, we shall not know the exact figure that State House or the Office of the President requires. I implore my sister to read the entire figure. If it is “15,575...”, read it up to the last figure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. It is okay. Honourable colleague, the point is noted. What honourable members mean is that here, we do not deal with “etc.” - *(Laughter)* - we

deal with complete statements, but it is okay. It is good guidance.

Chairperson, continue. Do not go back because the whole report will be sent to the committee and it has all the details, but read the figures like Hon. Pacuto has guided.

MS ABABIKU: Thank you.

Vote 112: Ethics and Integrity

Recurrent expenditure – Shs 15,169,635,000

Development expenditure – Shs 150 million

Vote 122: Kampala Capital City Authority

Recurrent expenditure – Shs 218,979,201,000

Development expenditure – Shs 133,913,187,000

Vote 158: Internal Security Organisation

Recurrent expenditure – Shs 172,102,984,000

Development expenditure – Shs 10,680,000,000

Vote 167: External Security Organisation

Recurrent expenditure – Shs 96,253,009,000

Development expenditure – Shs 1,002,960,000

Vote 167: Science, Technology and Innovation

Recurrent expenditure – Shs 161,419,037,000

Development expenditure – Shs 106,454,389,000

I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, chairperson. For processing all these Votes in time, I thank you and your team for a job well done. Honourable colleagues, like we were doing, five people are going to contribute to the debate. That is number one.

Number two, your submission should enrich the processing and consolidation of this report by the Budget Committee. This means that the issues of a policy nature are not helpful at this time. We want issues that have a financial implication so that the Budget Committee can take note. Let us take two minutes each.

3.32

MR NATHAN BYANYIMA (NRM, Bukanga North County, Isingiro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. And thanks you, the chairperson, for the report. I am perturbed, especially when these funding gaps are all over. Do we close the ministries? What do we do? Our work is to set priorities.

However, when you listen to her report, for example the tracking of these vehicles, you realise that an investor is supposed to bring money here and invest. Today, we even held a meeting. Which money do they require? I think there are some things that ministers do not explain to the committee members. I think there is money hidden somewhere.

Today, we have been in a thorough meeting with the Minister of State for Security, where a Russian man/company is willing to bring in US \$26 million to invest here so that he can recoup the money by giving us the plate numbers and we pay for them; we pay for the gadgets. Even the fines, which have been a non-tax revenue for the Government, are to be taken away by the investor.

We can pass the budget, but let us be a bit more polished. When the ministers read their policy statements here, they had dummies; they came back after two weeks. The Members have been reading the policy statements yesterday and even today. They have not had a chance to read them in and out.

Our ministers need to pull up their socks so that we can get the policy statements in a simple way. You show us your wish list – “We want to do the following this financial year...” Do not - *(Member timed out.)*

3.34

MR SIMON OPOLOT (NRM, Kanyum County, Kumi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for that report but my concern is on ESO. The committee rightly notices that there is a gap of Shs 15 billion for mainly collecting intelligence from abroad. I wonder how that money will be

enough by looking at the space, the scope, the coverage and the global threats. If for example, ESO was given more money, we would not have had the ADF last time infiltrating because intelligence gives you a forewarning and guides policy.

Therefore, I implore, if possible, with your permission, that the ESO budget be increased because of the scope of coverage. *(Applause)* This will lead to mitigation and addressing of threats before they occur. This is because it is very expensive for us to go on after a threat has already occurred.

We rather increase the money now so we are forewarned before the threat has occurred. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The committee has prioritised the security sector. The Internal Security Organisation last bought cars in 1997. So, how will they work? I think before the last financial year, a District Internal Security Officer (DISO) was getting Shs 1,540 per day, as fuel to monitor a whole district. – Yes, Shs 1,000 on average is the money they were getting. So, what do they end up encroaching on? This is why intelligence officers disturb MPs by saying; “Facilitate me,” and yet, when we facilitate, we end up influencing the outcome of whatever we do. Hon. Max Ochai?

3.37

MR MAXIMUS OCHAI (NRM, West Budama County North, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I thank the chairperson of the committee for the elaborate report. Having listened to the presentation, I get a feeling that what, in my mind, are critical priorities are instead treated as secondary. I am glad you have actually hinted towards the need to facilitate ISO in gathering intelligence.

Security is a *sine qua non* for economic growth and development. That is why Uganda has for a long time prioritised it. In this case, therefore, when we see the committee flagging out a funding gap of about Shs 10 billion to procure

transport equipment to facilitate ISO to gather intelligence – the software does not need it. It only emphasises the fact that we need to provide that money to guarantee our security and therefore, I support the recommendation that that funding gap be filled.

The second critical issue I see in this report is the lack of funding for maintenance of the National Leadership Institute (NALI) Kyankwanzi. NALI was established in 1981 with the sole purpose of training national leaders in public service. We all know that public service is critical for improving the welfare of our people. So, anything that will contribute towards building that critical capacity should actually not be looked down –*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Aza?

3.39

MR TOM AZA (NRM, West Moyo County, Moyo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the good report. I am an MP from the South Sudan border and really, there is a need to increase money for security agencies, especially the Resident District Commissioners (RDCs), who are the chairpersons of the district security committees. There is also a need to increase funding for ISO and ESO. There is a need for a security tracking system for these agencies and a need for motorcycles and motor vehicles for foreign intelligence gathering.

This is simply because we are surrounded by countries that are at war. Take for example, there are issues in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in the Sudan right now, as I speak. So, there is a need to increase funding for the security agencies for border security, especially the stretch from Koboko, Yumbe, Moyo, to Adjumani, which are along the border.

There are issues of the proliferation of small arms. These small arms are being brought by the refugees into the country. So, the intelligence system must be strengthened. Thank you very much.

3.40

MS SUSAN AMERO (Independent, Woman Representative, Amuria): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the report. I have a few issues to note. It looks like we need enough time to look at things because we seem to be doing double budgeting.

When we ask for money for monitoring and evaluation and money for manifesto implementation – I expected that the ministries are doing their work. We just need to use other arms to do the monitoring. Now, you find money is being asked from both sides; so I do not know how we are going to handle this kind of issue.

The issue of city markets comes under local government. I do not know why we need money in KCCA for markets when the Committee on Public Accounts (Local Government) that I was sitting in, is also working on the same markets. If we are not putting money in one pot from different angles, then I do not know what we are doing.

I listened to the report of the committee but I am a little bit disturbed because we have not heard about affirmative action in ministries. We want to know how much is in each ministry so we are able to know during monitoring how to aggregate with what is in Prime Minister's office. In most cases, once money is put in a pool in the Prime Minister's office, we do not know what goes to Teso, Karamoja, and that is why we find things are going amiss.

I seek clarification from the chairperson on how much is going to Teso, Karamoja, Luweero, Bunyoro and the rest. I beg to submit.

3.42

MR RONALD BALIMWEZO (NUP, Nakawa Division East, Kampala City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish to appreciate you for your tweet on the state of Kampala roads. Thank you very much.

Kampala is the capital city of Uganda; the face of Uganda and the economic hub of this

country. Kampala contributes over 60 per cent to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The development budget of Shs 133 billion for Kampala is too little to manage the face of Kampala – the economic hub of Uganda. It is important to recognise that Kampala as the capital city houses our Parliament. I pray that we find it fit to increase the development budget of KCCA to the tune of Shs 500 billion.

Mr Speaker, I was a mayor during the tenure of Jennifer Musisi – the person you have been praising for making miracles in the city; the budget was Shs 700 billion. Kampala cannot make miracles now. Therefore, I pray that we cut wherever we can and fund Kampala so that we pride in it being the capital city of Uganda. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. - I have already picked Members to speak. We have a formula we are following. Only one Member is remaining.

Honourable colleagues, Hon. Balimwezo has raised a very critical issue that I need the Committee on Budget to critically look at. I think the chairperson will clarify; maybe some of the money might be traced in the report of the Committee on Physical Infrastructure since now we do a programme-based budgeting.

For the road sector, some of the money is captured under physical infrastructure, but when we reach there, we shall pull – I will need the chairperson of the Committee on Budget to clearly pull all money for KCCA, especially to do with roads.

Honourable colleagues, we have visitors who come to this country. The moment you veer off the highway, it is really embarrassing -

Let us listen to one another. It will be a very big mistake if we start blaming the leadership of Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), like I had seen some people had started doing on social media. These are people we have not given capacity.

It will be our duty to ensure that KCCA – I am assigning the Committee on Budget. Chairperson of the Committee on Budget, the issue of roads in KCCA is an issue we must look at critically. *(Applause)* This is the face of the country; we cannot avoid it.

3.46

MR JONATHAN ODUR (UPC, Erute County South, Lira): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson of the committee, but I am constrained from fully supporting the report for the following reasons:

The first and foremost reason is the proposal by the committee to rent office premises for the presidential advisors. I do not know whether the committee gave full attention to the role of an advisor and the number of presidential advisors that we have and when and at what point they are needed to render advice to the President.

With the Cabinet being the principal body mandated to give advice to the President, I think this should be reconsidered. I invite the House to reject this proposal to allocate Shs 5.1 billion.

The second issue is about the Intelligent Transport Monitoring System. This matter is before this House and was referred for investigations. The investigations were calling into question the existence of the company called Joint Stock Global Security.

For this House to sit at this moment – before we even receive the report on whether that project should go ahead – and propose to allocate Shs 1.5 billion, would be undermining our own authority. I propose that we put this on hold until we receive the reports by the committees that are mandated.

The third issue is about the facilitation for Resident District Commissioners (RDCs). I have a problem using the word “facilitation”. Are you asking for fuel, salary or airtime? What is it that you want us to appropriate?

You cannot say, “Appropriate Shs 4.5 billion as ‘facilitation’.” What is it? In budgeting, we have even moved away from issues of contingency – things that are not clearly defined.

Lastly, I propose that since we have identified –*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, it is like the word I have seen trending in each and every ministerial policy statement: “retooling” – and in billions. The Government has a language – they have a way... “retooling”!

If you analyse and aggregate the budget for retooling across – There is where I saw Shs 32 billion for retooling. What is “retooling”? Why don’t we be clear?

Committee on Budget, that is the money we should be reallocating to more critical things – if it cannot be clearly defined. Why do you say “retooling”? Aren’t you already tooled? *(Laughter)*

Leader of the Opposition?

3.49

MR FRANCIS MWIJUKYE (FDC, Buhweju County, Buhweju): Mr Speaker, I agree with you on retooling. I see retooling under State House at Shs 35.4 billion. Are they going to buy hoes? Are they buying spears? *(Interjection)* I am not minimising it, but I want to know because I do not just approve. I should know before I approve it because I must defend this budget. So, if I do not know, why should I approve it?

Secondly, I see money for donations. Recently, I saw a letter from the President to the Prime Minister and he was referring to “political corruption” – that if you go and distribute iron sheets, it is political corruption.

Now, we want to pass money for donations for the President to go and do “political corruption”. *(Laughter)* These donations should also be clear. What is bad for the

ministers and Members of Parliament should also be bad for the President.

When we say the President does it, in the media, you find an Ofwono Opondo saying: “It is you who give it to him.” Now is the time to exonerate ourselves. Should we go on with “political corruption” or should it stop? His is institutionalised and budgeted for by us.

Lastly, when in my district there are no medicines, how do I come and start passing money for special workshops and vehicles and the Minister of Health tells me she has no money for medicines? I see there are no medicines in the health centres and my voters are seeing me here, passing money for workshops – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR MWIJUKYE: Mr Speaker, just one minute.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No. Honourable colleagues, listen to me. I have my agreement with the Leader of the Opposition. On a report of a committee, the Leader of the Opposition has no right of reply or comment – he is like any other Member. However, I had allowed him and we had agreed that he would do it quickly.

MR MWIJUKYE: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your kind guidance. If we have to do donations, then, let us have donations for all political leaders so that we know that Members of Parliament, ministers and the President can donate. If we must not have donations, then, we should not have donations for everybody. *(Applause)* That is why the Constituency Development Fund was removed.

Finally, as a Member of the Opposition, why should I approve money for Kyankwanzi? It has been made an NRM thing – FDC cannot go to Kyankwanzi, UPC cannot go to Kyankwanzi, NUP cannot go to Kyankwanzi. Unless we agree that we are now going to have delegates’ conferences of all political parties in Kyankwanzi.

However, if it is going to remain an NRM thing, then, it becomes difficult for me to sit and approve money for it. It should be through the NRM Secretariat. Otherwise, for me, it does not make sense.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, can the Opposition access Kyankwanzi once they request? Just clarify.

3.53

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Mr Speaker, all the Opposition Members of Parliament and other political parties – yes, because there are those who are not in Parliament – are all entitled to access Kyankwanzi. Nobody has denied you access to Kyankwanzi. If you want, we can even organise – after the policy statements session, we can arrange and invite all colleagues from the Opposition to go to Kyankwanzi. Thank you.

MR OKIN: Mr Speaker, I belong to an Opposition party called Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) and I hold a very high portfolio there. It is on record that FDC has ever written a letter to allow this institute to be used to facilitate their meeting. There was completely no response. This is on record.

Is the Prime Minister in order to deceive the House that other political parties are also free to access Kyankwanzi to conduct their business?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, please, we do not have much time. Now, the moment you say it is on record, I ask you to share the record with me so that I can be able to judge. So, share with me the request by FDC and then I will be able to rule on whether the Prime Minister is in order or not. Otherwise, now I do not know whether it is on record. When I was with Hon. Mwijukye - I mean the other time - we did not make a request. *(Laughter)* That is also on record.

MS ABABIKU: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the detailed insight you have given to our report. One of the issues you have raised about

the money we have proposed to ensure that we have a better tracking system for our mobility.

Mr Speaker, you cannot contract somebody without doing oversight. We are requesting for Shs 1.5 billion because what is contracted out is of security nature and, therefore, we need to do some oversight. So, that money is for oversight, not for what Hon. Nathan has explained. The contractor is going to do his but, as a Government, we need to do oversight to ensure quality assurance.

Secondly, regarding the issue of double budgeting, we want to clarify that, first of all, ministries implement but what we are budgeting in streamlining the manifesto operation is not going directly to enhance implementation but to ensure that these implementations are done. They do monitoring and evaluation, report to the country, and disseminate progress reports. So, we have a difference between the two - what the manifesto implementation does and what the ministries are doing.

On the issue of the roads, Mr Speaker, you answered rightly; it goes to our sister committee.

Regarding presidential advisors, the President has the prerogative and has his own schedule, which he does not share with us. So, he will decide when he will interact with the presidential advisors; we do not have control, but they are there because of the provisions in our Constitution. Therefore, they exist legally, and we cannot keep paying *-(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson, conclude. Thank you.

I put the question that the report of the Committee on Presidential Affairs, on the ministerial policy statement for the Ministry of the Presidency, Kampala Capital City Authority and the Office of the Prime Minister, for the Financial Year 2023/2024, be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The report is referred to the Committee on Budget for scrutiny, consolidation and ensuring that figures are proposed. Congratulations, chairperson and all the honourable members of the committee. Next item.

CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF
THE COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE AND
INTERNAL AFFAIRS ON THE POLICY
STATEMENT AND BUDGET ESTIMATES
FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/2024

4.00

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Ms Rosemary Nyakikongoro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to present the report of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs on the ministerial policy statements for budget estimates for the Financial Year 2023/2024.

However, before I proceed, allow me to state that we have a minority report written by some members of the committee on a specific issue. And after my presentation, I request that you allow them to present it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson, as you prepare your documents, allow me to recognise the presence of our visitors. In the Public Gallery this afternoon are students and teachers of Lingira Hope Secondary School in Buvuma Islands County, Buvuma District. They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Migadde Robert Ndugwa and Hon. Mugabi Susan. They have to come to observe proceedings of the House. Please join me in welcoming them.

Honourable colleagues, Hon. Migadde is unable to be here with us; he called me earlier on and said he had lost his elder brother. Thank you.

MS NYAKIKONGORO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will not go to the background because it is the usual stuff. However, we are handing: Vote 004: Ministry of Defense Veteran Affairs;

Vote 009: Ministry of Internal Affairs; Food worth Shs 133 billion will be required due to increased operations and recruitment. Additionally, the Air Force has a similar shortfall in the budget of Shs 41 billion.

Vote 309: National Citizenship and Immigration Control;

Vote 144: Uganda Police Force;

The committee recommends that Shs 90 billion be provided as additional resources towards fuel and to the Land Forces, Air Force, Shs 76.2 billion for the procurement of uniforms and Shs 133 billion for the procurement of food for UPDF.

Vote 145: Uganda Prison Services;

Vote 135: Directorate of Government Analytical Laboratory; and

Vote 137: National Identification and Registration Authority.

The wage bill

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can I request that you lay a copy on the Table so that I can be able to use it to follow?

Mr Speaker, there is an estimated increase of Shs 92.5 billion due to enhanced salaries of senior military personnel. However, the committee recommends that salary enhancement for lower cadre staff of UPDF be prioritised by a provision of Shs 427.768 billion.

MS NYAKIKONGORO: I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the report and all the minutes.

I will go to page 8, which has Vote 004: Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs. Since I have been given limited time, I beg that we go to the budget estimates for the overall budget on page 9.

I implore the House to avoid being demoralised; these are the foot soldiers who are everywhere and require them to participate fully.

Development Budget

In regard to this, the committee observed that the Ministry of Defence budget is projected to register a reduction in the budget provision of Shs 27.74 billion, in the Financial Year 2023/2024, primarily due to a significant decline in external financing towards the peacekeeping mission in Somalia by 52 per cent, relative to the current Financial Year 2022/2023.

The committee recommended that the Ministry of Defence and Veterans Affairs undertakes a project-evaluation of the Defence Equipment Project and the on-going contractual obligations be transferred to the ministry's Retooling Project in the Financial Year 2023/2024.

Despite this reduction, there is an increase in the recurrent budget, arising from the enhancement of salaries for higher cadre UPDF officers and the attendant cost of Shs 1.7766 billion.

The security situation in the Karamoja Subregion

However, the Land Forces' budget is insufficient to meet fuel expenses with a funding gap of Shs 49 billion, arising from increased fuel costs and uniforms at Shs 76.2 billion, which also includes the projected recruitment of 14,000 LDPs.

The committee recommends the provision of Shs 27.5 billion to the ministry to combat insecurity in the Karamoja Subregion during the Financial Year 2023/2024.

National Military Referral Hospital -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, can we have order in the House?

MS NYAKIKONGORO: The committee recommends that a balance of Shs 35.2 billion be provided in the Financial Year 2023/2024 as this is a contractual obligation.

Recruitment and training

The committee recommends the provision of Shs 14.6 billion towards the training of reserve forces during the Financial Year 2023/2024.

National Enterprise Corporation (NEC) and the Uganda Air Cargo Corporation (UACC) The Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs has a commercial arm – that is the Uganda Air Cargo Corporation and National Enterprise Corporation – that generate revenue.

The committee recommends that both NEC and the Uganda Air Cargo Corporation provide detailed budgets to Parliament for scrutiny to improve their operations and run the enterprise more efficiently. NEC is currently profitable and with improved efficiency of use of its resources, the much-needed capital can be generated within the institution.

Uganda Air Cargo Corporation should be recapitalised to continue on the path of full recovery by provision of additional funding of Shs 381 billion in the first year of its business plan to lease Airbus A320 aircraft, purchase Boeing 737-800 and also purchase Boeing 737-400.

Let me just give you an explanation; Uganda Air Cargo Corporation helps us during the transportation of our people in combat, but also our equipment. Therefore, sometimes, the country finds it difficult to continue leasing and renting, yet if we had our own aeroplanes, they could help in transporting our own soldiers in combat.

I will not go to the regulatory and legal framework. The Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs has pending laws that need amendment.

Vote 009: Ministry of Internal Affairs

I will go straight to the budget estimates. The committee recommends the additional funding of Shs 7.018 billion for the NGO Bureau to be provided in the budget for the Financial Year 2023/2024. The breakdown is in the detailed report.

Ministry restructuring

This is a policy issue.

Community service

The committee recommended provision of Shs 3 billion in the budget of the Financial Year 2023/2024 to decentralise ministry services at the regional level and expedite the amendment of the Community Service Act.

Reception centres for rescued trafficked persons

The committee recommends that Shs 5 billion be provided in the Financial Year 2023/2024 budget to kick-start the establishment of reception centres for trafficked persons and the balance can be provided in the medium-term.

Commercial explosives regulation

The committee recommends provision of additional Shs 3 billion to regulate commercial explosives and kick-start activities of developing an explosive magazine in the central region.

Votes 120: National Citizenship and Immigration Control

I will go to the budget estimates. On the issue of border control and management, the committee recommends collaboration with other sister agencies to ensure border control and an additional Shs 4.89 billion be provided to the National Citizenship Immigration and Control.

Procurement of blank passports

The committee recommends:

- (i) A review of the venture between the Government of Uganda and the private company Veridos in the manufacture of security documents to include expertise in the construction of the facility, importation cost of blank passport booklets before completion of the facility, quality aspects

of the security document, risks associated with viability, among others.

- (ii) Government should review the procurement of e-passport booklets before the local manufacturing of passports, since the prices are above the market rates through international bidding. Therefore, the Shs 42.569 billion is sufficient for the procurement of the 450,000 booklets, pending the construction of our own factory.

Vote 144: Uganda Police Force

The committee recommends that Shs 54.57 billion meant for ending the project be reallocated to critical areas under the committee's purview. Ongoing contractual obligations under assistance to the Uganda Police Force be transferred to retooling for the project in Financial Year 2023/2024. In the meantime, Uganda Police Force should also provide a project completion report and evaluation report to Parliament. The Uganda Police Force should prepare new projects to finance infrastructure developments.

CCTV Cameras

They required an additional funding of Shs 257 billion. The committee recommends a special audit of the second phase of the project to identify how gaps emerged that currently require Shs 187 billion to be filled before the implementation of phase three.

Police accommodation

The committee recommends developing a successor project to continue with the infrastructure development in the Forces. All outstanding contractual multi-year obligations of the ending project will be met under the Retooling Project in the Financial Year 2023/2024. A provision of Shs 49 billion be provided to meet the contractual obligations of provision of uniports.

Operations and maintenance of fleet and the air wing

The committee recommends a provision of Shs 60 billion for fuel, Shs 20 billion for repair and maintenance of fleet vehicles, Shs 6.165 billion for maintenance of the air wing.

Crime management

The committee recommends providing Shs 4.65 billion for the canine unit and Shs 40.569 billion budget for investigations of crimes.

Transport equipment

The committee recommends a provision of Shs 19.47 billion to be provided to procure transport equipment for all districts over the medium-term.

Police welfare

Given the suspended enhancement of salaries by one year, the committee recommended a 40-per cent salary enhancement be provided to the Uganda Police Force over the medium-term. This is to bring all Forces at par; you cannot just provide for the other Force and then you leave the other one out.

Vote 145: Uganda Prisons Services

On prisoners' accommodation, the committee recommends prioritisation in constructing low-cost security prisons by providing Shs 3.8 billion. Uganda Prisons Service should develop infrastructure development project multi-year projects like constructing one regional Mini-Max prison at Kakiika. This is to decongest the prisons. Remember every day, we send prisoners.

On ICT, the committee recommends the provision of Shs 2.18 billion during the Financial Year 2023/2024 for establishing a Prisons Management Information System (PMIS) phase one.

<p>Seed production input</p> <p>Uganda Prisons Service has been identified as one of the entities to provide seeds. The committee, therefore, recommends the provision of Shs 1.793 billion for seed production.</p> <p>Cleaning and sanitation</p> <p>The committee observed that the contractual obligation of providing sanitation services to Uganda Prisons Service has a funding gap of Shs 5 billion. The committee recommends the provision of Shs 5 billion for cleaning and sanitation services.</p> <p>Staff accommodation</p> <p>The committee recommends the provision of an additional Shs 45.1 billion for the procurement of construction materials for staff accommodation facilities. They usually use their labour, but this is for construction materials.</p> <p>Relocation of prisons headquarters</p> <p>Mr Speaker, we were notified that Parliament wrote to the ministry to vacate the current headquarters by June this year. The committee, therefore, recommends that Government identifies office premises for Uganda Prisons Service to pave way for Parliament occupancy. So, we have to provide money for construction. The deadline is June and they laid on the Table the letter that was written to them.</p> <p>Prisoners' feeding</p> <p>The committee recommends the provision of Shs 42.516 billion for prisoners' feeding expenses.</p> <p>Staff uniform</p> <p>The committee recommends the provision of additional uniforms to staff to be prioritised over the medium-term, however, they need Shs 6.142 billion.</p>	<p>Land surveying</p> <p>The committee recommends Shs 0.5 billion for land surveying. We have seen encroachment on Government land these days.</p> <p>Vote 135: Directorate of Government Analytical Laboratory (DGAL)</p> <p>The committee recommends the provision of Shs 19.95 billion to DGAL for the construction of a national DNA data bank.</p> <p>Operationalisation of DGAL regional laboratories</p> <p>The committee recommends provision of Shs 8.59 billion to DGAL for the financial year to operationalise the regional laboratories across the country. Remember, whatever happens, they have to transport them to Kampala; so we need to operationalise them. Otherwise, sometimes they are distorted.</p> <p>Acquisition of modern scientific equipment</p> <p>This scientific equipment is for forensic and analytical services to aid the administration of justice and safeguard public health.</p> <p>The committee recommends the provision of an additional Shs 1 billion to DGAL to acquire modern scientific equipment to aid administration.</p> <p>Vote 137: National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA)</p> <p>Mass enrollment</p> <p>Mr Speaker, this is where the controversy of the minority report came up but they will explain. A provision of Shs 117.8 billion is provided for this purpose.</p> <p>Mr Speaker, give me an opportunity to first explain this: We are going to have a massive enrollment and renewal project of Shs 293.253 billion to develop a new system to undertake mass registration of approximately 17.2 million unregistered citizens into the National</p>
---	---

Identification Register and renewal of 15.8 million national ID cards that are due to expire. The updated NIRA register is also required by the Electoral Commission for the 2026 general elections by November 2024.

The committee noted that procuring a new system and disregarding the existing one will be more expensive. The current system developed by Muhlbauer High Technology International only requires a maintenance and upgrade contract to produce new IDs with a chip and a data recovery system at an exchange rate of 1 US\$ = Shs 3800.

When the committee undertook a study in Germany to meet with Muhlbauer High Technology International, this is what we discovered - and we thought that would save the country a lot of money instead of engaging in new technology.

We also visited Veridos but they told us that by the time they finish construction of the factory and produce the necessary materials for the identity cards, it will be in 2027.

In the wisdom of the committee, we recommended that NIRA engages Muhlbauer High Technology International, the vendor of the initial national identity card system to upgrade and maintain the current system and produce new national identity cards with more security features like chip and set up a data recovery system to save resources of procuring a new system that has not been tested and save time.

Mr Speaker, a provision of Shs 117.8 billion be provided for this purpose but the House will agree on this.

The committee recommends that consideration be made for NIRA to recruit staff for mass registration. They require Shs 12.67 billion. With the mass renewal, we need staff. Some districts even do not have staff. Some have just one person.

We have been talking about the issue of accommodation but the Government can think about relocating NIRA from Kololo.

Summary of the budget estimates

Mr Speaker, I am just going to read the totals.

- Vote 004: Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs - Shs 3,396,117,959,145.
- Vote 109: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Shs 70,306,948,557.
- Vote 120: National Citizenship and Immigration Control - Shs 124,433,475,348.
- Vote 144: Uganda Police Force - 980,726,101,430.
- Vote 145: Uganda Prisons Service - Shs 375,135,369,563.
- Vote 135: Directorate of Government Analytical Laboratory - Shs 44,773,915,096.
- Vote 137: National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) – Shs 177,530,887,692. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, chairperson, for the job well done. There is a minority report; so let us receive it. Haji, do not go into all those details. In five minutes, you should be done.

4.25

MR BASHIR LUBEGA (NRM, Mubende Municipality, Mubende): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This minority report actually has the majority of Members. *(Laughter)*

The Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs, in accordance with Articles 90 and 155(4) of the Constitution of Uganda, Section 12 of the Public Finance Management, Act and Rules 149 and 205 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, internalised the ministerial policy statement and budget estimates as well as the

alternative policy statement for Votes under its purview as enunciated in the committee report.

Background

Following the laying of the ministerial policy statement and budget estimates for Financial Year 2023/2024 as well as the alternative policy statement for Financial Year 2023/2024, the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs interacted with various stakeholders, as stated in the majority report.

From those deliberations, the committee drafted the report, substantially detailing its findings, observations and recommendations.

I am now going to our point of departure: The minority report strongly disagrees with the majority report on one ground.

The majority report makes a stray recommendation that NIRA engages Muhlbauer High Technology International (vendor of the initial NID system) to upgrade and maintain the current system and produce new national identity cards with more security features like a chip and also set up data recovery system to save resources of procuring a new system – that has not been tested – and save time.

They go ahead to recommend that Shs 117.8 billion be provided for this purpose in Financial Year 2023/2024.

The committee rightly observes that NIRA needs to develop a new system to undertake a mass registration of approximately 17.2 million unregistered citizens on the national identification register and conduct the renewal of 15.8 million national identity cards that are due to expire.

The updated national register is also required by the Electoral Commission for the 2026 general elections, by November 2024.

In spite of that observation, the committee report goes on to make the recommendation above. Note that the Government of Uganda signed a joint venture agreement (JVA) with

Veridos Identity Solutions and there is a running agreement with NIRA to develop a new national identification register, carry out mass enrollment and renewal as stipulated in the NIRA roadmap.

Observations

1. The committee leadership unilaterally held private interactions with Muhlbauer High Technology International, both in the country and in Germany, and these trips were not sanctioned by the committee – the committee is not aware. Even Parliament is not aware. The decisions made in that regard are not the aggregate opinion of the committee, but the leadership's. Moreover, they did not report back to the committee about their deliberations for the decisions of the committee as the rules of the House stipulate.
2. A section of the committee, led by the leadership, overstepped their mandate by engaging in vendor selection, in total contravention of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act and the regulations thereunder, which Act was honourably enacted by this august House. When did the committees begin to select and procure – that “Give Muhlbauer and leave this one”?
3. Breach of the current joint venture agreement with Veridos Identity Solution has costly legal ramifications. It is trite law that a party that breaches a signed agreement pays damages and makes good the loss occasioned. Therefore, breaching the current joint venture agreement exposes us to a risk of protracted legal battles that will not only stifle the operations of NIRA, but come at a huge cost to the taxpayers as well.
4. The breach of the contract will as well present with a high risk of affecting the 2026 electoral processes. This has an impact on the security of the country, which is the primary mandate of the committee.

5. The vendor (Muhlbauer) has managed the current system for seven years since 2013, with the current challenges, namely;
- Lack of data recovery – they are talking about it but did not do it when they were managing.
 - Downtime in the process of renewal.
 - Failure to build capacities of Ugandans for all that time they were managing the system.
 - No technology-transfer at all.
 - Inferior NID features that they want to upgrade now, as compared to others in the region.
 - The inefficacy and insufficient service delivery in national identification registration.

Recommendations

In light of the above, the minority report recommends as follows:

- Shs 293.253 billion be allocated to National Identification Registration Authority – as a committee, we deal with entities, not vendors – to develop a new system to undertake mass registration of approximately 17.2 million unregistered citizens onto the national identification register and conduct renewal of 15.8 million national identity cards that are due to expire. The updated national register is also required by the Electoral Commission for the 2026 election, by November 2024.
- NIRA continues with its roadmap of mass enrollment and renewal under the current JVA with Veridos Identity Solution.
- I beg to submit that the House disregards the majority report and upholds ours. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You have to lay on the Table – no, no, no, no. They should not disturb you because the minority report is part of the main report – it is always attached. So, the chairperson – please, wait. I know you are asking, honourable member.

Honourable colleagues, I have heard very serious allegations. The allegations being raised here do not only affect a committee, but all of us because we are judged.

This is my guidance: First, next time, when you have such issues, first reach out to the leadership of the House. When you do not agree and have such very strong allegations against each other.

For example, when you say that they went and held private discussions and yet Parliament funded the trip. They sought clearance of the Speaker and the Clerk, and the committee was funded. The chairperson chose the people they took and it comes as an allegation on the Floor, then it becomes difficult. If there was a disagreement on how members were chosen, those are committee issues, which should not be coming here.

Secondly, honourable colleagues, I do not know why we are not learning. Why are we involved in procurements? To say, “Give so and so...” - because in the report, presented by Hon. Bashir, you could see it was also favouring another company in his observation. He is also showing how when you go with this one, the other one will go to court. Why do we go to that? Why don't we limit ourselves to where we are? - Before I allow procedure, let me first allow the chairperson of the committee. Very serious allegations - I will allow you.

MS NYAKIKONGORO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We got this minority report at around 11.00. Otherwise, in all the meetings, we have been with these Members. Mr Speaker, we even visited Veridos headquarters in Entebbe where they are constructing, with the members who have signed the minority report. If you want to prove it, you can go there – we signed in their books, we took photos; they were with us.

We went to Germany as a committee, and Madam Speaker gave us the mandate. We were supposed to visit the two - Veridos and Muhlbauer. Veridos actually said they were not ready but the Speaker had already given us the mandate to go. That is when we agreed to go and look at what Muhlbauer, which is pending. If the Speaker wants to send us to Veridos, we shall go there - or they will select another team to go there. For some Members to come and say that we met separately is very wrong.

Mr Speaker, as a committee, if there is an issue or a petition from outside, someone can write to the committee and state that they want to meet us, as a committee. Muhlbauer wrote to the Committee of Defence and Internal Affairs, I invited all members of the committee and they all met with them and in public. The media were there; they can produce the same. So to say that they met privately - maybe there is something behind this.

Mr Speaker, as a committee, like you have seen it, we said NIRA should engage - because by that time the factory will not have been completed and they told that to us, yet we are rushing for mass renewal and enrollment.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, first wait. It is you explaining yourself. If that is the case, now which information is being given to you? It cannot come in! They have put allegations on you and we have given you a chance; now you are allowing information?

MS NYAKIKONGORO: Mr Speaker, why we went to visit Veridos headquarters and also Muhlbauer is because there have always been controversies whenever we interacted with NIRA. So, we decided that even before we engage in these ministerial policy statements, let us go there and cross-check but we were disappointed that Veridos did not pick interest to invite us yet we wrote to them at the same time, when we were going there.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, honourable chairperson -

MS NYAKIKONGORO: Mr Speaker, I beg to declare that as a committee that came up with this resolution, it is based on the facts that were formed on the ground and it is subject to debate.

I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR OKIN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. These rules here we see, are actually meant to guide debate in the House. When the Minority Report was being presented, the presenter kept on saying, "that is the majority report." Rule 204 is very clear that for a report of the committee to be presented to Parliament, it has to be signed by one-third of the Members. Can we, therefore, know, which one is the majority report and which one is the minority report before we even engage in this debate? Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I have also been going through this same issue and some of you can even guide. This is because the one which is considered - whereas the rules provide for signatures, the other report, which *Hajji* calls the "majority report", is referring to the main report. And it agrees with all other issues apart from one. The problem came at the point of signing to the extent that Members did not know which report had more signatures than the other. That is why they are part of one report, which is attached to the main report.

What I think, honourable colleagues – the Chairperson of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline has just come in but we can assign it to him because there is a gap in the rules. Anyhow, the practice on the ministerial policy statements has been that we adopt and refer both reports to the Committee on Budget. They are just adopted but not voted on, one against the other. What is important is the content and then we send them to the Committee on Budget for consolidation.

MR NSEREKO: On that matter, Mr Speaker, you have guided well, because here is what we share the concerns and the concerns as raised

by members of the committee in the different reports for the consumption of the Members, because the budgetary process is a process that must be partaken by every Member of the House.

So, they bring their observations, as members of different committees for digestion and inception, so that at the time of budgeting, we either refute certain figures or accept them. We have heard observations from both sides of the committee. It is one report, but we have heard the dissent from the other members.

Unfortunately, in this case, the dissent is louder than the main report but it happens. Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before you debate - because I want to allow you to debate. Colleagues, this is a problem because of only one thing - the way we are processing our ministerial policy statement reports. This is the detail we do not need because this report should go to the Budget Committee to look at the financial implications and consolidation.

When do you go -? No, listen. The problem is not with the figures but with who has been recommended to provide the service. Maybe, *Hajji* can first clarify on that. *Hajji*, what is your biggest problem with your committee?

MR BASHIR LUBEGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Our biggest problem is how Muhlbauer came in; Muhlbauer has no agreement because it was terminated. How did our leadership generate the need to go to Germany? This is because the idea to travel to Germany was not discussed in the committee for us to go and benchmark; we have never talked about it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, the problem of the dissenting view is about the recommendation on certain vendors?

MR BASHIR LUBEGA: Of vendors!

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Instead of money going to a Vote and the Vote implements. Honourable colleagues, can we agree as a team

that from what has been put here, as a House, we expunge that information of recommending vendors? Let us recommend that the money goes to a Vote. – Listen to me. The chairperson of the Committee on Rules, Privilege and Discipline will guide me. The report has come here. When we are adopting a report, we can adopt it with amendments. We are allowed to adopt a report with amendments. You cannot say that this is a full report of the committee.

The Budget Committee is going to consider the financial implication of this and money going to a Vote. I want us to agree on this. If we agree on anything to do with the vendors - that can be expunged. One of you can move a motion and we do that.

Hon. Katuntu, do you want to guide as the chairman of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline?

4.46

MR ABDU KATUNTU (Independent, Bugweri County, Bugweri): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Colleagues, this House, under our Constitution, is not mandated to do procurement. Politicians should not be part and parcel of the procurement process. The moment we start meddling with who should provide service, we are already in the procurement process. It infringes on the Constitution and our mandate. It also raises suspicion which is absolutely unnecessary.

Let us do what we are supposed to do: One, ours is policy and oversight. When do we get to the extent of recommending vendors or service providers? I think we need to move very carefully on that. It is not about this report but generally as a lesson to Parliament. We, as leaders, should never ever get involved in the procurement processes because once we do that, we infringe on the law, but it also raises suspicion.

We should expunge anything from our record; either as committees or even the House, that we are recommending vendors or service providers. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

4.48

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. We are discussing the committee's reports and from this committee report, which has been presented, there is a minority report. When I carefully listened to the chairperson, she did indicate that they received the petition.

As per our Rules of Procedure, a petition is supposed to be tabled before this House. Specifically, rule 30 (2) states:

"A petition shall be filed with the Clerk who shall immediately notify the whips and table them before the Business Committee."

The chairperson indicated that they received a petition, but even getting business and dealing with an entity, which was trying to look for business, as a committee, for me, there is a serious conflict of interest by the committee leadership.

Mr Speaker, what I also want to raise is that let us look at the committee report and reject that particular recommendation because I do not agree with this business of expunging things from the *Hansard*. Certain times, we have to refer to certain positions and your rulings to guide us in future implementation or future similar activities. Rather than expunge, let us consider the committee report, but reject that particular provision, where the committee was proposing that we consider Muhlbauer High Tech against Veridos. That is what I want to say. Let us not expunge but let us adopt the report and reject that particular recommendation. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

MR SEBAMALA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We are bound to be guided by information and knowledge, when we are in this House. The procedural matter I want to raise is that we had an interaction with the Uganda Security Printing Company. Veridos, like it was mentioned in the report, as COSASE, failed to find out where it was; whether it existed in Germany or elsewhere, but here it is doing construction.

Secondly, we should be guided that the Government of Uganda made an agreement with the Uganda Security Printing Company, which is a joint venture of Veridos and Uganda Printing Press Company, to work on everything called identity cards, passports, driving permits and anything to do with security printing.

Therefore, appropriating money to NIRA would equally be appropriating money to Veridos. Like she mentioned, even when we were in COSASE, we could hardly find its premises in Germany or Uganda.

My procedural matter is: Wouldn't it be procedurally right that that whole portion of appropriating money - the Shs 117 billion - be first halted, until we are sure of the companies that we are appropriating money to?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, that is procurement.

MR SEBAMALA: It is appropriation; you are appropriating to Veridos either way.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, we appropriate to Votes, not service providers.

MR OKIN P.P. OJARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We have just heard a situation whereby a serious allegation has been made in the person of the chairperson of the committee as well as other committee members.

I find it very difficult to proceed - even to consider this report and debate it - before us deciding, or the Speaker ruling whether to refer this matter of serious allegation, which affects all of us as a Parliament, to the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline of this House. This is in order for them to understand it, investigate it, and find out whether the allegation being made is actually correct or not.

Therefore, is it not procedurally right, Mr Speaker, to refer, especially the part of the allegation, to the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline to handle so that this matter is resolved once and for all?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, let us put it clearly: Firstly, there was an allegation that they went without parliamentary approval. I can confirm that we approved them; we paid for their travel for benchmarking and studying. So, what does the committee go to investigate?

Secondly, at this level, this report is adopted under rule 149 and referred to the Committee on Budget to handle issues of figures; they will not handle issues of procurement. They will be dealing with Votes and not service providers – the way Hon. Katuntu guided them. In fact, both of them agree that we need the money but the disagreement is about who takes the money. The money is for NIRA. Can we conclude on this?

I request a Member to move an amendment to this so we adopt it and move together. I do not want someone to say I sat and said “Remove A, B, C and D.”

MR EDDIE KWIZERA: Mr Speaker, Parliament performs through committees under Article 90 of the Constitution. The enabling legislation we have is Rule 204 of the Rules of Procedure. Rule 204: Report to be signed by chairperson and members –

204(1) *“A report of a Committee shall be signed and initialled by at least one-third of all the Members of the Committee, and shall be laid on Table.”*

Mr Speaker, here, the House is faced with a challenge where we have members of the committee who do not attend. Yet, you make the committee members sign and present reports falling short of the rule. The report presented by the chairperson of the committee is signed by eight members out of the 30.

In my view, all of them fall short of the expectations of the rule. If it is allowed, we would refer this committee to go back and harmonise because none of them qualifies to be on the Floor of the House. The rule says it must be a third.

Mr Speaker, where are the other people?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let me sort out this. We suspended that rule during COVID-19 and World Health Organisation has never declared the world COVID-19-free. Some of the COVID-19 rules still apply. So, the report and signatures are sufficient. Let us move on.

MR KATUNTU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Why do we have the rule Hon. Kwizera is talking about? By the time a committee takes a decision, there must be a minimum number of people taking that decision.

I must say there is only one committee report which has the majority and the minority. When you add the signatories of those who are majority and minority, you get the number. *(Interjections)* That is the interpretation of that rule. Doctor, listen. It is not about saying “No”. Let me tell you why.

These rules need interpretation and what you have to look at is what we call “mischief”. The mischief of that rule is - I wish the doctor could listen instead of engaging in another conversation. The mischief of that rule is that you do not need 2,3,4,5 members in a committee and take a decision. If you are 14 and somehow you are differing on an opinion, you cannot say, “Now, we do not have a quorum.” Even here, when we are talking about quorum –*(Interruption)*

MR OKIN P.P. OJARA: Mr Speaker, I find it very hard to put to order one of the very senior Members in this House. This rule has been simplified for every Member to understand and interpret. We underwent an orientation in regard to the interpretation of this rule.

When they say “...a third of the members sign it,” it is very clear. You just count the numbers and then multiply by those who have been able to attend.

Mr Speaker, our senior colleague is misguiding us in the way he is trying to interpret the rule. Is he in order to misguide this House when we

actually know how to interpret these rules?
Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, let us conclude this matter. I told you earlier that this was not an entrenched rule. And for the House to be able to process business, we suspended it and we have been operating that way.

First of all, what will happen is to ensure that it is reinstated, if people are now available but I will reinstate it later – not now. *(Laughter)*

Secondly, these are reports we adopt but the decisions are not final. If the decision was going to be final, I would be in a different situation. These reports are adopted and then sent to the Committee on Budget to consolidate, harmonise and then come here for the final decision.

I do not know why we want to make it very complicated as if we have appropriated already. Hon. Katuntu, kindly conclude without misleading Hon. Okin Ojara because he admitted to being misled.

MR KATUNTU: I know it is like the Bible; everyone can read the Bible but there are those who are entitled to interpret the scriptures and that is the difference between me and him. *(Laughter)*

Having said that, when we look at the issue of quorum in this House, whether you vote for or against, if a decision is being taken that we need one-third, you cannot say the one-third is for those who have voted for or against. *(Applause)* We look at those who have voted for, together with those who have voted against and we conclude whether there is a quorum of one-third or not. I thought this is common sense. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Nsereko, debate because the issues are sorted.

5.04

MR MUHAMMAD NSEREKO (Independent, Kampala Central Division Kampala City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the honourable members for the presentation. I will restrict myself in advisory form as the report is to be presented to the Committee on Budget on the following:

We have been here discussing matters of technology and this is the hunting ground for foreign companies in the Third World. Simple interpretation; people in the Third World do not take much time to read and do research. That is why we are beaten at numbers, taken for granted – most of us – and every single data of ours is used in the way the companies want.

Mr Speaker, I have no doubt when I start seeing this battle of companies for such a lucrative deal. Ask yourselves as legislators. For mass enrollment to cost \$70 million – that we are reenrolling... I am going to address NIRA and the issue of the Police cameras. These are technical issues and they go into the ambits of technology.

Where is our prior data that NIRA collected? You have my data. I have been losing an ID and you have been replacing it: with which data? So, are they going to recollect new data from me? You took my biometrics, you took my picture, you took my date of birth and you took my address. What I have to do is only to go online and give you an update.

This is replication of work. These resources could be put elsewhere. They went to schools and registered children; where is the national data for the children that were registered? Where are the IDs for the children that were registered?

Mr Speaker, there is replication of work and that is why you see “retooling” everywhere. They know Africans do not go deep to read and do not do research. The IDs that they want – with security features – is to give you an ID that is machine-readable. The IDs that we have are already machine-readable. So, what they want is to strengthen the features. Yes, that said

and done, can't we do it from home? We can do it at a lesser cost. We do not need these millions of dollars. Registration must be a continuous process.

Finally, the single question that many Ugandans ask is: Why is the expiration of the IDs in five years? It is because - *(Interjection)* - wait a minute. The ones that we have were from 2016/2017 and are now expiring. That is about five to six years. If the passports are for 10 years, why don't we have this – because the features, we accept, might keep changing after every 15 years. You can evolve, maybe, in the face. However, the technology you have now, if you have captured my iris, there is nothing that changes. My fingerprints will remain the same until I am about 70 years – that is when they start mutating.

The question here is whether it is blanket. As we send you to the Committee on Budget, just know that whether this money – and rightly so – should go to NIRA, the issue is that it is an inflated cost. Let us start with that.

Secondly, where is the national data centre? The passport office has its own data, the Ministry of Education and Sports controls its own data – every institution has its own data. Where is the aggregated centre for the national data of every Ugandan? This is a huge question. As a child at birth, if you are issued a with a birth certificate, it should be a referral for you to be issued with a national ID –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Clerk, did you capture two minutes? What is going on?

MR NSEREKO: Secondly, Mr Speaker, as Members come in, this is where I wanted us – because you had ruled on the other matter – to debate “substance”. “Substance” is why we give recommendations – we are giving further recommendations to these people on an oversight that has been made so that they may be adopted by the Committee on Budget to see whether this money is adequate, inadequate or overinflated.

Mr Speaker, on the cameras, we talked about the Police cameras and they are in phase three: how many Ugandans have benefitted from this scheme?

To begin with, the cameras we have are not hybrid; they do not have face recognition. The world has migrated – and why does this come back? The reason why they are not effective is the capturing of our data – the data is not shared. If the camera can get the face of Hon. Nyakikongoro, it should be able to correlate with the national database to show that this is indeed Hon. Nyakikongoro.

However, the cameras being procured are not the ones that have technology that is correlated with face recognition. That is why they will come back here after four years and you will buy more cameras and replace cameras. You will find every institution – Kampala Capital City Authority will be here –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, you will not allocate yourself time, please. Allow him to conclude.

MR NSEREKO: As I wind up, I would like this august House to adopt your guidance – and I am now moving – that amendment be made that Parliament and the committee of Parliament do not usurp the role of procurement and the issue of procurement be deleted from the main report and that if the appropriation is to be made, it should be made to NIRA, where proper procurement shall be conducted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I put the question that the amendment be adopted. Thank you.

5.11

MS CHRISTINE APOLOT (NRM, Woman Representative, Kumi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate you for the wise guidance, especially that when members of a committee disagree on a matter, they should seek the guidance of the Parliament leadership.

I want to look at page 34, where there is a proposal for allocation of Shs 46 billion to construct new premises for the prisons

headquarters. They also give a second option of renting premises at Shs 3.77 billion.

My view is that it would be better to have the Shs 46 billion so that we construct these headquarters and avoid the continuous expenditure of renting every financial year.

When you look at the various sectors, this remains a problem. If we did, we would be able to save some money for this country for service delivery.

I also expected to see some allocation to cater for the construction or improvement of accommodation facilities for the Police. If you visit many local governments, for example Kumi District, where the police are sleeping in a very terrible mess. At least this financial year, let us try to identify and allocate some small money so that the construction of accommodation facilities for the police can be done in a – *(Member timed out)*

5.13

MR GEOFFREY EKANYA (FDC, Tororo North County, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee.

Worldwide, governments have moved away from looking at salaries only for security personnel. Every day I walk in the streets and meet security personnel in other countries, including South Africa, security personnel have compulsory free education for their children and compulsory health insurance for their children. I expected this in the report.

Once you provide army personnel, police personnel and prisons personnel with free education for their children from primary to university, they will protect our country. This needs to be adopted in this House – not looking at salary only.

You will increase the salary of the army personnel and police personnel, but when the personnel die, the children and wives continue suffering.

Therefore, I beg to propose that in this year's budget, we put some money to take care of compulsory free education for the children of police officers, compulsory health insurance and I expect the Prime Minister to take this.

Lastly, our report - because of time - we need to look at the Public Finance Management Act and our Rules of Procedures. We do not have adequate time to comply with certain provisions of the rules. For example, under rule 149, the chairperson is supposed to provide a budget for state enterprises and authorities or for all entities that fall under the central committee under the programme because these institutions are created by Acts of Parliament; they have a board and we have to approve their Votes here.

However, if the committees do not provide for those items, it becomes very hard - they operate illegally outside the Public Finance Management Act. They collect the money and are therefore corrupt –*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, but the money to the Votes was read out clearly, and that was captured. It spelt out the amount for both development and recurrent expenditures; those were clearly read out for each and every Vote; I need to clarify that.

5.16

MR LINOS NGOMPEK (NRM, Kibanda North County, Kiryandongo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the report. My issue is with the Uganda Police. Well, salary is okay. However, our police officers were last smart during the reign of Gen. Kale Kayihura. But lately, you find that the budget allocated to them by the Police authorities does not cater for official uniforms. That is why you find most of the police officers wearing uniforms that are worn out.

So, my proposal to the House and the committee is to let them appropriate more resources to the Police wear so that our police officers also look appropriately dressed when they are going for their duties. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ameede?

5.17

MR AGNES AMEEDE (Independent, Woman Representative, Butebo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the committee for the report. I would like to draw the committee's attention to the issue of community service. In my view, that amount is not justifiable, unless the ministry realigns itself with the Judiciary because it is a cross-cutting issue.

The level of implementation of that Act, since the Act was passed in 2002, has been very slow and looks like there is no commitment to implement the Community Service Act yet it is very important and would help to decongest the prisons because when they are sending people fatal –(Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, honourable member.

MS AMEEDE: The other issue is about the security forces in upcountry border stations. Whereas we pass money here, the ministry is not committed to improving the working conditions of the security officers at the border stations. They are few in numbers; they cannot sustain shifts. They are poorly accommodated and they do not have equipment to work yet so many cars are here for example in the Police - there are very many cars criss-crossing the town yet those who need them to work do not have facilitation. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, LOP; we do five people per statement.

5.19

MR FRANCIS MWIJUKYE (FDC, Buhweju County, Buhweju): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I come from a background of having faced the wrath of an annoyed policeman; a very annoyed, hungry policeman who sleeps and eats badly. And therefore, sometimes they act the way they do because of the conditions under which they live. So, I should be able to defend them and make sure they get good accommodation.

I have been moving around to see the uniports that are being constructed; they are actually poorer than the ones that were constructed in the 1960s. Therefore, I support the idea that we give them money for accommodation, but that this money should be for decent accommodation so that when they come to look for me, they are not as annoyed as they have always been. *(Laughter)*

Secondly, we do not understand when someone tells you of “an expired register.” How does the register expire? You can upgrade or update it, but it does not expire. So, where did it go? Did people die? Some of these things you do not understand? Or expired IDs?

Mr Speaker, some people watch us speak and they say, “But these Members of Parliament of ours; why do they agree with some of these embarrassing statements from some of these entities?”

I want to end with the disagreement that happened about the committee trip. Now that it has been established that the chairperson sought permission from Parliament, and you okayed it, and you have just said you did. I think even that should also be removed because it stands on you the presiding officer and on record, and since the Speaker Okayed it, I think that should be removed from the record. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I put the question that the amendment proposed by Hon. Mwijukye be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Mulimba. Yes, I think you wanted to raise an issue.

MR MULIMBA: Mr Speaker, I simply wanted to move on amendment, which Hon. Mwijukye has provided.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable chairperson, but two minutes.

MS NYAKIKONGORO: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for adopting the report. I just want to make -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We have not yet adopted; I have not put the question.

MR NYAKIKONGORO: Okay, for debating the report. However, on the issue of expiration of IDs, I want to say that it is after 10 years. And the fact that they want to add new features, that is why they want to do mass renewals, for IDs and all those that have -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, let the minister come and explain that.

MS NYAKIKONGORO: And on the issue of cameras, in the report we have said that the third phase should be halted until an audit is done.

On the free education for the children of the soldiers, we shall continue pushing for it. And the President himself committed and said that he even wants the establishment of institutions for children of soldiers.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Can we hear from the honourable minister?

5.23

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (VETERAN AFFAIRS) (Ms Huda Oleru):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Already we have free education for the children of the soldiers - at least from primary up to the secondary. What we are now planning is just to upgrade to the university level. And even it is universal. You are aware in this country we have Universal Primary Education; we have USE, we have all that and so, we have affirmative action for the children of the soldiers. That is why we have the Army Primary Schools and Secondary Schools specifically to cater for the education of the children of the army men.

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

5.24

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): Mr Speaker, I will go through a few of the submissions of the Members, starting with the divergences in the report.

First of all, I would like to thank the chairperson, generally for the report, but I was also perturbed by the mention of Avender Company Limited in the chairperson's report, but even worse Muhlbauer High Technology.

That said, I will not get lost on matters of procurement. I would rather we stick to the ministerial submission in our ministerial policy statement to the committee and your guidance that the Budget Committee considers the report as expunged; the things you wanted put off.

Hon. Nsereko talked about cost, integration, and durability of the IDs. It is true, like the chairperson said, features change, not just of the ID but also of the person after some time. We also have new majors in terms of young people who come of age; all these need renewals.

In the process of the new system that we want, we also included the National Security Information System, which will also cater for integration because Hon. Nsereko talked about it and its implication to the enhancement of the efficacy of the CCTV. That is well-catered for, and in part, it explains the cost.

A Member talked about accommodation for the police officers. That is a very pertinent issue – *(Hon. Nsereko rose)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Nsereko, please, I need order in the House; we gave you enough time here. Do not access the microphone before you are allowed. Colleagues, I want us to be clear on those rules. That is the only way we shall have order here. Since yesterday, we have been having order; so I wish we could continue that way.

GEN. MUHOOZI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Hon. Modoi talked about community service and that the amount indicated is not justifiable.

I want to differ and say that part of the reason for the slow pace of – (*Interjections*) - can you rescue me from -?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, I put the question that the report of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs on the ministerial policy statement and Budget Estimates for the Financial Year 2023/2024 be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I put the question that the Minority Report on the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs on the ministerial policy statement and Budget Estimates for the Financial Year 2023/2024 be adopted with amendments.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The two reports are referred to the Committee on Budget for processing and consolidation. Members of the Budget Committee, I am not giving you priority at this stage because these reports are coming to you. At least, you have an opportunity to process them. When I have space, I will allow you to speak, but when you see me not picking you, just know it is because I know you have an opportunity.

CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT
OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN
AFFAIRS ON THE MINISTERIAL POLICY
STATEMENT AND BUDGET ESTIMATES
FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, you have 15 minutes.

5.29

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Ms Norah Bigirwa): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to

be able to present a report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs on the ministerial policy statement and Budget Estimates for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Uganda's Missions Abroad for the Financial Year 2023/2024; that is for Vote 006 and Votes 501 to 538.

However, before I go into the details of the report, allow me to lay on Table the committee report and the minutes of the meetings of the Committee on Foreign Affairs for Ministerial Policy Statements for the Financial Year 2023/2024 for Votes 006 and 501 to 538. I beg lay.

Allow me at this very moment to inform this House that this sector is very unique from the rest of the sectors. Therefore, I request that you allow me to give a brief introduction of what we are dealing with.

On 14 March 2023, the ministerial policy statement for Vote 006 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Votes 501 to 538 for Missions Abroad were laid on the Table and subsequently referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs for scrutiny.

Likewise, on 29 March 2023, the Ministerial Policy Statement for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the Financial Year 2023/2024 was laid on Table and subsequently referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs for scrutiny.

The mandate of the committee

Rule 189(a) and Rule 187(k) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament respectively mandate the Committee on Foreign Affairs to examine and comment on policy matters affecting the ministries covered by them; to cover Missions Abroad and cover bilateral, multilateral and inter-governmental relations.

The committee considered the Ministerial Policy Statement for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs comprising the ministry headquarters; that is Vote 006, 36 Diplomatic Missions, and two Consulates.

The mandate of the ministry is to implement -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, I beg you not to go into that. Go to the observations and recommendations so that you have time to debate your report.

MS BIGIRWA: Mr Speaker, I thank you so much for that guidance, but there is something very specific that I would like to inform this House -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, in 15 minutes, I will cut you off; so it depends on how you want to use your time.

MS BIGIRWA: This committee was informed that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a draft foreign policy dating back to 2008, which is currently under review in Cabinet because:

- i) The draft was not aligned to the current Public Policy Development Guidelines and Format.
- ii) The draft was not informed by regulatory impact assessment, which is currently a requirement for all policy proposals to be passed.
- iii) There are gaps such as problem statements, linkage to existing frameworks, strategic direction, strategic interventions, and priority areas, which were not considered in the previous draft policy of 2008.

It should, however, be noted that the foreign policy is still in draft form. In the absence of the foreign policy, Uganda's foreign diplomatic interactions and relations are guided by strategic objectives, which were approved by the Uganda National Planning Authority, and are detailed in the National Development Plan (NDP III). This can be looked at on page 2 of our reports.

Methodology

Unique to the rest of the entities, the Committee on Foreign Affairs was able to hold interactions physically, but also via Zoom, because it was not possible for us to interact with all the 39

Votes physically here. We deemed it very important that we interface with them over Zoom.

However, there are challenges that we encountered while executing this mandate through virtual meetings; the heads of Missions and accounting officers are highly inconvenienced because meetings are sometimes held outside official hours in different time zones.

The deliberations are also, often times affected by internet or network connectivity interruptions. I felt I needed to bring this out very clearly because it informs the budgeting process.

The performance of the committee

The committee observed that over the years, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been at the helm and epitome in promoting and protecting Uganda's image abroad at high level international events and in the last one year, it has overwhelmingly promoted Uganda's economic and commercial diplomacy abroad, although it has also done this with a lot of financial difficulties. As a result, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has registered the following achievements that demonstrate that it is a productive and not a consumptive Government sector.

In the last three years, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through its missions, has contributed to Uganda's non-tax revenue leading to a total collection of Shs 10,890,000,000 as indicated in annex 3 of our report.

Page 4 of our presentation – I am trying to be brief but I would like us to capture some of the important aspects of our report.

Cooperation assistance and framework

Our missions sourced 381 scholarships in various academic fields. This has been able to impact our young people.

Resource mobilisation

In Financial Year 2020/2021, as I have already stated above, the docket was able to mobilise non-tax revenue, which was had a lot of impact on our coffers, as Government.

Mr Speaker, let us go to page 6.

Half year budget performance of the ministry and missions during the Financial Year 2022/2023

The Minister of Foreign Affairs Headquarters half-year budget performance

- i) The approved budget - Shs 38.01 billion.
- ii) The released budget by end of quarter two - Shs 18.003 billion.
- iii) The amount spent by end of quarter two - Shs 10.162 billion and the percentage was 47.40.
- iv) The release spent - 49.90 per cent.

However, there are arrears to international organisations and these amount to Shs 2.493 billion, as the approved budget. What was released was the same amount. What has been spent is Shs 2.419 and the budget release was 100 per cent. By the end of the second quarter, 43.70 per cent of the approved budget had been released to the ministry for expenditure.

The ministry absorbed 49.9 per cent of the released funds during the current financial year. The committee was informed that under absorption is attributed to the following reasons -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, I appealed to you that all chairpersons have been using 15 minutes. You have used 12 minutes but you have not yet even gone - You have now three minutes; so, what do you want me to do? I have other statements. Just go to the recommendations because the Committee on Budget will deal with the finances; it will not deal with these other issues.

MS BIGIRWA: Much obliged, Mr Speaker. This very docket has a number of challenges and I request that Members can go ahead -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Recommend and then we give you money or not.

MS BIGIRWA: The committee recommends that the Government of Uganda should invest in the construction and acquisition of properties, through mortgages for missions that are currently operating in rented premises, renovation of the existing but dilapidated properties and development of the vacant plots of land.

The committee also recommends that the development budget amounting to Shs 237,867,600 should be considered to incorporate the security aspects of tightening security at Uganda House in London.

The committee further recommends that an estimated Shs 600,000,000 be availed to cater for the Head of Missions accommodation during the period the official residences are going to be under renovation.

5.0 Compliance

We have the budget projection on page 11. Honourable colleagues, I pray that you go ahead and acquaint yourselves with these figures.

We have table 5 where Missions Abroad aggregated budget production in the medium term.

We have, however, critical unfunded planned outputs for the Financial Year 2023/2024, which I would request that you allow me read out because these are very critical for the sector.

Vote 006 requires Shs 5.52 billion but what has been provided is Shs 0.97 billion, and the funding gap is Shs 4.55 billion. The justification is to carry out commercial and economic diplomacy, regional and international peace and security, and consular services, among others.

Travel abroad (Missions Abroad) has been given zero shillings. We are talking about travel for Missions Abroad and the Ministry of Foreign affairs. The funding requirement is Shs 11.65 billion but the budget approved is zero shillings. The funding gap is Shs 11.65 billion and this is to carry out commercial and economic diplomacy, regional and international peace and security, consular services, among others.

This docket of foreign affairs and its missions has 11 JPCs on political and economic cooperation convened and or participated in DRC, Ethiopia, Egypt, Algeria, Nigeria, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda and Burundi. It will require Shs 2.24 billion as the budgeted amount of money. What has been provided is Shs 0.24 billion and the funding gap is Shs 2 billion.

We are supposed to host, as a country, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the G77 Summit. The funding requirement is Shs 54 billion but what has been provided for is Shs 40 billion and the funding gap is Shs 13 billion.

Hosting the NAM and G77 Summit in December 2023 and chairing the NAM activities for the next three years - Therefore, there is need for Parliament to provide funding for this very important activity.

We have contributions to international organisations and annual subscriptions. Mr Speaker, the funding requirement for this activity is Shs 32.36 billion. However, what has been provided is only Shs 6.36 billion and the funding gap is Shs 26 billion.

For the proposed budget for the Financial Year 2022/2023, the ministry was allocated Shs 6.36 billion to cater for annual subscriptions to international organisations. However, these funds are far less than the annual assessed contributions, which amount to Shs 26 billion.

Mr Speaker, it is very embarrassing diplomatically if as a nation, we fail to subscribe to international organisations. We have had

instances where our Heads of Missions have been chased away from meetings and not even allowed to vote because of not being able to pay. Therefore, I implore us to allocate funds to this very important docket.

Contributions to international organisations has arrears amounting to Shs 34.56 billion funding requirements and there is zero shillings allocated to cater for these arrears. The funding gap is Shs 34.56 billion that is required to clear these outstanding arrears.

Peace and Security Council of the African Union in Addis Ababa - you are aware that Uganda was elected to the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU-PSC). Accordingly, His Excellency the President directed the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to provide Shs 1 billion to the Mission in Addis Ababa under the Financial Year 2023/2023 Budget, to facilitate the activities of Uganda's membership to this very important docket. However, this was not done and it has left the mission struggling financially yet we are the chairperson of this very important activity.

The Uganda Consulate in Mombasa requires Shs 8.15 billion but only Shs 4.15 was provided. There is a funding gap of Shs 3.85 billion to cover the whole amount for the construction of both the Chancery and staff quarters. This is mainly to avoid a situation where the project will stall midway for lack of funds, which would be a violation of the building regulations in the Municipal Council of Mombasa and could lead to the cancellation of the building permit. The committee prays that this is considered.

The Uganda Embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, requires Shs 2 billion. What has been provided for is Shs 1.1 billion to provide consular support to more than 250,000 Ugandan workers in countries of accreditation and facilitate engagements with other countries of accreditation to sign bilateral labour agreements.

Participation of the ministry in IGAD, ICGLR, AU, EAC, COMESA, NBI meetings and UN systems where important decisions are made requires Shs 0.85 billion, but what has been provided in the budget is Shs 0.15 billion, causing a difference of Shs 0.70 billion.

Facilitation to participate in regional and international organisations will help to provide and support Uganda's interest.

For defending the country's position before the Human Rights Council in Geneva, Mr Speaker, we require Shs 0.06 billion, but zero shillings has been allocated to this very important activity. We are required to participate and defend Uganda's position in the Human Rights Council. It is imperative for projecting Uganda's image abroad and our presence and visibility, at all times, is very crucial.

As a country, through our missions, we have got 30 bilateral meetings on Uganda's strategic interest on matters of regional peace and security convened and participated in the DRC, as mentioned before. Shs 0.33 billion is required, but zero shillings has been provided for. Therefore, there is a funding gap of Shs 0.33 billion.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Committee chairperson, go to the supply table. I have waited enough. Go to page 21. The rest will be captured because the whole report will go to the Committee on Budget and you will reappear.

MS BIGIRWA: Mr Speaker, I really want to appreciate your guidance, but we are looking at a docket with 38 Votes -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, go to the supply table.

MS BIGIRWA: On page 21, we have the supply figures. The committee recommends that funds be supplied to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Missions Abroad as follows:

Vote 006: Ministry of Foreign Affairs Headquarters

Recurrent – Shs 29,511,234,000
Development – Shs 120,000,000.

Votes 501-538: Missions Abroad
Recurrent – Shs 180,148,845,000
Development – Shs 52,888,000,000.

In summary, Mr Speaker, the Committee on Foreign Affairs would like to assert that this report presents, in parts, a grim narrative of the challenges that the sector is grappling with.

First of all, the sector faces the challenge of being categorised as consumptive rather than productive, yet from our objective analysis, we have gained huge trade volumes accrued to this country as a result of the tireless efforts of our missions abroad.

This report demonstrates the good measure and the challenges that the sector faces through drastic budget cuts on the core activities that drive our missions abroad. These include the critical priorities like travel abroad, promotion of economic and commercial diplomacy and capital development.

We, therefore, would like to muscle the support of this House towards the sector so that Uganda's face abroad is saved.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, when you want my support, listen to me.

MS BIGIRWA: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable committee chairpersons who are next, all these details you are giving here are critical in the Committee on Budget. Here, in plenary, we are just giving advice and it goes to the Committee on Budget. I have a deadline of tomorrow. If I did not have a statutory deadline, I would have given you all this time. My hands are tied. I am sorry for harassing you, but my hands are tied. I open up the debate to five Members.

I will pick Hon. Byakatonda, Hon. Cecilia Ogwal, Hon. Musana, Hon. Katabaazi and the Member for Kween.

5.29

MR ABDULHU BYAKATONDA (Independent, Workers' Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson for the report – *(Mr Ekanya rose)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Procedure under what rule?

MR EKANYA: According to our Rules of Procedure –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, please. Rule 78(4) says you cite the rule. Honourable member, go on.

MR BYAKATONDA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think the key issue, especially on economic diplomacy, is very important but I would like to request that we remain cognisant of what we need to do on this area.

The first issue is about emerging markets. This could actually be able to absorb our aspect of export-led growth. Mr Speaker, economies are developing because of what they export. We are basically consumers of what we do not produce and we do not sell what we produce as a country. For example, when you look at countries like Vietnam, in one crop – cashew nut – they are producing 450 metric tonnes and earning \$3.2 billion, which is about Shs 12 trillion. These embassies should now rethink the strategy and ensure that we have a catalogue that shows what we can sell to these countries.

These embassies require affirmative action in terms of funding. For example, we need to have attachés Saudi Arabia so that our labour can be regulated properly because the labour export is now giving us about \$12 million. This money is a lot and can actually grow.

Mr Speaker, when we do this, I think we can develop our economy. Right now, when you compare with our neighbour, Kenya, their GDP is at \$87.9 billion, whereas Uganda's is still at \$27.5 billion – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

5.52

MR FRANCIS KATABAAZI (NUP, Kalungu East County, Kalungu): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson for the report. I think we should stress the point of training people who are professionals in diplomacy. We should allocate money for that because, at the moment, most of the people who are appointed to head these missions failed to get the mandate of the people in some constituencies, but are now given the mandate of the entire country to represent a country. Normally, they are just awarded – somebody has failed somewhere and then the President says: “Be the ambassador.” The problem we are facing is that these people do not know anything about diplomacy.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: But we are all candidates, honourable member. *(Laughter)*

MR KATABAAZI: When they reach there and you ask them, for example, about the volume of goods and services Uganda is benefiting from that country, they cannot tell. They are just cadres. We should change that and have people who have been trained. Human resource is very important.

We should have an economist in each and every mission of ours and that will do so much. We should look at trade – how is Uganda benefiting? It is not just about somebody representing us there and they are being paid a salary because that increases our recurrent expenditure. I will give an example: I had a chance of traveling to Somalia one time and I was – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable member, the problem is one day, if I meet you for approval as an ambassador, appearing before Parliament – we are all candidates. *(Laughter)* Hon. Cecilia Ogwal.

5.54

MS CECILIA OGWAL (FDC, Woman Representative, Dokolo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The chairperson of the committee said that the mandate of this ministry is to protect the image of the country, and to make sure they

become our image bearer wherever they are. Mr Speaker, most of the members who have travelled abroad have wondered whether the offices from where our embassies operate deserve to promote the image of the country. I think this is one area that I want the ministry to focus on.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, the facilitation to the officials who are manning these offices needs to be looked at. Whenever we travel out, they tell us that sometimes they do not have rent or even money to facilitate simple things.

Mr Speaker, I think you need to guide the ministry to be more strategic in raising funds to make sure that these embassies can portray the image of the country.

Finally, I want to say that the embassies are spending a lot of money in renting yet they have land. They were given land many years ago. Addis Ababa has got land. Washington has got land, UK has got land that you do not want to develop into an estate, in order to earn money from wherever you are. Mr Speaker, I think we need to come up with a strategy to encourage the ministry or give them money to build sanctuaries wherever the embassy – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Musana -

5.56

MR ERIC MUSANA (Independent, Buyaga East County, Kagadi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to commend the chairperson for the good report that actually shows the bigger challenges we have, as a country, in terms of foreign affairs.

Mr Speaker, there are specific issues that we need to take advantage of and be very serious about. There are certain statutory obligations that Uganda must meet. For example, the chairperson has made a comment about our obligations at the African Union. Our contributions and our payments are at stake. If we do not meet these payments, Uganda will not be seen as a serious country.

We are talking about building the image of Uganda. How are we going to build the image of Uganda without meeting those statutory obligations that make Uganda a serious country? Remember, these are treaties and protocols that we must honour. Short of it, Uganda is at stake.

Mr Speaker, the chairperson has also made a serious comment that there seems to be a mismatch on which policy we are following. That we have the old policy, the new policy and we do not know what we are following. Maybe the minister will guide us: what is guiding us in the affairs in your ministry? It is a very big challenge and this means that we are going to have very many gaps in our diplomatic standards. We wouldn't want to have Uganda have – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let us hear from Hon. Florence Akiiki, our representative at the Pan-African Parliament (PAP).

5.58

MS FLORENCE ASHIMWE (NRM, Woman Representative, Masindi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I have been able to visit some of these foreign missions in Pretoria, in Ethiopia and one in Kenya.

The one issue that I noted, or we noted, is about supporting the commercial attachés. As the chairperson has rightly put it, that ministry can actually generate a lot of money but you cannot get money if you do not invest.

Therefore, we need to give some capital to these foreign missions, so that they can generate money. For example, they can have exhibitions to show what Uganda has - the tourism potential - then we can get more tourists coming to Uganda. So, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs can actually do a lot of public relations and also generate money.

Secondly, is the human resource. Some of these missions have skeleton staff and, therefore, it becomes very difficult to handle some of these duties they are supposed to do.

Then there are some missions that generate income, for example, through rent, like in Kenya. Actually, they are generating some good money and we pray that some of this money is retained, so that the property is maintained because once the money comes to the Consolidated Fund, it becomes difficult to maintain these properties.

And as a colleague said, we –(Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, we do five Members only; we do not go beyond that. Honourable minister and I have shared a lot with the chairperson – we have issues where Missions Abroad are grappling with statutory obligations. You post staff when there is no salary provided for them.

Now you find the ambassador is touching money for gas, money for allowances, they are grappling, lobbying, sometimes you say, “The President directed.” Yes, but when the President directs, you have to see whether there is salary. You do not just send to an ambassador. You want an ambassador to sell their property?

You see, a Presidential Directive, if you are to use the example of power, is like a high voltage line. So, as a minister, you step it down to be functional and in stepping it down, you make sure you follow the procedure. If the President, for example, directs that you employ so and so in this embassy and you do not have a provision for salary, then the appointment can start with the next financial year; you would have implemented.

Secondly, there is the issue of fees. You have very many of your staff saying they are coming back to Kampala because when it is time to pay fees, they go and sell goats to go and pay fees in America, yet they do not need much. So, you need to highlight it seriously, and I hope the Committee on Budget will capture these issues; they are very serious.

Three, there is property we are about to lose; land we are about to lose. For example, in

Brussels, that land is next to the property of the royal family. Wrong elements were using it to do wrong things and causing insecurity to Government officials. So, since it is a lease, you are not following the terms of the lease. First, you will be forced to break down the house and meet the cost of breaking it down. You have the designs and everything ready, but you are not building. So, these are issues we should give serious consideration, and as a House, we give priority to foreign policy.

Finally, when you say that you have removed travel of ministers and Government officials and their work is going to be done by ambassadors, you cannot believe - you post an ambassador who is in charge of seven countries but he cannot even go to present credentials. I was in Maputo and I engaged some of the senior Government officials and they said, “But it seems you downgraded our diplomatic relationship because we do not have any other Ambassador. You removed the other one and this one has never” – when you ask the ambassador, they say there is no budget for presenting credentials.

Amb. Paul Amoru has just presented credentials in Namibia after spending nearly a year in Pretoria.

–The one of Australia has just presented in New Zealand. Committee on Budget and Ministry of Finance, we have to seriously look at these issues.

6.03

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (REGIONAL AFFAIRS) (Mr John Mulimba): Mr Speaker, I thank you. I also thank the chairperson of the committee for a very well presented report. I cannot agree with the committee more; they have ably elucidated the shortcomings that face the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Missions Abroad.

In your last remarks, you have recapped everything that I had to say. However, I want to emphasise that it is our duty, as Parliament, to appropriate, but to also strictly follow the provision and the inputs of Article 154(5) of the

Constitution in ensuring that the Appropriation Act is followed.

I hope and pray that the Budget Committee this time around does a thorough evaluation of the Appropriation Act and inquires into the budget performance. That will give us leeway.

I also hasten to add that our NDP III highlights investment in production to increase GDP, so as to deal with the debt-to-GDP ratio, which we are grappling with. Production without marketing is almost meaningless. If we do not focus on attracting our commodities into the high-end markets, we will not redeem our debt-to-GDP burden.

Our priority, as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has been to promote commercial and economic diplomacy; dividends speak for themselves, if we had time to elucidate.

However, we have not performed up to expectation because of non-releases, like you have seen the chairperson present here in that schedule. The performance was almost at 42 per cent recurrent expenditure. I pray that when we interface with the Committee on Budget, maybe, we will, this time, live to the expectation of what you have alluded to this evening.

Nonetheless, we are committed and permit me to just give you an example: In our engagement in commercial and economic diplomacy in the Republic of Kenya, we took with us members of the Private Sector Foundation. We came along one entity - a juice processing industry in Kenya - which had, apparently, closed on account of lack of supply of raw materials. One of the businessmen took an opportunity and signed a Memorandum of Understanding to supply pineapples; the requirement is that he supplies 20 tonnes of pineapples every once week.

I would like to invite members who have pineapples grown in their areas to approach the Ministry of Foreign Affairs so that we link you to the market. Right now, we have a shortage of pineapples.

In our engagement with the Republic of Algeria, we managed to secure market for powdered milk on quarter - tax free, up to \$500 million. Our internal production capacity of all the plans that we have is only up to \$100 million. We are really doing great. We call upon the support of this House so that we can get there. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, would you love to comment on what I asked for yesterday; the post-Cotonou Agreement?

MR MULIMBA: I did cross-check and there was a resolution of the East African Community Member countries to jointly sign the East African Community Cotonou Agreement. However, Uganda, on thorough scrutiny, had reservations and did not initial.

I have been briefing the mover of that requirement. I am yet to find the text, which we shall be tabling here. The crux of the matter is that Uganda did not initial; just like Uganda has moved out of the International Coffee Organisation (ICO) on account of the imperialist formation of those organisations, which does not deliver Uganda in terms of growth.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable, I will make it very easy for you. I will assign Hon. Opio to link up with you. I led the delegation of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS). We were given a list and Uganda was included among the countries that signed. That is number one.

Two, in Africa, the country that refused is South Africa and it withdrew. The only reason it is not yet fully signed is because of Hungary, a European country, which has blocked the EU side.

Hon. Cecilia Ogwal and Hon. Opio, kindly link up with the minister, on my behalf. We will even provide you a copy because we were officially given one, as representatives. Then, on Tuesday, I will request that you formerly

present a statement; whether a one-pager or not, and it goes on record. This is such that when we go back to Brussels, we present it and say, "This is what our minister presented" because they are saying we signed it. Thank you.

Honourable colleagues, I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs on the Ministerial Policy Statement and Budget Estimates for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Uganda's Missions Abroad for the Financial Year 2023/2024 be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson, congratulations. Thank you for a job well done. I am sorry for the pressure - you did your work and I had to do mine so that we move. The report is referred to the Committee on Budget for further scrutiny and harmonisation. Thank you.

MR KATUNTU: I rise on a point of clarification. We are in the budget process. Where is the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in this process? Are we having a conversation amongst ourselves? How can we go through this process at this critical time and I do not see the ministers responsible for the budget?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yesterday and today morning, we had the finance minister here, but he is not with us this afternoon. Hon. Mwijukye said that you know what is happening; some ministers are in hiding. *(Laughter)* You might see them coming to Hon. Katuntu for services.

Since the minister is going to interact with the Budget Committee on the same and the Prime Minister is here, we can focus on sector ministers. Therefore, only one finance minister is available and he is also needed in the committees. For example, I know he was in the Committee on Education and Sports also clarifying issues. It is the current situation we are handling, Hon. Abdu. Otherwise, I had

demanded from the beginning - but you know the situation.

MR EKANYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rule -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: This time I am not requiring you to refer to the rule because you hired Hon. Okin Ojara.

MR EKANYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rule 204(8) and (9) of our Rules of Procedure - If you would read it and guide us at what level to invoke it. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, I guided that I will give a ruling later. Thank you.

CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH ON THE SECTORAL MINISTERIAL POLICY STATEMENT AND BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Colleagues, we are still here; so, ministers, please do not go. Even the ones who are out should come. We are doing business. There is a lot of jam outside. I do not want you to be stuck in the traffic jam.

Yesterday, we did a good job. Chairperson, you have 15 minutes only.

6.13

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON HEALTH (Dr Charles Ayume): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to present the report of the Committee on Health on the sectoral ministerial policy statement and budget estimates for the Financial Year 2023/2024. I beg to lay the minutes.

We received notice that there is an alternative report and at an opportune time, you will allow the Member to present it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Have you laid a copy of the report and the minutes? I hope the minority is captured in the main report.

DR AYUME: Mr Speaker, the health sub-programme has 29 reports. Allow me to cruise through and slow down, where I think we need some more clarification and more explanation.

There has been a decline from 7.3 per cent of the health sub-programme budget in relation to the total budget to 6.5 per cent.

I would like to draw your attention to page 9, table 3.2 which shows the overall health sub-programme budget for the Financial Year 2023/2024. The categories are; wage, non-wage, domestic development and external development.

Mr Speaker, you can see from the Financial Year 2022/2023 to Financial Year 2023/2024, there has been an overall decline of Shs 181.86 billion, which represents a negative drop of 6.8 per cent. However, there were projected increases in wage and non-wage of Shs 48.16 billion and Shs 54.97 billion. The decline was in domestic development and external development. One of the factors that were attributed to that was that some of the projects were exiting, and a ban on development.

Mr Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to page 11. I encourage IT to flash it up, that is, table 4. It shows the specific allocations for various Votes, that is, the Financial Year 2023/2024 and it gives us the nominal change for all the Votes.

For Financial Year 2022/2023, it was Shs 2.679 billion, for Financial Year 2023/2024, Shs 2.497 trillion, meaning there was a negative drop of Shs 366 billion.

I would like to draw your attention to page 13, table 5 on Vote-specific allocation for wages. We see an increment of wage across all the Votes combined, of Shs 48.16 billion. That represents an increment of Shs 16.7 billion.

Let me now go to the committee observation and recommendations.

Under the Ministry of Health, there have been health budget cuts to the tune of Shs 181.86

billion. The committee recommends that Parliament reverses the proposed cuts under non-wage amounting to Shs 74.5 billion and adequately provides for resources to facilitate the provision of subventions to the affected services in order to avoid a likely crisis during budget implementation in the Financial Year 2023/2024. Mr Speaker, there is an annex attached; Annex A shows the subventions that were affected.

In Annex A, there is an allocation to private not-for-profit hospitals. These play a very big role in the health service delivery in this country and they have been affected by these cuts. I beg that the budget cuts are restored. Otherwise, there has been a budget cut to Uganda Red Cross services.

Uganda Red Cross Service is usually the first responder whenever we have emergencies. They are also involved in blood recruitment drives. Otherwise, we foresee a situation of inadequate blood in the country getting worse.

Mr Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to table 12 which shows staffing levels for the newly elevated hospitals.

On page 26, there is an inadequate budget for wages - and this cuts across all hospitals - to the tune of Shs 40.78 billion. Table 12 singles out the regional referral hospitals of Entebbe, Kayunga, Yumbe, Kawempe and Kiruddu, which shows positions filled at 28 per cent, 24.7 per cent, 23 per cent, 33 per cent and 35 per cent. Kawempe, for instance, delivers between 60 to 100 babies per day, yet their staffing is at 33 per cent. It is our humble wish that these wage percentages are increased between 65 and 70 per cent which tantamount to an increment of Shs 40.78 billion.

Mr Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to page 28 on inadequate funding to support the renovation and equipping of hospitals. The committee recommends that an additional Shs 24.1 billion be provided in the Financial Year 2023/2024 to ensure the renovation and equipping of hospitals and health facilities is fast-tracked as a means of decongesting

regional and national referral hospitals to enable them to provide the much-needed specialised health care. Also, an additional Shs 30 billion be provided for the upgrade of health centres III to IV and health centres II to III and the renovations of the existing ones.

Mr Speaker, as you are aware, some of the projects like the Mother and Child Health Programme (AMCHP) and the Uganda Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfer (UgiFT) are existent.

I would like to draw your attention to page 29, bullet 6.5 on the non-functional ambulance system. The committee reiterates its earlier recommendation that Shs 73.05 billion be provided for the operationalisation of the national ambulance system in a phased manner starting with Shs 12.8 billion in the Financial Year 2023/2024.

Mr Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to the budget cut of Shs 4.82 billion to Red Cross during the reduction of subventions. I gave the justification for why we need to restore this money.

I would like to draw your attention to page 32 of Uganda Heart Institute. As you are aware, Parliament last year passed a loan of \$70 million, tripartite funding for the Arab Bank for Development ((BADEA), the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD), and OPEC.

The committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development should fast-track the processing of this loan because the heart services uptake is on the increase.

Catheterisation laboratory

Mr Speaker, the committee was informed that the catheterisation lab at Uganda Heart Institute, which has been in use for 13 years, has exceeded its recommended lifespan by three years. The lab is out of warranty and spare parts, meaning whenever it breaks down, we have to call Egypt or South Africa to cannibalise spoiled machines.

The committee observed that equipment in the catheterisation lab has been able to serve beyond 10 years because it has been well maintained. However, since its lifespan has expired, it can break down anytime and deny patients critical diagnostic services, yet there is no alternative in the country. The committee reiterates its earlier recommendation that Shs 7.512 billion be provided for the purchase of equipment for the catheterisation lab.

Uganda Cancer Institute

Establishment of a Positron Emission Tomography (PET) centre

Mr Speaker, the PET centre is a multipurpose centre primarily used for early detection and spread of cancers, Alzheimer's disease, sclerosis and localisation of seizures in the case of epilepsy.

In summary, Mr Speaker, the total cost of the PET project being undertaken by UCI is estimated at about Shs 350 billion, but to be funded in three phases over four years. The first two phases were scheduled to be completed by June 2024 and contracts worth Shs 251 billion were signed. Only Shs 65 billion was provided, leaving a deficit of Shs 285 billion.

In order to complete the project, a final Shs 99 billion will be needed for Financial Year 2023/2024. I forgot to mention that no money was appropriated in the current financial year.

Mr Speaker, I am sure my colleagues at the Treasury would be interested in knowing the business case of investing in a PET centre. Abroad, for access to a PET centre, you will pay about \$2,000 per scan. If we are to subsidise in Uganda at \$500 x 30 scans a day x 320 days, it would come to Shs 4.8 billion. So, there is a good return on investment if we invested in this PET scan. I am happy to say that 15 per cent of the patients reporting to Uganda Cancer Institute are foreigners. So, already, we are seeing the benefits of medical tourism.

The committee recommends that Shs 50 billion be provided in the next financial year for the continuation of construction of the PET centre.

Inadequate funding for wage, cancer medicines and operationalisation of the Gulu Cancer Centre

Mr Speaker, as you are aware, the regional cancer centre in Gulu is complete, but funds are needed for its operationalisation.

The committee recommends that a total of Shs 28 billion be provided for: medicines and sundries (Shs 5 billion); wage shortfall for the regional cancer centre in Gulu (Shs 3.1 billion); bone marrow transplant facility (Shs 15 billion), and; non-wage for the regional centre (Shs 5 billion) for Financial Year 2023/2024.

Vote 116: National Medical Stores (NMS)

Inadequate funding for essential medicines and health supplies

Mr Speaker, much as the NMS funding outlook for drugs looks healthy, of the Shs 74 billion that was increased, it was broken down as follows: Shs 50 billion was for ARVs, and Shs 24 billion was for the health centres III that had been upgraded under URMCHIP. There was no increment in other areas.

Mr Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to table 13, which shows the level of facilities they need, what has been allocated, the funding gap and the area highlighted grey is what the committee recommends. So, for health centres II, we recommend an additional Shs 2 billion, health centres III (Shs 3 billion), health centres III (Shs 5 billion) and general hospitals (Shs 5 billion -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, you cannot go into all those details.

DR AYUME: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Therefore, the committee recommends that an additional Shs 87 billion be allocated to National Medical Stores to enable them buy supplies of essential medicines, laboratory reagents, anti-malarials, TB, immunisation supplies and so forth.

Mr Speaker, the National Medical Stores should be given an additional Shs 4.5 billion for the procurement of a kit of three items (glucometers, BP machines and thermometers) for 3,000 health facilities. Most of our health centres III cannot do blood pressure and have no glucose machines and we are prone to collapsing whenever we are in our constituencies – *(Interjection)*- no, the stress that comes when we are in our constituencies. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, go on.

DR AYUME: Mr Speaker, the committee recommends that Shs 2.9 billion be provided for the General Military Hospital in Bombo. It serves as a regional hospital for the greater Luweero.

Vote 151: Uganda Blood Transfusion Services (UBTA)

Inadequate budget for blood collection and processing commodities

This financial year, they have overshot their blood collection – and I must commend them. They have out-used their supplies and this quarter, they do not have Shs 9.4 billion to collect blood.

The committee recommends that an increment of Shs 10 billion be allocated to NMS for commodities for UBTS in order to increase blood collection.

Lack of funds for procurement of centrifuges

Mr Speaker, the committee recommends that Shs 2.4 billion be provided to facilitate procurement of centrifuges in six regional blood banks across the country. These are responsible for cleaning and purifying the blood collected.

National Referral Hospitals

Vote 418: Kawempe National Referral Hospital
There is a need to overhaul the plumbing system at the hospital. Their plumbing system has given way – like the one in Kiruddu, which

was overhauled. The committee reiterates its earlier recommendation that Shs 1 billion be provided for the total overhaul of the plumbing system.

Inadequate budget for essential medicines and supplies

The committee recommends that an additional Shs 1 billion be provided.

Lack of budget for extension of medical gases

The committee recommends that Shs 420 million be provided to Kawempe Regional Referral Hospital for maintenance of equipment and extension of oxygen to the wards.

Vote 417: Kiruddu National Referral Hospital. Inadequate funding to the burns and surgery unit

Mr Speaker, Kiruddu acts as the national referral centre for burns and surgery. The committee recommends that Shs 1 billion be availed to mitigate the shortfall for Financial Year 2023/2024.

Insufficient budget for essential medicines

The committee recommends an extra Shs 1 billion to be provided for essential medicines.

Inadequate funds for decentralisation of dialysis services

Mr Speaker, I would like to thank Parliament and the Committee on Budget that last year, Shs 2 billion was allocated for decentralisation of dialysis. I am happy to say that in Lira, the dialysis is functional; we are rolling out to Hoima.

This financial year, the committee recommends that Shs 4 billion be provided to Kiruddu to decentralise dialysis to Arua, Kabale and Mbale.

Vote 401: Mulago National Referral Hospital

Inadequate funding for essential medicines and health supplies, non-communicable disease services and specialised services

Under this, the committee recommends that an additional Shs 8 billion be provided for specialised units like maxillofacial, endocrine, neurology, gastroenterology and so forth, and another Shs 10 billion be provided towards the provision of essential medicines and health supplies, and non-communicable disease commodities. It is quite common to go to Mulago these days and you are asked to buy these.

Inadequate staff accommodation

The committee agrees that 50 units should be completed immediately to house critical care workers and the remaining two blocks of 50 units each, be completed in the subsequent financial years.

The Committee recommends that an additional Shs 8.5 billion should be provided in the Financial Year 2023/2024 to complete at least one block of 50 units.

Lack of funds for commencement of kidney transplant services

On this, the committee recommends that Shs 1.5 billion should be provided to the national referral hospitals to start kidney transplant services in the Financial Year 2023/2024.

Inadequate funds for maintenance

The committee recommends that an additional Shs 7 billion be provided for maintenance. You saw the headline screaming in Monday's *Daily Monitor* newspaper.

Mr Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to page 47, bullet 6.4 on incomplete civil plumbing and sewerage ICT and electric works; ROKO did not complete the work for several reasons.

The committee recommends that a total of Shs 25.5 billion be provided to Mulago National Referral Hospital, as a matter of urgency, to fully operationalise it.

Vote 420: Mulago Specialised Women and Neonatal Hospital

Mr Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to page 48 on the lack of funds for the purchase of a LEEP machine. This machine helps in early treatment of cancer of the cervix, which is the number one cause of death amongst women. We have the colposcopy machines for detection but we need another Shs 180 million provided for the procurement of two LEEP machines in the Financial Year 2023/2024.

Vote for 402: Butabika National Referral Mental Hospital

On page 49, bullet 6.48 on the lack of funds for completion of the perimeter wall - the patients in Butabika Hospital are not ordinary patients. We were informed that some of them have strayed out of the perimeter wall and we have lost some in the swamp. So, we want Shs 2.5 billion to construct the perimeter wall.

Regional Referral Hospitals

Mr Speaker, these are on page 50. There was a cross-cutting issue of understaffing - that is 6.49. There was also a cross-cutting issue of incomplete infrastructure in various regional hospitals.

The committee recommends that Shs 29.81 billion be provided and allocated as follows: Shs 3 billion to Gulu for the 54-staff housing, Shs 500 Million to Masaka for the ICU, Shs 12 billion Mbale for their surgical complex; Shs 1 billion to Jinja; Shs 4.5 billion to Arua, and Shs 4 billion to Fort Portal.

These projects, Mr Speaker, have been built for the last seven years and we are losing a lot of money through variation in costs.

Mr Speaker, as I conclude, the committee recommends that a total of Shs

3,034,158,769,598 be provided for that excludes KCCA, Uganda AIDS Commission and the PHC that we give to local governments.

Mr Speaker, the budgetary allocations for the health sector votes for Financial Year 2023/2024 are presented in a tabular format. The first table shows recurrent expenditure and the total proposed budget by the committee is Shs 1,614,000,280,648.

When we when we move to page 53, the development budget is also presented in a tabular form. The proposed budget by the committee is Shs 1,419,878,000,121.

Mr Speaker and honourable members, please support this report. I thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Dr Batuwa, please present the minority report; five minutes.

6.38

DR TIMOTHY BATUWA (FDC, Jinja South Division West, Jinja City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg to present the Minority Report on the report of the Committee on Health on the Sectoral ministerial policy statement and budget estimates for Financial Year 2023/2024 and this has moved under Rule 205 of the Rules of Procedure.

Mr Speaker, we agreed with the majority report, but dissented on these five areas.

The first was on the neglected efforts to expand community level health promotion education, and preventive services. This is where we desire to go preventive, rather than being curative, or taking care of the diseased economy. So, in this, the Ministry appropriated Shs 700 million to enable us go preventive. The committee, thankfully, increased this figure to Shs 7.7 billion; it increased it by Shs 7 billion. However, it is our view -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, the committee only recommends or you want it to be on record.

DR BATUWA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for that guidance. The committee recommended that this figure be raised by Shs 7 billion to Shs 7.7 billion. However, it is our opinion and recommendation that the Budget Committee sees it reasonable to increase this figure to Shs 289 billion.

This is to enable them pay the salary or remuneration of the VHT workers, the Community Health extension workers but most importantly, to give the VHTs gadgets. A VHT should have a blood pressure machine, a glucometer or a machine to measure glucose.

In the villages, we have hypertensive patients who are under medication and the drugs are not intelligent that as you take them and as they lower your blood pressure, they will reach a level and say, it is now no more, let us stop acting. They will keep lowering it for as long as you are taking them. So, the ideal situation is that you should have this gadget in the comfort of your home, such that you monitor as you take the drugs. When the readings are within the normal ranges, you go back to your physician for advice.

The people in these communities may not afford these gadgets at home-based level. So, if we have them as a village, one could walk a few houses to the VHT's home and really see whether the treatment is helping or not. So, we wish that the budget committee recognises that.

On the issue of improving healthcare service delivery - let us go to page 8; it was on page 5, but let us go to page 8.

So, on page 8, you will see our budget; we have a budget proposal. We are saying that when you look at the Uganda minimum health care package, together with many policies that are guiding the Ministry of Health, you notice that they desire to improve our health care.

Therefore, we suggest that we should functionalise health centres IV and for starters, we are saying that if we have Shs 115 billion provided for this purpose, as per the table on page 8, then these facilities or this service would be well functionalised.

The other dissenting issue is that we do not see a clear strategy that the ministry is using to eradicate malaria, much as it acknowledges that it is the biggest disease burden leading to the death of so many Ugandans, especially daily; the numbers are very big. The World Health Organisation also recognises Uganda as the third most malaria-burdened country in the world. There are countries that have eliminated malaria. We desire to join the list of those countries. We have put up a budget line that can enable us eradicate malaria like other countries on the list have done. The budget line is on page 11.

The Ministry of the Health could be funded with Shs 270 billion so that it does aerial spraying by going for large sources of mosquitoes such as swamps, wetlands, rice fields, and sugarcane plantations.

In the areas mapped up as the most burdened, you will find that there is a wetland. In Namutumba, you will find rice fields; in Busoga, you will find sugarcane. Therefore, you cannot use these backpacks to spray plantations; you need a plane. These are cheap planes - we have fixed-wing planes in our aeronautics teaching schools in Soroti that can be repurposed. The seats are removed, a tank is put in with insecticide and the spraying goes on. We have elaborated that and we can do it further. However, it needs Shs 270 billion.

After that expenditure, we shall have no malaria and we shall now start maintaining the threshold of quantities of mosquitoes, but there will be no malaria. This is what other countries have done.

Finally, on these last two areas where we dissented - if others could be postponed, these areas should not be left out. The first one is the budget cut to the private not-for-profit facilities - these are church-based health care facilities belonging to the Muslim faith, Catholic, Protestant, and Seventh Day.

Some of the facilities exist in areas where there is no government facility. They have been receiving government support. Fifty per cent

of the money given to them is used for drugs through the National Medical Stores and then the other 50 per cent helps with the operational cost. Part of this money has been cut.

We are asking the Budget Committee to ensure that it reinstates the Shs 11.6 billion that is supposed to run these facilities, such that the vulnerable communities in the villages that are benefiting from services in these facilities continue to do so in this coming financial year.

Last but not least, we did not see a budget supply for interns and senior house officers. There has been a tendency, in the last one or two years, of the finance ministry programming our minds and brains that there is not enough money.

Mr Speaker, 2,000 medical students have finished their course and they now need to be transitioned from theoretical knowledge to practical. This is done through internship - it is the obligation of the Government to offer them this facility and people to supervise them.

As they do this, they are supposed to be paid an allowance of Shs 2.5 million. We do not see this budget supply and we are saying that it should be provided. It will be a political mistake to allow interns, in the multitudes of 2,000 medical students, to go to hospitals without money to take care of their accommodation, allowances and well-being. They will make patients pay money; they will make Ugandans become desperate. It will be a big political mistake.

To rectify this, we need Shs 80 billion. It may look like a lot of money but we have seen supplementary budgets suggesting an excess of Shs 200 billion to go to a single company. We have had supplementary budgets asking in excess of Shs 300 billion to go to some business person to grow sugar canes in Atiak. We have also had Shs 80 billion going to hotels. We cannot allow to be convinced that Shs 80 billion is a lot of money to take care of interns.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable. You know you are my OB politically; so, I have given you enough time as my OB.

DR BATUWA: Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, the concluding line to eject me peacefully is that we request you to consider and support this minority report. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Dr Batuwa. Honourable colleagues, I am going to give five people a chance to speak, as we have been doing. If you are a member of the committee, please do not stand. Dr Bukenya, are you not a member of the committee? Then I will start with Dr Bukenya.

Secondly, if you have spoken today, first sit. I know you; I can see some faces. Colleagues, we are still going on. I am going to pick you. Take two minutes each.

6.49

DR MICHAEL BUKENYA (NRM, Bukuya County, Kassanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for having a very sharp eye. I would like to first thank the committee and the Member who presented the minority report for the good presentations.

However, allow me to thank the Ministry of Health for trying to deliver under very difficult circumstances - they need to be applauded. Since you have given me little time, let me mention two issues:

One is the Uganda Red Cross. We came to support the Uganda Red Cross as Parliament after we had a blood shortage about seven years ago, and they have been helping in mobilisation - Shs 4.8 billion is not a lot of money. Therefore, I request the Committee on Budget and the Ministry of Finance to work on that.

Secondly, like the Members presented, if we invest in health promotion now - like the minister will tell you - a significant portion of people who present to our hospitals for outpatient and inpatient care come with preventable diseases. Unfortunately, the finance ministry has not been guided in this area. They do not want to invest there and we are suffering. I pray that we invest in that area.

Finally because I am an obstetrician, I will talk about Kawempe Hospital, which is the busiest maternity hospital in the world. However, it is grossly underfunded, and understaffed; and that is everywhere.

I request the finance minister, without even the Committee on Budget's intervention, to come with corrigenda and work on a few issues such that as Ugandans, we can exist peacefully. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

6.51

MR MUHAMMED KATO (NRM, Katerera County, Rubirizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee chairperson and Dr Batuwa for the minority report.

Mr Speaker, our Government always spends money on non-issues and yet health is very important - no health, no life. What bothers me so much is that some committees deny ministries money but you find that that money has been allocated illegally.

I would like to request, honourable members, like the Member who presented the minority report - the village health teams are doing commendable work. I humbly request that we support the minority report so that at least, all the emphasis is put on health facilities. I thank you.

6.52

MR GEOFFREY FETA (NRM, Ayivu Division East, Arua City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. In the same vein, I want to thank the committee for a job well done - both reports are wonderful.

I would like to thank the committee, specifically on the issue of the Shs 30 billion for upgrading health centres II and III. The need is very urgent and I think it is important to support the committee on this.

On the operationalisation of ambulances, ambulances play a key role in the efficiency of the health systems. I would like to appeal that we put a component of security of these ambulances. Otherwise, it is not very costly to install security components because recently, we have seen ambulances being stolen.

On National Medical Stores (NMS), recently, we debated the issue of shortage of supplies. I would like to appeal to this House to understand that issues of health in this country are very critical. Out there, voters ask us to give them money to buy medicines. It is better we use this opportunity to give adequate appropriation to them. Thank you.

6.54

MS HANIFA NABUKEERA (NUP, Woman Representative, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the committee and the chairperson for the report. I would like to also appreciate the Government for having given us the water ambulance. However, I request that we put aside facilitation for fuel for the water ambulance. Otherwise, it is parked at Luzira, yet it is supposed to be at Mukono Landing Site, that is, Katosi.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is it under arrest or just parked? *(Laughter)*

MS NABUKEERA: It is parked but people do not have fuel to facilitate the ambulance yet we have mothers who may need emergency access to a health facility. We request that that money is allocated for fuel for this ambulance. Thank you.

6.55

MS BETTY AOL OCAN (FDC, Woman Representative, Gulu City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to appreciate the committee report; both majority and minority.

I have scanned through the report but there is nothing on the Nodding Disease Syndrome. Mr Speaker, the Nodding Disease Syndrome is still a problem in the north. Moreover, the total budget for health is Shs 1.6 trillion. I doubt whether it is 15 per cent of our national budget as per the Abuja Declaration that we signed. Please, addition should not be a big problem.

We also have a problem with dialysis. Gulu Regional Referral Hospital has not been considered. I wonder whether you can make some consideration for Gulu.

There is also a problem in Mulago. If you go to Mulago National Referral Hospital where we have the casualty ward, it is very small and overcrowded. Is there a way we can try to expand that so that we serve our people better?

Mr Speaker, health should be prioritised in Uganda. It should be able to find space for inclusivity of the minority budget and what I have highlighted.

6.57

MR DONALD KATALIHWA (NRM, Mwenje County South, Kyenjojo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am just building on what my sister has just mentioned. We all know that Uganda has a growing population and we have an increasing disease burden. We also have increasing administrative units everywhere. My question today to the House is: why should the budget for health be cut? I have observed that the budget has been cut yet, in my opinion, the budget for health should even be more than that of security. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, due to the health burdens in the country, the health budget should be ring-fenced so that these challenges are addressed completely.

My second concern relates to the minority report. My colleague proposed using helicopters to spray. I am not a scientist, but I know some insects are more important than others. We know that the insects that cause malaria are mosquitoes but we also know insects like bees, which do pollination. Do we have a specific insecticide, which kills mosquitoes and not bees? Are we not going to suffocate our crops and later have a disaster in terms of famine and the like? I beg to submit.

6.58

MR WILLIAM CHEMONGES (NRM, Kween County, Kween): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the committee for this very good report. The budget has been reduced but when we use it properly, it can work. Shs 1.6 trillion can do something.

I have noted that in two years from now, the UGiFT project and the African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF) are not going to be working with us again yet these are the funders that have been helping us in building health centres III and upgrading health centres II.

When I look at the budget that has been provided this time, with the very many sub counties that do not have health centres III - In Kween, where I come from, there are about eight subcounties without health centres II and III. In the budget, I have seen allocations of money to other areas that do not have much impact.

Mr Speaker, Shs 1 billion can build a health centre III, when used properly. Therefore, I would like to request that the Shs 1.6 trillion we have allocated should be put on areas that are very critical, most especially ensuring that at least every subcounty in this country has a health centre III, before we think of having health centres IV. Otherwise, we cannot have a health centre IV when we have a subcounty without a health centre II. *(Member timed out.)*

7.00

MS SYLVIA AWAS (NRM, Woman Representative, Nabilatuk): Thank you, Mr Speaker. What I want to say about health is that most of the health centres especially in Nabilatuk District have no medical equipment. Mothers are delivering on the floor. I remember sharing this with the Minister of Health and she said there were a lot of budget cuts. I requested her to consider Nabilatuk for some beds and mattresses for the mothers to deliver on. There are a lot of challenges there, Mr Speaker.

Nabilatuk District has only health centres II. There are only three health centres III. The rest are health centres II and two subcounties have nothing. All the health centres are along the road. There is nothing in the villages. People are dying before reaching a health centre.

The health centre IV we have cannot be equated to a health centre IV. I think even the health committee will testify to this. It is in a

desperate state. It is seated in the structures of a health centre II. You will be ashamed to say Nabilatuk has a health centre VI. My appeal is for the ministry to consider upgrading Nabilatuk to a health centre IV. Thank you.

7.02

MR FRANCIS MWIJUKYE (FDC, Buhweju County, Buhweju): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the chairperson for the good report.

I also thank the minister for doing a good job.

Mr Speaker, I am concerned about the two cancer machines for only two regional hospitals. Cancer is killing people everywhere in our constituencies. Why should we buy only two machines and for only two regional hospitals?

Why don't we buy cancer machines for all the regional hospitals? Cancer is killing almost - in my constituency, for almost every person who dies, they tell you it was cancer. You need Shs 90 million only for each machine. The money we spend on medical tourism to India, for even just one person to go, is a lot.

So, Mr Speaker, my view is that we should buy cancer machines for all the regional hospitals.

The other issue is about stopping the upgrading of health centres III to the level of health centres IV, yet it is a Government policy for each constituency to have a health centre IV. It had been phased out and we have been supporting other constituencies to get them. Now, when our opportunity comes, they say that it is being phased out. We were duped. We thought we were supporting others because at some stage we would have all these health centres IV.

Our view, Mr Speaker, is that all constituencies that do not have a health centre IV should get it. It does not really make sense – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, conclude.

MR MWIJUKYE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank them for the effort, but since we cannot

upgrade health centres II to health centres III - and now that we have a challenge of giving money to the not-for-profit medical bureaus he talked about, I think this is very important.

Otherwise, the health of our people is paramount and we cannot have a budget where we have not provided enough money for them – *(Interruption)*

MS CECILIA OGWAL: Mr Speaker, I thank the acting Leader of the Opposition for allowing me to give information.

Mr Speaker, we are very concerned about primary health care and we cannot be talking about improvement of health service delivery when we are closing health centres II and we are not upgrading them. This is very sad. Think about that common man there, the woman who is about to give birth and the child who is almost dying at night with malaria and they have to wait to access a district hospital. It is very unfair.

Mr Speaker, I am pleading with the Committee on Budget, through you, that we must find money somewhere to make sure that the Ministry of Health upgrades health centres II. It is our responsibility. There is a lot of money being thrown around. We must find money somewhere so that we can touch those rural poor.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, we passed a motion here when our dear Speaker passed on and we said we would ensure that the Positron Emission Tomography (PET) centre becomes a reality. As I talk now, I am being told there is no money to continue with the construction. Is it because we have forgotten about the death of Oulanyah? It was our own resolution and the project has started. Why have we stalled?

Mr Speaker, we have to be serious. I want to insist, again, that we find money and make sure that the PET centre becomes a reality in Uganda. It is a must, Mr Speaker. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Conclude, Leader of the Opposition.

MR MWIJUKYE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank Hon. Cecilia. I conclude by asking the Minister of Health to avail us with a list of all the health centres II, health centres III and health centres IV to be upgraded so that we know where these health centres are and can be able to support them from a background of knowledge. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister and honourable colleagues, we are going to host the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), where we are going to have Heads of State – who are more than even the ones who came during CHOGM. What if the unfortunate, for example, happened? Which hospital would we – fly to Nairobi?

We are not saying it is going to happen. We have the Pan-African Parliament; it is going to be here. We have the Commonwealth Speakers Forum; it is going to be here. Are we waiting to be embarrassed one day so that, as a country, it goes on record that when you go to Uganda, you are not safe? That never put any international conference in Uganda?

So, Committee on Budget, on this one, I am very clear – on the resolution we made here when we paid tribute to the late Jacob Oulanyah that we must have a PET centre, the issues of our national referral hospital and, generally, the health sector.

The Rt Hon. Speaker had also emphasised this. You remember when we were discussing the supplementary, we said the minister must come and confirm whether he had released the Shs 27 billion needed for Mulago National Referral Hospital. These are the issues that must be clearly dealt with. That is the only way we shall serve our community.

Honourable minister? Committee chairperson, did you want to clarify some issues first before the minister comes in?

DR AYUME: Mr Speaker, I just wanted to clarify that the minority report presented by Hon. Batuwa said they disagree with the majority report for failure to recommend appropriation of funds to cater for medical interns and senior health officers.

I would like to state that this is not true. We did not disagree. We actually said that the subventions that had been cut should be reversed. There was a whole table of subventions and one of them was about interns and senior health officers. Subvention is money that is given by the Ministry of Health to other subsectors.

Mr Speaker, I would like to appeal to the minister that the way we took a loan in the 10th Parliament, for those who were here, for the upgrade of health centres II to III - instead of these knee-jerk reactions, why don't we also take a loan for a total overhaul of the health centres IV and also build health centres IV in constituencies where there are no health centres IV? (*Applause*)

This is for two obvious reasons and one is that a health centre IV is the first point of surgical care in terms of obstetric care, but it is also politically correct. When somebody is in pain, you are the first person they will curse. So, I think it is important that we do the same thing. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, for issues of a policy nature, do not refer to them. We are going to issues, which the Committee on Budget will consider. So, three minutes are enough for you. You do not need to answer everything.

7.11

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Jane Ruth Aceng): Mr Speaker, I actually need less than three minutes. I thank the honourable members because all their interventions were in my favour. I do not have anything to complain about.

I thank the committee and even the shadow minister. He has supported me heavily.

I only want to clarify three issues. One, for the loan that the committee chairperson is proposing, Mr Speaker, we quantified the needs about three years ago and presented it to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. We are only waiting for them to take action – on the issue of loans for health centres III and health centres IV.

The LOP requested for the list for the upgrades; it is with the Committee on Health.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can lay it here on Tuesday or even tomorrow.

DR ACENG: Thank you, Mr Speaker. On the issue of the LEEP machines, in the majority report, it is not only two; the proposal was for all the regional referral hospitals. The two were for the Women's Hospital but the report talks about all the regional referrals.

On the issue of Karamoja, I would like to say that there is a project and the Karamoja team is aware. The only setback is that we got a directive that the Karamoja projects should be undertaken by the UPDF. So, we have to renegotiate with the Italian Government on that aspect, and the Member is aware that the negotiations are on-going.

Mr Speaker, allow me to thank the members, for their support and we wait for the Committee on Budget to undertake to correct our budget deficit. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Health on the sectoral ministerial policy statement and budget estimates for Financial Year 2023/ 2024 be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: [Hon. Cecilia Ogwal rose] Honourable colleagues, please take your seats; please wait a bit then we can talk because I am speaking while you are standing behind me.

Honourable members, I now put the question that the minority report of the Committee on Health - please, we are not in the Committee on Supply. This is an issue going to the Committee on Budget.

At this level, we only adopt a report, and the copy of the report and the *Hansard* are taken to the Committee on Budget. Then the Committee on Budget goes through the figures and they come back here. We just make recommendations; we are not taking any final decision here.

I have clarified that since morning, and Hon. Dr Batuwa, you see your colleagues disturbing me when I am putting a question to your report. You need to go and see whether you have the support of your members or not.

Honourable members, I now put the question that the minority report of the Committee on Health on the sectoral committee ministerial policy statement and budget estimates for Financial Year 2023/2024 be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Minority report, adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Both reports are referred to the Committee on Budget for further consideration and harmonisation so that we can have a final report to consider.

Thank you - including the nodding syndrome but now, there is something I also want you to take note of. At this stage, only issues which were captured as priorities, whether funded or unfunded, are the ones the Committee on Budget will consider.

The Committee on Budget cannot introduce new lines of items outside what is considered as priorities. So, you must also know that because that is very clear. I do not want us to reach here with the budget and you say - because that is the limitation that we have. So, the reports are referred. Next item.

CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORTS OF
THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE
AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ON THE
MINISTERIAL POLICY STATEMENT
AND BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE
FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Chairperson, Committee on Public Service, please use only 15 minutes. First lay a copy of the report so that I can have it.

7.17

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Mr Godfrey Onzima):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Before I present my report, allow me to lay a copy of the report of the Committee on Public Service and Local Government on the budget estimates of revenue and expenditures for the Financial Year 2023/2024. I also beg to lay the minutes of our engagements with the various stakeholders.

Introduction

Mr Speaker, this report comprises of two major parts namely, the local government and public service sectors. Under the local government sector, it is comprises the following votes:

Vote 011: Ministry of Local Government;
Votes 157: Local Government Finance Commission;
Votes 601 to 950: Local governments;
Vote 005: Ministry of Public Service; and
Vote 146: Public Service Commission.

Methodology

The committee analysed the ministerial policy statement for the local government sector and public service and also interfaced with the -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Chairperson, please, go to your observations and recommendations.

MR ONZIMA: In that case, let us go to page 19 of the report. This part of the report highlights the committee observations and

recommendations as part of the scrutiny of the ministerial policy statement and a draft estimate on revenue and expenditure for Financial Year 2023/2024.

- a) Obsolete decentralisation; this is a policy matter. I cannot read all of it; and
- b) Recentralisation of local revenue collection and management. The Ministry of Local Government proposed comprehensive amendment in the Local Government Act, taking into consideration the contradictions in the Public Finance Management Act, to solve this problem.

The review of decentralisation and also amendment requires Shs 2.0 billion. The committee recommends that this money be provided for.

Remuneration of Local Government officials, both political and technical

This requires Shs 34 billion, it runs from LC I up to LC V level, including all the councillors. We ask the House to support us on this. The increment is supposed to cater for 50 per cent increment for all the local government political and administrative staff.

Transport and retooling

This is meant for Local Government Finance Commission. I think it was mistakenly moved here but it is supposed to be under Vote 157. They want Shs 300 million to acquire vehicles for the newly appointed staff.

Physical planning

Most of our local governments are not being planned. Most of the cities, municipals and town councils that we created are developing without any proper physical planning causing a lot of confusion in their expansion.

The total amount we require for all this is Shs 9,950,000,000.

Lack of office space for our cities	Vehicles for former leaders
The local administrative units, those are subcounties and town councils. This requires Shs 25.6 billion; so, we urge this House to help us and provide this money.	We require Shs 7.2 billion. This is a statutory obligation and we also appeal to the House to consider this.
The Parish Development Model – Operationalisation	Rollout of e-inspection
We require Shs 20.3 billion for operationalisation of the Parish Development Model and Secretariat; so, we appeal to the House to provide this money.	It requires Shs 2.0 billion. We also request this to be considered.
Vote 005: Ministry of Public Service	Induction of the newly recruited officers in the ministries, department and local governments
Mr Speaker, the first issue is more of a policy issue; so, we may not talk much about it. The second issue is on rationalisation of government agencies, which is also a policy matter. So, I cannot talk much about it.	It requires Shs 2 billion. This should be provided with strategic leadership.
Salary increment	Management training
Commitment to increase salaries for the UPDF is Shs 1.078 billion. We appeal to the House that this should be provided since the salary enhancement plan is already in place and is being implemented.	It requires Shs 0.075 billion and we urge the House to support us.
Implementation of the recommendations of rationalisation of 69 government agencies	Operationalisation of research agenda
This requires Shs 4.61 billion. We also ask the Government to take this into consideration and that the House looks into this.	That requires Shs 0.7 billion and we also urge this House to help us with this.
The establishment and operationalisation of the National Emolument Review Board	Human resource analytics conducted for human resources
This requires Shs 5.3 billion. We ask the House to take this into consideration.	This requires Shs 0.4 billion and we also ask the House to support us on this.
Implementing pre-reform activities for the establishment of the Public Service Pension Fund	Disseminating the Public Service Standing Order and Public Service Act
This requires Shs 5.14 billion and we request the House to take this into consideration.	It requires Shs 0.7 billion we also request that the House supports us on this.
	Vote 146: Public Service Commission
	ICT infrastructure and maintenance
	They require Shs 600 million for this.
	Capacity building
	They need Shs 650 million.

Bench marking on best practices (recruitment and selection)

They require Shs 300 million.

Monitoring and evaluation

They need Shs 100 million.

Retooling

It includes the purchase of one heavy-duty photocopier and vehicles for commission members and fieldwork activities. That requires Shs 1,438,000,000.

Verification of academic documents and tracer studies

That requires Shs 600 million, totalling to Shs 3,600,000,000.

Vote 005: Ministry of Public Service

Recurrent expenditure - Shs 30,386,203,000

Development expenditure - Shs 3,200,000,000

Total - Shs 33,586,203,000

Vote 011: Ministry of Local Government

Recurrent expenditure - Shs 38,207,388,000

Development expenditure - Shs 55,364,744,000

Total - Shs 93,572,132,000

Vote 146: Public Service Commission

Recurrent expenditure - Shs 11,892,910,000

Development expenditure - Shs 100,000

Total - Shs 11,893,010,000

Vote 147: Local Government Finance Commission

Recurrent expenditure - Shs 10,910,443,000

Development expenditure - Shs 100,000,000

Total - Shs 11,010,443,000

Vote 601 – 935: Local Government

Recurrent expenditure - Shs 4,081,655,517,000

Development expenditure - Shs 743,174,110,000

Total is - 4,824,829,627,000

The total budget to the public service and the local government sectors is as follows

:

Recurrent expenditure - Shs 4,173,052,461,000

Development expenditure - Shs 801,838,954,000

Total - 4,974,891,415,000

I beg to submit.

We have a minority report and no specific item was contested, but the minority report, which was presented, is an alternative to the Parish Development Model, which is a comprehensive policy.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Why don't you leave the presenter to finish and then respond after?

MR ONZIMA: It is okay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Chairperson, for a job well done. (*Applause*)

7.32

MS ETHEL NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. We entirely agree with everything in the majority report, save for one item, the Parish Development Model, and our submission is in conformity with what we laid in the alternative ministerial policy statements from the Shadow Cabinet.

Mr Speaker, all Wakiso residents are supposed to be at Wakiso for *Iftar*, but we are here. Let us finish this matter.

On the PDM, we are saying that having given it one year - and Ugandans are entirely going through a hard time - our side diverted and brought in an entirely new programme called "*Ubuntu*", which looks at the marginalisation of each district and the comparative advantage of that district.

We are saying -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Madam Chairperson, since it is very short, just read it verbatim so that it is well captured.

MS NALUYIMA: Given all the different challenges we have; the population size being different for each parish, there are still unapproved SACCOs. We still have lack of transparency and accountability in creation of groups. We have failure by the key stakeholders to appreciate their roles and responsibility in this very model and there is still an issue of personalisation of groups by local leaders.

We are proposing to establish the “*Ubuntu*” marginalised fund, which will operate in a way that every local government looks at its comparative advantage. For example, those who have mining should concentrate on it - everyone looks at coffee farming and the like. In this programme, the local governments should be able to alleviate poverty as per its area of jurisdiction. This will repeal the Parish Development Model.

It is our considered view that the PDM cannot translate into increased household incomes and alleviation of poverty in its current state, neither can it improve the quality of life of citizens. We suggest not to allocate any more money for the PDM but entirely plan otherwise. I submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable colleague. As we go for this debate, I am picking only five Members. Chairperson of the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development get ready. We shall handle gender next. [*Member rose*] If I have already picked you, kindly sit. I am not giving you another opportunity. If you have spoken, kindly sit.

I will start with Hon. Muwuma, Member for Lyantonde, my sister, the Member for Kalaki. I have been here since 10.00 a.m., so the mind - Dr Opio and Hon. Stephen, do not mind, we are still moving. I am going to pick you because we are still here.

We have stamina. We are a young Parliament. Instead of going into the jam, let us handle business here. I had promised Hon. Kwizera because there is an issue he had raised earlier. Two minutes each.

7.36

MR MILTON MUWUMA (NRM, Kigulu County South, Iganga): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to salute the committee for the good report, more so, where it has highlighted an increment of salaries for local leaders.

There has been a growing animosity between Members of Parliament and local leaders, especially the councillors. They feel we do not think about them. Most of them keep getting excited that they should go to Parliament as if it can accommodate the entire country. Therefore, by making a consideration in this regard, I should say, “Kudos” and I pray it is actualised.

On the same, I feel we need to consider the *ex gratia* for LCI chairpersons. The Shs 10,000 they get monthly aggregated to Shs 120,000 a year does not match the work they do. I would like to appeal to my good Government to make a consideration in this regard so that our LCIs and IIs get motivated to perform their duties. Thank you.

7.38

MS PAULINE KEMIREMBE (NRM, Woman Representative, Lyantonde): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the good report. Mine is about pension irregularities.

This is a very serious problem most especially with senior citizens. Someone misses his or her pension for almost four months; moreover he or she has to travel from maybe Gulu to Kampala yet when he or she reaches the ministry, they are tossed around. Mr Speaker, how I wish the ministry fast-tracks this so these pensioners are served on time. Otherwise, it is a very big problem in our constituencies.

In fact, some of these pensioners are very old to the extent that they cannot even move. Honourable minister, please fast-track this and see how these people can be served well without moving long distances. I beg to submit.

7.39

MS JENIFFER AYO O (NRM, Woman Representative, Kalaki): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the committee for seeing the need to allocate money for the review of the decentralisation policy. We have projects that handle construction of seed schools like the UGiFT and construction of the upgrade of the health centres III. These projects are handled in the districts but they are always contracted by the central Government.

This has led to delays in implementation of these projects. At the end of the day, we are late and the money is remitted back to the Consolidated Fund. Therefore, I would like to encourage all Members to support the allocation of the Shs 2 billion for the review of the decentralisation policy. Thank you.

7.40

DR SAMUEL OPIO (Independent, Kole North County, Kole): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the committee for their report, most notably on two issues. One is on the enhancement of the salaries for the local leaders. It is very surprising that an LC V Chairperson earns Shs 1.7 million yet he or she is the political head in a district, who supervises the District Health Officer (DHO) who earns Shs 6 million and a district engineer who earns Shs 4.4 million.

Then, you have an LC III who earns Shs 350,000 yet he or she has to put to order a head teacher, who earns three times their salary, and has to put to order an in charge who earns almost Shs 1.2 million. There is a very big anomaly in our salary structure. It is actually an inverted pyramid yet in the ministry, the political head earns the highest and the rest follow below. I agree that we start with that 50 per cent but it should not stop there. We should look at increasing their salaries incrementally.

On the issue of induction, we must put our feet on the ground and ensure these funds are released. We are facing a lot of oversight challenges because there is limited oversight at the decentralised level itself. We need to provide these funds. I have seen challenges,

where a councillor cannot differentiate between road maintenance, road rehabilitation and road construction.

We need to have them inducted so that they can understand the rules of procedure and governance and avoid a lot of these squabbles taking place in our districts.

I thank the committee for this report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kagwera?

7.42

MR STEPHEN KAGWERA (NRM, Burahya County, Kabarole): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My major issue is on the remuneration of the political and technical people at the district and lower local governments. The problem is about the creation of the many districts – actually, where we need a lot of money is at the district level.

Mr Speaker, the issue of creating districts is in our Constitution. However, the way we create districts is actually just political. It is as if these districts have been imposed on us.

Mr Speaker, we need to put a limit and follow the Constitution. For the town councils, we can handle. However, where we have the LC V chairpersons, CAOs and District Health Officers (DHOs), it is very important that we limit further creation of districts if we are to give good salaries and allowances.

Mr Speaker, the other issue is about the physical planning, especially in the newly creative town Councils. The population of this country is growing very fast and urbanisation is something we cannot avoid. Therefore, we need to put a lot of money in planning. If we fail to plan today, we will try to plan when the problem is already out of hand.

Mr Speaker, I know it annoys very many people but the creation of new districts in this country must be limited and we must follow the Constitution.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Wagahungu -

7.44

MR EDDIE KWIZERA (NRM, Bukimbiri County, Kisoro): Mr Speaker, thank you. I thank the chairperson of the committee for the work done.

The issue of establishing administrative or planning units such as town councils and subcounties and then failing to plan for them is very unfortunate because it becomes a political question. So, I would think that in this budget, we should look at it.

Another issue is the vagueness of how the PDM is implemented. We need a structure and if need be, we should get a specific Vote for them such that they can account for the funds better.

The other issue I would like to talk about is that the Ministry of Public Service's function and mandate is manpower planning, but we see that they are not doing the function because there are a lot of disparities in pay. An example is the case where honourable members are referring to the pay of accounting officers. For example, undersecretaries who are accounting officers – or even Chief Administrative Officers – are paid less than what their junior officers get. An engineer is paid Shs 6 million and the accounting officer, the CAO, is paid about Shs 2 million.

You cannot stop corruption at that level, if you are not paying people adequately for the work they are doing. Pay should look at the hierarchy, protocol and cost of error being made. So, I would appeal to the Government to look into that matter to avoid disparities in pay, which can lead to corruption.

We also want to know how far the Government has gone in establishing a body that will harmonise pay – where you do not find that a Member of Parliament is paid less than a Permanent Secretary and the Vice-President is paid less than –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: LOP?

7.46

THE SHADOW MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY (Mr Francis Mwijukye):

Mr Speaker, on the issue of administrative units, we either find money for them or merge them if we cannot manage to facilitate or provide money for them. You cannot just go and – I do not want to use the word “masquerade”. You cannot just go and say, “we have given you a district”, yet the district cannot even have an administration block.

Buhweju District is now stuck. They started, roofed but cannot proceed. I do not know how far Mitooma and other new districts have gone. However, they are districts but operating in very small structures.

Some cities are fighting with districts over office space. Town councils and subcounties were created, but they are stuck.

Mr Speaker, we get the blame, as Members of Parliament, as if we are not doing anything about it – because they were created here.

Mr Speaker, I think we need to find money for these units. If we cannot find the money, then, we should merge them so that we stop pretending that we have units for which we cannot provide money. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I will allow two minutes each for the two ministers. Strictly two minutes because the committee reports are supporting you.

7.48

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Ms Victoria Businge):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. On the Parish Development Model, I think we have monitored and brought reports here. There are districts that are doing very well and there are districts that are at a *laissez faire* performance. I will give an example of Lwengo, Mr Speaker. When I went to launch their money, they had really put in effort, right from the councillors up to the technocrats.

They search, research and analyse. Out of the 54 parishes, they scrutinised and found out that two had put names of nurses and LCs and the two were not paid.

Everything was proper and people started getting their money. This money cannot be stolen because it is sent right to their mobile phones. I think we need to get involved and encourage our people to get involved.

On the creation of administrative units, there is a ban. There is a circular in place, which was written, on behalf of Cabinet, by the Minister of ICT and National Guidance, banning anymore creation of units – districts, town councils, etc.

However, there is a problem, which we must understand and, as the Ministry of Local Government, we have put it very clearly: some of these institutions have self-inflicted wounds. During elections, people run to the Electoral Commission and say: “Our parish is very big. People will not come to vote; they have to walk for six kilometres.” Then, the Electoral Commission says, “Okay, we will create “Centre A”, “Centre B”” – specifically for easing elections –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, we are handling issues that are going to the Committee on Budget. That committee will not be considering those issues. However, on the Parish Development Model and all these things, the minister will come next week and we shall have an extensive debate.

7.51

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE (Ms Mary Mugasa): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I thank the chairman of our committee for the able submission. I also thank the Members for the support.

About pension irregularities, pension management was decentralised a long time ago. However, some older persons, who normally get challenges, are the ones who come to the ministry, especially those who have errors on

their IDs – and some of them do change years. Those are the ones who are supposed to come to the ministry for physical validation. Otherwise, it is a decentralised function. We are doing technical backstopping, at the moment, to help the districts and other agencies to manage their pensions.

After the creation of the new human capital management system, the pensioners will automatically migrate, at the age of around 59 and 20 days, to the pension payroll and so, they will have no hustle of coming to the ministry or maybe filling in new forms.

Then about salary disparities and salary enhancement, I want to say that this is still work in progress. We beg for your patience and as we work together to make sure we actualise this budget, we will continue working together to make sure Ugandans are well served. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I put the question that the Report of the Committee on Public Service and Local Government sectors, on the budget estimates of revenue and expenditure for the Financial Year 2023/2024, be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I put the question that the minority report of the Committee on Public Service and the Local Government sectors on the budget estimates of revenue and expenditure for the Financial Year 2023/2024 be adopted.

(Question put and negatived.)

Report not adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I refer the main report of the committee to the Committee on Budget where all these issues can be followed up. Next statement.

CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT
ON THE COMMITTEE ON GENDER,
LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT,
ON THE MINISTERIAL POLICY
STATEMENT AND BUDGET ESTIMATES
FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/2024

to Shs 72.257 billion in the next Financial Year 2023/2024.

This arose on account of an 80 per cent blanket cut on subventions applied by the Ministry of Finance while issuing the MTEFs to the different programmes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson, you have only 15 minutes; you have seen the Chairperson of the Committee on Public Service and Local Government has set a very good trend; you can do it in 15 minutes so we can go and break our fast.

The result is that the ministry will have to significantly scale down its programmes or even close a number of them. Moreover, the subventions account for more than 90 per cent of the budget of the ministry and the programmes for vulnerable persons are the most severely affected.

7.54

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (Ms Flavia Kabahenda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is the report of the Committee on Gender, Labour -

To this effect, the sector requires that the Members of Parliament reconsider and more so, the Committee on Budget gives a consideration to restore some of these funds.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, we shall conclude with the legal committee; so, prepare to come in.

The Special Assistance Grant for Empowerment (SAGE)

MS KABAHERA: This is the report of the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development. The ministerial policy statement and the budget estimates for the Financial Year 2023/2024 were processed by the committee. Allow me to lay the minutes and the report on the Table. I beg to lay.

The committee observes that the SAGE programme has been operational. We appreciate the Shs 97 billion provision for SAGE that has been restored.

Mr Speaker, the Committee on Gender and the sector on gender overseas two votes: Vote 018 for the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and Vote 124 for Equal Opportunities Commission.

However, the arrears on SAGE are not catered for under the Shs 97 billion. The committee notes that a total of Shs 43,559 eligible older persons have been excluded due to errors on their national IDs and their money is pending on the account of the ministry.

Mr Speaker, I beg to take the Members to page 27 where we have the observations and recommendations. The committee makes the following observations and recommendations:

The committee was informed that the ministry is working with NIRA to resolve this matter. However, many eligible older persons still miss their financial report.

Budget cuts to the ministry

Recommendations

The committee notes with concern that there have been significant budget cuts for the ministry. The ministry has decreased the budget to a -30.69 per cent, which is equivalent

- i) The funds allocated to SAGE programme, especially the funds for the 43,559 eligible older persons without national IDs, be ring-fenced and not treated as non-absorbed funds at the end of the financial year, given the vulnerability of the beneficiaries;

- ii) The process of provision of national IDs to SAGE should be expedited and the Ministry of Finance should facilitate this process;
- iii) NIRA should consider availing the beneficiaries with provision NINs in order to enable them to access social services; and NIRA offices should be present and staffed in every district, city and municipal councils.

The Special Enterprise Grant for older persons is a new programme that has been provided for under the Presidential Directive to support older persons of 60-79 years in the event that there is delayed lowering of the SAGE eligibility age and they have been provided with a livelihood programme.

It supports extremely vulnerable older persons who may not necessarily fit in the PDM and some of whom are not in SAGE.

A directive was made by His Excellency to provide a total of Shs 10 billion to support older persons in this regard.

The committee notes that only Shs 1 billion has been provided for under the MTEF, leaving a gap of Shs 9 billion. Further, the programme is exclusive and does not take care of the pensioners.

We recommend that the Shs 9 billion be found by the Ministry of Finance and the Committee on Budget to enable the targeted beneficiaries to access the support.

Funding of the green jobs and fair labour market programmes (*jua kali*)

Mr Speaker, *jua kali* speaks for the unemployed youth, the unemployed skilled women and young people, especially those in the informal sector, and this contributes more than half of the country's GDP.

The programme also helps the youth and women groups in the informal sector with business start-up kits, equipment and green

technology to help them transit from the informal to the formal sector.

Mr Speaker, this is in line with Resolution 6.1 of the NDP III, which aims to reduce the informal sector, from 51 per cent to 45 per cent in 2024/2025.

The committee notes that there is massive skilling all over the country for public, private and even Presidential skilling but there are no tools given to the students who are passed out. This programme comes in to provide solutions to tool the young people and women who are being skilled.

Mr Speaker, while the programme required Shs 5 billion even in this year running, only Shs 2 billion was provided for this year. As if that is not enough, only Shs 0.85 billion is provided for the MTEF 2023/2024, which will not only make it difficult to continue operating, but also will effectively close it down and lose the gains already made. Moreover, the programme requires a lot more funds to run efficiently. We requested that honourable members and the Committee on Budget give a consideration to provide Shs 5 billion to support *jua kali*.

Renovation and rehabilitation centres for persons with disabilities

Mr Speaker, the centres are in dilapidated state. Some of their structures are condemned like the one of Mpumudde and, of course, they lack many things. The institutions need to equip PWDs with vocational skills and hands on training.

We recommend that rehabilitation centres be prioritised for funding, feeding, equipment, accommodation and infrastructure

Reduction of the National Special Disability Grant

This grant requires Shs 16.6 billion and this was what was provided for this financial year, but even with Shs 16.6 billion, 32 districts, cities and municipal councils have never benefited from the disability grant. In the coming

Financial Year 2023/2024, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is considering Shs 3.3 billion - a severe cut.

According to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development Report on Situation Analysis of Persons with a Disability, 2020, these people live in poverty and are more likely to have various disabilities developing from the already experienced disabilities. It is coupled with the increasing number of PWDS in Uganda due to accidents inter alia and it pushes them into poverty, thus the need to for socio-economic support.

We recommend that Shs 16.6 billion be restored for the special enterprise grant for PWDs -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have five minutes, honourable colleague.

MS KABAHERA: The funding for National Councils. The committee recommends that Shs 17 billion for the National Councils for Special Interest Groups be restored so that they can serve their vulnerable people and be able to mobilise them to appropriately participate in the national development programmes.

Food and non-food items for institutions under the ministry

The children and youth institutions have a budget of only Shs 0.64 billion in the current financial year, but the committee found out that this money was inadequate to feed children and youth in those institutions. These include remand homes, rehabilitation centres and youth skilling centres like Kobulin. Moreover, the numbers in remand homes and other centres keep increasing. When they pick street children, they throw them in these remand homes even when they cannot feed them.

Therefore, Shs 0.02 billion allocated to the ministry in the medium term expenditure framework (MTEF) for the efforts to address this issue is very inadequate.

We recommend that:

i) The National Children's Authority be operationalised, as is provided in the law that was established in 2015.

ii) Shs 2.98 billion is allocated for operationalising the National Children's Authority.

iii) The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development should have a strategy to regulate urbanisation, and consider affordable accommodation for the urban poor.

Externalisation

The externalisation of labour programme contributes \$750 million from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia alone. When you compound all the workers in the diaspora, \$12 million is remitted every year from workers in the diaspora. However, the externalisation of labour is unfunded, unregulated and left to the private sector to fleece unsuspecting clients.

We require a budget of Shs 5 billion ring fenced from the money that the externalisation brings into this country; Shs 20 billion per year. We recommend that Shs 5 billion be ploughed back so that this industry of externalisation of labour can be supported to ensure the safety, the security and decent work for the workers abroad.

Funding, community mobilisation and mind-set change under the Parish Development Model

Mind-set change is a mandate of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development by law established. It is even a key pillar in the Parish Development Model, but while it requires Shs 36 billion in the coming financial year, a zero budget was allocated by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

The committee recommends that Shs 10 billion be allocated to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development for community mobilisation and mind-set change,

as a mandate, and also to support the Parish Development Model.

Funding of the Uganda National Cultural Centre

The committee underscores the importance of the creative arts industry to the development of the country and is cognisant of the potential it has, especially for the young people. However, the importance of the creative industry has not received its due recognition and the Uganda National Cultural Centre is in arrears of Shs 0.77 million in salaries. The centre also has gratuity arrears of Shs 3.37 billion, which is a statutory obligation. It requires operational funds of Shs 5 billion to carry out activities and reach out to various artists.

The committee recommends:

- i. That Shs 0.77 billion be allocated to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to cater for salaries of staff at the Uganda National Cultural Centre.
- ii. That Shs 5 billion be allocated to the ministry to cater for planned activities at the Uganda National Cultural Centre.

Functioning of the Industrial Court

The committee takes note of the significant role played by the Industrial Court in the administration of labour justice, which is a cornerstone of industrialisation. The NDP III and the administration of justice programme aim to make labour justice accessible for all.

The committee notes that the effects of the amendment have not been catered for -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, chairperson.

MSKABAHENDA: Mr Speaker, the Industrial Court requires Shs 6.83 billion and another Shs 14.694 billion for operationalisation of the Labour Disputes (Arbitration and Settlement) (Amendment) Act, 2021.

Operationalisation of the Medical Arbitration Board

The committee recommends Shs 0.100 billion allocated to the ministry for operationalising the Medical Arbitration Board.

Operationalisation of the Labour Arbitration Board

It requires Shs 0.6 billion.

The Social Registry

This requires that the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to establish a social registry and update it consistently in order to provide reliable data for social protection. The gender ministry should even expedite the processing of the National Social Protection Strategy by the close of the Financial Year 2022/2023.

National Apprenticeship and Graduate Volunteer scheme

It requires Shs 5 billion. Even then, the ministry should increase awareness about the scheme to enable more beneficiaries and equitable placements.

Functional adult literacy

It requires Shs 0.2 billion to revamp the functional Adult Literacy Programme so that it complements the other initiatives in place.

Funding for the Equal Opportunities Commission

This requires an enhancement of Shs 10.1 billion for scaling up implementation of gender and equity planning and budgeting for both central and local governments, for comprehensive research and report on the state of equal opportunities in the country, and for awareness creation on the issues of equal opportunities and affirmative action.

The social development sector is core under the SDGs, the ILO Convention, Vision 2040

and other international and regional obligations are a key component in attaining the goal of the NDP III, which is to increase average household income and improve the quality of life of Ugandans.

The Votes under the mandate of the committee are all inclusive with women, youth, children, workers, PWDs, older persons and other vulnerable persons. It is our prayer, as a committee, that the House provides the additional resources as indicated in the committee recommendation.

On the whole, we recommend that Shs 72 billion be restored to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, if it has to really protect and provide improvement of the livelihoods of the vulnerable people.

I beg to move that the recommendations of this report and appropriations of the following be adopted:

Vote 018: Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development

Recurrent expenditure - Shs 157,809,607,000
Development expenditure – Shs 117,697,065,000
Total - Shs 275,506,672,000.

Vote 124: Equal Opportunities Commission

Recurrent expenditure - Shs 16,104,054,000
Development expenditure - Shs 216,000,000
Total - 16,320,054,000

I pray that this be approved and adopted by this House. I beg to submit, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, chairperson, for processing and coordinating everybody. We do not have a minority report on this one. Honourable colleagues, I open up the debate. Five members strictly, starting with the Youth Representative for Northern Region, Member for Rukiga, Hon. Rwemulikya - because he has never spoken when I am Charing. So, I am giving him an opportunity. I am also picking Hon. Mamawi.

Two minutes each. Honourable colleagues, we are still proceeding; so, you will have another opportunity.

8.12

MR BONIFACE OKOT (NRM, Youth Representative, Northern): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I salute the committee for this report. I only have two issues.

The gravest contemporary ticking time bomb is the unemployment of the youth. If we do not deal with it firmly, we shall have to deal with its consequences for generations, and very expensively. Mr Speaker, it saddens me that the very first unfunded priority, which is on page 12, is support to *jua kali* business to transit into formal employment under the Green Jobs Programme.

The funding gap is only Shs 4.2 billion and I know this Parliament is very serious about the empowerment of the youth, women and persons with disabilities. I trust that we will unanimously support the recommendation to have this Shs 4.2 billion availed. When this money is availed, I request that Parliament standardises it so that all constituencies benefit equitably.

Secondly, the Shs 10 billion meant for Social Development Grant –(*Member timed out.*)

8.14

MR ROLAND NDYOMUGYENYI (Independent, Rukiga County, Rukiga): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for this report. I support the recommendation to provide money for the Social Assistance Grant for the Elderly (SAGE) programme because our senior people are suffering in the villages.

It is not good to give hope to people and then sway away that hope. It can even kill. We need to be very careful when handling our senior citizens. So, I support the recommendation that the SAGE programme is fully funded so our people in the villages and towns who are above 80 years can continue to benefit from it.

Because of the communication that has been widespread in the whole country, when the President announced he is going to look after the people who are above 60 years - people are already aware and they have started mobilising themselves. When we do not support them with the Shs 90 billion they require, people will 'eat' us from the constituencies because they are aware that the President promised them this money. Therefore, it is very important that we provide this money so that these people in the villages, who are above 60 years, can benefit from what the President promised.

Finally, there is a problem - I think when NIRA was capturing data of older people - people who are not even 40 years old are benefiting from the SAGE programme. So, there is need for harmonisation of the data - *(Member timed out.)*

8.16

MS MARGARET MAKHOHA (Independent, Woman Representative, Namayingo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the committee for the good job. However, as the Chairperson for the Children's Forum, I am concerned about issues of children in this country.

We know very well that children are the most vulnerable but the money we are giving to protect them is not adequate.

As it was observed in the chairperson's report, the National Children's Authority has not been given money to execute its mandate. As the committee has recommended, I ask that we give money to the Authority so that they can try to help in issues concerning children.

Regarding the street children, as a forum, we are already set with our motion. Very soon, we shall be coming on the Floor of Parliament to ask this House to intervene on the issues of street children. So, when we hear that money has not been provided to solve this issue of street children who may pose a threat to this country, as Members of Parliament, we get concerned.

I want to agree with the committee that we provide resources to help these children who are struggling on the streets- even those who are in Kampiringisa and other remand homes. If they are not given adequate facilitation, what else will these young children do? At the end of the day, they will come back, encroach and destabilise this country since we ignored them.

I want to call upon this House to appropriate money to cater for children in those vulnerable situations - *(Member timed out.)*

8.18

DR JOHN PAUL NKUSIIMA (NRM, Ibanda County South, Ibanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the consideration. I also commend the committee for the report well done but as you all know, in our villages, even in my constituency in Ibanda, we have very many special-needs children.

The Government has managed to give free primary and secondary education but it has not considered special-needs children. Kyambogo University is training special-needs teachers. In Western Uganda, where I come from, there is no fully-sponsored Government school for special-needs children.

I am requesting the ministry to consider these children because very many parents come to me asking where to take their blind and deaf children. The schools that are nearby are all private; they need a lot of money and as a Member of Parliament, I cannot handle. So, I am asking the ministry to consider putting at least three schools per region for special-needs children. Thank you.

8.20

MR JAMES MAMAWI (NRM, Adjumani East County, Adjumani): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the committee for the report. I also want to assert that aware we are helping our elders who are above 80 years - the committee stated clearly that there are monies, which are withheld and pending clarification from NIRA, for people who are above 80. We keep losing most of them day and night. Mr

Speaker, I want to know when this issue is going to be rectified.

Secondly, in this Parliament, we have been battling the issue of reduction of the age of elders from 80 to 60. I am very surprised that up to now, we have not reached a consensus about the reduction of age, yet we have continued to appropriate funds for this specific special-interest group. I will be glad to receive such reports so we know how we can explain the situation to our people. In our constituencies, we are facing a lot of problems. These are people who do not have money and whenever they know that you are at home, they come and ask: “Why are we not getting our money?”

So, we really need to help them. As Members of Parliament, we cannot help them enough. It is the Government’s responsibility to help these people. I thank you.

8.21

MS MOURINE OSORU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for ring-fencing the Shs 97 billion for the older persons. This money is meant to be “eaten” by them. These people do not have the energy to do any productive work.

Mr Speaker, I am aware that there are districts that have not received this money yet. I would like to know from the honourable minister: what happens when one of these elders dies? Where does their money go?

Secondly, for how long does that money keep hanging as they rectify the issues of national IDs? Most of those elders do not know their date of birth?

Lastly, the ministry is asking for about Shs 2 billion to revamp the functional adult literacy programme. I do not think money needs to be put here.

If you were to go to many districts, there are no facilities for this functional adult literacy programme. So, this money has to be taken elsewhere. Thank you.

8.23

DR ABRAHAM ISAMAT (NRM, Kapir County, Ngora): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the good report. However, I have two issues.

Much as a lot has been said about the Parish Development Model, looking at the various programmes that the Government came up with – starting with *Entandikwa*, *Emyooga* and now the Parish Development Model – it is very evident that there is a transition from where people actually had a lot of problems in their households.

We can see that the society we are in is actually changing and life is improving. We may not measure it quantitatively, but, qualitatively, we can see some improvement.

A Member said that the Parish Development Model should, maybe, be suspended. However, in my opinion, that money should be given and such programmes should be given more money.

The second issue is about labour externalisation. Many Ugandans, more so girls who have gone abroad, have experienced the worst in some of the Arab countries. Some have ended up dead, while some are tortured, harassed, etc. As we speak, I have a case – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Leader of the Opposition?

8.25

THE SHADOW MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Ms Betty Naluyima): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Most of the issues have been tackled, although we need to emphasise and make culpable whoever is involved in child trafficking. Why are children continuously removed from streets and then they come back?

Also, in our final bit, we have said there is need to emphasise decentralisation. When you look at this programme of social development grant allocation to local governments, you find that these Community Development Officers

(CDOs) have not been given anything to do the monitoring.

This is where we are getting it wrong. We cannot have zero shillings for CDOs at the lower local government levels and we say that we are managing the country well.

So, once again, we emphasise that something be put for districts, town councils and municipalities to operate as far as this matter is concerned.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, do you have some clarification to make?

8.26

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (YOUTH AND CHILDREN AFFAIRS) (Ms Sarah Mateke): Thank you. Mr Speaker, I take this opportunity to thank the committee and the honourable members for the issues that they have raised. As you have said, today is not for policy issues.

However, my prayer is that we restore the original budget. It was already less and cutting it by 80 per cent affects all of us. This is a ministry for all of us. So, let us consider restoring our budget and, more so, increasing the little that we have requested for. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development on the ministerial policy statement and budget estimates for Financial Year 2023/2024 be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The report is referred to the Committee on Budget for consideration. Congratulations, committee chairperson and the committee, for the good work.

CONSIDERATION OF THE OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY
AFFAIRS ON THE MINISTERIAL POLICY
STATEMENTS AND BUDGET ESTIMATES
FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I was approached by some Muslim honourable colleagues who told me Eid might be on Friday and most of them are not going to be here tomorrow.

They approached me in good faith. They said: "Be considerate." They would not have even wanted us to have a sitting tomorrow. So, that is why I am doing all of this so that we can, at least, reduce on the business and set our colleagues free early tomorrow to go and prepare for Eid. *(Applause)*

The caucus? That is not a programme I know about. It has nothing to do with plenary business. Committee chairperson, use 15 minutes, strictly.

8.28

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (Ms Robina Rwakoojo): Mr Speaker, I am here to present the report of the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs on the ministerial policy statement and budget estimates for Financial Year 2023/2024. I have a copy of the report and copies of the minutes that I would like to lay on the Table. I beg to lay.

Mr Speaker, the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs has 11 policy statements that were presented under;

Vote 007: Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs

Vote 133: Directorate of Public Prosecutions

Vote 102: Electoral Commission

Vote 105: Uganda Law Reform Commission

Vote 104: Parliamentary Commission

Vote 101: The Judiciary

Vote 148: Judicial Service Commission

Vote 311: Law Development Centre

Vote 106: Uganda Human Rights Commission

Vote 103: Inspectorate of Government

Vote 119: Uganda Registration Services Bureau

Judiciary

Low disposal rate of cases at Supreme Court

On the low disposal rate of cases at the Supreme Court, the committee recommends that the Judiciary develops strategies to improve the performance in the Supreme Court in order to stem accumulation of backlog.

Construction of court buildings

The committee recommends that the Judiciary be provided an additional Shs 19.96 billion to undertake the construction of court buildings in the above-mentioned areas – Court of Appeal buildings in Mbarara and Gulu as well as High Court premises in Moroto, Mpigi, Iganga, Mubende, Luwero and Kitgum.

Transport equipment

The committee recommends that the development budget of the Judiciary for Financial Year 2023/2024 be enhanced by Shs 8.19 billion to procure transport equipment to improve access to justice.

Court sessions

The committee recommends that the Judiciary be provided Shs 35 billion, during the Financial Year 2023/2024 and the next Financial Year 2024/2025 to enable it organise more court sessions.

Gender compliance

The Judiciary should priorities gender mainstreaming and its activities, and make provision for breastfeeding/children rooms in all premises.

Law Development Centre (LDC)

On allowances for part-time lectures, the committee recommends that the allowance of part-time staff be declassified in the charter of accounts as wages to protect it from possible future budget cuts.

Secondly, the LDC be provided with an additional Shs 3.5 billion on its nonwage recurrent budget to cater for allowances of part-time staff.

Completion of the construction of the LDC multi-storied building - Shs 77 billion

The committee recommends that the Development Committee of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development finalises the approval of this project as it has the potential of generating income once completed.

Two, Government provides Shs 77 billion to the LDC development budget for the completion of the multi-storied building, across the medium term, starting with the Financial Year 2023/2024.

Legal aid services

The committee recommends an additional Shs 1.5 billion to LDC to facilitate legal aid services.

On Mbale Regional Campus, the committee recommends that Shs 6.7 billion be provided to LDC to set up a regional campus in Mbale in the Financial Year 2023/2024.

Gender compliance

The committee recommends that the LDC expedites the implementation of the gender policy at the workplace and also set up sign language services, and visual impairment aids for persons with disabilities

Uganda Law Reform Commission

On low budget absorption, the committee recommends that the commission should ensure that procurement modalities are completed so as to immediately commence printing as soon as the President ascends to the revised principle law.

The commission should exploit recruitment on contract terms as they wait for rationalisation of agencies so as to fill the available human resource gap.

Budget strategy for Financial Year 2023/2024	out of possible future litigation for failure to release funds for these vital statutory activities that are being appropriated for by Parliament.
Transport equipment	
The committee recommends that Shs 0.41 billion be provided to the Uganda Law Reform Commission to procure a station wagon during the Financial Year 2023/2024.	The commission be provided with Shs 54.85 billion during the Financial Year 2023/2024 to settle outstanding bills relating to this programme and conduct fresh women council/committee activities and elections.
Rent	Outstanding Wage Bill
The committee recommends that the commission's rent budget be restored to the previous levels and the extra funds be allocated to other institutions' unfunded priorities.	The committee recommends that the outstanding Wage Bill of Shs 12.82 billion be provided to the Electoral Commission.
Gender compliance	Rent
The committee recommends that the Uganda Law Reform Commission continues mainstreaming gender and equity in all new legislation and fully implements the gender mainstreaming guidelines.	The committee recommends that Shs 4.44 billion be provided to EC to settle rent obligations.
Electoral Commission	Uganda Registration Services Bureau
MS RWAKOOJO: - On this	Implementation of new staff structure
THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson, those without financial implications, jump them because they are policy related.	The committee recommends that Shs 6.3 billion be provided to URSB to implement its new staff structure as this will create efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.
MS RWAKOOJO: The committee recommends that Shs 60.89 billion, aimed at conducting fresh elections for LC I and II, be provided in the Financial Year 2023/2024 to enable the Commission to adhere to the provisions of the Constitution and the Local Government Act.	Rent arrears
In addition, the implementation of the Parish Development Model is hinged on the structures of the LC II. The implementation of the PDM could fail if there is a vacuum at that level.	The committee recommends the provision of Shs 3.2 billion to URSB to settle rent arrears.
Women Councils/Committee Elections	Archival centre
The committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development bears all liability that could arise	The committee recommends that URSB priorities this development project in the Financial Year 204/2025,
	Inspectorate of Government
	Low absorption of the development budget
	The committee recommends that the IGG expedites the construction of its headquarters as per the procurement plan.

Prosecution of corruption cases and civil litigation	attracts interest by providing the remaining amount of Shs 227.1 billion.
The committee notes that the cost of corruption in Uganda is estimated at Shs 9114 billion annually and with adequate funding at least Shs 200 billion can be recovered from the 5,000 cases investigated.	For cattle compensation to war debt claimants
Transport equipment	The committee recommends that the entire outstanding bill be settled across two financial years of 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 as has been promised by H.E, the president of Uganda during the launch of the compensation exercise.
The committee recommends that Shs 1.2 billion be provided to procure vehicles during Financial Year 2023/2024.	The committee recommends that Government should also fast-track the registration, verification, validation, and payment of war debt claimants in Bukedi and Busoga regions.
Construction of the IGG Headquarters Building	Constitutional review Commission
The committee recommends that an additional Shs 46.85 billion be provided to the development budget of the IGG to complete the construction of the head office.	The committee recommends that an additional provision of Shs 11.32 billion be made to the ministry to establish a constitutional review commission in the Financial Year 2023/2024.
Potential waste of resources under development budget	Development of computer and tracking skills
The committee recommends that Shs 6.3 billion, out of Uganda's Shs 9.4 billion, be reallocated to other institutions' unfunded priorities.	The committee recommends that the ministry be provided with Shs 3.08 billion to automate their systems.
Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs	Representation of Government in the East African Court of Justice and international courts
Poor budgetary performance	The committee recommends that the ministry's travel abroad budget line be unfrozen and a provision of Shs 2.81 billion be made to facilitate Government's representation in the East African Court of Justice and other international courts.
The ministry should ensure that recruitment to fill the vacant positions is expedited so that the ministry can function optimally.	Uganda Human Rights Commission
Salary enhancement	Low absorption wage budget
The committee recommends that Shs 5.26 billion be provided to the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to enhance staff salary to similar levels to its counterparts of the Judiciary and the office of the DPP.	The committee recommends that the commission explores the option of recruitment on temporary/contract terms as they wait for the Government's conclusion on the rationalisation process.
Court awards	
The committee recommends that Government prioritises payment of court awards and court arrears to reduce the principle amount that	

Salary enhancement of staff

The committee recommends that Government provides Shs 11.75 billion to cater for staff salary enhancement at UHRC in the Financial Year 2023/2024.

Civic education, values education, and human rights awareness

The committee recommends an additional Shs 16.04 billion to take the nonwage recurrent budget during the Financial Year 2023/2024 to undertake countrywide civic and values education and sensitisation on the protection and promotion of human rights.

Transport equipment

The committee recommends that Shs 3.38 billion be prioritised for the Financial Year 2024/2025 to acquire transport equipment to help it execute its mandate.

Judicial Service Commission

Public complaints system

The committee recommends that Government should initiate amendments to the Constitution to provide for permanent members to the Commission and further recommends that Government provide the JSC with resources so as to meet its expanded mandate in light of the administration of the Judiciary Act, 2020.

Partitioning, cabling, and wiring of the new JSC offices

The committee recommends that the JSC should be provided with an additional Shs 1.4 billion to set up their new premises.

Purchase of air conditioners and other assorted electrical consumables

The committee recommends that the Commission be provided with Shs 0.91 billion to procure air conditioning equipment for their new premises at Kingdom Kampala.

Transport equipment

The committee recommends that Government waives the ban on procurement of vehicles for the Commission and as well as provide Shs 1.38 billion for their procurement.

Office of the DPP

Staffing

The committee recommends that Shs 28 billion be provided to the Office of the DPP during the Financial Year 2023/2024 to facilitate the Office of the DPP to recruit and promote staff with the aim of increasing the scope of criminal prosecution services across the country.

Accommodation/rent

The committee recommends that that the Office of the DPP be provided with Shs 4 billion during the Financial Year 2023/2024 to rent offices and avoid such risks that come with being housed under local authority premises and courthouses.

Construction of offices and residential premises

The committee recommends that an additional Shs 11.05 billion in the development budget be provided to the Office of the DPP during the Financial Year 2023/2024 to construct their own upcountry offices and residential premises.

Transport equipment

The committee recommends that Shs 12.5 billion be provided to the Office of the DPP during Financial Year 2023/2024 to procure transport equipment.

Computerisation through rolling out of Prosecution Case Management System

The committee recommends that Shs 10 billion be provided to the Office of the DPP in Financial Year 2023/2024 to facilitate the ODPP to automate and computerise its prosecution system with the aim of improving quality of service delivery.

Tax exemption on salary

Vote 119: Uganda Registration Services Bureau
- Shs 40,889,154,000

The committee recommends that this issue be catered for during the approval of Tax (Amendment) Bills for Financial Year 2023/2024.

Vote 133: Directorate of Public Prosecutions -
Shs 90,157,232,000

Mr Speaker, in conclusion, the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs appreciates the fact that the institutions under it are very critical in achieving just and equitable society. During the presentation of the ministerial policy statement, there was a shared concern that these institutions continue to attract very limited funding, which has made it extremely difficult to attain their respective mandates. The budget strategy for the Financial Year 2023/2024 will only be achieved if the above institutions are supported in the execution of their mandates.

Vote 148: Judicial Service Commission - Shs
16,652,040,

Vote 311: Law Development Centre - Shs
26,787,911,000

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We need to have the actual figures in either billions or million.

MS RWAKOOJA: It is billions. Just add the three zeros. Should I repeat it?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, we have captured it.

In light of the above, it is the committee's prayer that this House adopts its report and approves the budget estimates that incorporate the committee's recommendation for the respective votes for the Financial Year 2023/2024 as follows - do I have to read them?

MS RWAKOOJO: Okay. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, read Vote per Vote but only the totals. Do not go into the recurrent development.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, the *Hansard* will capture it. Thank you, honourable chairperson. I also congratulate you for not having a minority report, which has been the trend today.

MS RWAKOOJO: Much obliged, Mr Speaker. They include:

Colleagues, I want to open up debate for five questions for those who have not spoken today. I am not picking those who have just come. Take two minutes each.

Vote 007: Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs - Shs 150,373,000,000

8.45

MR ANDREW OJOK (NRM, Omoro County, Omoro): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I would like to thank the chairperson for the report, especially the bit that captures the issue of cattle compensation.

Vote 101: Judiciary - Shs 392,545,500,000

Vote 102: Electoral Commission - Shs
148,890,000,000

Vote 103: Inspectorate of Government - Shs
86,471,868,000

Vote 105: Uganda Law Reform Commission -
Shs 18,458,012,000

The second aspect is around the magistrate courts. We have new administrative units, whereby if a crime is committed, for example, in Omoro, you have to travel 40 plus kilometres to seek justice. I had hoped to hear from the chairperson regarding new administrative units. What is the plan for the new financial year regarding the new magistrate courts?

Vote 106: Uganda Human Rights Commission
- Shs 19,572,078,000

8.46

MR YOVAN ADRIKO (NRM, Vurra County, Arua): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for this good report. Mine is on the delay of the judicial system, which takes several years and months to bring the suspect to the court. I wonder why this delays, and yet we have different crimes. It would be good if they can take a short time to bring the suspect to court so that people can appreciate the Judiciary for delivering a good service.

Secondly, many judicial officials are always complaining about their salary. In most areas, the allocations given to the Judiciary are not enough. I request this committee to go back and come up with a good figure so that the judiciary officers can be paid a good amount in order for them to deliver good service to this country. This is a sensitive ministry and we need good service delivery so that Ugandans can benefit from it. Thank you.

8.47

MR ROBERT KASOLO (NRM, Iki-Iki County, Budaka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I just want to thank my sister for the report. My concern is one. In the 10th Parliament, we struggled to make sure that we pass the Administration of Judiciary Act. We were aiming at causing efficiency and making sure that the judicial officers are working all the time in administering justice in this country.

When you go to the countryside, the magistrate and chief magistrate courts appear not to be functional. You will find people seated and waiting. Meanwhile, these people have hired lawyers, travelled all the way and have paid their money. They even go to those courts several times but the magistrate is never in there.

The corruption in those courts is a big problem; it seems when we enhanced their salaries, we enhanced the corruption. Attorney-General, the upcountry chief magistrate courts or the lower courts are punishing the public and people are suffering. You find people seated at that court from morning and when you ask them why they are there, they will tell you the

magistrate did not show up. It is a big problem in the countryside.

It seems there is low supervision in the Judiciary. They think that they are independent; so, they decide what to do.

Therefore, I just want to implore my good uncle, the Deputy Attorney-General; those courts are not helping Ugandans. They are instead punishing them.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: LOP? [*A Member rose*] No one is holding the Floor. Honourable colleagues, clarification is sought when a Member is on the Floor. Are you now seeking clarification from the Clerk-at-Table? We are debating; we are not clarifying anything.

8.50

MR YUSUF NSIBAMBI (FDC, Mawokota County South, Mpigi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would also like to thank my sister, Hon. Gureme, for the report. For the record, we went to school together and she was number one in discipline and everything; so, no wonder the report is very good.

First of all, as the Opposition, we look at this budget as very modest. We support whatever enhancement has been requested because it is a critical sector. However, I am going to comment on two issues.

One is the issue of backlog in the courts of law. This can be explained because the courts have not been supported with adequate funding. If we want to fight backlog, then fund the courts so we have the officers and researchers on ground who can ably handle whatever is available.

It is our view that we support the budget as it is, and recommend that all the cuts to do with this sector be reversed. If we want milk, then we must feed the cow. That is what is actually happening.

Specifically, I want to address the issue of land grabbing. Most of the land grabbing -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude LOP, switch on the microphone and conclude.

MR NSIBAMBI: The other issue that has to be addressed is the DPP's office. We would like to support the position of the committee that the DPP's is adequately funded and staffing levels enhanced.

Lastly, on the issue of the Constitutional Review Commission, we support the position of the committee that this commission be funded to ensure that they at least handle the critical laws, specifically the electoral laws that are in the offing.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, you have two minutes, minister. Only handle matters of a financial nature. The ones of policy are not going to the Committee on Budget. You will handle them any other time.

8.52

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to start by thanking the honourable chairperson. When we passed the Administration of Judiciary Act, at the time, the budget of the Judiciary was Shs 100 billion. The President committed to increase that budget to Shs 800 billion, but gradually, and we passed this law two years ago. As we speak, we are at Shs 300 billion.

We have a feeling that we are moving systematically and things will improve. As a result, you can see that the Judicial Service Commission is busy recruiting. The Judiciary is declaring more vacancies; more magistrates and judicial officers are coming in with the intention of fighting backlog and delivering justice. It is just a matter of time but the effect will be felt.

Perhaps, I would like to add that maybe we need to add more to the inspection bit of it, especially upcountry courts, where most complaints come that judicial officers are not there. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Colleagues, I put the question that the report of the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs on the Ministerial Policy Statement and Budget Estimates for the Financial Year 2023/2024 be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The report is referred to the Committee on Budget. Honourable colleagues, I have a dilemma. When I set rules and then start practicing double standards, it becomes difficult.

When I say, "the honourable colleagues who have spoken", I am not able to know whether the issue of colleague A is more serious than that for B and therefore, I allow A. I try to do it uniformly. This is a position I sometimes do not envy. If I have not allowed you, please understand the situation.

House adjourned to tomorrow at 10.00 a.m.

(The House rose at 8.55 p.m. and adjourned until Thursday, 20 April at 10.00 a.m.)