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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

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THIRD SESSION - THIRD MEETING

TUESDAY, 2 APRIL 2024



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

THIRD SESSION - 19TH SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Tuesday, 2 April 2024

Parliament met at 2.12 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to today's sitting. We have interrupted the reflection of love from Kitgum, *Mama Mabira* congratulating our sister, Hon. Lillian Aber. I also take this opportunity to congratulate you and your colleagues. *(Applause)*

The *Ex-Officio* Members who have not yet been sworn in, we shall be doing it tomorrow so that they can join us in the House. The new breed, you know the issues we have been grappling with of the ministers not attending Parliament. I hope you will do better because you were among the people complaining. Now, it is your opportunity. I trust you and I hope that we will work together and do more for this country.

Honourable colleagues, I take this opportunity to welcome you back from Easter weekend. I hope you had a wonderful Easter. Those who managed went to their constituencies, but most importantly, it must have been a good time with the family; sharing a lot and feasting together, among others. I am glad to see you all back

here to conduct national business because the months of April and May are critical for our budgeting process, so, I expect Members to be here.

On a sad note, on Sunday, we lost a gallant son of Uganda, Brig. Gen. Stephen Kiggundu, who fell in a bathroom at his residence. Brig. Kiggundu has been serving as the Deputy Commander of the Uganda Air Force. One of the most highly trained officers; we have been having in that sector.

At 44 years old, what he had achieved was tremendous. I read through the training he underwent, but each and everywhere he could go, he would excel. The hand of death took him at a very prime time. When I was reading the analysis, they said he was appointed to that position after numerous accidents and incidences in the Air Force Wing.

Therefore, he was brought in to share his expertise, but unfortunately, he died at a very young age. We condole with the family, His Excellency the President, the UPDF fraternity and all Ugandans. I request that we observe a minute of silence.

(The House rose and observed a moment of silence.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It was not a weekend of only bad news, because we also got some good news, whereby our very own Jacob Kiplimo, won a gold medal in the men's 10-kilometre race at the World Cross Country

Championship in Belgrade, Serbia. He made us proud and raised our flag high. Congratulations Kiplimo. Since we are in the budgeting process, I hope we shall look at the budget for the sports sector tremendously.

In other countries, the prime time you get from these sportsmen and women, if you are to convert them into money for advertisement, you really cannot. When we are in international activities, the Deputy Speaker of Kenya says, "I am from Uasin Gishu the birthplace of champions." He talks about a few champions who come from there.

When you talk of our own Joshua Cheptegei and Jacob Kiplimo, everyone stands up. Therefore, the prime time that we get from people like Hon. Acon, when they go and shine across the world, you cannot equate it. (*Applause*) I hope we shall deeply look at the sports sector and see how best we can support it.

I would like to remind chairpersons of sectoral committees and Members, to finalise your reports so that we can adhere to the timelines of the budgeting process, as provided for under the PFMA and our Rules of Procedure. According to our rules, we must finish considering all these ministerial policy statement reports by the 20th of April. Therefore, this is where I am going to focus.

I hope some reports will be ready by tomorrow so that we can have adequate debate. Otherwise, if we do not finish them early, we shall be rushing instead of having enough time for debate.

Committee chairpersons, you have analysed enough, engaged stakeholders and we need these reports so that they are referred to the Budget Committee to finish the budgeting process on time.

This morning, I joined Rt Hon. Speaker who led a delegation to Bulange, Mengo, to pay a courtesy call to the Katikkiro and the officials at Mengo, but most importantly, to express our support for the Kabaka's Birthday Run.

The group of Members of Parliament was led by our very own Chairman of the Buganda Caucus, Hon. Kivumbi. On top of Parliament giving its contribution, the Buganda caucus and the NRM caucus in Buganda also made their contribution. We were also blessed to have the Government Chief Whip and our new minister, the firebrand, Hon. Lillian Aber joining us and commissioners.

It was rewarding in terms of the engagement we had, some of it behind closed doors, but all aimed at seeing how best we can leverage these efforts to serve our country, especially tackling critical social issues. So, I encourage everyone to participate.

The Buganda Caucus has bought for each Member of Parliament a kit. (*Applause*) There is no reason for you not to run. If you do not participate in the run, please refund that money so that we take it back to Mengo. If you cannot run, contribute in another way. Otherwise, we have your kit and it is there.

We need all of us to run and we shall report at 6.00 a.m. on Sunday at the Palace. Hon. Kivumbi, give more details about the run.

2.23

MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI (NUP, Butambala County, Butambala): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

First of all, let me thank the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, and Cabinet ministers who accompanied the Speaker, including none other than the Government Chief Whip, the newly appointed honourable minister, Hon. Aber and other honourable colleagues.

On behalf of the Buganda Parliamentary Caucus, I would like to express our big thanks for the contribution that you have made today for this occasion. (*Applause*) Small endeavours of that nature go a long way towards consolidating our national unity, nourishing and growing our mother country, Uganda.

Sometimes hard stuff does not speak much, but when I saw every single region represented

in Mengo, I then knew that as a country, we are moving in the right direction and towards achieving the very noble goals of the formation of the Republic of Uganda.

Mr Speaker, we do not take it for granted. We are humbled by the contribution of the Speaker and honourable members. The run will start at 6.00 a.m. we have bought running kits for all the 529 members of Parliament. *(Applause)*

It is a courtesy of the members of the Buganda Parliamentary Caucus to contribute every month Shs 50,000, which is well kept and for endeavours of this nature, we go to our account and we are able to meet the cost. I implore other caucuses to follow suit, it helps in running those tasks.

I will liaise with Parliament to organise common transport like a bus to take us to Lubiri. The run will be flagged off by His Majesty, the King of Buganda, Ronald Muwenda Mutebi II. So, we expect and appeal to all of you to turn up.

The Deputy Speaker is going to challenge the Katikkiro to see who will go the wrong way. We hope to be there in solidarity.

The theme is for us to combat HIV/AIDS and the resources realised will go towards supporting the HIV/AIDS cause; to ensure that come 2030, we do not have a single Ugandan suffering from HIV in our motherland. We hope and pray that we shall have a peaceful day and we welcome you. Thank you, very much. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Kivumbi. Honourable colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation of petitioners composed of clan leaders, elders, councillors, teachers and constituents from Agago North County, Agago District.

They are represented by Hon. John Amos Okot and Hon. Beatrice Akello Akori. They have come to listen to the presentation of their petition on customary land matters in Agago North County. Please join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

Later on, I will amend the Order Paper to accommodate the petition from the people of Agago. I will, at the right time, give Hon. Amos Okot a few minutes to present it. Yes, Hon. Silwany -

MR SILWANY: Mr Speaker, I rise on a procedural matter. When the Speaker gives a directive in this House, it is good to always respect it. The Rt Hon. Speaker directed the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to avail money for seeds for members of Parliament before the rainy season.

The rains have started, but up to now, the Ministry of Finance has not done anything – *(Applause)* – and has not supported the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) to provide Members with seeds, yet it was stated on this Floor of Parliament.

I request you to ask the Minister of Finance to fast track and conclude this process because we are in the planting season and farmers cannot wait anymore.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Silwany, this is an issue which we shall indeed discuss with the minister to see whether he is facing any difficulties or he is in the process of working on it and then we shall update the Members. – Is it on my communication? Let me first pick Hon. Omara and Hon. Alyek.

2.29

MR PAUL OMARA (Independent, Otuke County, Otuke): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The largest bank in Uganda with the biggest balance sheet and market capitalisation recently had a change in its leadership and the former Managing Director, Ms Anne Juuko, has been assigned a regional role. However, the information from the Bank of Uganda indicates that the nominee to succeed Ms Juuko has been rejected, because of him being from outside the country.

I have been in the banking industry for the last 26 years. What I know is that Uganda has

made tremendous progress in human capital development and the banking sector has not been an exception.

We have had many managing directors who are Ugandans. The first one was Mr Patrick Mweheire and then Ms Anne Juuko. Where we have reached on matters of financial stability because this bank plays a critical role in the financial sector daily.

The practice that is normally exercised is that foreign nationals are recruited, as long as there are no capable nationals in that particular country. I would like to submit that Standard Bank and Stanbic might not have explored opportunities for Ugandans who are capable of running that bank and I believe they are there.

My request is for this House to associate itself with the position of the central bank so that the Standard Bank Group and Stanbic Uganda's Board explore opportunities for Ugandan human resources to run Stanbic Bank Uganda. I submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Omara that is a very critical point you are touching and expressing solidarity is very okay. The problem will be if we are too direct. Stanbic Bank was in the hands of a Ugandan, Mr Mweheire and it performed very well. They brought in a young Ugandan female who also performed exceedingly well.

The question you should ask yourself is why are they now bringing in a non-Ugandan to a bank, which we entrusted with our biggest assets and keeps most of our money? If Ugandans were performing badly, you would have an issue.

I understand that every bank submits a succession plan to the central bank regularly. No foreigner can go to Kenya and become an MD of a bank. In South Africa, where Stanbic originates, no foreigner can be an MD of a bank. Why Uganda? They say that they have many Ugandans in executive positions, at the regional level, yes, but we need MDs.

I would like to support the central bank for rejecting the non-Ugandan who was nominated because these are issues – (*Applause*)– you know, when the bank performs well, now they want to take it back themselves.

This is our largest commercial bank; if anyone has confidence in us, let them have a Ugandan – and we have them – who are capable. Otherwise, out of the succession plan which they have been submitting to the central bank – why were they saying “We have so and so” and then at the end of the day you bring someone from another country? Or, they can swap. Let them get a Ugandan appointed an MD of a bank in another country and then they come here. These are their issues.

However, some of us are supporting the Central Bank strongly. It was right to reject a foreigner to come and be – if they want to work with us as the Government, we should be strong.

By the way, honourable Minister of Public Service, in Uganda, we do not fight for our people. I want to express it seriously here. I was somewhere – some people in the United Nations (UN) in Rome told me that other countries are going to the UN headquarters – at the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) – to demand their share: “Uganda should have this slot”, “Kenya should have this slot”. They demand. They said that those who were there took themselves. They said, therefore, that when they are there, they do not even feel that their government is helping them, compared to how other governments are helping their people.

I think it is high time we stood up. You saw at the East African Legislative Assembly: The Rt Hon. Rebecca Kadaga stood her ground and said it is time for Uganda to have these positions. They had to cancel the whole process and Uganda got them. (*Applause*)

Once we demand, we get our share. Therefore, we congratulate you on rejecting non-Ugandans and you better congratulate us too for congratulating you. (*Laughter*)

2.35

THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE

(Mr Muruli Mukasa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I quite agree with you; we have not been so aggressive as a country. However, in terms of employment and so on, we would go to a foreigner if there is no local expertise. *(Applause)* Once the local expertise is there, there is virtually no need to go for a foreigner and that has been the way these days. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. *(Members rose)* Leave alone the minister, the position of the Government has been clear: they rejected the one who was nominated. Therefore, as Parliament, we are expressing solidarity with the decision of the Government on this matter.

I had allowed Hon. Judith Alyek.

2.36

MS JUDITH ALYEK (NRM, Woman Representative, Kole):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. You talked about the talents that need to be identified in sports. Recently, when we had a game between Lango Province and Busoga Province, I saw talents. I have been attending these games in Lango, but -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Which games were they?

MS ALYEK: The FUFA Drum games. Mr Speaker, it was a nice one because - I want to bring this experience to this House. *(Interjection)* - yes, it is the FUFA Drum for football. I saw that we need to identify talents when we have young people outside there. Some people dropped out of school, but can play very well.

There are children who are in the local games in our districts, like in Kole. We have talents in such local games. Therefore, my mind went ahead to think that maybe the Ministry of Education and Sports can still go ahead to identify talents in the local area, not only in schools – because we have primary schools,

secondary schools and tertiary institutions. The talents should not only be identified in such areas, but locally. It is very important because among the teams, we saw even people who had dropped out of school, but they were doing very well.

Some of our players – for example, four players for Lango Province – had been sent for international games and they were doing very well.

That is one thing that the Ministry of Education and Sports should think about. I am bringing it forward, that we should go ahead to identify talents in the children as young as they are –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, we shall be discussing the ministerial policy statement report from the sector. I see that many want to contribute, but we shall have time.

MS ALYEK: Mr Speaker, I thought you were also going to thank us for taking the trophy to Lango. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Congratulations, Hon. Judith Alyek and the team.

MS ALYEK: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

2.39

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

(Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join you in congratulating Mr Jacob Kiplimo who has won a second consecutive world athletics title. As you have mentioned, we will discuss it in detail during the ministerial policy statements and all that, but I thought I should throw this in at the moment that we are congratulating him.

As Parliament, the Government and the country, we need to take sports a lot more seriously. Sometimes we think it is just a leisure activity, but it is serious stuff and that is why whenever athletes go out there and shine, we are excited because our country would be in the news for good reasons.

Many times, there are headlines flashing out there for not-so-good reasons. Therefore, it is important that we begin to prioritise it.

Mr Speaker, Members of Parliament here, every so often, organise tournaments on their own – Easter, Eid and so on; I am one of them – as a way of providing a platform, but it is because of the challenges that we grapple with.

Football pitches continuously keep being sold for shopping malls because we do not think sports are important. Promises are made to these athletes whenever they come back after they have won and these promises do not get to be kept. Some are personal promises to the individuals, while others are promises to the sector.

When these athletes are preparing to go for these competitions, we do not even know because we do not give them attention; they struggle. There was a time some years back when Ugandans were collecting money to buy sports shoes for these athletes, yet when they returned, we were excited.

So, let us not remember them only when they have won; let us join efforts with them, as a government, when they are struggling. At this point, I will talk about Teryet High Altitude Training Centre. Towards the end of last year, in this House, the minister for sports, Hon. Peter Ogwang, was asked for an update. He stood on this microphone and told the country that it was at 97 per cent completion.

A month ago, on 27 February 2024, the same minister went to inspect and he was very angry and disappointed at what he saw. He even went on social media to vent his frustration. Of course, people were saying: “Minister, you are complaining on social media, how about the rest of us?”

He was angry because he found there was very slow progress and things were not moving as he had reported here. In fact, he was saying some of these people should be arrested. I do not know how far he has gone with that. Can we get a lot more serious about these issues?

Hopefully, another report that is a lot more realistic will come soon.

Finally, Mr Speaker, there has been a promise of the Akii-Bua Stadium. We want to keep following through on this one. When we went to bury the late Hon. *Imat* Cecilia Ogwal – I attended the burial and almost every speaker, local leaders and the folks there were saying that, at least, in memory of *Imat*, can we deal with this promise?

I want to remind the Government, in recognition of these athletes that we are celebrating today: can we construct Akii Bua Stadium and have it completed pretty soon? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Government Chief Whip, do want to say something about this?

2.42

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Mr Speaker, the support to the sports subsector has been incremental. We all recall at the time of COVID-19, the budget for sports came down from Shs 25 billion to Shs 17 billion, then the 40 per cent budget cut brought it further to Shs 10 billion.

This Parliament is equally alive to the fact that in the last one or two financial years, the budget for sports has increased to Shs 47 billion. No team has participated recently in any international sports event not funded fully by the Government of Uganda through the budget support appropriated by this Parliament, including the team where Kiplimo won.

On the question of Teryet, as a Government, we are told that phase one of Teryet High Altitude Training Centre will be commissioned before the end of the year 2024.

On the question of Akii-Bua, we are all aware that in addition to the commitment we made for hosting jointly the Africa Cup of Nations in 2027, the Government of Uganda committed to construct two new stadia in addition to Mandela National Stadium, which is currently being renovated. Akii-Bua, the Government

has already zeroed in on a contractor from Egypt while for the stadium to be constructed in Hoima, the Government has zeroed in on a contractor from Turkey. Both of them, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has been directed through Cabinet to ensure that the requirements including the question of funding them through pre-financing be finalised.

Mr Speaker that is the brief I can give. Otherwise, as the Government, we are on the right trajectory supported by this Parliament and I know the issue of Akii-Bua and the stadium in Hoima will be before this Parliament when we are considering the budget for the next financial year through pre-financing. I beg to report. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I am happy both the Government and the Opposition side are all committed to ensuring that we continue supporting the sector. It is, therefore, also very important that as Parliament, we must continue supporting this very important sector, especially sports tourism because the potential for sports tourism we have in this country is huge.

Matters of national importance and I will start with Hon. Patrick Nyanzi.

2.46

MR PATRICK NYANZI (NRM, Butemba County, Kyankwanzi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My matter is regarding the delivery of health services in Kyankwanzi District. Allow me to start on a positive note by thanking the Government. Last year, Butemba Subcounty was blessed with a health centre III at Kikomu. That was around August. So, I would like to thank the Ministry of Health.

As I speak, this facility is not operational because it lacks drugs, essential medical supplies and equipment. Relatedly, we do have subcounties like Byerima, Kigando, and Bananywa which have a target of a population of 20,000 people for Health Centre III, but they do not have Health Centre III. Also, the famous Kyankwanzi District does not have a district hospital.

My prayer is, one, the Government operationalises Kikoma Health Centre III, which is already done. Two, the Government considers these subcounties without health centres III and also a district hospital. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, how can a famous district have no hospitals? What are you doing about it? I do not see any minister from the health sector.

2.48

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Mr Speaker, I thank the Member of Parliament for raising those issues. However, before I go to that, we prayed for the souls of our departed loved ones so I want to inform this House that Gen. Muhoozi, our Minister of State for Internal Affairs has lost his mother. It is, upon you, Mr Speaker, to tell the House to pray for –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, let us observe a minute of silence.

(Members rose and observed a moment of silence.)

MS NAKADAMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. For the health centre III, which has been completed, I congratulate my brother on the milestone of having a health centre III, which is now complete. What we are not aware of is whether that health centre III has been commissioned or not. We need to get information from the Minister of Health.

Mr Speaker, we are going to give all that information on the subcounties that are lacking a health centre III and the district hospital and then come back here and inform the House. We shall liaise with the Member of Parliament and inform him of what is being done. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Surely, let us operationalise this health centre which you have already put up. Hon. Kasolo – Hon. Nyanzi, please follow up with the Rt Hon.

Prime Minister. She will arrange for you the minister.

2.50

MR ROBERT KASOLO (NRM, Iki-Iki County, Budaka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance. On 16 March 2024, in Kameruka Subcounty unidentified people burnt six houses in different homes, leaving people with no houses; all beddings and everything was destroyed. It did not end there.

The following day, on the 17th, the very unidentified people went to another village and burnt six houses, for a motive which is not yet identified.

Prayers - it is raining too much on that side of the country so since the houses of those people were burnt with all the utensils, there is a problem; they need to be assisted.

I request that the new minister of disaster takes all the necessary precautions to make sure that that side of the country requires her attention immediately to usher her into the office. Thank you. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Lillian Aber?

2.52

THE MINISTER OF STATE, OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER (RELIEF, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND REFUGEES) (Ms Lillian Aber): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I take this opportunity to thank Members for their prayers. Since it is my maiden speech as a newly appointed minister, I would like to note that.

Hon. Kasolo, I request you to put that in writing and of course, attach a report from the district which should be brought to my office and then will see how to handle the situation. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. When Hon. Aber was appointed, the call I gave her was, "You've been disturbing the Minister for Disaster. Now, you're coming on the firing line." So far, she is doing well. Hon. Aza?

2.56

MR TOM AZA (NRM, West Moyo County, Moyo): Thank you, Mr Speaker and congratulations to Hon. Aber. I rise on a matter of national importance. The issue is related to the population census, which is due to take place from 10th to 19th May. There is insecurity along the common border with Sudan, stretching from Koboko to Yumbe, Moyo, Adjumani, as well as Lamwo.

Currently, there are conflicts and quarrels related to the boundary, land, settlement, social services and so on. Mr Speaker, if you can remember, in the year 2014 there were conflicts when officials from Moyo went to carry out a census along the border. Nine Members of Parliament were arrested and detained.

My prayers are as follows:

1. We need peace and security along the border during the census period. That is very important.
2. Institute patrols by the army and the police during that period so that we do not get that incidence of 2014, where I was also a victim. I was tied up, arrested and bundled and I felt belittled.
3. Setting up of an army detach for peace and security.
4. In the long run, demarcating the border line between Uganda and South Sudan. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Huda.

2.55

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (VETERAN AFFAIRS) (Ms Huda Oleru): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker and Hon. Aza, for raising that issue. By the end of this month, the Government of Uganda is going to hold a meeting with the Government of South Sudan. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has already communicated. We are going to have the meeting probably, in Gwere Subcounty in Moyo District.

On the issue of security, I think you are on the ground. You know that the situation is calm

now. We have those barracks both in Yumbe and Moyo. Therefore, the issue of security is settled for now. That is why during the NRM registration, this time you did not get any conflict. People registered peacefully.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Next item. Honourable colleagues, I had told you that I would amend the Order Paper to accommodate a petition.

PETITION BY THE COMMUNITY
MEMBERS OF LAPONO AND LIRA KATO
SUBCOUNTIES IN AGAGO NORTH
COUNTY AGAINST LAND GRABBERS
OF THEIR CUSTOMARY LAND

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Amos Okot?

2.57

MR AMOS OKOT (NRM, Agago North County, Agago): Thank you, Mr Speaker, first of all, for accepting to accord us space on the Order Paper. We are aware of how much activities Parliament is facing. Thank you very much for honouring our people so that they can attend to this presentation of the petition.

For those who came in late, the petitioners are being represented by about 40 people who have come so that they can observe even today's sitting.

Mr Speaker, I rise under Rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, concerning the petitions that regard customary land.

The humble petitioners are community members of Lapono, Lira, Kato Subcounties that include even the neighbours, that is, Paimol, Omiya Pachwa and partly Adilang. I am presenting it on their behalf.

“Your humble petitioners showed and state that they have been living in their community land of Lapono, Lira Kato Subcounties, Paimol, Lamiyo, Omiya Pachwa and part of Adilang, which is their customary land without any issues since Uganda was created, I believe.

“Your humble petitioners own their land, which is approximately over 2,000 hectares and have been using it for settlement, cultivation, hunting, grazing animals and some other sports activities. They aver that they were using their land without any interference until one UPDF Land Force Commandant and his uncle claimed to have freehold titles over their land.

“They discovered that the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development has issued certificates, which even measure land close to about 7,537,341.5 hectares. The same certificates claim that 219,401,365 hectares of land has already been surveyed fraudulently and nobody attended even the surveying process.

“The petitioners believe that the two land grabbers, the UPDF Land Force Commandant and one of his other uncles, did this fraudulently.

“They also aver that the participation of LC2 Chairperson Kaket Parish, the LC3 Chairperson of Lapono Subcounty and the Chairperson of a clan called Kochure, have been having some illegal meetings and forming a non-existent association and referred to it as Land Owners' Association. They have been linking with a coordinator of a project called Parish to Market Project, where they generated resolutions, which are fake, without the attendance of any members of the community, besides putting some signatures that they are landowners of that same area.

They also aver that the Resident District Commissioner of Agago District, who had been moving to different meetings, on 17 October 2023 said that the people of Lapono, Lira Kato, Omiya Pachwa and Paimol had already given their customary land to the said investors. The Resident District Commissioner is even now using the Uganda Police and National Forestry Authority Police to intimidate some leaders who are standing together with the community so that their rights are not violated.”

Mr Speaker, in that same land, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, through

their own way of finding minerals, discovered some minerals in that place. However, they started their operation with the community just seeing them pour in soldiers causing a lot of intimidation and fear that they want to value the minerals. The community does not have any issue with that.

However, during that same period, the National Forestry Authority (NFA) said that the land these people are occupying is under natural forest. The actions by NFA are geared towards land grabbing and the people are crying.

Mr Speaker, on that same land, the actions by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) are unbearable to the extent that the game rangers are being seen as if they are the ones driving animals to destroy people's crops. Over 10,000 acres of crops have been destroyed within this period.

The petitioners have are aggrieved because their constitutional rights are not being observed.

Their prayer is that:

1. This House helps them to investigate these fraudulent issues of certificate of titles to this land in question.
2. This House helps them so that this action is investigated, especially the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) and other persons that have been mentioned too.
3. The investigation on NFA, where they claim that that land is under forest reserve, the truth should be revealed and if anything, they should be stopped immediately.
4. The RDC should desist from intimidating people using the police. If not, he should be transferred.
5. We investigate these alleged actions of intimidation of some leaders.

I humbly present this petition to the august House. I would like to lay on Table the list of 560 petitioners, who appended their signatures in this petition. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Amos. I see almost everyone neighbouring this land is interested in this matter. I think I should not disturb the Attorney-General on this. Let me invoke my powers under Rule 30(6) and I refer it to the minister. A lot of allegations have been made and we are now in the budgeting process and sectoral committees are very busy managing the budget.

Therefore, I am referring it to the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development who will liaise with the Attorney-General for guidance. He is required to report back to the House within 30 days. Hon. Kania Obiga, on the same?

3.06

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR LANDS, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (URBAN DEVELOPMENT) (Mr Kania Obiga): Most obliged, Mr Speaker. We do not run away from responsibility, but as you will note from the petition, there are many agencies, and the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development does not have the mandate to investigate other agencies. These citizens who are rightly concerned, have addressed their issue to Parliament.

If it pleases you, I suggest that the right committee in Parliament takes over this issue and we are willing to assist as witnesses in that matter. However, we rely on your good direction. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I told you that we are in the budgeting process. April and May are difficult months. Rule 30(10) requires that once such a petition is brought, within 45 days we must dispose of it. So, I cannot tell a committee to leave whatever they are doing and investigate this petition.

I think the biggest issue is ownership. Let the Attorney-General help me on this.

3.07

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa Kiwanuka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. As you have correctly stated, the issue here

is on the ownership. The ownership by the National Forestry Authority and Uganda Wildlife Authority are all by Gazette and they should be known.

Now, all customary land ownership in the area can be determined by the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development. If titles have been issued, they must be able to explain to the Government and Parliament how those titles were issued.

The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development is well within its right, if it finds that the title was wrongly issued, to cancel the same. I will work with the land ministry to get to the bottom of this within 30 days. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, that is the middle ground, which we can go with.

MR OBIGA: I agree.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister.

MR EBWALU: Mr Speaker, the people of Teso like those in other subregions - like Acholi, West Nile and Lango - lost lives, cattle and other properties.

Three different teams from Teso dragged the Government to court;

1. There was a case put in by Hon. Elijah Okupa.
2. There was a case put in by Hon. Julius Ochen; and
3. Another case by our old man, *Mzee* Papyrus Imodot.

The Government lost all these cases in court. The Attorney-General and team, claim that compensation is ongoing in Teso. However, I would like to state here that there are no people who have been compensated. The last ruling was on 19 October 2023, and the court gave the Government six months to pay the people of Teso. Nothing has happened up to now.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your procedural matter?

MR EBWALU: Mr Speaker, the Attorney-General is here. We request that the Attorney-General;

1. Gives this Parliament and the country a comprehensive report or a list of people who have been compensated by the Government.
2. Tells us the plan that they have to compensate not only the people of Teso, but Acholi, Lango and West Nile.

When you look at the budget that we are going to pass, the money for compensation is not included.

Now, people are totally frustrated; *Mzee* Esabu from Gweri died without getting his compensation. As I speak now, Mr Speaker, *Mzee* Imodot is ailing in Doctors Plaza. He has a bill of Shs 1.8 million and he cannot pay. He left the hospital and went to another one, where they are demanding him Shs 1.3 million, but he cannot pay. He is now going to die *(Interjection)*- No, he is very sick. A number of them have died; *Mzee* Esabu died and *Mzee* Echodu died, among others.

Now, the Government is not sensitive even after the court made a ruling. The Attorney-General will come and say, "We are compensating people," but there is no list and we do not know which people they are paying. They even brought in the President –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, what is the procedural matter you are raising?

MR EBWALU: I am raising this under rule 42, a question to the minister.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, you stood under procedure and I am allowing you to speak. Therefore, conclude. You stood up under procedure and now, you are on rule 42.

MR EBWALU: Mr Speaker, wouldn't it be procedurally right that the Attorney-General brings here a schedule of payments for the people of Teso who lost their property?

Secondly, the Attorney-General also briefs Parliament on the progress of payment not only for Teso, but also for Acholi, Lango and West Nile. I thank you. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, you finished your time; do not go back. *(Laughter)* The way Hon. Ebwalu presents his case-

3.12

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa Kiwanuka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First, the Government acknowledges that some people did lose cattle and other property during the insurgency.

Secondly, it is not correct that we are not doing anything. In fact, under your guidance, we were required to submit the reports of all the payments that have been made in cattle compensation. I am absolutely certain because I submitted them myself to Parliament. If Hon. Ebwalu bothered to read the documents that were supplied to Parliament that would be provided.

However, because we have not run out of paper or information, I undertake to provide the list again to this House of all the payments and all the work that has been done.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, that would be an indictment on the whole House because I remember they were big volumes. Like three books that were laid here. It will not be good for Parliament, as if when we were given records, we lost them and therefore the Attorney-General has again gone to bring the same.

We shall guide Hon. Ebwalu to where he can find the record, which is in the Library of Parliament. I was in the Chair and three huge volumes were submitted here.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Mr Speaker, also for purposes of easing the work of Honourable colleagues who are affected in these constituencies, for anyone who would like to receive soft copies for the areas where they are concerned, we are happy to provide those to the various members available.

On the issue of the Budget, we are in the budgeting process and sincerely hope that some money will be made available for that purpose by the time the Budget is done. If it is, we shall continue to remit the money to the persons who are entitled to it. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, we are going to open this matter and - Hon. Edakasi -

MR EDAKASI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am seeking clarification from the Attorney-General about Kaberamaido District. Since compensation started, very few people have been compensated. In some subcounties, no one has been compensated and we have been moving back and forth to your office about why those who were not compensated have never been considered.

When will you consider those who were not registered because there were problems during the verification process? When will they be able to access the registry so that they are compensated? In many subcounties, not even a single person was compensated. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, don't you think it would be good if you held a meeting with MPs from these affected areas so that you go through this deeply and not on the Floor here? Hon. Ebwalu and then I go back to the Attorney-General - do you also have Busoga issues? Yes, Hon. Ebwalu - we have not yet sorted this. We cannot have a procedure on another procedure.

MR EBWALU: Mr Speaker, we had a meeting with the Attorney-General. Unfortunately, what we agree upon in the boardrooms in Kampala is different from what is on the ground. You

agree here on a different thing, but when they go on the ground, they do a different thing.

That is why I came here on behalf of those who are affected for Parliament to direct the Attorney-General to give us a schedule of payment. When are you paying our people? We shall sit here and agree, but when they are in the field, they will do a different thing. That is the problem.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, there is something which I told you earlier. A minister is part of this Parliament. I do not like sitting in this Chair and start directing a colleague.

I believe that the moment we tackle from an angle of respecting and working together, you achieve even more. It is important that we do not lose trust. Attorney-General, the Members are saying that in the boardroom you agree, but on the ground – let me first pick Hon. Linda Auma.

3.18

MS LINDA AUMA (Independent, Woman Representative, Lira): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this moment. I was part of the team that went to court for the Lango case and a secretary as well because the leaders were illiterate.

From the Attorney-General's record, Lango was supposed to be paid up to 42,000 claimants. However, two teams went to court.

The first was under Bashasha and Co. Advocates while the other was under Makmot-Kibwanga and Co. Advocates for Lango War Claimants and there were 65,000 claimants and from Bashasha's list, there were 59,000 claimants. These cases were all concluded in court and everything was finalised including verification.

However, we were shocked when the office of the Attorney-General met with us in the Members' Lounge and it was only 42,000 claimants that were to be paid. They did not

specify; so, I asked for the list they were paying because I did not see the number awarded by the court included.

We went ahead to check on the list, but out of the 42,000 claimants, only 18,000 were approved leaving out 24,000; in the 42,000 and not even the general court-awarded list.

We went to the office of the Attorney-General several times for an explanation on why they did not approve this other 24,000 list. There was no clear answer. I would like to give an example of Okot-Ogong. He was on the list not approved -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Here we say "Honourable".

MS LINDA AUMA: Okay, thank you. I was treating him as a claimant, Mr Speaker. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: He is an honourable claimant.

MS LINDA AUMA: Hon. Okot-Ogong is on the list that was not approved. Everyone in Lango knows where his family came from - the father and himself because this is a claim from 1986 to 2006; meaning from Lakwena, National Resistance Army and Kony war. Mr Speaker, we went with this case up to the President. The Attorney-General's office was claiming that Bashasha's list was fake. Luckily, I was in court myself. I joined when I was a Youth Councillor.

We wrote to Lira High Court and it gave us a certified list of the beneficiaries under Bashasha and Co. Advocates who did not receive payments up to now. These are the aggrieved claimants who could not bear the pain and went to court.

The Government says that it is now paying and yet those who went to court are not considered. Are we curing this problem or are we raising another emotional issue? I would like this matter handled. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ababiku and then Hon. Muzaale.

3.22

MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This matter is a thorn in our flesh. Government officials have made several promises – including the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, when I raised the matter at the beginning of this term. In the case of West Nile, no money has been voted. When the report came on the Floor of Parliament, it was only Teso, Lango and Acholi.

As leaders of West Nile – Madi sub-region – we are under fire. People think we do not contribute while in the House and that that is why our region has been left out.

As I agree with your proposal that we need to be met, I propose that these meetings be region by region so that our issues are critically analysed and better proposals taken instead of bringing all the regions together – *(Interruption)*

MR MUWUMA: Thank you very much, Hon. Ababiku, for yielding the Floor. Mr Speaker, as our colleagues from West Nile are under fire, it is worse for us from Busoga, as far as the Lakwena war victims are concerned. They are saying that we are not talking. Every electioneering period, people move to the field registering and promising that people will be paid. However, nothing is being mentioned to this effect.

Therefore, my sister, as you are being questioned, we are also under the same furnace. We request the Attorney-General to handle this matter.

MS ABABIKU: Thank you. Mr Speaker, there is nothing substantial being done to benefit our people in relation to the compensation. I also propose that the Attorney-General updates us on the implementation of his presentation. I was in the House when he laid those documents – he gave us information on what the Government was going to do. Let him come back and update us on what has been done so that we can access

the progress report for the other regions, which he claimed have gained from this. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I am seeing that nearly every region – I am even going to crosscheck: you might find that Mitooma is a potential claimant. *(Laughter)* You might find that I am seated on an opportunity. Hon. Bwanika here is about to submit it.

However, if you followed, all the time we have been having the Attorney-General on this matter here, it was on matters of Lango, Acholi and Teso. The money we appropriated was for those areas. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when are you looking at other areas?

Maybe let Hon. Muzaale, first conclude on this and then the Prime Minister will come. *(Mr Silwany rose_)* Hon. Silwany, when I pick you – and you have already spoken – I look for others who have not. I know you are looking for issues of Busoga. *(Laughter)*

Honourable colleagues, when you see me ignoring you a little bit, sometimes it is because I am trying to see if there is someone from your region who - Hon. Muzaale?

3.26

MR MARTIN MUZAALÉ (NRM, Buzaaya County, Kamuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to inform you that for Busoga, we have been submitting our list, but it has always been ignored and I do not know why. I want to inform the Attorney-General that Busoga was affected by the Lakwena war. Actually, many people in Busoga lost their lives and property. We have seen it in Buganda – Buganda has been having a ministry under Luwero and they have been compensated. For Busoga, nothing has come.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, I have been able to receive so many people complaining about compensations. You find people who were awarded compensations by court right from 2000, but, up to date, they have not received their money. We need to understand how the office of the Attorney-General handles the

issue of compensation. You find someone who has just been awarded a compensation –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Martin, the ministerial policy statement report is coming. There is a budget component for compensation. That is when we are going to discuss those issues. This one was different. For those other ones of court and all of that, let us wait.

MR MUZAALÉ: Mr Speaker, my concern is one: there are cases that have been ruled on recently, say, in 2018 or 2019, and those people are compensated while there are those who were awarded court compensations in 2000, 2004 and so on, but, up to date, they have not been able to access their compensations.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, this issue of compensation for war, I think, is a highly explosive issue because I am very sure one of the legitimate claims would come from Hon. Nathen Byanyima in Bukanga. For that war of 1981 to 1986 plus the one of Amin, the raids started from Tanzania, crossing over to Isingiro and going through Masaka and Rakai.

I think the Prime Minister will need to go back, look at these issues and give instructions to the Attorney-General on other regions. The Attorney-General cannot originate this himself. Otherwise, we are going to accuse him as an individual.

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, what plans do you have for other regions that have not been included? *(Mr Angura rose)* Rt Hon. Prime Minister, can you give a minute to Hon. Angura?

3.29

MR FREDERICK ANGURA (NRM, Tororo South County, Tororo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The issue of compensation is very serious. Whereas we have groups that went to court, in certain instances, our elders were guided not to go to court. They were told to be patient, compile their lists and that the compensation would be handled.

A case in point is that in Tororo, we had the challenges of FOBA (Force Obote Back Again), Lakwena and many others. People lost. So, the efforts to galvanise and put teams to generate petitions that would end up in court were put down in a bid to try and fast-track the solving of this problem. I have submitted, with the community, lists time and again to the Attorney-General, but we are not hearing of any mention of how soon we shall be considered. This must be fast-tracked. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let me also allow the Opposition – the Member for Kiboga.

3.30

MS CHRISTINE KAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Many of the complainants came after His Excellency Yoweri Museveni was in power. Our people from Kiboga, who brought Mr Museveni to power, have camped at Lwamata for four years. They decided to leave their villages.

It is very important to harmonise the different ministries because every time we complain about this, the ministry for Luwero is referred to us. It is important that ministries harmonise. They have told us that probably the President has already compensated these people, but they confirmed that they have not been compensated.

To us, the new legislators who do not have any proof that these people were compensated, we have even failed to help them. However, I have people of Kigemuzi who have been in Lwamata. At first, they were in a playground, but they were chased. Now, they have rented – up to seven oldies rent a small room! They are in Lwamata. In case anybody wants to go and meet them, they are there. We have lists.

They told us there were some programmes. Last year, they were informed that they would benefit from other Government programmes. However, we need to come out clearly and sort out these issues because at least we were the first before the Lakwenas and those “Send Obote Back”. We – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Should I start with the Attorney-General or the Prime Minister? Let me start with the Attorney-General then the Prime Minister will conclude.

MR KIRWOWA: Thank you very much. Mr Speaker, I will meet the MPs from Teso, Lango and Acholi and go through the issues concerning compensation that are in my office. *(Applause)* We can only pay what is made available.

You recall even when the President started this process, he said we shall verify, at least someone will know that the Government acknowledges the indebtedness to that person. Then the payments will come as and when the money becomes available.

I know that today, Mr Speaker, and I am going to share this with my colleagues, we have verified claims to the tune of Shs 496 billion and I am going to share this information with colleagues. However, it is also possible that some people have not been paid because of the money that is made available. However, to acknowledge their indebtedness, we do that and we shall keep it.

I yield the Floor to the Rt Hon. Prime Minister to speak about all the other regions. Thank you.

3.33

THE SECOND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Mr Speaker, this is an issue that we are going to take back to Cabinet so that all those other areas can be included and be given to the Attorney-General for appropriation for the claimants in those areas to be paid. This is because it is long overdue, especially all those that you have heard raising issues of payment to those people. We are going to take it back to the Cabinet. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, let us close this matter at this stage. Otherwise, we have not yet started on the Order Paper. Can you imagine?

However, we have tackled very critical issues. Prime Minister, when do you think you can give us an update? These are critical issues. We do not want – also, Attorney-General, when do you think you are meeting the Members?

MR KIRYOWA: Mr Speaker, we can even meet this evening. *(Laughter)* I am available at your convenience because I have the information; it is a matter of carrying it. So, I do not know when –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please give us a date and Members will come.

MR KIRYOWA: Can we meet tomorrow at 8.15 a.m.? You can give us a place here. We will meet and I will provide the information. Tomorrow at 8.15 a.m.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, how many are you? You are very many, and we are mainly using our conference rooms for – the Prime Minister can get us a room at the Office of the Prime Minister since they have a lot of space. One of you should liaise with the Prime Minister to agree on which room you are going to meet.

Hon. Beatrice Akori, you should coordinate that with Hon. Aber. Hon. Ebwalu will report back on the progress of the meeting. You cannot report on behalf of the Attorney-General. The Attorney-General will update us; you can only supplement. Prime Minister -

MS NAKADAMA: Mr Speaker, since we are going to Cabinet, I request that you give us three weeks. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is tenable, honourable colleagues. Three weeks is tenable. Thank you. Next item?

MOTION FOR THE ADOPTION OF
THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
ON EDUCATION AND SPORTS ON
THE MATTER OF PHASING OUT
OF COMPREHENSIVE NURSING
CERTIFICATE AND DIPLOMA COURSES
BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND
SPORTS

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Chairperson, Committee on Education and Sports assigned Hon. Philips Lokwang. Is that it, Hon. Kubeketerya? Thank you for empowering your Members. Honourable, you know what we agreed on how to manage. And it is his maiden report, therefore, no one should disturb him. *(Laughter)*

MR PHILIPS LOKWANG (NRM, Napore West County, Karenga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am here to present a report of the Committee on Education and Sports on the matter of phasing out the comprehensive nursing certificate and diploma courses by the Ministry of Education and Sports.

During the House sitting of Wednesday, 2 March 2022, Hon. Dr Musa Noah, Member of Parliament representing Koboko County North, raised an urgent matter regarding a decision taken by the Government of Uganda to phase out the certificate and diploma courses in comprehensive nursing that were obtained at various comprehensive nursing training schools in the country.

This, he said, followed a pronouncement made on 15 January 2022 by the Minister of State for Education in charge of Higher Education, Hon. Dr John Chrysostom Musingo while presiding over a ceremony during which the Uganda Nurses and Midwifery Examination Board (UNMEB) released results of Uganda Nurses and Midwives Examinations that had been conducted in September 2021.

The Hon. Dr Musa made the following prayers:

1. That the Ministry of Education and Sports should provide concrete justification for allowing nursing training schools to

train students in comprehensive nursing, contrary to the pronouncement made by the same ministry on phasing out the courses;

2. That the Ministry of Education and Sports should direct all nursing training schools to allow the affected students to pursue alternative courses that match their scores at advanced level and courses that are relevant to the world of work; and
3. That the Ministry of Education and Sports, together with the Ministry of Health ought to develop an abridged course for all students who trained and graduated from comprehensive nursing since they will be required to retrain.

With those prayers, the Rt Hon. Speaker acknowledged receipt of this and forwarded the case to the Committee of Education and Sports for proper scrutiny.

I request to go to the specific observations and recommendations as time does not allow.

Observations and recommendations

The first prayer was that the Ministry of Education and Sports should provide a concrete justification for allowing nursing training schools to train students in comprehensive nursing contrary to the pronouncement made by the same ministry.

The committee was informed that contrary to the 15 January 2022 pronouncement that phased out the comprehensive nursing course was to take immediate effect, some nursing training schools, like Soroti School of Comprehensive Nursing and Masaka School of Comprehensive Nursing were reported to have issued admission letters to 60 and 80 students respectively to pursue courses in comprehensive nursing.

The committee observed that some admission letters were dated 12 January 2022 – see admission letter dated 12 January 2022, issued to Mr Ayimana Ahad Salim to pursue a Diploma in Comprehensive Nursing at Soroti School of Registered Comprehensive Nursing, before the pronouncement that was made by

the Minister of State for Education in charge of Higher Education, on 15 January 2022.

The committee recommends that since the decision on phasing out the courses was to take immediate effect without due consultation with key stakeholders, and given that no student enrolment would take place effective July 2022, the Government should clearly guide on how the comprehensive nurses in the field, affected prospecting and current students that were admitted for the said courses by nursing training schools, should proceed.

Prayer number two was that the Ministry of Education and Sports should direct all nursing training schools to allow the affected students to pursue alternative courses that match their scores at advanced level and courses that are relevant to the world of work.

The committee observed that, while the decision of the minister to phase out the academic programmes took immediate effect, there were no instruments to support the pronouncement that would guide nursing training schools to offer support to fresh students.

Additionally, there was no specific instrument issued by the Ministry of Education and Sports to guide continuing students undertaking the courses in comprehensive nursing.

The committee recommends that as a matter of urgency, the Ministry of Education and Sports, in collaboration with the nursing training schools, should arrange to offer career guidance and counselling to fresh students who were admitted to pursue courses in comprehensive nursing with the view of revising their courses to make them more compatible with the job market needs and health service care needed.

Prayer number three was that the Ministry of Education and Sports, together with the Ministry of Health, should develop an abridged course for all students who trained and graduated in comprehensive nursing since they will be required to re-train.

The committee observed that the Government did not take into consideration the costs associated with its decision to phase out the academic programmes, which costs to a larger extent, would be borne directly by in-service comprehensive nurses, those employed in the private sector and continuing students. Such costs include, but are not limited to retraining, service disruptions and outflow of nurse cadres, which ultimately would take a toll on healthcare service delivery.

The committee further observed that the decision to phase out the academic programmes did not envision the need to formulate new academic programmes or review the curriculum and related curricula that would facilitate the retraining of in-service comprehensive nurses and continuing students undertaking courses in comprehensive nursing.

Recommendations

The committee recommends as follows:

- (i) That the Government, as a matter of urgency, should design academic programmes and relevant curricula that would enable in-service comprehensive nurses, and current continuing students pursuing courses in comprehensive nursing, to undertake re-training that would consolidate their new roles and careers;
- (ii) That the Government should incur costs of retraining in-service comprehensive nurses, since they were in service at the time of the pronouncement and offering a noble public duty, and to continuing students undertaking comprehensive nursing courses to guarantee the same upon completion of their studies. This would enable them to offset retraining costs and other related expenses and would signify the Government as empathetic;
- (iii) The Ministry of Education and Sports should prepare to award the certificates of completion and competence recognised by the regulatory body - that is the Uganda

- Nurses and Midwives Council - to former graduates of comprehensive nursing, as proof of re-capacitation, and that such certificates should be recognised at the time of applying for career opportunities in the public and private sector; and
- (iv) That the Ministry of Public Service should, as a matter of urgency, review the scheme of service for the nurses and midwives to take into account the Government's decision to phase out the comprehensive nursing certificate and diploma courses.

Conclusively, therefore, the committee notes with concern, the impact that the sudden phasing out of both certificate and diploma courses in comprehensive nursing will have on several citizens who have trained, and are still training in this field given that the courses were introduced over 25 years ago. As such, detailed and comprehensive research should have been carried out before deciding to phase out the courses.

In this regard, the Committee recommends that the Ministry of Education and Sports should rescind its decision to phase out certificate and diploma comprehensive nursing courses, and instead explore avenues for strengthening the curriculum for both courses to meet the current demands in the job market, without disorganising the students that previously undertook and are currently undertaking the courses.

The Ministry of Education and Sports should develop a policy to guide the phasing out of programmes or courses in the education and sports sub-programmes going forward.

Mr Speaker, I beg to submit. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Philips Lokwang.

MR LOKWANG-ILUKOL: Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Well done. Honourable colleagues, this was a matter

of 2022. Unfortunately, we did not manage to process it in time. A lot has happened since then. Let us first get an update from the minister on the current state of what they are doing.

3.32

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (HIGHER EDUCATION) (Dr John Chrysostom Muyingo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. A lot has been overtaken by events, and several things have been done. It is true that the Ministry of Education and Sports in 2020 stopped the recruitment and training of comprehensive nursing graduates. That was almost three years ago.

We have looked at the job market needs and revised the curriculum for midwifery and nursing courses to address the needs of the job market. Perhaps the Minister of Public Service will let us know what is happening with the scheme of service.

Otherwise, everything is going on very well.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, it is Hon. Noah Musa who raised the matter. It is three years ago and the ministry is moving on well, but we are saying, "rescind the decision of three years."

3.33

MR NOAH MUSA (Independent, Koboko North County, Koboko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Your observation is right. This matter is coming up after about two years. The spirit of raising the matter was that the ministry had already phased out the courses.

However, there are training schools that are admitting students, but since the minister has said that a lot has been done and everything has been harmonised, I think it is okay.

Otherwise, generally, we now have many nurses that the Government cannot recruit. Therefore, if you phase out comprehensive nursing graduates and streamline the training for the nurses, I think that is good. Thank you.

3.34

DR ABED BWANIKA (NUP, Kimaanya-Kabonera Division, Masaka City): Mr Speaker, I have not heard clearly from the minister - and I would like him to clarify - what happened to the comprehensive nursing graduates. Have you provided a programme to retool them because you have not stated anything? We know that a lot has taken place, but what happened to those nurses? *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, there is no one on the Floor. So, there is no one to give information, unfortunately. Yes, Hon. Onzima.

3.34

MR GODFREY ONZIMA (NRM, Aringa North County, Yumbe): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My concern on this issue is about the way decisions are made. Many times, the Ministry of Education and Sports comes with directives that are so abrupt, that from today onwards, this one is not going to happen. For example, sometime back they came up with a decision that all primary teachers should have at least a bachelor's degree.

When the citizens begin to make noise, they retrieve information the same way, this one was also brought. One wonders whether some of these decisions are subjected to studies before they are brought forward.

Why don't we have consistent planning, and if there is a situation that requires change, why don't we bring it up in a planned manner to allow phasing out of this consistently? This is because the issue causes anxiety, confusion and disturbance.

The other day, we were discussing the O'level curriculum, which is being implemented. When it comes to A'level, we are stuck. Now, for those students who will proceed to A'level, what will happen to them is not known because even the materials are not there.

In the education sector, the way decisions and policies are made, requires proper decision-making, and issues must be subjected to at least rigorous studies. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, our debate should focus on the resolution we are going to make. This is a matter, which is *fait accompli*. So, whether you debate and speak the best English and make the best submission, it is a done deal. The honourable member who raised the matter has conceded. The minister has told you that for three years, they are moving on; we cannot go back.

Therefore, we should save time and handle these other issues that are coming up. Honourable, please respond to the clarification matter raised by the Hon. Onzima.

DR MUYINGO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Regarding the scheme of service, we have it, but as you are aware, we do not have the money to fully implement it. I am happy we are now in the budgeting process. When this matter comes up, please support us so that this scheme is implemented.

I agree with my brother that for any decision to be made, we need to have carried out a comprehensive study, but this is what happened. A lot of consultations were made, the employer, the Ministry of Health, and many others were consulted. And this is how we came to that decision. It took us over three years trying to consult and find out what is happening in the market.

Finally, my brother here wants to know what happened. We issue skills that are needed in the job market to our learners. There was a time when employers were saying, "We are not taking comprehensive nursing graduates. They do not have the skills." They preferred nurses who were not midwives.

What we have done is, once again, to go back to the field and say, "We want to add value, what do we do?" What we have done is enrich the Midwifery curriculum with what the market needs and that is why I am saying that everything is going on very well. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson of the committee, what would be your view on the recommendation, which was brought here

before I put the question? From what I am getting, we need to revise the recommendation.

3.59

MR JAMES KUBEKETERYA (NRM, Bunya County East, Mayuge): Mr Speaker, I would like to thank Hon. Lokwang. Given these recommendations, as it has been mentioned, they have been overtaken by events.

The issue is that when the roadmap is to be made by the ministry, I think our committee should also be consulted. Since they have said that they have improved on it, I am sure we are going to interface with them in the ministerial policy statement. We shall scrutinise and move in harmony. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Would you like to propose that we amend this recommendation? You are saying here that it is against this background, and the committee recommends that the Ministry of Education and Sports should rescind its decision.

MR KUBEKETERYA: Mr Speaker, we should amend that.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think it can be amended to say that the ministry should carry out comprehensive consultations.

MR KUBEKETERYA: Yes, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I put the question that the report of the Committee on Education and Sports on the matter of phasing out of comprehensive nursing certificate and diploma courses by the Ministry of Education and Sports be adopted with proposed recommendations.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Next item. Procedure, Hon. Nyanzi?

4.00

MR PATRICK BINGI (NRM, Butemba County, Kyakwanzi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Related to what we have been debating, on the 15th of February, at the 11th Sitting of the third meeting of the third session of this Parliament, with you in the Chair, my able Chairperson of the Committee on Education and Sports, presented a report to do with the management challenges of Mbale School of the Deaf. This same report was also overtaken by events.

The report was presented, but it wasn't debated or adopted by the House. Your guidance was that perhaps the minister would give us a status report so that if there are recommendations, they would be adopted by the House. However, that never came to pass.

That same day, my chairperson of the Committee on Government Assurances and Implementation presented a report. It was about a presidential pledge to extend electricity to industrial parks directly from power generation plants.

This report was also overtaken by events though the same was also presented, not debated and no recommendations taken.

Mr Speaker, wouldn't it be procedurally right that you guide the ministers responsible to also give us status reports so that at least, this House can adopt certain recommendations or if there is a need for discussions and debate, we do the same so that committees are guided? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleague, the phrase "overtaken by events" does not mean delay because that presidential pledge still stands. The minister should come back and explain - Hon. Okaasai is here. What is important is for us to get for it space on the Order Paper.

Honourable minister, you are supposed to submit your response. Avail it to the Clerk so that we add it onto the Order paper so that we conclude the matter. Clerk, pick out those issues. I know we have about four reports,

which are pending debate; we need to conclude them as soon as possible.

MOTION FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES ON A PETITION BY ZOMBO TEA NURSERY OPERATORS ON THE DELAYED SUPPLY OF TEA SEEDLINGS TO FARMERS IN THE DISTRICT

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. We have tackled this issue several times so, Honourable chairperson, go straight to the observations and recommendations. For the record, let the whole report be captured verbatim on the *Hansard*.

(The report is hereto attached.)

4.03

MS LINDA AUMA (Independent, Woman Representative, Lira): Thank you, Mr Speaker. On behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and my chairperson, I beg to submit and lay on the Table the minutes and the report.

This petition was presented to this Floor by the Zombo Tea Nursery Operators and Farmers Association on 21 May 2023. The petition was about the delayed supply of tea seedlings to farmers in Zombo.

In accordance with Rule 30(6) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, you referred the petition (Annex 1) to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries for consideration. And because of time, I would like to give a brief background about tea growing in Zombo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no need, honourable member. Go straight to the prayers.

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. There were three prayers:

1. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to authorise

National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), in conjunction with Zombo District Local Government, to procure tea seedlings, so that farmers are supplied within the shortest time possible;

2. The above demand should be met under the same arrangement as that of the year 2022 since it was just postponed due to the then-approaching dry season; and
3. If the demand or requests are not fulfilled by the Government, then the nursery operators and farmers should be compensated for the loss of investment and business, alternative use of land and time.

Mr Speaker, in the brief reference for consideration of this petition, arising from the prayers in the petition and circumstances leading to the petition, the committee formulated various terms of reference, as put in writing, by having meetings and a field trip to Zombo for facts finding.

Findings, observations and recommendations

1. To establish whether the Government, through NAADS, invited Zombo Nursery Operators to produce tea seedlings for distribution to farmers.

This was done and it was found out that on 21st September 2022, Cabinet made a directive for a one-off procurement of tea and coffee seedlings during the 2022 seasons.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries wrote to the 16 tea-growing district local governments on 28 September 2022, which is in Annex 1, seeking information on quantities of verified mature tea seedlings in nurseries at that time.

The committee established that between 29 September and 17 October 2022, NAADS initiated and executed procurement for the verified tea seedlings, under a delegated procurement arrangement, to the six district local governments that submitted information to MAAIF within the prescribed timeframe.

According to MAAIF, Zombo was not among the districts, which submitted the required information within the designated time frame.

The district requested to defer procurement of their tea seedlings to the March 2023 planting season, on account of the anticipated dry spell. They thought that this would be a waste because even if the seedlings were supplied, they would dry up because of the dry spell.

Zombo District, in compliance with the MAAIF letter, had invited verified tea nursery operators to provide information about the quantity of tea seedlings they had in stock. In response to the district invitation, 45 nursery operators invested in the production of tea seedlings for sale to NAADS.

The committee established that NAADS sought guidance from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development about the possibility of carrying forward the procurement and delivery of seedlings by Zombo District Local Government. The district received no response, despite several correspondences to that effect.

On 6th October 2022, Zombo District Local Government submitted information to NAADS about the available tea seedlings in the nurseries without the demand data. It is in Annex 4. The committee observed as follows:

1. Zombo District Local Government submitted data on 6 October 2022 of verified tea nursery operators and the quantity of seedlings produced within the specified time frame by MAAIF from 29th September to 17th October 2022 for consideration of payment. However, there was no demand data, as was required by the Ministry of Agriculture; and
2. Zombo District Local Government, in anticipation of the dry spell, requested NAADS to defer procurement of the tea seedlings to March 2023. However, by the time of writing this report, the Ministry of Finance had not responded to the request, leaving the district and the farmers in suspense.

Committee recommendations

1. MAAIF or NAADS and Zombo District Local Government should urgently verify the viable and overgrown seedlings among the originally verified nursery operators;
2. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should urgently avail funds to pay all the verified nursery operators for the still-viable tea seedlings for distribution to farmers for planting, as determined by Zombo District and NAADS;
3. The Ministry of Finance should compensate the originally verified tea nursery operators in Zombo, whose seedlings have overgrown and are no longer viable for planting; and
4. The Ministry of Finance should establish a more efficient communication mechanism to respond promptly to inquiries from district local governments, to foster better coordination and prevent unnecessary delays in vital agricultural processes.

The second term, of reference was to establish whether the Governments had committed to procure and pay for the tea seedlings

In Cabinet Minute 340(CT 2022), the Government agreed to a one-off arrangement to procure and distribute tea seedlings across the 16 tea-growing districts.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) in compliance with this Cabinet decision wrote to Zombo and the other 15 districts, communicating the Government's decision and instructing the districts to identify, verify and submit a list of tea nursery operators and the quantities of seedlings required by the farmers in the district.

Zombo District Local Government, in response to the ministry's communication, proceeded to identify, verify and instruct the selected nursery operators (45) to raise over 10 million seedlings for its tea farmers.

It further proceeded to communicate the list of verified nursery operators and their quantities

of seedlings, which totalled 16,765,000 seedlings, to the ministry, through Zombo District Local Government.

However, this communication lacked the demand data and Zombo requested MAAIF to defer the procurement to March 2023, to coincide with the growing season.

Observations

- (i) The Government, through written communication and other documents plus testimonies from the farmers, committed to procure, pay and distribute the seedlings to the farmers;
- (ii) The exclusion of Zombo from the six districts lined up for payment by the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS)/MAAIF with the claim that Zombo District had not submitted their information was false. The decision to exclude Zombo from the list of the districts to be paid due to lack of demand data was, therefore, not, in the committee's opinion, justified;
- (iii) The committee, however, was not able to establish the reasons for the failure of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to communicate to Zombo District Local Government and MAAIF/NAADS its position on the request to defer procurement to March 2023.

The finance ministry did not respond to the committee's invitation to appear before it and respond to the matter.

The committee, therefore, recommends that the Government should proceed to fulfil its commitment and pay all verified tea seedling suppliers within the current financial year.

The third term of reference is that the committee wanted to establish the number of nursery operators who had responded to the Government's invitation and the number of tea seedlings they had raised.

The committee was informed that Zombo District Local Government had identified, verified and invited 45 tea nursery operators to produce/raise over 10 million seedlings to supply 1,000 farmers/households over a period of three years at a unit cost of Shs 500 per seedling.

In anticipation of an increased number of tea farmers and the tea plantation, and to support the development of the tea industry in Zombo, the Government in 2016 offered to set up a tea factory in the district.

In the picture, Mr Speaker, is one of the nursery beds that we monitored, as we proceed -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, please, conclude.

MS LINDA AUMA: Mr Speaker, the observations were to:

- (i) The establishment of a tea factory in Zombo has the potential to stimulate economic development in the region through the creation of employment opportunities, provision of a market for mature tea, technology transfer and payment of taxes, among others;
- (ii) The Alur Kingdom had offered 10 acres to the Government to construct a tea factory. However, progress could not be made because ownership of the land was being contested by a private investor, Mukwano Industries. The contested land is connected to the national electricity grid;
- (iii) Given the above contestation, Zombo District Local Government and the Zeu community have identified an alternative piece of land for a government tea factory, which awaits surveying, titling and transfer of ownership to the district; and
- (iv) Further, the district had invited a private investor to set up a tea factory and allocated five acres at Zombo Technical Institute, which was a District Firm Institute (DFI-ZEU), also referred to as Presidential

Initiative Skilling Centre-ZEU, for this purpose. This land, however, is yet to be developed.

Recommendations

- (i) The Government and Zombo District Local Government should quickly resolve the issue of ownership of the land provided by the Alur Kingdom, which is contested by Mukwano Industries;
- (ii) Zombo District Local Government should urgently follow up and complete the process of survey, registration and transfer of ownership of the land availed by the Zeu community for the tea factory; and
- (iii) On the contingent on the availability of unencumbered land, the Government should disburse Shs 19.5 billion to expedite the establishment of the tea factory in Zombo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chairperson, you have already covered issues, which the petitioners wanted sorted.

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Members have gone through the rest of the issues. Let us save time. It is also another old report, therefore, we should move quickly.

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would also like to bring in the challenges faced by the tea farmers.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is generally the whole country; these are issues which -

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In light of the above findings and observations, it is the prayer of the committee that the House adopts the report of the committee in its entirety. I beg to report. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER. Thank you, committee chairperson. Before I pick Hon. Lawrence Songa, let me pick a Member of Parliament from Zombo – oh! Sorry, my chairman.

4.18

MR GABRIEL OKUMU (NRM, Okoro County, Zombo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First, I thank the committee and request the House to adopt the report.

However, let me mention one or two things. The issue of tea in Zombo, to the farmers and the stakeholders, has been of great frustration. I have visited the tea estates about five times. Some of the colleagues who have been in this House, who invested in tea, have been frustrated for the last 10 years.

Farmers planted tea and some tea gardens have overgrown and the Government's pledge to give a tea factory is one of the prayers still being sought until today. Many families have lost their livelihoods. As we are in the budgeting cycle, I would like to implore the august House to have mercy on the tea farmers from Zombo, because tea was a colonial crop.

Tea was introduced by the colonial government, it thrived very well and has its roots in Zombo. When it was re-introduced, the old tea, which was planted during the colonial period was there. I would really like to add my voice and send my sympathies to the farmers that they should not lose hope.

Let the House adopt the report, and the Government should do its part to set up a tea factory such that the farmers can see the light at the end of the tunnel. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let us have Hon. Lawrence Songa and then Hon. Afoyochan. Now, we need to know the latest.

4.20

MR LAWRENCE SONGA (NRM, Ora County, Zombo): Thank you. Mr Speaker, I appreciate the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries for visiting Zombo, especially when they were looking at the issue of tea.

I totally agree with the recommendations. It is true that the Government invited these nursery operators and they raised the seedlings to the

tune of about 16 million seedlings and it is also true that the decision by Cabinet was taken in September when it was already heading dry season. It would be meaningless to plant tea in October which was already a dry season.

The people of Zombo requested for deferment and wanted to plant in 2023 in March. In March 2023, seedlings were not supplied because there was no response from the Government and also in the second rain season of August, seedlings were not supplied to the farmers yet the farmers were ready to plant.

Therefore, since other regions have been given seedlings and have planted - because of the dry season in Zombo, it was not possible. In fact, currently, we have nurseries that have seedlings, and the committee verified. Although some seedlings have overgrown, the majority of the seedlings are still okay.

Therefore, I agree with the prayer that urgently the district together with National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) and with the ministry, verify the seedlings quickly so that farmers can plant this season from April until July. I think that would be very good for us.

Related to that, we requested a factory because some people planted seedlings before. For this factory, we need Shs 19 billion so that it can be put in place because the factories needed in Zombo are not only one; they can be three because the plantation already exists.

There was also the issue of a machine. While we were waiting for the factory, the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives decided to get a machine for the Zombo tea cooperatives so that they could process tea seedlings as they waited for the factory to be put in place. However, although this machine left Kampala, it did not reach the farmers.

I request the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives to come and make a statement. Where is that machine? I think with the other players; I agree that the Government should respond. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Can the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives be called because he is usually here? If someone could help us, call the trade minister to come in and support us. Yes, Hon. Afoyochan.

16.23

MS ESTHER AFOYOCHAN (NRM, Woman Representative, Zombo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to appreciate the committee for the work they did in Zombo; they were in touch with us and we gave them the support they needed.

This report comes at a very good time when the House is in the budgeting process. We would love to see this report not just end as a report but be backed by finances in the coming year so that people of Zombo who have been suffering from issues of tea can start reaping from it.

Mr Speaker, you requested for an update. I want to inform you that a lot of tea in Zombo has turned into trees. What is very painful is that people utilised their land to cultivate this tea and have no other land to grow other crops and activities. That means that they have hope in only the tea alone.

We, therefore, wish to see a budget trying to solve such problems. We shall be here during the budgeting process and we implore the House to support us on this to bring this issue to an end. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, these tea nursery bed operators are people who are vulnerable and for most of them, they work on borrowed money. They borrow from the SAACOs, not from banks. This is the situation we faced in Kigezi, Ankole and we were lucky at least steps were taken; some payment was done, though not fully.

I can confess that I had put in a lot of money when they told me it was a good business. I put in Shs 504 million but I was only paid Shs 107 million; it was better than nothing. Yet I knew I was going and I had tea worth billions.

I am seeing here they are even talking of Shs 500. For us, they were giving Shs 450. We lost a lot of money, but I survived because I had other businesses that helped me survive. Some people are still in prison and some committed suicide. I know the pain of the people of Zombo, and what they are going through. Unfortunately, we do not have anyone from the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries despite having how many ministers but the Prime Minister is here. Let us first hear from the Hon. Emmanuel and then Hon. Santa plus Hon. Nyakikongoro.

4.26

MR EMMANUEL ONGIERTHO (FDC, Jonam County, Pakwach): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for a job well done. I do not want to repeat what my colleagues have already stated, but we need to understand Zombo as a unique area, particularly for us in West Nile and the greater Nebbi.

The point Hon. Esther has raised about the land matter is serious because Zombo actually should be the food basket for the whole of West Nile. So, if the land they had and because of the campaign, which was given on tea, people got convinced, like you were convinced and decided to go in for tea and could not grow food items. It pains, if one or two years, these people can be stuck in such a problem.

The recommendation for compensation is very important because somehow, people can then still go ahead and cultivate and grow their tea.

I want to add that when I was still working for an organisation, the Zeu area had a whole expanse of land that was having tea trees. I remember we would even go, locally harvest, and have our local tea. I imagine such an area is the area that our king is talking about that the Government could take over and make sure tea growing is done well in our area.

We implore our Government to ensure that our people are compensated and that the factory comes so that eventually, we can have a difference in our zone. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, but honourable colleagues, as leaders, you have to educate your people. Tea is for extensive agriculture. Tea is not for intensive agriculture. I remember before - and you have to take this seriously, otherwise food security is going to be highly threatened in your area.

I remember in our area when we had started pushing for tea, we said that anyone who had less than four acres of land should not go into tea because people were starting to cut down banana plantations to plant tea. As leaders, you have to come up and be serious about it. Hon. Koyekyenga and Hon. Nyakikongoro are here. They are from tea-growing areas that are making a lot of money. Hon. Faith, and Hon. Ephraim Biraaro are also here - Tea is for extensive agriculture. If you do not have enough land, do not go for tea. I hope you will take it up. Let us hear from Hon. Santa, then Hon. Nyakikongoro.

4.30

MS SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to join my colleagues in thanking the committee for doing a thorough job. I share the pain of the people of Zombo District, especially the farmers whose livelihood depends on the tea growing.

When you look at the nursery operators, you realise that some of them even borrowed money from banks, SACCOs or elsewhere. They are running up and down trying to see how to pay back this money. Mr Speaker, some children are not even going to school because of the failure of this business.

I am very much disturbed that I do not see the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development who is supposed to answer this plea because what we are looking for is money. I do not see the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries nor do I see the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, Mr Speaker.

It is my prayer that these ministers come and brief this House on the best way forward. Minus money - we are in April the 2nd today. The rain has come. The planting season is now. For how long are we going to wait? This has been an issue since 2022.

Secondly, I would like to ask the Minister in charge of the agriculture sector, together with the ministry in charge of planning - let us have good planning. The Ministry of Finance is also the ministry for planning. How else can you tell people to grow over a million seedlings and then when the time comes, nobody is there to buy? I want to support the report – *(Interjection)*- my colleague is asking for – *(Interruption)*

MS LUCY AKELLO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The information I wanted to share with you, my colleague, is regarding planning in this country. I remember apart from just tea, in Acholi, there was a time they told people to grow cassava, and that there was a lot of market for cassava. People grew a lot of cassava but when it came to time for the market, there was actually none. Again, they said, “Now, grow sim-sim.” The same thing happened.

Therefore, I think the planning in this country needs to be looked into very seriously. That is the information I wanted to give you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Nyakikongoro?

4.33

MS ROSEMARY NYAKIKONGORO (NRM, Woman Representative, Sheema): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the committee for the very good report presented. I also sympathise with the Speaker who always presides over such petitions every time they bring them on the Floor of Parliament because they have not yielded the results that the citizens of the country expect.

Look at how they excited the people of Zombo to grow tea and they were excited to have that factory in Zombo. Right now, they do not have that factory. That is why Hon. Afoyo Chan was saying that the tea trees had grown into bushes.

Likewise, people were excited because they knew that the tea-growing business had come back. You have ably said that you put in your money, but lost it. You can imagine the Speaker who has other sources of income - you have a salary, Mr Speaker. But think about those peasants who have engaged in the production of tea seedlings yet up to now, they have not been paid. They have children in school who are being chased away. They have sold their land, by the way, in order to pay for that.

Mr Speaker, two years back, you ably guided that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should at least pay people in phases each financial year, including those who were demanding money for coffee seedlings, by the way. My ears have been on the ground. Many people are crying. My father turned 90 years old this month. He supplied coffee seedlings to the Uganda Coffee Development Authority (UCDA). Up to now - four years down the road, they have never cleared him.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: They are proposing we close down UCDA.

MS NYAKIKONGORO: Exactly! This goes back to planning. As Members of Parliament and leaders, we are finding it very difficult to sell Government programmes because we excite people, they put in their money but end up not being paid.

Mr Speaker, it is also becoming difficult to do business with Government. Government is the biggest - what can I call it? –*(Interjections)*- that one. Everyone is demanding arrears from the Government, from peasants to even well-to-dos. Yet, they supply genuinely after they get call-off orders.

You wonder why the Government would say, “We are going to do this.” They excite people to put in their money and supply but the same Government does not pay them. What do we do?

I would like to say that during this budget process, Members of Parliament should support our peasants that have supplied Government

and ensure that we deal with arrears. We cannot continue paying school fees –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Attorney-General, why don't you pay?

4.36

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa Kiwanuka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First of all, I hear what Members are saying. It is a matter of grave concern but from all sides of the political divide, we must get a common position to send to the people. What is for intensive agriculture? What is for extensive agriculture? What do we do with a four-acre plan? What do we do with 100 acres?

We cannot continue exciting our people with everything that seems to have money then when we come here, we say they have lost – (*Interjections*) – honourable colleagues, I am not even saying anyone is wrong. But we must find, as leaders in this House, a common position on what we are going to tell our people.

From where I sit, I see a lot of these things - these compensation claims that we talk about, and like you say, some of them are simply misled into situations that they should not be in. I was telling Hon. Auma here that even those claims that they are talking about, we are also starting to see a lot of people who bring claims - when you say that Government is the biggest defaulter like you said, Mr Speaker - we are going to debate the policy statement - it is not true. There are very many people who claim from Government and we shall show you the cases that we have been able to win. Therefore, it is not that everything you hear is that the Government has defaulted.

For me today, this issue that we are discussing here is extremely important. As Members and leaders in this House, we take a common position on what message we are going to give to our people. Just the other day, we were discussing the sugar law. Again, people were being lured into growing sugarcane. And we said no, sugarcane is for big landholders – (*Interruption*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, you know you do not access the microphone without my permission.

MR KIRYOOWA KIWANUKA: As I conclude, honourable colleagues, I agree that we need to find a way of resolving this problem. However, if we do not address this problem carefully, we are going to have continuous problems coming up of this nature. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I had wanted Hon. Biraaro to come first before the Leader of the Opposition.

4.39

MR EPHRAIM BIRAARO (NRM, Buhweju West County, Buhweju): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the committee for the very pertinent and touching report presented about Zombo. Leave alone the losses made by the people from tea. Any overgrown tea garden is a danger to society. It is a very good haven for wild animals and thieves. It is a good forest for hiding.

When we have tea gardens like those in Zombo and the ones growing wild in Mitooma, Bushenyi and Buhweju, we are also growing another danger of vermin within the societies.

I am appealing to the Government - when we talk about Shs 19 billion for investing in a tea factory in Zombo, and then about Shs 180 billion in terms of returns, the Government should be very calculative and do that business. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, let us not lose focus on the matter. Farmers were mobilised in Zombo by the Government to “Establish nursery beds and you are going to supply tea to the people.” Of course, some people got excited, got seedlings and everyone went in for tea.

However, let us first sort out the most important issue of the nursery bed operators. Let us help the operators, and then we can get to the issues of the factory. We should focus on the operators because most of them may even go to prison if they are not helped.

What is very important is for us to make a decision on the issue, and once the committee presents the ministerial policy statement report, and we discuss the budget, we will see whether our recommendation has been included in the budget. That is how we can strategically come in and help these people.

4.41

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Just for perspective, tea is the fourth largest agricultural export in Uganda after coffee, maize and the like. That is why the Government encouraged people in Zombo to venture into that field because it was lucrative. So, it is very critical. Again, we have excited people and not shouldered them.

Mr Speaker, in the recent past, about 90 factories shut down due to the high cost of production. Of course, again, the Government told them to go in that direction saying that they would be supported, but the support was not given and they crumbled. They have many employees who have no jobs anymore. We thought we were going to bolster our exports, but it did not happen. Again, in doing this, we are telling the Government to fulfil its pledge. We have seen many entities or factories being bailed out, can you take action on these ones you promised?

We expected the Minister of State for Trade, Industry and Cooperatives to be here with us, but he is not. He had promised that by February, he would provide to this House an information paper on the tea sector. We are now in April and it has not come yet. Maybe it would have provided a bit more information.

Away from Zombo, there is a tea research station in Kyenjojo called Rwebitaba, which is pretty much non-functional yet it exists. The Government keeps allocating money there and there is not much coming out. We would like to hear from the Government on these issues.

Therefore, I appreciate the committee for this report and join colleagues in demanding that the Government takes care of this situation. Pay these people because you told them to

go there saying you would take care of them. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable. I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries on a petition by Zombo Tea Nursery Bed Operators and Farmer's Association on delayed supply of tea seedlings to farmers in the district be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: On the action report for this, I would like the finance minister, in two weeks, to update Parliament on what action has been taken.

MR EBWALU: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Sometimes we are given seeds, but some of them do not germinate. I remember there was a time we were given maize seeds but they did not germinate in my area.

Mr Speaker, I appeal to those who are responsible that before you give us the seeds, first go and plant one or two, and see whether they germinate. This is because you will give it to constituents but at the end of the day, they do not germinate. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, in the Tenth Parliament -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ebwalu, you are discussing seedlings, which have already germinated. So, how are seeds related to seedlings?

MR EBWALU: They are related.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, they are not. Let us be very clear.

MR EBWALU: Mr Speaker, I am talking about the suppliers. I remember very well – these are all suppliers.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: On procedure, no, honourable colleague. I always accommodate a lot, but on this one, kindly spare me. Next item.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES ON THE PETITION AGAINST THE ALLEGED IRREGULAR RECRUITMENT/MAINSTREAMING PROCESS OF STAFF OF FORMER RURAL ELECTRIFICATION AGENCY INTO THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT UNDER RURAL ELECTRIFICATION DEPARTMENT BY THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION AND THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, we are going to finish these two reports by 5.30 p.m. Since they are both in the electricity sector and are all about employment, we shall receive all of them and have one debate. Yes, Hon. Angura.

4.47

MR FREDRICK ANGURA (NRM, Tororo South County, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish to present a report on the petition against the alleged recruitment/mainstreaming process of the staff of the former Rural Electrification Agency into the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development under the Rural Electrification Department by the Public Service Commission and the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development.

This report is presented under Rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament. Before I present, allow me to lay the minutes and other attachments thereto, for the record. I beg to lay.

Mr Speaker, in the interest of time, as you have guided, I will move straight to the petition. The petitioners had two prayers:

1. Absorption of all former staff into the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development as provided for in the Electricity (Establishment and Management of the Rural Electrification Fund) Instrument, 2021; and
2. Compensation for termination of employment contracts and payment of benefits for the former REA staff.

Allow me to move to the committee findings, observations and recommendations.

The absorption of former REA staff into the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development and its conformity to the statutory requirements.

The committee established that the Electricity (Establishment and Management of the Rural Electrification Fund) Instrument, 2021 revoked the Electricity (Establishment and Management of the Rural Electrification Fund) Instrument S.I No.62 of 2020. Upon its commencement, all former REA staff were transferred to the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development based on the import of the statutory instrument which was to:

- a) revoke the Electricity (Establishment and Management Act, Management of the Rural Electrification Fund) S.I No.62 of 2020 under regulation 12(1);
- b) transfer all the former REA staff to the MEMD under the Rural Electrification Programme on the same terms and conditions as they were under REA under Regulation 12(2)(a)(b).
- c) continue the existence and management of the Rural Electrification Fund under the responsibility of the Accounting Officer for the Ministry responsible for Energy; and
- d) have the instrument remain in force for a period not exceeding two years from the 19th October 2020 to the 19th October 2022 under regulation 13.

The committee further established from the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development that REA had a total staff number of 192, with 143 staff employed under the Government of Uganda, while 49 were employed as project staff, funded by development partners including the African Development Bank and World Bank.

Following the placement of the fund under the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, all staff were transferred into the ministry under the Rural Electrification Programme on the same terms and conditions as they served under REA until 18th October 2022.

When the instrument expired, the ministry embarked on the mainstreaming process using the Ministry of Public Service Rationalisation guidelines, which provided for the following:

- (i) The terms and conditions of service of employees who shall be mainstreamed into the Public Service under a parent ministry shall be similar to those that are provided under the Public Service Standing Orders;
- (ii) The appointment of the employees shall be regularised by the respective Service Commission after a validation exercise;
- (iii) Only those public officers who possess the required qualifications at the time of mainstreaming will be considered for regularisation.

The committee noted that this resulted in the review of the structure and the creation of 107 positions under the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development to absorb former REA staff who had the requisite qualifications for the jobs as follows -

Mr Speaker, this report is uploaded and we have two structures thereto for your consumption as you look through. During the validation exercise, the themes compassed around:

- a) Bio-data, including the name of staff and date of birth.
- b) Age of staff factoring in eligibility for appointment to permanent terms for a period of service up to the mandatory retirement age of 60 years.
- c) Standards for academic qualifications and working experience as per the approved job description and the person's specifications against the positions in the structure.
- d) Terms of employment.

On terms of employment, the committee was informed by the ministry that there were 96 staff with contracts with the Government of Uganda, of which 61 were recommended for different positions while four staff positions were declared redundant and 32 staff were not recommended based in the different guidelines that included, among others:

- (i) Age that is eligible for appointment in the Public Service,
- (ii) Failure to meet basic qualifications for the approved posts and
- (iii) Where there were no vacancies.

In line with that, the committee noted that the general conditions of the contract of REA provided in clause 7(3) for the right of either party to terminate the contract by giving a written notice of termination to the other party that is in line with the period of notice prescribed under the Act, which Employment Act under Section 65(1)(a) provides that termination shall be deemed to take place where the contract of service is ended by the employer with a notice.

You can also go through the general observations that the committee looked at. However, terminating their contracts with notice as provided for under section 65(2)(a) of the Employment Act on the 19 October 2022 meant that the contracts that did not meet the minimum requirements were thereto terminated. The grounds of termination are there for you to go through.

The committee recommended that the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development re-evaluates the relevance of posts that were declared redundant to ensure that they fall within the legally acceptable ambit of redundancy with a view of mainstreaming critical staff who were holding such positions.

Entitlement of former REA staff upon termination of employment The petitioners raised concern over the failure of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development to clear all outstanding benefits of terminated staff including NSSF, accrued gratuity, accrued leave allowances, golden handshake and baggage allowance as stipulated in clause 11.3(b) of the REA Human Resource Manual which entitled them to:

- (i) Three months' salary in lieu of notice;
- (ii) Payment of earned leave entitlement;
- (iii) Golden handshake and terminal benefits under regulation 11(8) of the manual;

- (iv) Accrued leave
- (v) One month's salary in lieu of notice and
- (vi) Accrued gratuity according to the contract of employment.

The committee was informed by the ministry that:

- (i) Those who were not absorbed have been paid a severance package including gratuity, accrued leave in lieu and the baggage allowance has also been processed for payment;
- (ii) Those that were considered redundant have been paid gratuity, accrued leave and the baggage allowance has been processed for payment.
In addition, the staff who were considered redundant are to be paid a redundancy compensation in the form of a handshake payment of three months' salary and notice in lieu of three months' salary, which is being processed for payment.
- (iii) The 49 project staff on contract are still being remunerated by the development partners until the expiry of the projects.

The committee however observed that not all terminated former REA staff attained their retirement benefits from the ministry. On that note, the committee recommends that the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development expedite the payment of all retirement and pending benefits including NSSF, the golden handshake of three months, severance allowance, certificate of service, transport for self, baggage and immediate family and any other outstanding benefits to all the terminated staff as stipulated in the REA Human Resource Manual and General Contractual Conditions; within three months from the time of adoption of this report.

I have a table of those who were affected and the status of their termination and payments. I do not know whether – they are just 15 and if it pleases you, I will read because I am concluding.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, we have them and I am not impressed with the job on it because you have Mable –

MR ANGURA: Thank you, Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us go to the next one.

MR ANGURA: Yes, in conclusion, the Rural Electrification Agency was the first agency to undergo mainstreaming. The process however raised a number of concerns, many of which remain unresolved with many former REA staff neither absorbed into the ministry nor fully compensated as required by their terms of engagement.

The committee therefore recommends that the Government, through the Ministry of Public Service, reabsorbs all those who qualify into the Public Service and the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development fully compensates the former REA staff for any outstanding benefits and entitlements.

Mr Speaker, I thank the committee members as well as my chairperson and deputy chairperson, who are not here. I beg to move that this report be adopted.

Like you guided, Mr Speaker, this being the first one, I would like to move to the second one.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, we have to call you. *(Laughter)* I do not know if you rushed this report the way you are rushing *-(Laughter)-* because it is signed by seven out of 35 members. Next item.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL
RESOURCES ON A PETITION OF
FORMER EMPLOYEES OF UGANDA
ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION
COMPANY LIMITED

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chairperson?

5.01

MR FREDRICK ANGURA (NRM, Tororo South County, Tororo): Maybe before we proceed, the minister had something that he wanted to say about directors -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, they are all his reports; he will tell us whatever he wants when we open up for debate.

MR ANGURA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I wish to present a report on a petition against the alleged gross mismanagement at Uganda Electricity Transmission Company Limited (UETCL) in accordance with Rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure.

The petition was originated by former employees of UETCL, alleging a number of administrative improprieties by management. I wish to lay a copy of the report and the minutes of the committee's meeting.

Mr Speaker, this one also had two prayers:

- (i) Halting of all staff layoffs, transfers and recruitments until a governance and management review is sanctioned by Parliament of Uganda.
- (ii) Halting of the direct procurement of KPMG immediately so that recruitment for non-managerial positions is done internally by the human resource department.

Committee's findings, observations and recommendations

This part of the report will examine the committee's findings, observations and recommendations. The examination is structured around the thematic areas outlined in the petition.

6.1 Alleged gross mismanagement and abuse of office by the UETCL Chief Executive Officer

6.1.1 Criteria of renewal/non-renewal of staff contracts

The committee established that employment of staff in UETCL is principally contract-based,

with the only distinction being in the source of funds for remuneration of the staff, wherein some are paid by the Government of Uganda while others are paid from donor funds for specific projects, hence the reference to these as "project staff".

The committee, however, noted that at the onset of the appointment, staff were not expressly informed of the category under which they belonged as either project or non-project staff and neither was there express mention of the source of each staff's remuneration.

The committee established that the criteria of selection of staff whose contracts were renewed was not based on performance, as all staff performed well in the appraisal process but rather on the source of funding for the staff's remuneration and its continued availability from specific projects to which some of the staff were attached.

The committee further established that whereas the petitioners alleged that some staff worked for specific projects, which still had funds, their source of remuneration was tagged to other projects whose funds were extinct and thus, their contracts were not renewed. The committee was, however, informed by UETCL management that the alignment of staff remuneration to the project source of funds is internally handled by the company.

UETCL management further informed the committee that the staff who were to be laid off were informed a month prior in writing and a meeting was held for all the 130 project staff to inform them of the decision to lay off some of them. The categories of staff included:

(a) Tariff staff

The committee was informed by UETCL that management considered contracts for 183 staff whose salary was funded through the tariff and the contracts of 182 were renewed with the exception of one manager of finance who failed to meet appraisal requirements.

(b) Project staff

UETCL undertakes transmission grid projects funded by both Government and development partners. During implementation, staff are recruited to support the project with their salary being availed from the Government of Uganda component. However, upon completion, a project is removed from the Public Investment Plan (PIP) and no budget provision is made thereafter.

The committee was informed by UETCL that:

- (i) Projects that had been completed but were awaiting commissioning were removed from the PIP with no Government funding for Financial Year 2023/2024 provided. Contracts on these projects were not renewed.
- (ii) For projects that were still ongoing but expected to be completed in 2023 and whose resettlement action had progressed to over 90 per cent, staff numbers were reduced and a few staff retained to handle RAP issues. However, all engineers were retained to handle snags that could arise during the Defects Liability Period (DLP).
- (iii) For projects that were still ongoing and not expected to be completed this year (2023), staff contracts were renewed for the remaining duration of the project.

The committee was informed that there were 130 staff on various projects and for 66 of these, their contracts were not renewed as shown in the table. I will jump that table; I know Members are going through it.

6.1.2 Legality of the termination of the petitioners' contracts

The Employment Act, under section 2, defines the term "termination from employment" to mean the discharge of an employee from employment at the initiative of the employer for justifiable reasons other than misconduct, such as expiry of contract, attainment of the retirement age, etc.

An employer has the right to renew or terminate a contract of employment as the court stated in the case of *Hilda Musinguzi v. Stanbic Bank (U) Ltd.* In the case, it was explained that: "The starting point is that normally, an employer cannot be forced to keep an employee against his will and section 65(1) (a) provides that termination shall be deemed where the contract of service is ended by the employer with notice."

The Employment Act, in section 65, further provides that termination shall be deemed to take place where the contract of service, being a contract for a fixed term or task, ends with the expiry of the specified term or the completion of the specified task and is not renewed within a period of one week from the date of expiry on the same terms or terms not less than favourable to the employee.

The employer is under no obligation to provide reasons for the non-renewal of the contract as explained in the Court of Appeal's decision in the case of *Bank of Uganda v Joseph Kibuuka* that termination of an employee could be done by notice or payment in lieu of notice and therefore without need for the employer to give reasons for the termination.

The committee notes that whereas it is unfortunate that the petitioners lost their employment, there is no evident breach of contractual or statutory obligation in the termination process, as one month's notice of termination was given to those whose contracts were terminated as required by their employment contract under the Employment Act.

The committee observations

1. The completion or near completion of projects from which the petitioner's remuneration was being drawn created a financial gap and thus, this lack of funds for the continued payment of the contractual remuneration for the staff resulted into the non-renewal of the petitioner's contract.
2. The committee further observed that lack of clarity on the source of funding for

remuneration for particular staff created room for discontentment as to the criteria used not to renew contracts of some staff and not others, especially those who were working on unfinished projects.

3. The committee observed that the irregularity in the remuneration where staff from one project were being remunerated from another project and vice versa was a big mistake.

The committee, therefore, recommends as follows:

- (i) Considers transitioning staff from completed to new projects as opposed to wholly recruiting new staff to save time and money on recruitment and training.
- (ii) Includes provisions in its planning for the post-completion phases anticipating staff needs and budgetary requirements beyond project completion to facilitate a smooth transition.
- (iii) Should ensure transparency in staff recruitment, job assignments, and payment alignment to avoid suspicion among staff.
- (iv) Should provide career transition support, which may include counselling, job placement assistance and access to training programmes to enhance the employability of staff whose contracts are not renewed.

Honourable colleagues, we have recruitment for vacant positions but I thought I should go straight to the observations thereto.

Committee observations

- (i) The committee observed that delays in filling vacant positions can impact operation efficiency, team dynamics, and overall organisational effectiveness.
- (ii) The committee also observed that the use of an external consultant; KPMG, to externally recruit even for lower-ranking officers poses a risk of de-motivation of existing qualified staff and also raises questions considering the context of staff layoffs due to funding gaps when the company has a human resource department

for which KPMG could have recruited. It would subsequently recruit the lower officers to save company resources.

- (iii) The committee also observed that the practice of using external recruitment agencies is very costly to public agencies. There is no value for money, especially when the recruiting company has a human resource department.

On that, the committee recommended as follows:

- (i) The committee recommends that UETCL should consider promoting existing staff before externally advertising vacancies if the staff have the requisite technical competence. This will enable staff to grow in the organisational structure to boost staff work ethics and morale.
- (ii) The committee also recommends that UETCL should prioritise building and strengthening its internal human resource capacity by hiring competent personnel, including a head of human resources and investing in training and development to enhance the department's effectiveness.
- (iii) The committee further recommends that UETCL expedite the review of the human resource manual to guide future recruitment and promotions.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, honourable.

MR ANGURA: The next is staff movement and its recommendations. In conclusion -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, this report is uploaded. We do not read from here.

MR ANGURA: In conclusion, Mr Speaker, the committee notes that though it is unfortunate that staff lost their employment, no procedural breach was attributed to UETCL and thus recommends that UETCL should hasten the process to clear all outstanding entitlements to the aggrieved staff and considers re-employing them in any new projects that it may take up. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Chairman. Let the full report be considered on the *Hansard*. Honourable colleagues, I am going to open up the debate but I will first call the ministers to make a few clarifications.

There is a general fear I have. Is Parliament being reduced to a court to handle issues of termination? I think we are taking more than we should. No, courts are available, if you are terminated.

Most of the time, the people who come here instead of going to court are people who know that they have weak cases, I can tell you. They want us to now bring in politics and general recommendations. When you have a genuine case, in a minute, court reinstates you and all these employees know it. All of them know, especially most of them in government. Someone tells you, I am a civil servant, you can never touch me. They know their rights. They have unions, the industrial court, and everywhere.

I look at the time we have and also Parliament entering into the space of another arm, showing it to do it this way or that way. It is just a point of concern. I am not saying we should not entertain petitions, but it is a point of concern for me. Honourable Minister of Energy and Mineral Development -

5.18

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (ENERGY) (Mr Sidronius Okaasai): Mr Speaker, I want to take on from where you ended. First of all, there are standing orders on how these people are recruited into service. You are either taken on permanent basis, a contract, or a consultant, and we actually follow that.

In the case of the REA staff, for those who qualified to provide the service, who had the degrees that were required, 87 per cent were absorbed. Those who were not absorbed did not have the required qualifications or did not have the requisite age to continue holding the positions. That is only about 13 per cent who were not absorbed into the new jobs in

the Department of Rural Electrification in the ministry.

I wish to thank the guidance of the public service ministry and the guidance of the Public Service Commission in the recruitment. We did not do it single-handedly; it was through the right procedures. Therefore, I thank the committee for that report.

Number two, the committee was very clear at the time we were interacting with them. We were processing the payment of terminal benefits of the staff. I am glad to report that all the staff who were not absorbed have been paid their gratuity, accrued leave, and baggage allowances to enable them to go back.

Here, the handshake is not statutory. There is no provision in the laws of the Government for a handshake. We do it according to the provisions of the law.

Thirdly, let us not disturb the staff. The staff that we took have settled in their jobs. Those who did not qualify can go to Public Service, respond to the adverts and go through the recruitment exercise.

The second paper was on Uganda Electricity Transmission Company Limited (UETCL). The report is excellent. It is actually saying that we should do things in an orderly manner, and we shall abide by the recommendations. However, I will hasten to clarify again that for the UETCL staff who were terminated; all their outstanding terminal benefits have been paid. At the time of the report, we were in the process, but I am happy to report that we no longer owe any of them money.

For UETCL, many of them had the qualifications but because the projects were coming to an end, we did not have any more money because they were also on contract. Their contracts had come to an end, or the projects that we had, had come to an end, and we did not have any positions. However, we encouraged them to actually look for opportunities within the ministry. They are all energy officials. They are engineers. We encouraged them to get into new

projects, and we are establishing a database for the engineers. That is the clarification I wish to make. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Any further additions from the Government side? None? Thank you.

I am scanning to see the ones who were here first. I will start with the ones who came early. Hon. Betty Engola, Dr Aate, Prof. Mushemeza, Martin has already spoken, Hon. Muwuma - Hon. Kayemba has been in and out, I do not know what he is operating in the corridors - (*Laughter*) - so he will wait a little. He decided to take the assignments of the Leader of the Opposition instead of the Speaker, who is the cardinal one, and he has to be here - and Kiboga Woman MP. Yes, I am going to pick you, honourable colleagues. For those who have spoken, I am not sure I will pick you again. If you know you have already submitted since we started today - Please, let us shoot.

5.24

MS BETTY ENGOLA (NRM, Woman Representative, Apac): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I have a few issues to put across. One is that I wanted to find out when these petitions were presented to the Speaker, in Parliament. This is because I want to know how we do our work. It says here that the petition was presented to the Speaker almost one year ago; in May, 2023. Today, we are in April, 2024; one year past. When people run to Parliament, it is really critical. They want to get answers or responses as fast as possible but one year, Mr Speaker – So, I wanted to also get to know when these two petitions were submitted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: On that one I can help you, honourable. There is a lot we are trying to improve. There are other reports that are also going to come, which have been delayed. We are trying to sweep through and ensure that all of them come in as we improve systems on our side. That was a weakness on our side; delayed processing and not following the rules to the letter, but we are improving on it.

MS ENGOLA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The second one was from the chairperson; that after Parliament adopts this report, it will take about three months for staff who are not paid to be paid. I request the chairperson, please, that after those three months, that will be in August this year, please come and give us an update on the same.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, they are busy laying off or terminating staff yet we need them. For us who come from the northern region, we are anxiously waiting for the commissioning of the Karuma Hydroelectric Power Station which has taken quite a bit of time. Can I know when the Karuma Hydroelectric Power Station will be commissioned, so that we avoid power outages in our areas? I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. For further clarification, the action-taken report will be brought to Parliament by the minister, as per Rule 220 of the Rules of Procedure. Luckily, the minister has said that they have already sorted most of these issues.

MR ANGURA: Mr Speaker, as the minister has said, the issue to do with payments was one of our strong recommendations; that the Government should meet its obligation in line with that. However, as you have heard from the minister and some people who we have met here and there, it has been overtaken by events to some extent. Otherwise, we shall wait for the full action report in the next few months by the minister.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: If the minister has already taken action, he will submit it on the Floor. He will bring here evidence that indeed it was done, not just a verbal statement. Thank you.

5.28

DR SHARIFAH AATE TABAN (NRM, Woman Representative, Koboko): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I am glad that the Government has been able to recruit and absorb at least 81 per cent of the staff that were there previously. I am glad to hear that the honourable minister and the committee have

been able to resolve at least 90 per cent of the issues.

However, I request the Government to recruit the remaining percentage in order to be able to speed up the connectivity of power in the West Nile Subregion. We need these people in West Nile, so please recruit them so that they are able to go back to Koboko, West Nile and Arua City to connect us to the national grid. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Nyanzi. Procedure -

MR BINGI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise under Rule 204(1) of our Rules of Procedure and I relate it to the first report that the chairperson presented. Mr Speaker, you observed that this report is signed by only seven Members out of 35, but our rules state that a committee report “shall be signed and initialled by at least one-third of all the Members of the committee”, and the word is “shall.”

In this case, a third of 35 would at least be 12 Members. Therefore, Mr Speaker, is that report admissible before the House and can we go ahead to debate the same?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, honourable we can, because at the time we gave all these assignments, we had not yet recalled our decision on COVID-19. During COVID-19, we allowed a maximum of 10 Members. So, we suspended those rules and agreed on a certain period.

Do you know that the Ministry of Health has not yet declared Uganda COVID-19 free? So, we are still operating under COVID-19. *(Laughter)* I am waiting and wish the minister could – Hon. Mushemeza – Let us focus on the content of the report, but chairpersons, I will not answer for you next time.

5.30

PROF. ELIJAH MUSHEMEZA (Independent, Sheema County South, Sheema): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairpersons and the committee for the reports and the

update from the minister.

What prompted me to contribute to this motion are the good practices or the lessons we can pick from this petition and the reports. As you are all aware, rationalisation is in the process. I could see a good practice - How do we deal with transition if you are phasing out a Government entity and giving an opportunity to the existing workers to be absorbed?

In terms of public service, people have been used to good salaries. Those who cannot take up what the Government offers can try their talents elsewhere. I think this is a very good practice. Those who have been phased out should be paid in time and also stick to the law. If the law does not allow a handshake, as the minister has said, people should not demand for a handshake that does not exist. I think this is a very good practice.

Lastly, people with qualifications and skills should be given an opportunity any time, like I heard the minister say. There are opportunities coming up and they can always find good positions. So, these are very good practices that we should document so that as we go into rationalisation in the near future, we take them up. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

5.32

MR MILTON MUWUMA (NRM, Kigulu County South, Iganga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The first issue to do with rationalisation has been well attributed to by Hon. Mushemeza. I think something I needed to add is that since the process started, I remember that Bill was brought here and they mentioned something to do with Uganda Electricity Company that will be taking care of most of these agencies being absorbed.

I see us coming up with recommendations that may end up –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, rule 80 talks about anticipation, please.

MR MUWUMA: I will leave it at that. The other is that I thank the ministry for at least

managing to absorb 87 per cent of the former staff. However, they need to go an extra mile to help us know. During the REA days, we would say, if I have this challenge, this is the person I can reach out to. For example, we now have many projects that have stalled. Even mere commissioning already constructed lines take decades.

There is a transformer already installed but getting an officer or an official to come and flag it off or hand over this project to Umeme takes a lot of time, and people are taking advantage to vandalise these projects. Can the minister come up with clearly defined officers we can reach out to - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, during the time of REA, there was a lady called Flavia. Almost all Members of Parliament had her number. When you went to REA, at least she would open the computer, show you your map, the survey, what has been done, and we solved many issues that way.

Members need someone like her. If she is still there, give her that assignment because she knows how to do it. I think most of the complaints to do with REA have been on stakeholder management and connection. People do not know where to go, who to help them quickly and we do not want to be disturbing the minister.

Therefore, what Hon. Milton has said would help to solve very many issues if you can give us one or two focal persons whom we can always run to, as Members of Parliament, to present issues of our constituencies.

5.35

MS CHRISTINE KAAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I pray that all of us embrace the money in our budget to pay off REA staff. I request that when that budget item comes in, people should not take it that it is the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development taking the money. Let us appreciate that rationalisation started in the ministry.

The issue of staff salaries where staff are complaining about their remuneration and do not report anything about the work they were supposed to do also de-motivates Members of Parliament in handling their issues. It would be important for our human resource departments within these companies to share with us their appraisal reports because it should not be automatic that when you are dropped from this, you will be taken to that.

Some people are old while others' past performances cannot take them to other places. Therefore, it would be good for the HR departments of companies to save for us money, for example, by advertising but also appraising our staff and sharing these appraisal reports for our staff to appreciate that much as I have been here and I have the qualifications, but based on the past experiences, I am not supposed to proceed elsewhere.

We also need to look at their contracts. When you look at most of the contracts, they have a statement that everything will be fulfilled, provided funds are available. However, many staff do not look at that provision and they want to take us for granted, to consider what they want when the provision is in their contracts.

So, we did not look at the contracts well, but the provisions of what each staff was entitled to, is within the contracts. Like a colleague has stated, a year has passed and a number of resolutions –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, you should have reminded me that you are a member of the committee and you cannot debate your report as per our rule.

MS KAAYA: I am a shadow minister.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, even if you are, as long as you signed the report, it is your report because you gave your views as a shadow minister. It is not allowed as per our Rules of Procedure.

5.38

DR ABDULHU BYAKATONDA (Independent, Workers Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson for the report and subsequently the response by the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development. I have a number of challenges. Uganda is one of the countries constrained via law and as such, we need to conform to international minimum standards.

Subsequently, our Constitution under Article 40 calls for unionisation, collective bargaining, and the like. We are receiving this petition because of a lack of appropriate engagement with the affected parties. As a country, we risk losing core staff where we have put a lot of money into neighbouring economies.

When we do not conform to certain minimum standards, we shall lose out, and yet we have spent a lot of money on training these people. What perturbs me is the difference between rationalisation and re-engineering. The meaning of rationalisation is to re-engineer and widen the mandates of the people.

I have scratched my head, and read reports, but I do not see how much we are saving vis-à-vis the rationalisation. For example, in 2008, this Parliament passed a very core law; the Public Service (Negotiating, Consultative and Disputes Settlement Machinery) Act, 2008, which talks about rationalisation and the formation of consultative committees so that staff are engaged within their own cause and come up with resolutions.

Mr Speaker, if we do not do that, we risk losing very core people to nearby economies and at the end of the day, we cannot catch up with countries like the Asian Tigers that treat staff as their core.

Having staff is like a marriage. You may think that this person you are married to is a waste of time but at the end of the day, the neighbour takes him or her and you lose out in the end.

I beg that the relevant ministries look into the operationalisation of the Constitution,

international minimum standards and that core law; the Public Service (Negotiating, Consultative and Disputes Settlement Machinery) Act, 2008. Things will be better. Thank you.

5.41

MR GEOFFREY KAYEMBA-SSOLO (NUP, Bukomansimbi South County, Bukomansimbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. This report has exposed the Government's unreadiness in the rationalisation process because if it was ready and had done due diligence, we would not have seen this, especially in the rural electrification sector.

When you look at our electricity projects, this country is hitting a crisis. What the Rural Electrification Agency used to do is no longer being seen anywhere. An example is in my constituency of Bukomansimbi, where we lack power. What happened to the work that they were doing before, honourable minister? They are now employed but redundant. The Government should think before taking any decision, especially on rationalisation, to avoid such mistakes. Thank you very much.

5.42

MS JANE PACUTO (NRM, Woman Representative, Pakwach): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson of the committee for the report. Allow me to state that this report points to a bigger picture or challenge in the human resource development in this country.

The committee, for instance, observed that it was difficult for the employees themselves to differentiate whether they were company or project staff. I find that disturbing because it may not have been with these particular employees that are bringing in the petition. It points to the fact that the staff - By the time you are appointed, there could have been an advert and you applied, interviewed and you were appointed. That means many of our young people are taking up jobs without even perhaps knowing their job descriptions because it starts from you reading the appointment letter to

know the terms and conditions under which you are employed.

That aside, it also points to the fact that human resource personnel are not doing enough in terms of induction, training and mentorship. Why would somebody work for a company or project but at the tail end, you say you do not know?

It could also point to the fact that nepotism is indeed a reality in this country because if you were recruited through the normal processes, why wouldn't you know what you have been recruited for? Were they headhunted? Were they handpicked? That points to other problems that our people are facing in this country.

The report also indicated the fact that hiring a consultant to recruit is costly. Yes, we should not be duped to start looking at costs. To me, you would rather hire a consultant to procure the right personnel with the right quality to take up a job or else in the end, it may actually become more costly for the company or country at large.

Secondly, for a consultant, we are sure of independence and transparency in recruitment so that we stop other petitions coming up of people being recruited wrongly or picked because he is related to a board member or management.

To me, using a consulting company is in line with the Government policy on privatisation. We need to promote the consulting companies so that we use professionals that are knowledgeable in the different areas to recruit and deploy in different departments and companies – *(Member timed out.)*

5.46

MR TONNY AYO O (NRM, Kwania County, Kwania): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to get clarification from the minister on two items in observations (3) and (4) on pages 9 and 10.

Observation (3) of the committee states that “Key positions such as ICT were eliminated in

the approved job structure despite being critical in the performance of the rural electrification mandate and the ministry is currently outsourcing the officer to do this work by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development on a short-term contract”.

I would like the minister to come clear. You declared that you do not need ICT specialists and there was a person who was laid off. However, at the same time, you went ahead to recruit them on short-term contracts, yet there were officers from REA whom you had the mandate to absorb where positions were existing. Honourable minister, why do you take that line?

Secondly, on observation (4), the committee states that, “Whereas some of the former REA staff were not absorbed for lack of positions in the ministry, the ministry has since declared new positions and declared them to Public Service Commission to be filled through an external advert, open to all eligible Ugandans in accordance with the Public Service provisions on recruitment, contrary to the planned mitigation measures issued by the Ministry of Public Service, where affected staff were supposed to be appointed across the service in vacant positions”.

We need to build confidence in the staff working for these agencies as we get into rationalisation so that we mean what we have said and implement them, as stated.

When you get to implementation, you hide the jobs and first lay these people off. You keep on recruiting people in bits for three months because you want to replace them with your people.

Secondly, you do not declare positions and later on, when they are laid off, you then declare the same positions in adverts – *(Member timed out.)*

5.48

MR GOLI OG WAL (NRM, Dokolo North County, Dokolo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to appreciate the report of the committee and also the response of the

minister, which clearly shows that many of the persons were brought back and recruited into the ministry.

However, if many have been brought back, what is the impact of the work because when REA was there, things were different. Why is it that the results are not as good as then? Let me possibly answer myself.

One of the reasons was because resources were not available but during the supplementary budgeting process, we allocated about Shs 54 billion to support the processes which will bring rural development.

About a week and a half ago, the money we allocated had not yet reached the ministry. This is a very serious issue. I want the minister to confirm whether they have received the money. It is very serious. If they have not received the money, let us trace why we do not have the money.

Personally, in Dokolo where I am suffering seriously, over five subcounties do not have connection to power yet our budgeting process was supposed to handle that. Can we have that resolved where possible? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Muwada?

5.50

MR MUWADA NKUNYINGI (NUP, Kyadondo County East, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the report and also thank colleagues for the informative discussion. As you have rightly mentioned, Mr Speaker, not all suffocated employees in this country may succeed in raising petitions to Parliament.

Speaking as a lawyer, we have established, under the Employment Act, the Industrial Court - And now that the Attorney-General is around, we need to be briefed. The last time I checked, the Industrial Court, out of the five would-be judges, had only two with one or two registrars and it is positioned in one place; Ntinda. The same Industrial Court must serve a country called Uganda with hundreds of districts.

When you look at its enabling provisions being supported by labour officers, most of them do not exist in some regions and even for those regions where we have labour officers, their operational procedure and transaction is not regulated. They are very slow – someone can lodge a complaint and it takes five to 10 years without receiving attention whereas the provisions of the Industrial Court require that the majority of the petitions are referred by labour officers.

We must deal with the challenges of employees and employers in a broader way. We need to be briefed by the Attorney-General and the Government: what undertaking are they making to empower the operations of the Industrial Court in line with labour disputes? As we speak, many other employees are struggling with petitions and complaints within labour offices across the country.

The Industrial Court is located in Ntinda. How will someone in Pallisa or Kotido travel to the Industrial Court? Where is that empowerment to offer justice to these complainants? We need to interrogate this matter thoroughly and Parliament must be briefed so that we have a conclusive solution. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. LoP?

5.53

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have one general comment. When the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) was being rationalised, we were told that, one, the employees would not suffer – they would be absorbed in the ministry generally – and two, the projects that REA was undertaking would not suffer.

These projects were not planned for and have stalled and the employees are complaining, as we are discussing here. Maybe the Government needs to come clean on the rationalisation of some of these entities. What was the plan, exactly? We were told the purpose vehicle called REA was going to be abandoned but that the employees would be absorbed and the works, especially, would continue.

As you hear colleagues complaining, even some of the projects that had begun deep in the villages have now stalled because this no longer exists. It is important that there be clarity: what is going to happen, what was the aim and how do we address this?

The project should not stall. REA was abandoned, yes, but the staff, as had been promised, should be absorbed. Even more importantly, the projects should continue. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister?

5.55

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (ENERGY) (Mr Sidronius Okaasai): Mr Speaker, there are a number of issues I will make clarifications on. Many of the things which we are discussing have actually been overtaken by events.

We, in this august House, made decisions, amended the laws and we are now implementing the laws. That is why some of you are asking about Uganda National Electricity Company Limited (UNECL) – the new electricity company. As the committee report was saying, there were many processes that were going on and we have concluded those processes.

Karuma Dam is actually scheduled for commissioning in August this year – all six units have been technically commissioned. They can actually operate and generate electricity – they are operating at the testing phase. Therefore, some of the power you are enjoying is actually from Karuma. *(Laughter)* Take that statement; it is very true. You will find that 105 megawatts, every day, is fed into the systems from Karuma; it is in the grid.

West Nile power - we are now hopeful that we are going to deliver bulk power to West Nile by May because the four Project Affected Persons (PAPs) have signed the memoranda of understanding (MoU) to enable us to go through their land. We are progressing well in delivering power to West Nile.

Contact persons? We now have a department of rural electrification headed by a commissioner. Therefore, that is an entry point. When you talk of Flavia, she is still there manning the computers, but she has actually been raised a little; she is no longer that cadre.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: She is no longer accessible? *(Laughter)*

MR OKAASAI: She is now a senior officer, but there are officers who are now in Flavia's former position. However, the commissioner is now the entry point to rural electrification; his name is Mr Abdul Atwine and we have shown him to the Committee on Natural Resources and they have his contact numbers.

Appraisals were some of those things, which we used to absorb the REA staff into the department; all the appraisals were reviewed. Those who met the terms and were good performers were taken, while the poor performers are some of those who fell on the wayside.

I need to point out here that those ones who we did not absorb were not core staff for delivering electricity. Many of them were common cadres. Procurement is posted to us by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. The accountants are also posted to us by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

Therefore, we already had the accountants; it would be duplication to bring an accountant to a programme of the Government, which is a department when we already have accountants. They were common cadre staff and that is why we say, yes, they can get opportunities. However, some of them could have been taken on the projects.

Hon. Byakatonda, I cannot address the issue of trade unions.

Hon. Kasolo raised the issue of taking decisions without thinking. This one was thought through by the Cabinet. Therefore, it is wrong to say that it was not thought out; it was a decision of

the Cabinet. Do we say that the Cabinet takes decisions without thinking? *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, sometimes - Honourable minister, a Member is complaining about his name. You are calling him “Kasolo”, yet he is “Ssolo”. I think because of how he submitted, you related the submission to the name. *(Laughter)*

MR OKAASAI: I wish to apologise, Mr Speaker. He is Hon. Ssolo. Thank you.

Hon. Tonny Ayoo, I need to clarify on IT recruitment. The IT person who was taken was from REA and he had a rare qualification and talent. He was to manage an IT programme in the Uganda Electricity Distribution Company so, we could not let that one go because of the rare talent he had. We retained him on short-term contract but as we talk, he has got a better placement elsewhere. That is how that one came.

On declaring open recruitment on positions, jobs are being created day and night. There were new jobs that came, and the specifications were meeting the people who were laid off and I submitted here that we encouraged them to apply when positions were created. We did not stop them from getting the jobs.

Hon. Ogwal, thank you very much for coming out clearly. The REA staff are now in the ministry; in the rural electrification department, but we have not provided the money to enable them to work. You recall when we were passing the budget for this financial year, Shs 100 billion was lost then through your kind consideration, you provided Shs 50 billion out of Shs 100 billion and that one has not been released as we talk.

We have gone ahead, using our staff, to prepare contracts. Contracts have been signed for some of the activities that, that money was meant to do. We are waiting for the release of the money to enable the staff to go to the field to finish some of the projects that you see. There isn't money. Once we get the money released and

since the contracts are already signed, we are ready to move. I think that is what I can say for now.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I do not have enough time for you to start sharing with honourable colleagues. Attorney-General –

6.02

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa Kiwanuka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank my learned friend for the question. One, the Industrial Court is fully constituted with a Chief Judge and a Judge, and all the officers as required by section 10 and it is fully constituted.

Labour officers include a commissioner for labour, an assistant labour officer, and even a district labour officer. You have mentioned that some places do not have labour officers so I am going to take it up with the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development and ensure that, that is done. The labour officers do exist at this time.

Also, there are other remedies available. We now have a chief magistrate in every district and a magistrate Grade 1 at every constituency. So, it is the resources that stop us from having all these places completed but I think we are doing quite well. I think we have sufficient manpower on the ground to address the labour issues as they arise. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Attorney-General. Honourable members, I now put the question that the report of the Sectoral Committee on Environment and Natural Resources on the petition against the alleged irregular recruitment/mainstreaming process of staff of the former Rural Electrification Agency into the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development under Rural Electrification Department by the Public Service Commission and Ministry of Energy be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, you said most of the issues have already been sorted so let us have an action report in one month. Let us do it in two months after the budgeting process. I do not want it to affect your preparation for the budget.

Honourable members, I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources on a petition of former employees of Uganda Electricity Transmission Company limited be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There were no issues to report back because they were general in nature. I want to thank you, chairperson –

MR ANGURA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to take this opportunity to thank Members starting with the committee members and all of you for approving our report. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable chairpersons, if you have reports that you feel have been pending for long, please bring them to our attention because we want to get out all these reports; all that backlog and clear them. Hon. Kabanda –

MR DAVID KABANDA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I am seeking clarification from you and the leadership of this Parliament. Recently, we saw an activity organised by some people in State House. They called that activity an Oulanyah Memorial Lecture. I thought this was an activity that was supposed to be organised by Parliament. A few Members were invited and other people -

I want to seek clarification from you, Mr Speaker. Did you, as the leadership of this institution, sanction that function where a Speaker of another country was invited by not the leadership of this Parliament to attend a function that was supposed to be organised by this institution so that all Members of Parliament can remember our former Speaker?

That is the clarification I seek from you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, we take pride in seeing our leaders, whether current or former, being appreciated and celebrated by anyone who want to make the arrangements. We feel proud that the public out there appreciates the contribution of our leaders.

What I can make clear is that this was not an official function organised by Parliament but an effort by some members of the public to appreciate one of our leaders for his outstanding contribution.

Parliament as an institution has been discussing at the top leadership level how and what structure we can put in place for recognising our former leaders because not only the Rt Hon. Jacob Oulanyah was the Speaker of Parliament. We have others. We have Mr Rugumayo, we have his Excellency Yoweri Museveni so we have been discussing how best - but these ones moved faster than us because theirs had no institutional infringements and processes so they moved quicker than us and did what they did.

I understand they had invited the Prime Minister of Ethiopia who sent the Rt Hon. Speaker of Parliament of the National Assembly of Ethiopia and was welcomed by the Rt Hon. Speaker of the Parliament as a colleague visiting the country. We do not want to go so much into that but to clearly say this was not organised by Parliament. However, we appreciate when our leaders outside are recognised by other institutions or other forces besides Parliament.

(The House rose at 6.08 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 3 April 2024 at 2.00 p.m.)