



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

THIRD SESSION - THIRD MEETING

TUESDAY, 6 FEBRUARY 2024



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

THIRD SESSION - 6TH SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Tuesday, 6 February 2024

Parliament met at 2.23 pm in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Colleagues, I welcome you to today's sitting. We start on a very sad note; we lost one of the greatest Pan-Africanists as a continent, President Hage Geingob, President of Namibia, which occurred on 4th February 2024.

Namibia supported the liberation struggle in Uganda and recently, when we had CSPOC, the Speaker of Namibia was here with us and we exchanged pleasantries. We have been working with them very closely.

When the African fraternity was given an opportunity to choose the next President of the Inter Parliamentary Union, the Speaker and the MPs from Namibia played a very critical role. They worked from a Pan Africanist perspective, to ensure that number one, we get a lady; the Rt Hon. Tulia Ackson, the Speaker of Tanzania and two, that we do not have a deep fight over this as a continent and present ourselves as an example.

His Excellency Hage has been a friend to some of our people here and most prominently, a very close friend to *Ndugu* Ruhakana Rugunda, our former Prime Minister to whom he was a supervisor when *Ndugu* Rugunda was working in Namibia as a doctor.

Our President has sent condolences to the Government and people of Namibia. I also want to take this opportunity, on behalf of Parliament - I know that our Speaker has written to the Speaker of the Parliament of Namibia. However, I take this opportunity, in this plenary, to extend our heartfelt condolences to the people of Namibia, the family of His Excellency the President, the Pan-Africanists and Africa in general. And with that, I request that you stand up and observe a minute of silence.

(Members rose and observed a moment of silence.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I also want to take this opportunity to congratulate our Defence fraternity; the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF), on the 43rd Tarehe Sita celebrations, which are ongoing.

Unfortunately, today we do not have any of our army MPs around because of the celebrations, but they are the true nobility of our country. Whether we agree or disagree, they have tried their best to keep our borders safe, and make Uganda a safe country for most of us to thrive in our careers and in all aspects of life that we are pursuing.

I congratulate them very strongly and I hope that when they come – Oh, I did not know that my friend who deserted; Hon. Chemaswet, stood up on their behalf to acknowledge. I do not know whether he sorted out his issues with the UPDF on how he left when he was deployed in Northern Uganda. However, Hon. Chemaswet and your team, congratulations.

Honourable Colleagues, His Excellency the President has assented to some of the Bills we have sent to him. We have received notification that he has assented to:

1. The Civil Aviation (Amendment) Act, 2024,
2. The Judicature (Amendment) Act, 2023,
3. The Explosives Act, 2023,
4. The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Control Act, 2023, and
5. The Competition Act, 2023.

(Applause)

We hope that these laws are going to play a very critical role in facilitating the smooth running of Government business, especially the Competition Act.

Honourable Minister, remember you promised us the Bill on consumer protection, which we said we needed separate from the Competition Act. Now we are at par with our peers in the region. I hope we shall use it effectively.

Honourable Minister, we need the Consumer Protection Act. We do not want it to also come as a Private Member's Bill but private members will move it if you do not fulfil what you promised us.

Honourable Colleagues, in the distinguished VIP gallery this afternoon we have a delegation of staff from the Senate of the Republic of Kenya here on a benchmarking visit to Parliament of Uganda. They include:

1. Ms Ruth Vusaka - *Hansard* Reporter
2. Ms Linda Irusa Chavera - Clerk Assistant
3. Mr Francis Maroa Yaya - Superintendent of Police
4. Ms Hawa Adhey Abdi - Assistant Sergeant at Arms,

5. Mr John Kirugumi Chege - Assistant Sergeant at Arms.
6. Mr Bernard Okelo Sika - Assistant Sergeant at Arms.
7. Mr John Ngotho Lekampule - Assistant Sergeant at Arms
8. Mr Godana Mamo - Sergeant at Arms.

They have come to observe proceedings of this house. Please join me once again in welcoming them. *(Applause)* Thank you.

MATTERS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, before I receive communication, in the public gallery this afternoon we have four pupils of Angaba Primary School from Padyere County, Nebbi District, who excelled in the recently released Primary Leaving Examination results.

They are accompanied by three teachers and are represented by Hon. Otingiw Isaac Ismail and Hon. Acibu Agnes. They have come to observe proceedings of this House, congratulations. Please join me in welcoming them, honourable colleagues. *(Applause)* A big congratulation; we are proud of you. Thank you.

2.33

THE CHIEF OPPOSITION WHIP (Mr John Baptist Nambeshe): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Followed by Hon. Acon and Hon. Luttaguzi.

MR NAMBESHE: Let me join you in expressing my heartfelt condolences to the people of Namibia for losing their great leader at the age of 82 years.

I would like to salute the people and the Government of Namibia for the smooth and peaceful transfer of power from the late President - just emulating Tanzania anyway - to his Vice President Mbumba. It has been a smooth, peaceful transfer from him to the Vice President without any rift. How I wish that it would happen in other countries. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, most importantly – *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, honourable colleagues. Did I hear Hon. Nambeshe saying “in other countries”? [*Members: “Yes.”*] If a colleague has said “in other countries”, what is the problem? (*Laughter*) However, Hon. Nambeshe, what you need to clarify is that you are not wishing for any president to die. What you wish for is a smooth transfer.

MR NAMBESHE: Most obliged, Mr Speaker. I do not wish anybody – and as the presiding apostle, I am God-fearing and I would not pass judgment on anybody to die prematurely. However, a guilty conscience has no accuser. (*Laughter*)

Most importantly, a lesson we would draw from the demise of Namibia’s beloved president would be about the superb health care services, particularly the state-of-the-art cancer institute in Windhoek, the capital of Namibia. It is where the late president and other presidents who were sick and sought superb medical care were actually hospitalised. It would be a lesson for us, especially as legislators here who have the cardinal role of appropriation, to think twice about increasing the budget for the health sector. We should focus our attention on improving our health care services, especially in a national referral hospital like Mulago.

However, year in, and year out, the budgetary allocations have always been skewed in favour of three lions’ shares. The lion’s share goes to security, defence and of course, sometimes, infrastructure developments. For once, we should get to know that life should always be put first. We would rather have our health care services improved than have our people dying in neighbouring countries – I do not want to mention, Mr Speaker.

Otherwise, I thank you for the opportunity.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, LOP. I agree with you that we have to focus on the health sector seriously. That is why Parliament passed a request here, where we are going to have one of the best centres of excellence for

cancer in the region. I saw yesterday – I was watching Prof. Orem, the head of the cancer institute, saying that what we are going to have can be found in only two countries on the African continent. Therefore, we are doing well.

Secondly, it is not just a matter of having them. This is not sufficient. President Hage has been sick in America. He returned – they were open when they were taking him; they announced it to the nation. They went to America to treat the cancer and, after, they brought him back to Namibia. Therefore, even Namibia, which has good facilities.

Honourable colleagues, please, I want us to be brief. I had allowed Hon. Acon – yes, in Parliament, we deal with big things; we do not deal with small things. (*Laughter*) Anyone who has something small, please, we shall handle them tomorrow. Today, let us deal with big things. (*Laughter*)

2.38

MR JULIUS ACON (NRM, Otuke East County, Otuke): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. My condolences to the people of Namibia.

Mr Speaker, on your communication on Tarehe Sita today, I would like to appreciate what the UPDF is doing. On Saturday, I drove from Otuke via Lira and Kiryandongo, where I found massive cleaning by the UPDF soldiers happening. My main concern would be, how could we step in to continue with the general cleaning as a country? When you look around, the whole environment is messed up with plastic bags and other kinds of things.

I think this is where the country would step in to let the general cleaning, which the UPDF introduced, to continue. It should be on a weekly basis, as other countries do. I think this would really make this country remain great. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. That is worth noting and it is very important. Hon. Luttaguzi?

2.39

MR PAULSON LUTTAMAGUZI (DP, Nakaseke South County, Nakaseke): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Members have appreciated the speed with which the President used to assent to the various Bills you have read. However, we are very concerned and want to know what happened to the Minimum Wage Bill. Where did it die from? Members that we represent are always asking about the Minimum Wage Bill. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. For clarity, did we process it here?

MR LUTTAMAGUZI: Yes, in one of the sittings, you promised us that it would be processed and that you would report to the House soon. However, we have waited up to now and nothing is happening. We are getting a lot of pressure from the people we represent.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is it me who promised?

MR LUTTAMAGUZI: Yes, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Sometimes I tap into the wisdom of my brother, Hon. Jonathan Odur. From campus days, he has been an encyclopaedia on some issues. I will go back and cross-check. Thank you for that reminder. Yes, Hon. Lumu, present your small matter. *(Laughter)*

2.41

MR RICHARD LUMU (DP, Mityana County South, Mityana): Incidentally, it is not a very small matter, Mr Speaker. As you were communicating, you talked about Hon. Chemaswet having deserted, but he also went back and cleared the issues.

I am facing pressure from veterans who served in the army and left honourably. These people are supposed to be paid but they told me – I can bring a list, if I am allowed to do so – that for the last two years, they have not been getting the benefits which they are supposed to get. I need clarification on that. Why are they not getting what belongs to them? Information –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, please, not on such a matter. Please, someone is – What is going on? Can we crosscheck our phones? I need peace here.

Hon. Lumu that should come in as a substantive matter, not a matter of reacting to a communication. I would request that you capture it well and we refer it to the Prime Minister to be among the issues she will handle on Thursday. Either they are being paid or not, and they explain.

Honourable colleagues, let me pick a lady – and I had allowed Hon. Kajwengye.

2.43

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. My condolences, too, to the people of Namibia upon the loss of a president who championed the women's cause during his leadership.

Namibia, during the gender audit that was conducted, was ranked 12th in the world among the countries with the highest representation of women in Parliament. We need to commend him for the legacy he has left and for respecting their constitution by not trying to amend it to seek a third term.

The successor who has been chosen to run for president in the November elections is actually a lady. Namibia, hopefully, if this lady goes through, will have a lady president for the first time. We need to thank him for that.

Mr Speaker – *(Interjections)* – I am talking about Namibia. As I conclude, one thing I also commend the people of Namibia for - and this is something that we have been trying to push so that we propose amendments - we are waiting for the Constitutional Review Commission but it is not coming. If a Chairman LCV dies now or in the year 2025, for heaven's sake, we shall still hold elections. How I wish we could amend our rules so that if we are close to the next elections and God takes Chairman LCV or whoever - *(Interjections)* - no, not a Member

of Parliament because we do not have vice chairpersons. How I wish that person takes over the seat so that we do not waste the taxpayers' money running into an election.

Mr Speaker, I pray you allow some of those motions that are pending in your office so that we make these amendments. It is wrong for a Chairman LCV to die and the Government has to spend billions to replace that chairperson. It would be better that if a person dies during the five-year term, the vice chairperson takes over so that we move on. Let us have those amendments for the good of this country. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Sarah, I pick your mind. Hon. Attorney-General, when are we receiving the proposed constitutional amendments? By the way, we do not know if they are there. I do not know whether we are forcing them on you or whether you have any plans. Can you give an update, Attorney-General?

2.46

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. One, if I understood my sister Hon. Sarah clearly, she said that there should be a time when the deputy takes over and there is no need for a by-election. Our law is clear. Let me use the word "principal" figuratively. If the principal passes on, say, the Chairperson LCV, and it is within six months before the general elections, you do not have a by-election. However, anything below that, the law requires a by-election.

Be that as it may –(*Interjections*)- if I may respond to what the Speaker is questioning, there is a conversation within the Executive. When the time is right, we shall come to you. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The reason I raised it, Attorney-General, is the dilemma we find ourselves in as presiding officers. Members are entitled to bring Private Members' Bills. The Minister of Justice and Constitutional

Affairs requested for them to be consolidated into one Bill which the Government is working on. The issue is if we say that at the convenient time -

MR KAFUZI: Mr Speaker, when a Constitutional Review Commission is established, it would be required to go around the country and collect people's views to see what we need to add, subtract, and improve, in our Constitution, some of which may require a referendum, all of which requires a lot of money and time.

Like I said, there is a conversation ongoing and I do understand that colleagues have issues they wish to introduce. My request is, through the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs even with the Law Reform Commission and Parliament itself; let us continue to collect people's views when they are sent to us. However, we also encourage them to be patient. When a review commission is put in place, they may be called upon to come and present their views. It is just a matter of time.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Attorney-General, I will be glad if you invite us next time to where the conversation is taking place. We are going to have further engagement about this, especially with regard to the several motions that we have for Private Members' Bills.

Unfortunately, on our side, the rules do not allow us to have a conversation internally as presiding officers. We wanted to move on in a more harmonised manner.

Hon. Okot Boniface? Procedure from Hon. Atkins?

MR KATUSABE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. On Thursday, with your usual eloquence and leadership, you directed the Minister of Works and Transport to come to this House today and reassure the country about the Mpondwe Bridge, which is more or less an international bridge, given its economic position.

Mr Speaker, I have scanned today's Order Paper, specifically item 3(i) and (ii). I do not know whether the omission is from the Clerks-at-Table or the minister.

My procedural issue is: wouldn't it be procedurally right for the minister to wrap in that item, given the fact that you gave clear and precise instructions, on Thursday? Much appreciated, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Atkins. That is what I expect the minister to do when he presents his statements because I did not make it stand on its own as a substantive item. It was mainly about a commitment so I hope the minister is going to give us an update on it once he handles these statements. Hon. Boniface Okot -

2.51

MR BONIFACE OKOT (NRM, Youth Representative, Northern): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We are on matters of national importance, honourable colleagues.

MR BONIFACE OKOT: Mr Speaker, in 2021, the Uganda Development Bank (UDB) launched a special credit programme targeting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), youth, and women-led and women-owned enterprises. However, just like many young people, I am very concerned about the performance of this special credit programme which is targeting the special interest groups.

My prayer, Mr Speaker, is that the Government provides to this House comprehensive information on the beneficiaries, the economic impact, and the regional equity of this special programme under the UDB.

Secondly, that the Government ensures that the public has adequate information and access to UDB which is very scarce. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, are you ready to answer?

2.54

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (YOUTH AND CHILDREN AFFAIRS) (Ms Sarah Mateke): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank my colleague for asking that pertinent question.

This programme is not directly implemented by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. I request that you give me more time so that I can get the details of this program and I will bring the report to you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Government Chief Whip, you wanted to say something about it?

2.54

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Denis Obua): Mr Speaker, Hon. Okot, the Youth Member of Parliament for Northern Region, raises a very fundamental question. On non-activity implemented by Uganda Development Bank (UDB) that falls under the supervision of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, may I pray, if it pleases you, Mr Speaker, that you give the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development two weeks to provide the details that Hon. Okot has requested for, and the report is tabled for debate on the floor of Parliament.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think two weeks is sufficient, Hon. Okot. Sure, two weeks granted, Government Chief Whip. Hon. Kaaya Christine?

2.55

MS CHRISTINE KAAAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Mr Speaker, thank you so much. I stand on a matter of national importance concerning the dropped maize produce prices. We have seed and we have produce. We have seed and grain, but the price for grain currently is at Shs 400. This is far below the projected income statement for producing a kilogram of maize, which at the moment, is rated at between Shs 1,000 to Shs 1,500.

Mr Speaker, during the Prime Minister's field trips that availed seeds to the farmers, a kilogram of Longe 10H was going for Shs 20,000, which one kilogram can only produce 20 kilograms. Look at that expense on seed alone. Then we have pesticides, fertilisers and post-harvest handling expenses. The price of Shs 400 is too low.

The same applies to vanilla in Kiboga. Vanilla is currently going for Shs 5,000 and you can only get the Shs 5,000 when you bring vanilla to Kampala.

My prayers are that we are an unaligned country. We are a mixed economy. Can the ministry at least come up with a break-even price; offer our farmers a break-even price, and then establish storage facilities where this maize can be kept for some time? Otherwise, seeing our farmers spend on inputs and then earn as little as Shs 400 is very shameful. The demand for maize as the most consumed food group here in Uganda is still high.

Another prayer, Mr Speaker, is for the minister to open up. Who are the exporters of maize in this country? We need to open up more and more. These are the people who will find competitive prices. Otherwise, when we close and leave a few people to export maize, that is why they can offer whatever they want and you have to accept the price regardless of whether it is too low because you have no other option. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. In the 10th Parliament, we had the same situation. I think it had gone as low as around Shs 200, and the Government came in to intervene. I remember Hon. Bahati played a very critical role at that time. Hon. Bahati?

2.57

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The prices of these commodities are not only affecting maize, but also we have a situation with tea. The prices of tea and cotton have also gone down and we

are operating in a liberalised economy where the price is determined by the forces of demand and supply. In other words, depending on that invisible hand, which we know sometimes, is a dirty hand.

Previously we had come up with a subsidy for the prices of maize, but given the situation we are in currently, as the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has elaborated again and again, it is something that we have to discuss as Cabinet and come up with a new immediate solution to see whether we can help our farmers to stabilise the prices.

So, within two weeks, Mr Speaker, we can discuss this matter –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of order?

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The honourable colleague brought a matter of national concern to the Floor to be able to address people's issues and now the honourable minister has put us in a state of hopelessness, enumerating a number of products whose prices have really gone low and telling us that we are in a free market economy.

Is the honourable minister in order to put the country in a state of hopelessness so that people get to know that even the Government cannot help? Is he in order?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I will just request the country not to accept anyone who puts them in a state of hopelessness because some people might volunteer to be hopeless. *(Laughter)* Honourable minister, conclude.

MR BAHATI: Mr Speaker, I was stating the situation we are in and proposing what the Government needs to do before the honourable member came in before I finished the sentence. Also, we have a duty to be honest to our citizens, not to give them false hope. But on this particular matter, we are going to sit, as the Cabinet, and see whether there could be some possible immediate solutions to the situation. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Mwijukye had a closed matter. Let me first handle the Members who came to my office over this same matter.

3.01

MR FRANCIS MWIJUKYE (FDC, Buhweju County, Buhweju): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. The matter of national importance I have concerns tea. However, it has two dimensions. Whereas we have a problem of tea prices generally in Uganda, we also have a problem of bad governance and management at Igara Growers Tea Company, and my concern is about that.

Since 1969, Buhweju and Igara have worked together under the Igara Growers Tea Company and owned Igara Tea Factory that is in Igara. But in 2010, the farmers of Buhweju applied to the Government for support and started up an independent tea factory; Buhweju Tea Factory in Buhweju. Igara Tea Company acted as a guarantor and a promoter. However, the guarantor and promoter has refused to grant ownership to the people of Buhweju and they want to continue owning the factory that is in Buhweju. Consequently, there is now a conflict; there is a crisis.

The farmers in Buhweju, for the last six months, are not picking their tea. This has caused anxiety and panic; it has caused loss of money and loss of interest. The other day I saw a farmer who was uprooting his tea farm, and yet the Government has a lot of interest because in 2010, the Government invested money in Buhweju to start the factory.

Two, the Government has been giving us tea seedlings so, in such a situation, the Government cannot see farmers lose money and does not do something about it. I am sure Hon. Biraaro and Hon. Mushemeza know much about this because we have always talked about that factory and the crisis in Igara.

Mr Speaker, we are concerned, as leaders, and we think that the Government must come in and sort out the issue of ownership of this factory. Secondly, there is a need to deal with

the challenge of mismanagement that has further exacerbated the problem of prices because in Buhweju, I think it is about Shs 250 per kilogram. For me, that is a very big problem.

We think that the Government must come in now. I see Hon. Biraaro wants to say something. If *-(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see these people of Buhweju have decided to make it their day. Since we are celebrating Tarehe Sita, let it be their Tarehe Sita. Hon. Biraaro –

3.04

MR EPHRAIM BIRAARO (NRM, Buhweju West County, Buhweju): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Buhweju was a big contributor towards the liberation of Uganda because it was a training camp for the Tarehe Sita liberationists. I thank my honourable colleague for raising this matter. We have what we call the bona fide farmers and bona fide shareholders and in the greater Bushenyi, they are shared between the current districts of Mitooma, Bushenyi, Sheema, Buhweju, and River Rubirizi.

It so happens, Mr Speaker, that the factory that was commissioned in 1969 was based in Igara area. Buhweju remained pending with the registered company, which was registered in 1974. However, later on, there was a lack of funds and in 2008 -2010, I was a member of the board in Igara, and we asked the Government to finance Buhweju.

In 2004, His Excellency the President visited the site, which was just a playground, and he offered to help Buhweju to put up a factory and the Government financed all the civil works. The total funding from the Government was about Shs 14 billion and Igara, together with Buhweju, Mitooma and Sheema, contributed machinery.

Currently, Mr Speaker, to be very quick, the farmers in Buhweju have been molested by being denied payments on a monthly basis. Currently, we are demanding payments for four months.

Secondly, there is no representation from Buhweju on the board and management of Igara. They handpick their people; we have no democracy.

Thirdly, the factory in Buhweju lacks servicing and it collapses day in, day out such that now, the farmers no longer pluck their tea leaves because their factory is down.

Fourthly, there is harassment of employees originating from Buhweju. If you have an ID showing Buhweju, you are harassed in that area.

Fifthly, there is the hiring of police. Whenever farmers want to sit and settle their matters, a handful of managers at Igara hire police to chase the farmers from sites in their own homes.

Mr Speaker, Parliament should investigate and settle the ownership problem of the Buhweju Tea Factory since the Government also invested in it.

Secondly, we should investigate the mismanagement of Igara as a company so that the economy is salvaged because what happens in that company is that we employ a lot of Ugandans. Everybody becomes affected and our export potential reduces. Remember, we bring in about \$100 million per annum from tea exports from that company alone. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, we should be very cautious when we are talking about investigating such companies in the open. You might think you are doing a service, but you end up crippling them completely and they never recover. Because you are going to expose a lot to the competitors, to the would-be funders and supporters, and you create a state of panic and fear about how they are being run and all that - It is always better if we first give the Minister responsible a chance to come and address - We demand him to do his job. So honourable minister –

3.06

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVE (TRADE) (Mr David Bahati): Mr Speaker, in the circumstances, I am going to hold a stakeholders' meeting next week, and then I will be in touch with the Members of Parliament from the region. They will also attend and we will find a solution to this.

However, the good news for the country is that through Elite Group; a Dubai-based company, we are setting up extra factories in Buhweju, Kigezi in Rukiga, Toro region, and Zombo. Some of these solutions can be helpful for the farmers but next week, we shall have a stakeholders' meeting. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I know that this is an area I have been talking to some of the elders about. Give it as much attention as quickly as possible before it explodes further and kills the whole tea sector within the region. Hon. Eddie Kwizera –

3.09

MR EDDIE KWIZERA (NRM, Bukimibiri County, Kisoro): Mr Speaker, the matter of urgent importance is that the pensioners in Kisoro are not being paid, yet pension gets first call on the Budget and is total payment.

May I be informed by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, because the pension is also decentralised? When these teachers go to the district, they are told that there is no money for pension.

For over six months, they have not received their pay and if the Finance Ministry says there is no money again then it is high time that the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development prepares a statement on the state of the economy of this country because we have been coming here and he says there is no money. We want to get an assurance that those statutory payments are not interfered with. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic

Development or Minister for Public Service, whoever feels is in a better position - Once public service has money, it always pays.

3.10

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

(Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This matter concerning Kisoro was first brought to my attention by Hon. Sarah Mateke. I checked and found out that initially, we had not, like any other - we had an understatement of over Shs 300 billion. In the Supplementary Schedule No.1, we provided adequately for pension and gratuity and this money is part of the release for quarter three.

I am looking for the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of Kisoro. When I get the CAO, I will explain to the CAO how this should be handled.

Mr Speaker, I know we want to bring matters concerning our people to the Floor of Parliament, but Hon. Kwizera is my neighbour. I wish he would discuss this matter with me and we resolve it before we even come here.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Musasizi, the question will be, "Are you a good neighbour?" (*Laughter*) It seems you do not invite him for good things at your place so you are not a good neighbour. Anyway, what Hon. Musasizi is saying is what I have talked about several times; that we can take advantage of these ministers. They are our colleagues; they are Members of Parliament, okay? If you feel you can share with the minister, the better. Hon. John Faith Magolo –

3.12

MR JOHN FAITH MAGOLO (NRM, Bungokho County North, Mbale): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. In 2018, the Department of Surveys and Mapping in the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development released a report on the reopening of boundaries of the Mount Elgon National Park. The findings have been discussed with several stakeholders, including the Office of

the Prime Minister, local government, Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities and a way forward was agreed upon to maintain the status quo regarding the 1993 boundary. That is the time when the national park was gazetted.

A few days ago, communities in Bubyangu, Wanale, Budwale, Bududa and parts of the Bugisu Subregion faced a number of challenges, more so when a team came and surveyed using GPS. Shortly after this, people started cutting the trees that were on the already established boundaries. This has created a lot of animosity and restlessness in the community.

Mr Speaker, my prayers are that:

1. The Uganda Wildlife Authority respects and adheres to the arrangement agreed upon concerning the boundaries of Mount Elgon National Park, and protects the trees that demarcate the boundaries;
2. The local leaders should be informed whenever there is an activity along the park boundary to avoid suspicion; and
3. Those involved in destroying the boundary that demarcates this national park be brought to book. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleague, you are referring to a certain middle point agreement that was reached on maintaining A, B, C, and D, but Parliament is not privy to this agreement. Because of that, the minister needs to bring a statement on this issue.

I know it is a highly explosive issue that touches the whole of Elgon, Bugisu and Sebei. Hon. John Faith Magolo hosted me on top of Mountain Wanale and nearly forced me to make commitments which I could not fulfil. As they were asking me questions about that issue and I was trying to meander around, I heard some people asking whether I had already done *Imbalu* and they were coming closer to me. (*Laughter*) I immediately said I would sort out the issues and I took off.

Let the minister, in two weeks, bring a statement on this issue, so that we take up this

issue seriously. It is a very critical issue for Bugisu and Sebei and we have to sort it out. Hon. Emmanuel Omoding –

3.16

MR EMMANUEL OMODING (Independent, Serere County, Serere): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to raise matters of national importance concerning Serere County. We have issues of power in that area. In 2017, the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) launched the construction of a power line from Ochapa Town Council to Kateta Subcounty in Serere District.

Around 2020, *Mzee* George William Okago, in Ochapa Town Council, together with 43 other people, took REA to Soroti Court under Civil Case No. 20 of 2020. The reason for the dispute was that REA planted the pole in their land without their consent. The matter is still pending in Soroti Court.

In 2021, the power line from Ochapa Town Council to Katete Subcounty was commissioned by REA and Umeme, and the beneficiaries started using power. In February 2023, Umeme turned off power because of the pending case in the High Court. It is now about 12 months without power.

The matter is already in court; it has been moving back and forth, but this is affecting our people. Access to electricity is at the heart of socio-economic development and impacts a wide range of development indicators, including health, education, gender, equality, livelihoods and poverty eradication.

As a result of unresolved dispute, the following institutions have been affected –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, give us your prayers because it is a long list.

MR OMODING: My prayer is that this matter must be handled immediately because health centres, schools and businesses have been affected. The other issue is that some people got loans through *Emyooga* and we are saying,

“We want to eradicate poverty”. These people have now got businesses lying idle. They bought welding machines and opened salons but are not operating them, yet they need to pay back the loans.

There is also a lot of load shedding and businesses are being affected. If this prayer on load shedding can be also handled, I would really appreciate it for the people of Serere County. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. When the honourable colleague referred to the matter being before the court, of course, we have to be cognisant of the sub judice rule under Rule 73. This is not a matter for us to debate; it is a matter for the minister to help the community. Government Chief Whip, do you want to say something?

3.19

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obuga): Mr Speaker, cognisant of the provision of Rule 73, as you quoted, and the fact that the Member stated that this case is pending in court, the court proceedings should not stop the *wananchi* or the people from benefiting from Government services.

I would request that I touch base with the honourable member, link him up with the Minister of Energy and see how this matter can be resolved such that as the people wait for the pending case in court, they can get the desired services from the Government. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Hon. Rutahigwa –

3.20

DRELISA RUTAHIGWA (NRM, Rukungiri Municipality, Rukungiri): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My issue is on the Rukungiri-Ishasha-Kanungu Road. The people of Rukungiri and Kanungu appreciate the Government for tarmacking this road. The project is nearing its end but there are a number of town roads in Rukungiri Municipality, Bikurungu Town Council, Kanungu, Kihhi and Nyamirama Town Council that are not done, and it has

taken long. When you speak to the contractor, he says that he is waiting for funding. They tell you they are waiting for an agreement for those sections to be worked on. We are worried that these roads will not be worked on.

I pray that the Ministry of Works and Transport, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Uganda National Roads Authority and us, the stakeholders, have a meeting to understand what is going on because the contractor and the engineers on site say they have requested for money from the finance ministry but it has not communicated to them about it. We are worried that the contractors are going to wind up and leave when they have not worked on the town roads. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, were these roads part of the scope? Please address the concerns of the Member; I was just asking whether they were part of the scope.

3.22

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (TRANSPORT) (Mr Fred Byamukama): Thank you, Mr Speaker. We are aware of the issue which the honourable colleague has raised. I would like to inform the House that we have reached a level where the Ministry of Works cannot commit the Government any further because the contractor is even demanding for the works he is talking about.

We are engaging the finance ministry to give us money such that we can engage the contractor to proceed and to do these town roads. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is an issue you need to take seriously. The reason is that when a contractor is already mobilised in the area, it is much cheaper. Otherwise, you are now going to get a new contractor who will go through a new mobilisation and procurement process and all that. (*Hon. Kaberuka rose*) Hon. Kaberuka, is it the same?

3.22

MR JAMES KABERUKA (NRM, Kinkizi County West, Kanungu): Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity. I would like to thank Hon. Rutahigwa for the presentation. We were together in the 10th Parliament and we know the scope.

We know that this House is privy to even the amount of money. I do not know what the minister means when he says that the Ministry of Finance is not releasing money because the loan that was taken by this House had two loads, Mbale-Lwakhakha and Rukungiri-Kanungu, and it was about Shs 400 billion.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rukungiri-Kanungu-Kihihi-Ishasha.

MR JAMES KABERUKA: The scope for Kanungu is known and the town nodes were part of the scope. We have been engaging but there is a problem that the Ministry of Finance must explain.

How can a loan that we have taken as a country get lost? To where? If you were to have variations, to what extent can variations accumulate to over 100 per cent?

Even in the contractual procedures, variations in contracts have limits. You cannot tell me that the money got consumed and therefore the Ministry of Finance cannot release the money that we are taking interest as a Government.

Through you, we have the Minister of Finance, Minister of Works and Uganda National Road Authority (UNRA) to have an agreement on how to move forward because there is some conspiracy on this matter. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister in charge of roads, are you itching to say something?

MR BYAMUKAMA: Mr Speaker, at the time the contract was signed, cement was at Shs 22,000 but currently cement is at Shs 31,000. We have operational prices on that project. However, I do request that you give us time to sit with the Ministry of Finance together

with UNRA to come up with a comprehensive statement explaining what he is talking about so that we look at it as the House and see a way forward. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, take your seat. We are in politics on some of these matters and politics is the management of perceptions. The people in Rukungiri and Kanungu do not understand all these things we are discussing here.

You launched a road and said that the African Development Bank had financed it. Yet we are always sure that money of African Development Bank is available to finish the road. Whatever happened in-between I do not know but I would guide you to call a meeting.

3.26

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

(Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, indeed we are in politics and need to be careful about what we tell the public through this platform called Parliament. Last week, one of our colleagues came here and said that the road in Rubanda is impassable, which was a lie. I am also from the same subregion.

We need to satisfy ourselves that indeed it is true that the scope of work which was to be done is what Hon. Kaberuka and Dr Rutahigwa were talking about, before we talk about the crisis of variation and other things.

I pray that you allow us time. Let me check with Ministry of Finance, together with my colleague. We shall satisfy ourselves on the scope before we can determine the way forward. Otherwise, we risk telling lies here and then we get into a political crisis.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, in Parliament, they do not tell lies; they give “wrong information”. *(Laughter)* Okay? Those lies are intentional.

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, we risk giving wrong information. I want to thank Hon.

Namugga for correcting me on this. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. That is why when I was calling the minister, my first question was: Was it part of the scope? So, that one is not accused.

Honourable minister, I was still guiding when Hon. Musasizi gave us very good information. You need a meeting with the Ministry of Finance – first put the Ministry of Finance aside - with UNRA and the Members of Parliament from the area because the contract is known. You first give clear information - where was it started, where it ends and its current status.

UNRA has a project manager, contract manager; all those details are available. Kindly do that tomorrow, so that on Thursday I can talk to the MPs if they are not satisfied, then we will continue.

Leader of the Opposition you had an issue you wanted to raise.

3.29

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

(Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Yesterday schools reopened for the first term and we have been getting calls from many of these schools regarding the capitation grant.

This money has not gone to the schools, as it should be. Some UPE schools are yet to open; the capitation grant is money that is meant to empower the operations of the school - pay utility bills like electricity, water, and scholastic materials - and the general operations of these schools.

Once this money is not availed to the schools, how do we expect them to operate? As I am saying, some have not opened yet because of this challenge. I do not know why we delay sending this money and want it to go along the way, yet we knew about when the term opens.

The money should go first for the school to be able to open and operate. It would be prudent to establish whether it is a challenge with the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education or

Ministry of Local Government, where this is habited? It would be important to know and find a very quick remedy for these schools to operate.

Relatedly, again this capitation grant - and it is good that we are handling the budget process - it is too little money. When you have Shs 20,000 per Universal Primary Education (UPE) pupil per year - not per term but per year - and expect good standards from these schools - We expect these children to operate and compete at the international level; it is not possible. The magic will not happen.

I hope that we can review this because if we are talking about securing the future of these young people, you secure it by investing in education. This capitation grant does not make sense at all.

Finally, again related to schools, we have been reached out to - and I am sure a good number of colleagues here - by teachers in schools; arts teachers.

Government passed a policy and said; “We want to focus on sciences.” That is a good thing because we are in the artificial intelligence (AI) age. However, it is problematic when we think that arts are not important. You have a science teacher earning about Shs 4 million shillings. That is at the degree level. Their arts counterpart is earning Shs 1.2 million. They are both teachers at the same level. They teach the same hours, they sit in the same staff room and we expect them to operate well. It cannot happen.

These arts teachers feel marginalised and yet we expect a good output from them. We expect them to teach for the same amount of time that the science teachers do teach and when they do not deliver, we complain. I think it is high time the Government revisited this.

Yes, let us focus on the sciences - in fact, I think that the best way to focus on science is; one, to pay the teachers better – but not just the science teachers. However, as you are trying to do that, a number of these Universal

Secondary Education (USE) schools do not have laboratories. Some of these students meet test tubes, burettes or Bunsen burners for the first time in a final examination.

You have been seeing the performance of these Government-funded schools. It is poor, simply because we are not putting our money where our mouth is. Hopefully, the Government can wake up to the reality of these issues. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the Opposition. Minister for finance, last time you said you had released – Hon. Kabuusu, what is the issue? You rarely disturb me. *(Laughter)*

3.33

MR MOSES KABUUSU (FDC, Kyamuswa County, Kalangala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. In a related development, I have an issue in the islands. Earlier, there used to be fewer children because parents always went to work without the children. On some islands, only men went there without the women. Women would – *(Interjections)* Do not confuse me.

Now, the population in the islands has increased. The schools that had been built in those days cannot accommodate the increased number of children – and the facilities that are there. Some local governments that have local revenue can contribute facilities such as desks to schools. However, for some, because of their geographical location and the fishing that has collapsed, we are overwhelmed by requests for schools, scholastic materials, desks and so on.

I would like the ministry - whether in charge of education or finance - that sends the capitation grant - to come in and help these schools in the islands. Island communities have the same conditions - whether in Koome, Namayingo or Buvuma. Our schools need to be helped to be at the level of the other schools on the mainland. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister of Education and Sports is not here; so, I am cautious about opening up the matter.

3.36

MS LAURA KANUSHU (NRM, PWD Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I just want to add my voice because we are talking about Government schools. I think, about six months or a year ago, you asked the Minister of Education and Sports to bring a report regarding the performance of schools of children with disabilities, because they had failed miserably.

In the recently released Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) results, schools of children with disabilities have failed again, miserably. I did not see the report, which you asked the ministry to bring here.

It still goes back to the issue of funding. Mr Speaker, 99 per cent of schools for children with disabilities are Government-aided. There are no special needs teachers or materials that speak to the needs of these learners. I think that, as a Government, we have decided that students with disabilities should not go to school or, if they do, they should all fail.

Mr Speaker, how can we be here saying that we are a Parliament of the people when we are not concerned about the most vulnerable learners? How can you deny a blind student braille material? How can you deny a deaf student a teacher who can use sign language to speak to that student so that they can be at the same level?

Mr Speaker, when you give directives in this Parliament, is it for a show? What is it for? It is now a year. Other results have come. Students are failing. We are raising a generation that will be a burden to this country. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. On Tuesday, I need a statement in regard to these issues that have been raised, especially the issue of the performance of students with disabilities, as far as examinations are concerned.

Honourable colleagues, let me not risk opening this matter further. Maybe on Tuesday, we can have more discussion about it when the statement comes.

Honourable minister, did you want to say something on the capitation grant and affirmative action for the islanders?

3.38

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I am only responsible for the money side. I want to speak to it because that is where I can confidently speak.

In quarter three, we released Shs 134 billion for the capitation grant. This money was released to the various local governments. What we expect the local governments to do, after the release, is to warrant.

Sometimes, the districts take their time. Some schools have already received, while others are still in the process of warranting and other things and they will continue to receive as and when they are ready. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: On Tuesday when that issue of schools for people with disabilities is being handled, let the Minister of Education and Sports also update us on the same. Next item.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE STATUS OF UPGRADING THE NEBBI-GOLI-PAIDHA-ZOMBO-ZEU-WARR-VURRA-LIA-ODROMACAKU ROAD

3.40

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (TRANSPORT) (Mr Fred Byamukama): Mr Speaker, I am here to give a statement on the status of Nebbi-Goli-Paidha-Zombo-Zeu-Warr-Vurra-Lia-Odromacaku Road, which is 119 kilometres. This is a national road in West Nile. It connects the districts of Nebbi, Zombo and Arua.

The road is an important international route used to access Uganda's borders with eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It is important for agriculture, trade and security purposes, providing access to the border areas near DRC.

Planned interventions on the road

Mr Speaker, the feasibility study and detailed design for the upgrading of the road to bituminous standard was completed in 2017. The road was included on the list of roads prioritised for upgrading in the National Development Plan (NDP) III. However, due to the limited resources available in the medium-term expenditure framework, the initiation of the road upgrading works was not commenced.

Mr Speaker, the Government has made efforts to secure financing for upgrading the road. The Nebbi-Goli (19km) section of the road was submitted to the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) for funding. The preparation appraisal missions for the project are expected to be completed in the Financial Year 2023/2024. If approved by the financier, the works will commence in the Financial Year 2024/2025.

The planned upgrading of Goli-Paidha-Zombo-Warr-Vurra (100km) section of the road project was submitted to the African Development Bank for inclusion in the Indicative Operation Pipeline (IOP), which includes the projects to be considered for funding in the period from 2022 to 2026. The works on the project will commence depending on confirmation of financing.

The road is currently being maintained by UNRA as a gravel road under the UNRA Arua station. The Goli-Paidha-Zombo section of the road is currently maintained under a framework contract for periodic maintenance.

The Zombo–Vurra–Arua section of the road is currently maintained under Force Account.

Mr Speaker, in conclusion, the Nebbi-Goli–Paidha-Zombo-Warr-Vurra road is an important link and was prioritised for upgrading in the Third National Development Plan (NDP III). However, due to limited resources, the proposed upgrading of the road was deferred for implementation under future plans.

The feasibility study and the detailed engineering designs for the road upgrading were completed and efforts are being made to get financing for the proposed upgrading. In the meantime, Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) will ensure that the road is maintained in a motorable state to ensure continued connectivity in the region.

Mr Speaker, on the same note, as you had earlier guided, I would like to make an additional response to the Mpondwe Bridge. This Mpondwe Bridge is after Bwera and we had a bridge which had been made using metallic culverts but these culverts were vandalised by our own who wanted scrap. We realised it later but we did emergency works last year and currently, we have come up with the designs of the concrete box culverts, which is 30 metres long with a high fill at a contract of Shs 1.7 billion.

We have our contractor who was doing other projects in the region, that is, Armpass Technical Services Ltd, that is mobilising to start on the work and within a period of four months from now, that bridge will be finished. I beg to submit. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. On such, I allow only the Member who raised the matter. Of course, my Commissioner of Parliament has a- Yes Hon. Lawrence Songa?

3.45

MR LAWRENCE SONGA (NRM, Ora County, Zombo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the honourable minister for the statement. Like I said before, if there is any road which is having a higher return on investment, it is that road. It fits well with the policy of connecting all the border posts of Uganda to tarmac roads because we need revenue.

The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development here is talking about lack of funds for many things. We have an opportunity to raise money from Goli, Padea, Vurra, Lia and Odramacaku border posts and there are three other potential border areas that can be developed.

I want to give this additional information so that these stakeholders the minister mentioned - like the African Development Bank, Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) based in Khartoum, and the people from Nebbi, Zombo, and Arua district or Vurra need to have a meeting to fast-track to see that we get a loan for this very important road.

This area is highly - we call it actually the “food basket” for West Nile. It has a lot of coffee, the Government is promoting tea in that area; we have a lot of fruits, matooke - all these things are supplying the greater north.

Related to that, we have many of the forest reserves; talk about the plantation forests. We have Lendu, Okavurero, Awang and Ossi. These are very important investments of the Government.

In addition to those, we have two dams on River Nyagak. Since the road is in poor shape and the area is agro-based, it is now difficult for many people to benefit from agriculture. As a result, agriculture is not helping them. They have gone to environmental degradation and it is affecting two dams, that is, Nyagak I and Nyagak III. In fact, this is why you see Nyagak I is producing only 1.7 megawatts of electricity because of degradation. We need the road so that people can move away from environmental degradation.

On the revenue side, Shs 3 billion is the estimated market in the DR Congo. With these four borders plus the three more potential borders, if they are open, we can generate a lot of money from there.

Accidents on these roads are very many. Breakdown of vehicles moving on these roads is too much yet the cost of maintenance is very high.

On the issue of health and emergency, the whole area does not have any referral hospital, apart from the regional referral hospital in Arua. If the road is in bad shape, how are we going to rescue our people in case of an emergency? You may recall that in 2021, when Zombo was

attacked two times by bandits from the DR Congo, one of the reasons was - they tried all other alternatives but there was no market for their produce; so they were tempted to go and join those people in the DR Congo.

We quelled that one because we never wanted it. But even the Uganda People’s Defence Force (UPDF) could not maintain or contain the bandits because there were no roads to cross with those machines. There are no bridges. Therefore, we need that road. This road was pledged by the President in 2010. He repeated it throughout all the elections. We have reminded him in writing and also verbally.

In conclusion, the market is available if we can develop this road. From Zeu, for example, to the border of the Central African Republic, is only 750 kilometres. Imagine the market we are going to tap into in that area. Therefore, my prayer remains that we must fast track the loan with the African Development Bank, and the loan with BADEA so that we can do this very important road.

The money we shall generate there will help to do internal roads in Kiboga, Nakaseke, Luwero, and other parts of Uganda. This is a very important road for the security and development of Uganda. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Esther Afoyochan and then Hon. Gabriel Okumu. I can see every Member of Parliament from West Nile wants to speak. We cannot manage; I will pick only three.

3.49

MSESTHERAFOYOCHAN(NRM, Woman Representative, Zombo): Mr Speaker, thank you so much for this opportunity. When the minister read this report - even without reading it, I knew exactly what he would say. These are the same things they have told us ever since we joined Parliament. It is now two and a half years into our term and the report is the same.

Mr Speaker, the ministry is not interested in dealing with this issue at any angle. They are not interested in looking for any forms of

money for this road. If we do not put our feet down in this House, we are going to continue complaining about this road that has killed very many women from northern Uganda because the majority of northern Uganda picks food from Zombo but because of this road, women are dying every day on that road. Yet, the ministry does not have any form of interest. They are not bothered, probably because where they come from, the roads are better.

I want us to look at Zombo from a perspective that this is a district that relies heavily on agriculture; nothing else. God gave us fertile land. Only infrastructure should not frustrate my people to remain poor. I speak this with a lot of pain because I know that every person in Zombo today is watching and wants to get a solution to this.

We implore you, Mr Speaker, as Members from Zombo, to help us come in so we can fast-track this loan. If we can borrow for every other thing, why not for the road of Zombo?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, it is very important to look at the projections because the way it is presented here, there is nothing the Members of Parliament can go back and tell their people. You need to be a bit specific so we know whether we are succeeding on a loan or we have to look through our own resources and start on that road and whether it is in a phased manner or not.

Hon. Gabriel - Honourable colleagues from West Nile, if you could use a minute quickly without repeating what the other colleagues have said.

3.52

MR GABRIEL OKUMU (NRM, Okoro County, Zombo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First, as a historical businessman, I would like to say that we have lost a lot of money in terms of the wear and tear of the vehicles. Our people have always fetched low prices of coffee because of inaccessibility to the area.

Above all, we are near the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo, which is

endowed with numerous resources. So, we actually lose benefitting from resources from the Democratic Republic of Congo because the people now use Arua, which has now become a city.

Secondly, I would like to – my colleagues did not mention about the bridges. In 2017-2018, Government embarked on the six bridges along this road. The Wariki Bridge was made complete with half a kilometre on both sides. When we came to this Parliament in 2021, Odrua Bridge was launched, but it was only cleared and it was not worked on. We have four other bridges which completely - money was released and when we investigated, they said money was misappropriated.

We would like to ask the Government to be sympathetic to the Alur people. Many problems which my colleagues have enumerated have actually caused our people to be poor.

The poor education – if I talk of *matooke*, the *matooke* from West Nile, from Zombo is slightly bigger than the *matooke* we get from Ankole. I have worked in Ankole and I have worked also in Zombo. We would like the road to be made so that we also begin supplying the *matooke* here in Kampala. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Okumu Gabriel was one of the biggest coffee traders from Greater Bushenyi. He has stayed in our area for long; he is sure about what he is saying. Dr Noah.

3.52

DR NOAH MUSA (Independent, Koboko North County, Koboko): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The minister has just said that in the meantime, the road will be maintained. As we speak now, you know that there were no releases for the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) in the third quarter.

Last week, I spoke with the regional manager of UNRA in Arua, regarding one of the roads in my constituency – the Keri-Lima-Kerua Road. That road has not been worked on for about three years. They started it last quarter, but they could not finish it because they do not

have money. I would like the minister to clarify when that road will be maintained.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Paparu?

3.55

MS LILLIAN PAPARU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to join my neighbours from Zombo and Nebbi, to make a comment about this road.

When we first came to Parliament, I remember when the late Rt Hon. Jacob Oulanyah was still alive - May his soul rest in peace. He made a comment here that this is one road where he sees a human being walking on foot, being stuck, and has to be removed by other people. That day he said, while he is in this chair, this is one road he wants to see tarmacked and he personally went there, got stuck, and felt the experience himself.

Mr Speaker, the people of West Nile - I do not want to narrow it to one place - and that is why Hon. Songa said that it is the region that supplies food to the greater part of West Nile.

As Hon. Afoyochan said, we have lost lives on that road. When the minister was saying that UNRA is maintaining that road, if you went there now, you cannot even believe that that is a national road. When it is raining, people get stuck, and they have to be there for days, even for a week. When you are carrying things like tomatoes or ripe bananas, they rot.

We are here saying we want to make Uganda better, and we want to eradicate poverty. Mr Speaker, if that road is not worked upon, it is like we are not here. We sit here to appropriate and this road is not worked upon. It is very unfortunate. Minister, I think you are just romancing your words, with due respect; there is no answer you have given us. We have not got clear feedback.

Before we came to Parliament, I remember last term, they even said contracts were already given for this road. When we came back, we

started asking - we have been meeting the Minister of Works and Transport. We started asking, where are the copies of these contracts, you said you gave. Up to today, we have not seen them. So, do not take people for granted. Ugandans - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I went to that place, up to Paidha, and I was hosted by our Commissioner, Hon. Okumu and Hon. Mavunjina. It is really horrible. That road is really horrible. In fact, it is a road which has locked the potential of that area - of West Nile - from growing.

If it could be worked on, it is a road that will open so many opportunities for that area. When I came back, I must repeat, I had ever said it, I had to report in Cabinet because I had promised the people that I would ensure I bring it in Cabinet, and I did that.

Honourable minister, by me bringing all these concerns it is very simple. The answer you have given; you are playing it very safe. You are playing it extremely safe. I do not know how you would say you are going to do two roads in this country and this road is not among the two roads. I do not know what would be - The Leader of Opposition, you will come in. Just allow me - I had picked Hon. Leku. I also picked the Member for Jonam County. I am picking MPs from the area, honourable colleagues.

3.59

MR JOEL LEKU (NRM, Terego West County, Terego): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join the Members of Parliament from Zombo - actually, the President calls that road a security road.

Relatedly, I will take you to the road of Katrini to Nyadri. This is a UNRA road just like the one of Koboko. This road was worked on by UNRA more than three years ago but right now it is impassable. I have moved to the UNRA office in Arua and the one of Kampala. They told me the design is ready, it is in the computer, but there is no road. This road passes my home.

I can no longer go home. I am requesting - I stay in Katrini. This road is totally impassable; even the clergy, the Bishop and the community talk about it. It is very disgusting.

I am asking the minister to give us the status on this road. They said that by November, the road would be worked on. Then they said January, but up to now, there is nothing that has been done on the road. Can we get the status of this road? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for Jonam County?

4.00

MR EMMANUEL ONGIERTHO (FDC, Jonam County, Pakwach): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. Being a rare species in the Greater Nebbi, allow me to bring a political angle to this that my colleagues may find difficult to bring.

Mr Speaker, if you notice, you will realise that MPs are being changed year in, and year out in the Greater Nebbi and that road is one of the reasons why. What people say - people have a general belief that Museveni is a very good man who wants to do a lot for the people; it is the people we send to him to talk to him - because they believe as MPs, we are sent to talk to the President, and because they think we do not talk to the President well, they will now push us off and get other people.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: But how come you members of the Opposition have been winning, and the ones of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) have been losing?

MR ONGIERTHO: That is why I am bringing politics because they believe that I can tell the truth.

Mr Speaker, I want people to know that recently there was supposed to have been a demonstration on that road. What stopped the people from the demonstration was that Minister Musa Ecweru had to run there and we went together, and people said; "It is okay."

Hon. Ecweru worked in Greater Nebbi and they have trust in him. They said, "Let us cool down because he is looked at as our son and he has come; so, let us cool down and wait."

They have waited and their language is changing, people are beginning to say that maybe it is not our sons who are failing to speak to the President but it is probably the President who is failing to speak to them. And now, it looks like they want to move the target to a higher level and - (*Applause*) Okay, for me, our interest is that whether we change the President or these other people, for us, our interest is that road. I would like to inform the people of our sub-region that they have been isolated - if you go to the WhatsApp groups of Greater Nebbi, people have been isolated but I want to say for us in Greater Nebbi, no MP should be isolated; all of us should be in it.

Therefore, we are pleading that this road be done for us because all the reasons for the road to be done have been given.

I just wanted to play the politics a bit so that we understand what it is.

I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, the Leader of the Opposition.

4.04

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Mr Speaker, the question of roads is one - I do not know whether we just do not want to pay attention to it or we do not consider it as important.

Honourable colleagues are raising a critical element, which is the monetary one. The Government decided to build roads in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the reason that was given was because we do heavy trade with Congo and so the road network was to facilitate that trade.

Honourable colleagues are saying businesses in their area are crumbling because the road is pathetic. Therefore, why are we interested in

building roads elsewhere for economic reasons but we cannot build roads in our country for the same reason? (*Applause*) It does not make sense at all, Mr Speaker and colleagues.

And you see, it stretches beyond just West Nile. If you gave, a chance to every Member in this House to talk about roads in their area, you will be amazed at what you hear.

Last week, I went with some colleagues the shadow cabinet for a tour of the city roads in Kampala. On another day we will discuss the issues that arose and we are handling them administratively. But, the state of the road network even here in Kampala, which generates 60 per cent of our country's gross domestic product (GDP), is in a shambolic state and that goes for the entire country.

Maybe, the Government needs to tell us why roads are not a priority to them and perhaps we will get to know that this is not important so that we find other ways of dealing with the situation because as far as we are concerned, roads in Uganda are as important as roads in Congo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, for the roads of Kampala, we have given it two very good projects, which I hope if well implemented - honourable colleagues, I really urge you to do serious oversight, they should change the face of Kampala.

The issue of delays and all that, this is where we come in, but as Parliament and the Government, we have to ensure that indeed we get value for money.

If there is any group that I have met that is consolidated, determined and pushing for one issue, it is a group from the West Nile; the West Nile MPs. (*Applause*) I really- I would really feel that it would be a high-level betrayal if anyone said these MPs from West Nile have not pushed for this issue.

Maybe, if they want them to undress, to do what? But they have pushed, they have really pushed.

Therefore, honourable minister, we need to take this issue a notch higher; we need to be specific. Please have a meeting with Members of Parliament from West Nile on this issue and update us again on Thursday next week. I am still - Mr Chief Whip, would you like to comment on this?

4.07

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Mr Speaker, I wish to thank you for the guidance that you have offered to the Ministry of Works and Transport to hold a meeting with the Members of Parliament from West Nile. I am in agreement with you.

However, that said, someone perusing through the *Hansard* of Parliament will find a question on why the Government of Uganda opted to build some roads in the DR Congo, unanswered. It is important that I make some clarity.

Mr Speaker, Ugandans know that our common enemy at the moment is the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF). currently hiding in the jungles of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Arising from that, the Government of Uganda, under the leadership of His Excellency General Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, entered into an understanding to pursue this common enemy into the territories of Congo.

Honourable colleagues, you remember the time when there was a blast on Parliamentary Avenue, it sent all of us into a state of fear for our own lives and the lives of the people of Uganda.

The roads being worked on in the DR Congo are not for economic benefit. They are for security in terms of helping our forces pursue our common enemy as the Republic of Uganda, and that is the Allied Democratic Forces who are hiding in the forest of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

I wish to explain that, because – Honourable colleagues, if you and I are told to go to the jungles of Congo at the moment without security, we cannot. So, you cannot even talk about economics before there is safety of you and me as a citizen of Uganda.

That decision was taken to protect you and I, the citizens of Uganda, and the reasoning is based on security to enable our forces using that understanding to pursue the enemy of the people of Uganda. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, honourable colleagues, the Chief Whip – (*Member rose*) there is no one on the Floor. No. Just a minute.

This is a matter- I do not know why it is giving us so many headaches because it is one we approved in Parliament. So, maybe, we are faulting Parliament at that time.

The reasons are both economic and security. I remember some Members might have voted for economic, others for security, but it was a combination. Also for clarity, that is a road that was jointly financed by the DRC Government and the Government of Uganda.

So, for a project which we approved here, we should not have a lot of squabbles about it. Next. (*Laughter*)

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE STATUS OF KAMPALA-JINJA EXPRESSWAY

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister

4.11

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (TRANSPORT) (Mr Fred Byamukama): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I am presenting this statement to give the status of the implementation of the Kampala-Jinja Expressway Public-Private Partnership (PPP) project. Mr Speaker, the road in question is part of the national network and is managed by the Ministry of Works and Transport through the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA).

Honourable members, the Government of Uganda initiated the development of the proposed Kampala-Jinja Expressway to improve the connection between Kampala and Jinja cities and the neighbouring countries along the Northern Corridor.

The proposed project includes the construction of 77 kilometres from Kampala to Jinja and 20 kilometres of the Kampala Southern Bypass. The Kampala-Jinja section will include eight lanes for the first three kilometres through Nakawa, six lanes for the next 17 kilometres and four lanes for the remaining 57 kilometres.

The Kampala Southern Bypass will have four lanes for 20 kilometres connecting the Northern Bypass at Mandela National Stadium -Namboole to the Kampala-Entebbe Expressway Spur at Munyonyo via Kinawataka, Bugolobi, Ggaba, Kasanga and Bunga.

The Implementation Status of the Project

Mr Speaker, the procurement process for the right private developer is ongoing and once the procurement process is completed, the works will commence once the developer has secured the private capital required for the construction works. The construction period is planned to take five years.

The Kampala-Jinja Expressway is to be undertaken as a Public Private Partnership Project in accordance with the Public Private Partnership (PPP) Act, 2015. The developer will need to mobilise private financing towards the implementation of the project which they will recover over a 25-year operation and maintenance period.

All the bidders participating in the procurement have raised bankability issues that affect the ability to commit private financing to the project. This includes a Partial Risk Guarantee (PRG) covering annual payments that will be made to the developer.

During the operation and maintenance period, the developer will be fully reliant on the Government of Uganda to make timely payments for it to meet its debt and other payment obligations. Without a guarantee, private finance cannot be secured at competitive rates.

The PRG is under discussion with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic

Development and once it has been approved, the procurement will proceed with the issuance of the final bidding documents to the pre-qualified bidders. Within one year of issuance, this contract with the selected developer will be signed.

In preparation for the construction works, the Government of Uganda is currently acquiring the land for the project. So far, the land required for 45 kilometres has been acquired. This includes 14 kilometres along the Southern Bypass and 31 kilometres along the Kampala-Jinja mainline. The progress of compensation has been slowed down by a lack of funds to effect payments.

By December 2024, the Government targets to have acquired the full section from Kampala to Namagunga and the whole Kampala Southern Bypass. The rest of the land from Namagunga to Jinja is planned to be acquired by December 2025. This is fully dependent on the budgetary allocation for land acquisition to UNRA.

Assurances

Mr Speaker, I would like to assure you and the honourable members that the Government of Uganda is committed to ensuring that the Kampala-Jinja Expressway project is implemented to improve the efficiency of Uganda's transport infrastructure. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister, for the updated statement. I think our biggest concern for this loan was the speed, not doubting the plan you have and all that.

I remember it was around March 2021 when you presented a loan request of \$229 million from the African Development Bank and we passed it with another loan request of \$90 million from the European Union. There was also another component from the French. All this was aimed at ensuring that indeed a project which had been projected at around \$1 billion to \$1.2 billion came down so that the financier looks for around \$ 600 million. That was the major aim.

When we were approving these loans, honourable minister, we had interest in funds that were not disbursed, meaning that from 2021, we are paying interest on this money if this loan still stands. These are some of the terms we approved.

I remember you had reached four firms and you were about to close. Why should procurement take five years and which projections are you going to use? Just a short while ago, you told us on Rukungiri-Kanungu Road that a bag of cement was sold at around Shs 20,000 but now it is at around Shs 30,000. Who will cover all these costs? Hon. Jonathan Odur with a procedural matter.

MR ODUR: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am a bit in pain to discuss these piecemeal statements by the minister. In one of the Sittings of the Second Session, this House had directed the Minister of Works and Transport to bring a full and detailed statement on the status of all the roads in this country for discussion. He was supposed to show details for each road; when it was last worked on, the ones they are going to work on, what type of work they are going to do on it and the criteria being used.

We have severally been duped here with names as, "This is an oil road, this is a tourism road - this is what kind of road" and to the exclusion of other parts of the country using those small justifications. Next time we might hear about 'wetland roads' et cetera.

Mr Speaker, that statement was brought here and it was half-baked and this House sent it back. The Minister of Works and Transport was asked to come back in one month with all the details so that all the Members seated here can see themselves as part of the planning in this country.

Mr Speaker, I would like to beseech you that this minister who appears to be very serious by writing the notes as I am talking to him should be sent back to bring a full comprehensive statement showing us even the status of loans, whether it is PPP arrangement or negotiation with international financiers.

We must see ourselves because I was in the West Nile, there is a road that goes to Goli Diocesan Headquarters, I think to the border of the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is terrible. I was in some part of Mitooma, the road that comes from Buhweju, I think – the owner is - it is terrible. If you go to – countrywide, people are demanding for roads. All we would like to see, as a Parliament, is ourselves- so that we can go back and tell your people it is next year or the other year you will be fitted in.

Mr Speaker, I persuade you that this minister be sent back and bring this statement. When the statement comes, we can then debate it as a House and make recommendations so that they are all dealt with at once. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. What Hon. Jonathan Odur is requesting, honourable colleagues, is that - indeed, nearly every day one of you comes to my office over roads. It is the most dominant issue; so honourable minister, you are required to update this statement. If you could, then we can have one Thursday as we handle Members' issues and we say this Thursday we handle one item – roads comprehensively. (*Applause*)

Therefore, honourable minister, do you think two weeks is enough? This is because I would like it to be reflected in the budgeting process, which we also want to start. Honourable Minister, you were given time, have you updated the statement? When can you present it?

MR BYAMUKAMA: Mr Speaker, today's statement was specific; so, there is no way you could combine it with what he said. I request to go and check with my ministry and within a period of two weeks, I can come back and report to the House.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Two weeks - because we are supposed to update.

MOTION FOR THE CONSIDERATION
AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF
THE COMMITTEE ON PRESIDENTIAL
AFFAIRS ON THE FAMINE SITUATION IN
THE KARAMOJA SUB-REGION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kazini, before you go- why are you running away? I saw you “itching” and you rarely “itch.”

4.23

MR FRANCIS KAZINI (NRM, Buhaguzi County, Kikuube): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. As the minister prepares to bring a full statement, he should know that there is a road from Kabwoya to Kyangwali, an oil road that connects the oil wells up to Congo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: However, these were the roads, which Hon. Jonathan Odur was saying-

MR KAZINI: They compensated around 70 per cent of the people, it is now three years but nothing is done on the ground. As he prepares to respond, may he update us on what is going on and what we should tell our people. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: As the Chairperson comes, honourable minister, do you have a quick one? Was that put under Lot no.4? The oil roads? They had given us five roads.

4.24

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (TRANSPORT) (Mr Fred Byamukama): Mr Speaker, I come from the same region; it is just 30 kilometres away from my home to that road. We had an issue with the contractor whom they had given us to do direct procurement for that road.

The quotations the contractor had given us were too high and we had never used them here in the country. We had to go back and advise the President that if we were to go on with this contractor, we shall be selling our country.

The President replied to us saying that we should look for a genuine contractor and we believe within a period of three months, we shall be able to sign a new contract with that person and have works going on. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Since it is in your area, you will have more details. Honourable Chairperson - procedure, Hon. Aisha.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. This concluding financial year, we put money in the budget for railway construction that tends to ease traffic. However, the minister is proposing a bypass for the same purpose.

In the statement that he comes to present to this House, can he update us on whether they have now abandoned the other idea or how far they have reached in the idea of coming up with a railway? - because the biggest problem on that road are the heavy trucks that carry goods from the eastern side.

Wouldn't it be procedurally right for you to guide that as he comes with the statement next time, let him brief us on the grand programme of easing traffic on the eastern lane. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. It is procedurally wrong for us to proceed that way because the point of procedure should be, if there is anything wrong that is not covered under order, to put back the House on track.

We cannot have a procedure on how the House will be conducted in the next sitting but he has taken note. Honourable minister, the colleague's statement is not in vain, please, take note of that.

4.26

MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity to present our report. I request to go direct to the introduction.

Introduction

Following the prolonged drought and poor crop yields in 2021 in Karamoja, food shortage

continued to worsen and by July 2022, the food situation in the sub-region had gradually deteriorated to acute levels, constituting a crisis.

Mr Speaker, arising from this, we were directed to do investigation and our terms of reference are still on page one. We have five terms of reference.

Allow me to leave the methodology; how we proceeded to investigate this matter and proceed to page three. Our report has been uploaded.

Background to famine situation in Karamoja sub-region. Famine is a form of disaster characterised by severe and prolonged hunger affecting a substantial proportion of a given population and resulting into widespread acute malnutrition and death.

The United Nations defines famine using three key parameters. Where 20 per cent of the households in a given region face extreme food shortages. Over 30 per cent of the population are acutely malnourished and two out of every 1,000 people dying every day as a result of hunger, which reflects a crisis.

The Karamoja sub-region experienced sporadic occurrences of food shortage in 1979, which graduated into a crisis in 1980 for a year. Since then, episodes of famine have reoccurred with varying frequencies and severity. However, between March and July 2022, the famine situation had reached acute levels, with more than 70 per cent of the population in the sub-region affected. The worst hit districts are elaborated here in this paragraph.

The famine situation in Karamoja is attributed to the persistent level of insecurity, prolonged drought, inadequate water for on-farm production, increasing harsh climatic changes and weather patterns characterised by predominantly single-rain season, resulting into acute food insecurity, with an estimated 518,000 people affected.

The effects of famine in the sub-region include widespread disruption of the socio-economic

activities, migration, low school enrolment and learner retention, widespread malnutrition, increased incidences of raids, theft as well as loss of human lives and livestock; which affected the people in both the sub-region and the entire country.

However, as of October to November 2023, the situation had improved due to the little harvest, although this may not last for long because of the increased floods, which are expected to be followed by the dry spell.

Therefore, the country should plan accordingly for this changing trend.

The causes of this famine situation

Given that famine builds up over a period of time, the committee opted to focus on the past five years from 2017 to 2023 in analysing the famine situation in the subregion. These are the specific causes of the famine situation in Karamoja, among others:

Negative Cultural and Traditional Aspects

The committee established that some aspects of the Karamojong cultural practices impact negatively on the transformation of the subregion and the neighbourhood. For example, the continuous raids for cattle, food and other items destabilised productive engagement of communities within the subregion and beyond and often resulted into famine in the period under review.

In the Karamoja Subregion, there is limited emphasis on the promotion of formal education. As a result, the majority of the population do not prioritise formal education, hence limiting some of them from exposure and formal education.

Although cattle rustling was said to be waning, a big section of the subregion's population still holds the practice in high regard. This is a generational practice rooted in the cultural system into which young and energetic men are inducted to preserve the tradition. It is the committee's considered opinion that the

above practices are a hindrance to aversion of famine and holistic transformation of the subregion and the neighbourhood because of their negative effects.

Prevalent insecurity

The committee established that prior to 2017, there was a successful disarmament programme conducted in three phases. This restored peace and security, therefore, created an enabling environment for increased agricultural activities, business and trade.

However, the committee further established that there is improved security in Karamoja compared to the situation in 2022. The committee commends the Government for the progress so far registered regarding the pacification of the subregion.

Withdrawal of the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) from the subregion

The committee established that the withdrawal of most of the UPDF troops in 2017 reduced the number of security personnel in the subregion, giving way to the disbanded groups of rustlers to remobilise and reorganise themselves to carry out regular raids and attacks. This greatly scaled back the achievements of the disarmament programme from 2001 to 2010, therefore, exposing the community within and outside the subregion to a high level of insecurity and famine.

Proliferation of illegal firearms

The committee established that the proliferation and subsequent local possession of illegal arms obtained from some illicit suppliers in the neighbouring countries of Kenya and South Sudan directly destabilised the subregion and the immediate neighbourhood.

The committee observes that the continuous acquisition and replenishment of rifles and ammunition by the rustlers facilitates them to engage in activities such as raids and theft, among others, which ultimately disrupts socioeconomic activities such as farming and other businesses within and outside Karamoja.

Cattle rustling

The committee established that cattle rustling is not only a prestigious activity to some people but also a commercialised venture in the subregion and one of the key drivers of insecurity in Karamoja and the immediate neighbourhood. The cattle rustlers use mountainous, hilly areas and caves as bases from where they operate to raid communities for animals and other household items and other property.

The committee was informed that Kotido is an epicentre of insecurity in the entire subregion due to cattle raids conducted largely by the Jie community.

The areas most prone to cattle raids in the subregion are highlighted on page 6. All the above attacks, among others, contribute to the destabilisation of the socioeconomic activities in the region and contribute to exposing the region and the neighbourhood to famine.

Cross-border raids and prevalence of illegal arms

The committee established that Karamoja is susceptible to cross-border raids and proliferation of illegal guns. The raids and illegal firearms enter Karamoja subregion through Toposa in South Sudan, the Turkana and Pokot of Kenya who have formed alliances with Ugandan pastoral communities and are the key trading partners. Accordingly, the Government of Uganda is implementing a disarmament programme and other strategic operations such as operation “*Usalama Kwa Wote*” to ensure that peace and security return to the subregion.

The committee commends the Government for this but is concerned about the poor coordination of this programme with the neighbouring countries of Kenya and South Sudan. The committee observes that the poor coordination of the disarmament programme with the neighbouring countries provides an enabling environment for continuous

proliferation of firearms for the Karamojong rustlers, leading to persistent insecurity and instability.

The porous nature of the borders

The committee established that the porosity of the Uganda-Kenya and the Uganda-South Sudan borders poses logistical and human resource constraints to effectively maintain the security and stability of the region. The committee observes that the porosity of the borders makes it difficult for the Government to do effective and efficient deployment, hence affecting total control over the borders, which exposes the subregion to raids, contributing to famine.

Poor accessibility and connectivity in insecure areas

The committee established that poor accessibility and connectivity of most parts of Karamoja subregion inhibit movement and easy access to insecure hotspots such as the Kobebe corridor between the Matheniko, Turkana and the Jie, which hinders timely deployment of security personnel to respond to the activities of the rustlers.

In an effort to curb the resurgence of the insecurity situation in the subregion, H.E. the President directed the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in May 2022 to avail Shs 699.6 billion to the Ministry of Works and Transport to finance the opening and rehabilitation of security roads in Karamoja subregion.

Consequently, a joint inspection was conducted by a team comprising staff from the Ministry of Works and Transport, UPDF and the Uganda Road Fund (URF) in which four security roads totalling 250 kms were recommended for prioritisation. They are listed here.

Additionally, the Government also prioritised two roads to be worked on from the neighbourhood, that is, from the Acholi and Teso subregions. They are also listed here.

The committee observes that the poor state of the roads is also an impediment to timely responses to insecurity incidences, hence exposing the region to regular attacks, loss of property and famine.

Unpredictable weather patterns

The committee established that Karamoja Subregion is among the regions in the country greatly affected by the unpredictable and erratic weather patterns, largely as a result of climate change, due to persistent drought emanating from increased deforestation, among others. Information obtained indicates that for the past 10 years, the subregion has steadily drifted from the routine planting season to irregular patterns due to erratic changes in weather.

Utilisation of arable land

The information availed to the committee by the different district local governments on land utilisation reflects that the land in Karamoja, which is arable, is underutilised. The details in terms of percentages and acreages are reflected here on page 9.

The committee established that the arable land in the subregion is under-utilised owing to the following factors:

- i) poor land use practices;
- ii) insecurity;
- iii) high cost of agricultural input;
- iv) inadequate mechanisation;
- v) inadequate water for on-farm production;
- vi) high rate of alcohol consumption; and
- vii) high preference for livestock rearing.

A combination of these factors significantly constrains land utilisation in Karamoja subregion.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson, would you mind focusing on recommendations that Parliament can do something about? The whole report will be captured on the *Hansard*.

MS ABABIKU: Mr Speaker, our recommendations begin on page 32.

Under negative cultural and traditional practices, we recommend the following:

The committee recommends that the Government should ensure that the negative practices are discouraged through continuous sensitisation, diversification of sources of livelihood, and ensure compulsory formal education for all in the subregion.

Restoration of peace and security. We recommend the following:

- i) Ensure sustainable redeployment and deployment in the subregion to address the challenges of the withdrawal of some of the UPDF officers, and areas, which were not previously covered;
- ii) Broaden the peace-building initiatives to include the youth, the elderly and the neighbouring regions of Karamoja;
- iii) Expedite the completion and maintenance of the security roads;
- iv) Intensify use of modern technology for surveillance.
- v) Allocate more funds for recruitment, capacity building and acquisition of appropriate intelligent information collection technology;
- vi) Ensure effective disarmament to get rid of illegal guns and ammunition in the subregion.

Under, food security, we recommend that-

- i) Government should enhance mechanisation of agriculture in Karamoja subregion;
- ii) The local governments and the leadership of Karamoja subregion should rally the population to embrace optimal utilisation of the arable land, and the available equipment given to them by the Government;

Emergency food relief distribution

- i) Government should provide timely and adequate food aid where need arises.
- ii) Government should establish fair criteria through a consultative process before

distribution of food relief items for the purpose of adequacy and equity.

Prevention of crop destruction and wildlife destruction, on page 36.

For Uganda National Meteorological Authority (UNMA) -

- i) Government should enhance budget allocation to UNMA so that the entity improves its functionality and coverage.
- ii) Government should put in place adequate communication infrastructure in Karamoja subregion to work on the challenges of connectivity.
- iii) Government should continue sensitising the community in Karamoja Subregion on the benefits of the utilisation of the information given to the region by UNMA.

- (a) Implement the wildlife compensation scheme provided for under the Uganda Wildlife Act, 2019;
- (b) Ensure timely recruitment and deployment of human resources as rangers and so forth;
- (c) Increase the use of modern technology, such as collaring of the wild animals for easy tracking and control in the Karamoja Subregion;
- (d) Set up more electric fences;
- (e) Continuous sensitisation; and,
- (f) Ensure the availability of adequate water sources for wildlife within the conservation areas in the Karamoja Subregion.

Restoration of the environment

- i) Government should undertake consistent, deliberate efforts geared towards restoration through reforestation and afforestation of the subregion, among others.
- ii) The National Environment Management Authority should enforce strict adherence and compliance to the provision of the Act, that is, 2019.

On inter-district land boundary disputes, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development should ensure expeditious affirmation of the inter-dispute boundaries in order to resolve the inter-district boundary disputes.

Means of livelihood - The Government undertakes deliberate efforts to diversify the means of livelihood for the people in Karamoja Subregion.

Access to water

- i) Expedite the completion of the on-going construction of water reservoirs;
- ii) Prioritise the maintenance and rehabilitation of the existing water reservoirs;
- iii) Prioritise the desilting of the existing water reservoirs where need be.

Livestock, diseases and crops - The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries should ensure timely responses to disease outbreaks and provision of quality acaricides and pesticides.

Monitoring and evaluation of the performance of development partners and NGOs. Our recommendations are on page 38.

Utilisation of arable land

- i) Government should develop strategic interventions to ensure land in Karamoja is maximally utilised through mechanisation and other alternatives;
- ii) The local governments in Karamoja should put in place by-laws and ordinances to cut down the excessive consumption of alcohol;

- i) The Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry for Karamoja Affairs and Ministry of Internal Affairs, and local governments in Karamoja should increase monitoring of the programmes implemented by the development partners and NGOs.
- ii) The Auditor-General should carry out a value for money audit to ascertain whether the monies from the development partners and NGOs in Karamoja Subregion are well utilised.

Contingency fund - There should be adherence to section 26.1 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015.

Operationalisation of the disaster preparedness and management

Commission - Government expedites the Enactment of the National

Disaster Preparedness Act so as to operationalise Article 249 of the Constitution.

Intensify community mobilisation - Government should continue with the sensitisation activities, which are on-going.

Mr Speaker, I beg to report. Allow me to lay a copy of our report and minutes, which we used for processing this report. I beg to lay. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Chairperson. Honourable colleagues, the Chairperson has been straightforward. These are recommendations that are very clear.

I will first pick Hon. Stella, Hon. Okwalinga, Hon. Nyakikongoro, Hon. Acrobert - I pick these Karimojongs *-(Laughter)-* and these ones who are standing. I will not pick a Rose Obigah.

4.50

MS STELLA ATYANG (NRM, Woman Representative, Moroto): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I start by thanking the committee who went to carry out an assessment on the situation of Karamoja and came up with the report. I agree with them that that is the situation in Karamoja; that is how desperate it is.

I want to comment on the issue of famine. It is true that for the last three years, there has been persistent drought and poor harvest due to drought and erratic rainfall. At the moment, there are districts in the region that did not have a total harvest last year. For example, Moroto did not have a harvest last year, and apparently, they are facing famine.

The lack of harvest is actually the reason many Karamojong people are going to other areas in search of survival. That is why you find street children in Kampala, some of them in Hoima, Kitgum, Acholi area, and many of them in Teso. This has brought a lot of disasters because whereas they are looking for a source of survival, they are instead suffering. Some of the children that are sent are actually losing touch with their parents.

This calls for the Government, first of all, to take relief food to save these people from acute malnutrition and death due to lack of food.

On the need of improvement of harvest, we have always asked for water for production, especially irrigation. If Government would actually invest money in irrigation schemes for Karamoja to provide Karamojong with food, I think many of the challenges in Karamoja would be reduced, including the current insecurity. Much as it is said to be economical, part of it is just because - it is a way of survival. So, if food is there, many things would be resolved.

It is true that the Government has planned and actually put some money for water but that water is more for animal watering, and they have never put efforts in terms of promoting irrigation schemes.

There is also un-streamlined planning between the ministries in Government in relation to planning for Karamoja. I want to give an example of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), and the Ministry of Water and Environment. They had actually planned for water production for Karamoja, on the same site.

The MAAIF goes and starts to put the mega dam, and then the Ministry of Water and Environment also comes and claims to be wanting to put money there. So, there comes conflict and at the end of the day, it is left to one ministry. But where the money for the other ministry; the Ministry of Water and Environment went, is what is special. We advised them to put another dam somewhere

but they did not do that and we are still wondering where the money went.

On the security issue, I am thankful for what was reported but what they missed is an issue of encouraging the Government to engage other countries, because there is illicit entry of guns from countries like Kenya and Sudan into Uganda. That is the source of the guns. As much as the Government is trying to disarm, if actually they do not engage with these other countries, so that these countries also disarm their own, then definitely, we shall not achieve our aim in terms of disarming the Karamojong.

I request that the Government engages with Kenya because the Turkana are armed and they are the source; they are the ones giving Karamojong the guns. The Toposa on the other hand, is also another place where the Karamojong get their guns and you also know that they also cause destruction to the Karamojong. Yes, the Karamojong are disarmed but you are leaving them vulnerable in terms of attacks from the neighbouring countries.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, haven't you really concluded; you have got enough time. Is there a very critical point you wanted to conclude with?

MS ATYANG: Yes. The other one is, just the last one is; in this disarmament, the Government takes forces when actually the situation is bad. And these Forces are taken for a short time, and they will be there for one month, and in the shortest time, they are withdrawn. So, they are brought and then withdrawn. It is the reason why sometimes, this disarmament exercise is not getting done. It is just because of peep and take-away. If we take it as a long-term initiative whereby we put the forces there for a long time to do the exercise, I am sure we shall achieve something other than just putting them there and taking them away, which makes the community look at the Government as a joking body. I beg to submit. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I deliberately gave more than

sufficient time to the Member from Moroto so that we get the real overview in relation to what the committee has done. The rest, I will request from you to be brief because we have to finish this by 5.30 p.m. so that we receive a report from the Minister of Internal Affairs. Hon. Okwalinga?

MR SIMON PETER OKWALINGA (NRM, Kanyum County, Kumi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the Committee on Presidential Affairs for taking interest in studying and identifying the challenges that Karamoja has been faced with over time.

We have seen the situation in Karamoja; Governments come, they find the problem still in Karamoja. Governments go and still Karamoja remains with problems.

First, on the issue that I wanted to observe in the committee report, when they talked of—they seem not to have fully concluded on the issue of withdrawal for UPDF troops from Karamoja, because there was a time they withdrew but eventually, Local Defence Unit (LDU) were passed and reinforced. So, maybe, they needed to update that reinforcement because the situation has since changed. I am talking as a neighbour to Karamoja.

On the issue of hunger and famine in Karamoja, I would like to thank the Government, first for attempts to put in place projects that try to skill the Karimojong and putting in place factories. Just a few months ago, we had the President in Karamoja, launching a factory. This is a positive effort because these are issues that will eventually give an alternative lifestyle to the warriors who have been disturbing the area.

Also, the Government recently gave iron sheets to warriors who had surrendered. The problem is, this seems to be encouraging the vice because the youth that were not cattle rustlers, who were peaceful in the community are left without an alternative. However, you find those who have been warring, who have been rustling, are the ones to whom it is encouraged to give more iron sheets. So, will this not be a problem over time, that one will think, for

you to get a “*Mabati*” house, I need to first go and be a warrior and rustle cattle before I am rescued.

The issue, Mr Speaker, is that maybe the Government needs to look critically when they are delivering these interventions because it can lead to a bandwagon effect. People will want to go to the bush.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would request Gen. Muhoozi, especially on these security-related issues; they are issues where you can give us snapshots of responses at the end.

Those who have already spoken, please, if you know I have allowed you to speak in one way or another, let me first give a chance to those who have not had an opportunity today. Hon. Nyakikongoro -

5.01

MS ROSEMARY NYAKIKONGORO (NRM, Woman Representative, Sheema):

Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson for the report. I sympathise with the people of Karamoja for what they are going through, particularly a famine where we thought the country had food security. It is very controversial - Previously, the Member of Parliament for Kiboga was complaining about excess of food crops but Karamoja is complaining of hunger.

I would like to find out from the Front Bench, particularly; I do not see the Ministers for Karamoja Affairs, whether they took lessons from the First Lady when she was the Minister for Karamoja Affairs, we never used to hear of frequent famine in that region and there was a boost in terms of food crop growing and Karamoja had stabilised in terms of food.

I do not know whether they do benchmarking or do handovers to learn from such. We would wish to know what she had done to turn over that kind of food insecurity in the region so that we do not see our people dying of hunger because of food.

Mr Speaker, recently, I saw the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries distributing tractors in Karamoja. I do not know how the Government works, whether they work in silos or not, because how do you distribute tractors without putting into consideration the climate change issues in Karamoja region? Dealing with the water for production would be a priority and then, you distribute tractors because now tractors are redundant; you have put in a lot of money and you have secured them but they are just there and people are dying of hunger.

In my view, the Government needs to consolidate the funds and prioritise what comes first and then next because if you provide water, then people will be willing even to engage in agricultural productivity without using the tractors; who is using the tractors? Is it the “*wanaichi*” or it is those Karamojong *bourgeoisie* that have - are capable of tilling a lot of land?

Mr Speaker, I Government needs to prioritise and see where to invest in terms of getting food for our people.

The issue of irrigation –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sorry, please, conclude, honourable.

MS NYAKIKONGORO: I want to conclude on irrigation. Israel does not have water but they produce food throughout the year. In Uganda, we have the River Nile. We have water. Why can't we get out of our comfort and use irrigation? I do not know how we are planning. For me, irrigation is the way to go.

Otherwise, we are sitting on a time bomb with this population growth, where we have many children; women are producing, and we are not producing enough food. I do not know where we are going to get food to feed the country. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I was in Karamoja particularly Kotido, late last year. It is a pity, we can create

a situation whereby we have dependence syndrome. People of Karamoja know that “during this period, we receive free food.” instead of tapping into their potential to even feed the nation.

When you look at their soils, which have not been tilled, they are seated on a gold mine in terms of fertile soils. What Hon. Nyakikongoro is raising - we are interested in seeing the Ministry designing a special affirmative action for Karamoja and we bring it here and we discuss it; we say let Karamoja feed the nation and it has that potential.

Otherwise, the day you are assured that during this time, you expect free food, it also becomes an issue where the MPs are going to be pushing “people are dying of hunger, give us food” -that dependence syndrome has to end. Before I pick up Hon. Acrobert, Hon. Philiphs –

5.06

MR PHILIPHS LOKWANG (NRM, Napore West County, Karenga): I am Hon. Lokwang Philiphs Ilukol –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sorry honourable.

MR PHILLIPHS LOKWANG: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for that elaborate identity because we are together; I was there with you. The Karamoja case is a case that needs a commitment. I start with the issue of the iron sheets, which were to reduce the roaming mentality of people who did not have where to settle and wait for when food was ready and they came there. It was to reduce the roaming and make them settle and that is why that was put.

Another aspect is, that Karamoja, yes, is - I can say a region that can feed Uganda. As a person, I have tried to sample even the bananas I have there, even coffee is doing well in Karamoja. The only challenge is the commitment of interventions. The Government has the right interventions but many of the things that are put in for Karamoja do not practically happen in Karamoja. They remain - I do not know where- on the way or somewhere.

That is why when you clearly say that the Karamoja report should come, we discuss it exhaustively and make the story rest.

Like we are talking about tractors in Karamoja; in my district, I did not see any and yet that is the place, which is a food basket for Karamoja. Where the tractors remained, I do not know; where they say that you pay a certain, I do not know what. More so, Karamoja is an area, which is covered by wild animals in most cases. We have been battling – recently, a woman was killed by an elephant. They are struggling over whatever little you are attempting to cultivate.

Therefore, if there is a way for the Government to come in to control the movement of these wild animals - Like in Kidepo, where I represent, the animals have lost the pasture. Their pasture areas have been inhabited by other species, which is not palatable for wild animals. So, what they have done is to move out and therefore, they find gardens. That is-

Karamoja generally has many challenges. We have the drought, yes. We have crops in Karamoja that can take less time to grow. We have wild animals. We have, of course, the usual redundant use but more so, if we put- in our Karamoja Parliamentary Group –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, conclude, honourable.

MR PHILLIPHS LOKWANG: Karamoja Parliamentary Group, we said if the Government can put affirmative action for education to the children of Karamoja for 10 years, that would break the cycle of raiders -because if you keep them in school, by the time they come up, they will now be productive for the region. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I think we all agree that we cannot have a complete Uganda without Karamoja. This business - there used to be a saying that, “Uganda will not wait for Karamoja to develop.” No. That is a very wrong mentality because we cannot develop without Karamoja

developing. Otherwise, whatever we make, we shall need hundreds of billions every year to buy food for Karamoja without even helping much.

Based on this report, it will be very imperative for us to ask for a specific affirmative action report for Karamoja to be brought here and we discuss it, we dissect it from the angle of security but mainly on the intervention of the sectors of agriculture where we can say, “where is this money, Shs 100 billion for irrigation in Karamoja?” I do not know whether what Karamoja needs are tractors. Tractors to be fed by what?

Hon. Acrobert –

5.11

MR ACROBERT KIIZA (Independent, Bughendera County, Bundibugyo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I add my voice to my colleagues’ voices in thanking the committee chairperson and members for the elaborate report.

Mr Speaker, we have spoken and lamented enough about Karamoja. It is high time we spoke about the “Book of Acts”, other than the “Book of Lamentations” about Karamoja. *(Applause)* I thank the Government for the short and medium-term intervention but for the Karamoja case, we need a long-term solution.

I am happy that Uganda is endowed with a lot of resources - we have water. Honourable colleagues have said it all; repetition is for emphasis. Karamoja needs water for irrigation so that we get rid of the erratic weather patterns.

The second issue is in regard to the Presidential directive to the Ministry of Works and Transport- I read the report very well. The President directed that Shs 699 billion be allocated to rehabilitate roads. I would like to seek clarification from the Minister of Works or the Government Chief Whip on whether these roads have been rehabilitated. Thank you.

MR NATHAN TWESIGYE: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I would like to proceed under Rule 50 of our Rules of

Procedure, but also under Article 117 of the Constitution. Rule 50(1) says, “*A Minister shall attend sittings of the House...*” Article 117 says it is the responsibility of ministers to attend the House and be accountable to the President.

I thank Hon. Muhoozi; I see him here. The UPDF is celebrating a big day but he is here in the House to attend to the Members’ questions. I want to thank you. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, we are discussing a very important matter and we are even proposing that we should come up with a report and discuss the matter of Karamoja conclusively. The Government Chief Whip is not here; I do not know whether he has gone to whip the ministers. There is no Minister in charge of Karamoja Affairs, one who should listen to the Members’ questions but also who should go with us, as we prepare to look for a solution for Karamoja.

The procedural matter I am raising is whether we are proceeding well, when we are discussing the Karamoja matters and there is no minister from the Karamoja docket.

Also importantly, this matter has been on the Order Paper. It is not like it was a matter of national importance. They knew the matter was coming up but there is none of them here. I do not know whether it is a day for the court to answer the other questions but we need your guidance, Mr Speaker. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have given me an assignment of going and checking whether they are in court. *(Laughter)* Let us proceed, as I crosscheck where they are.

On a very serious note, ministers should be here. My only fear will be that if a minister is not around, we cannot conduct business. It can be another way of frustrating us. Let us conduct our business, we make our recommendations. We shall demand action taken on those recommendations.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs called and told me they had lost someone. He requested that he handles his item on Thursday; that is

courteous. Honourable colleagues, we were just debating. We are losing time and I am stopping this debate at 5.30.

Dr Bhoka, Hon. Adriko, Hon. Aza, my two beautiful ladies, Hon. Cuthbert Abigaba, Hon. Oseku, Hon. Bataringaya and Hon. Lagen. Did Hon. Naome stand up? Let us do this quickly.

5.17

DR GEORGE BHOKA (NRM, Obongi County, Obongi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson of the committee for the report, the findings and recommendations.

My first observation is that Karamoja is not a homogeneous region. It has the dry belt, the semi-arid belt and the agricultural belt, especially in the eastern part, which has the potential to be a food basket for Karamoja and Uganda. Also, the beauty of it is that Karamoja lends itself to mechanisation-given water.

My first observation is on the question of mind-set change. Yesterday, I was looking at a post by the Secretary-General that was appreciating the role played by Hon. Faith Nakut, who has become a role model in Napak. As part of the mind-set change, we urge the leaders of Karamoja at all levels to be role models so that they learn by doing. *(Applause)*

Second is the degradation of Karamoja, which is an environmental disaster for us as a country. I thought we needed a very strong recommendation for greening Karamoja. We need possibly 10 million trees in Karamoja within a certain period “T” that we should hold the Ministry of Water and Environment and all partners that love Karamoja to advance the Greening Karamoja Initiative –*(Member timed out.)*

5.18

MR YOVAN ADRIKO (NRM, Vurra County, Arua): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to congratulate this committee and appreciate them on the issues of Karamoja. Karamoja and the West Nile are, indeed, the poorest areas, where people are suffering and the Government is trying its level best to

support them. For sure, the Government has done its part.

What you have seen on the ground is a lack of sensitisation by the local leaders. If we are serious leaders on the ground, like the MPs are doing to sensitise the community about the danger of these problems, for sure, we can defeat the issues which are affecting Karamoja and West Nile.

For example, I thank our Government Chief Whip for giving out tractors, but Arua District never received any and people are now on my neck. I got a message from my colleague, who did not receive it as well. I asked myself where the tractors were because if everything the Government gave to the community had reached, they would be used.

I would like to request that we follow up on these tractors so that we can give the information to the community.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Government Chief Whip will tell us where the tractors are. *(Laughter)*

5.20

MR TOM AZA (NRM, West Moyo County, Moyo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the report on farming situation in Karamoja Subregion.

What is the role of the Community Development Officers, cultural leaders, religious leaders, teachers, education officers, senior citizens, opinion leaders, and elders. What role are they playing in that community? As others said before, we need very serious sensitisation, mobilisation, education and rallying of the Karamajong to embrace modern ways of development.

Mr Speaker, laziness is very serious in that place –*(Interjections)*– yes, it is laziness. So, as I said before, there must be affirmative action to avoid this business of the Karamajong coming to the cities to beg in the streets. Thank you, very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have a problem - someone heard the threats of order and took off. So, there is no one on the Floor. However, let us not judge the people of Karamoja. Let us focus on how we can give them the support they need. Let us give them an opportunity, and let us do affirmative action for the area.

5.22

MS SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me thank the committee for coming up with a very elaborate report. For once, we need affirmative action with the seriousness and commitment that it deserves, minus corruption.

The Government has ever addressed the issue of Karamoja, starting from the construction of the valley dams but what happened? Look at the iron sheets saga. What happened?

Much as we are asking for affirmative action, we need all the stakeholders, starting from the ministers who sit here, including the one for agriculture.

For us to address famine, we need the commitment by the minister or the Ministry of Agriculture. Good enough we have Internal Affairs Minister here, and I want to thank you, sir, for being here to attend to the issue of Karamoja.

We need the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) because we are talking about water. Having talked about that I would like to turn to the issue - the committee mentioned something about challenges of communication. Again, we need the minister as we talk about sensitisation.

The committee's report says that there was a challenge of network and radio coverage and this must be addressed because we need to sensitise these people but how will they get the information there are all these network challenges.

Lastly, we are talking about disarmament but we have porous borders. I want to hear from the Minister for Internal Affairs on whether

IGAD can address this issue partly so that we know and see how far we can go to address this problem once and for all. Thank you so much, Mr Speaker.

5.24

MR GEOFFREY KAYEMBA (NUP, Bukomansimbi South County, Bukomansimbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Although you have replaced my name, Ssolo with the name, Kasolo, it is understandable. On the issue of Karamoja, I want us to focus more on mindset change and giving them alternatives.

Karamoja is one of the richest regions in Uganda. At times, I think, it might be kept vulnerable because thieves want to steal their resources so they keep them that way to take them away.

They need to get alternatives. Apart from rearing cattle, what else? Agriculture is the best option. We need to speak and sensitise them so that they can feed not only Uganda as an economy, but also East Africa.

We should focus more on mindset change by giving them alternatives to cattle rustling.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. For the record this Member is called Hon. Ssolo Kayemba not Hon. Ssolo Kayemba. Thank you. However, I notice that the Hon. Ssolo raises fundamental issues.

There are two projects on which we need an update as the House. The first is the loan that had a grant element from the Italian Government to revamp health facilities in Karamoja. We need an update on how far.

Secondly, we passed another loan here for mapping and surveying the minerals in Karamoja. The period already ended.

Can we have a report on what we found in Karamoja so that we can see how best this can be used to develop the country with special attention to Karamoja? I do not know what we do with the marble that comes from Karamoja

and the cement factories that are being fed by Karamoja. These are things that we have to look at. We do not want people to see you coming as if you are picking but bringing back less and you might find that we are bringing much more to Karamoja, but not in a way that people can feel.

Honourable Governemnt Chief Whip, we shall need an action plan for the development of Karamoja, starting this financial year while looking at clear affirmative actions, not just saying agriculture. What is in for Karamoja? That will help to stop this business of Karamoja being dependent. We have to look at them at that level. I had allowed the Hon. Betty Awor.

5.28

MS BETTY AWOR (NRM, Woman Representative, Apac): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity and I thank also the committee for the work well done. The committee talked about famine. This means that even when Karamoja has very many programs, still famine is still a special case and that is why we have our Minister for Disaster Preparedness. And Karamoja, also being a special region, has two ministers. Therefore, we cannot run away from feeding our people when they are dying of hunger.

A country that allows its people to die of hunger is almost a failed country. We cannot allow our people to die of hunger. It is categorically put very clearly that it is famine.

We have not developed our disaster preparedness; disaster preparedness is almost not there. We need to strengthen that institution. Sometimes we have bumper harvests for example, right now, there are some places with maize. When we have a good harvest of maize, Government should help the farmers to buy this excess harvest and put it in silos.

In case of no famine, then they can put it back on the market to stabilise the prices so that our people do not suffer very much.

Otherwise, sometimes we have a lot of scarcity. During scarcity, then we can put back what has been in the silos on the market and we also need to buy. Why do we have a disaster preparedness minister? Why do we have ministers for Karamoja yet the Karamojong are dying of hunger?

Sometimes we need to look beyond Karamoja. For disaster and famine, a lot of our people are dying because of little food especially those who are on ARVs. Those who are on ARVs do not do a lot of work. We need to support them, but we can only support them. However, we can only do so if we develop our disaster preparedness institutions. We just leave it here at the national level, yet we are in a decentralised system –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Procedure, Hon. Mushemeza?

PROF. MUSHEMEZA: Mr Speaker, you earlier ruled that you intended to close this debate at 5.30 p.m. so that we can go on to the next item. Are we proceeding very well to go beyond 5.30 p.m.?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Presidential Affairs on the famine situation in the Karamoja subregion be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, usually I give the Leader of the Opposition a chance, but it is usually on statements from the Government. On reports of committees, I tend to take it that the Opposition has contributed since its Members are on the committee. It is a report for all of us, unless we have a minority report. Prof. Mushemeza has sent me a reminder. I am sorry about this. I made a commitment and I had to keep it. Next item.

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

I) ON FIELD VISITS TO GOVERNMENT
PRISONS AND PRISON FARMS

5.33

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR
INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David
Muhoozi):** Mr Speaker, these are responses on
action-taken reports from the ministry. I would
like to apologise because it is long overdue.

I will start with responses to the report of the
Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs
on the field visits to Government prisons
and prison farms. The issues raised by the
committee were congestion and overcrowding
in prisons. They recommended that the Uganda
Prisons Service development budget should
be increased to enable the rehabilitation,
expansion and construction of more prisons
facilities, to accommodate the increasing
number of prisoners and reduce congestion in
the existing facilities our response is as follows:

The first is that we had inadequate funds
allocated for the expansion of prisoners'
sleeping accommodation. The development is
inadequate and was budget was cut from Shs
37.227 billion, in the Financial Year 2020/2021,
to Shs 27.388 billion, in the Financial Year
2023/2024.

The average prisoners' population of 75,707 as
of 1 August 2023, exceeds the prisons' carrying
capacity, which is 20,321. This is exceeded by
55,386 prisoners. At a projected daily average
of 80,640 inmates and a projected increase in
holding capacity, congestion is projected at
396.8 per cent. This is phenomenal and needs
to be addressed.

In the Financial Year 2022/2023, the service
expanded prison accommodation through the
construction of a new prison at Ntungamo and
the expansion of prisoners' accommodation
at Rukungiri, Lira, Mutuufu, Kamuli and
Kiruhura prisons. Completion of prisoners'

accommodation in Kisoro, Ntwetwe, Isingiro,
Maiha, Lukaya, Loro, Yumbe, Lwabenge in
Kalungu, Koboko, Bamunanika and Kigandalo,
which has been planned in 2023/2024.

The strategy is:

- a) To construct five low-cost security prisons
at Shs 3.8 billion each. Shs 19 billion is
required per year for this to be realised;
- b) We need to construct one regional mini-
max prison (Kitalya Model) with a
capacity of 2,000 prisoners at Shs 33.3
billion per year.

The total annual requirement for prisoners'
accommodation is, therefore, Shs 52.3 billion

Recommendation two by the committee
was that the Government should develop
the National Corrections Policy to guide
transformation from penal to productive
correction. The response is as follows.

The development of National Corrections
Policy is ongoing. Once complete, this policy
will provide a framework for community
participation as well as private sector and
non-state actors' involvement in offender
rehabilitation and reintegration process.
The regulatory impact assessment has been
completed and a draft policy is being developed.

The other issue raised was about the inadequate
staff housing and accommodation. The
committee recommended that the management
of the prison should prioritise the construction
of low-cost housing and should phase this
using the incremental approach as a multi-year
project for decent accommodation.

The responses are as follows:

The rate of growth of staff population is not
matched with the rate of expansion of staff
accommodation. Currently, 7,936 staff, which is
55.9 per cent, are not properly accommodated.
In the Financial Year 2022/2023, the service
completed 320 staff houses, increasing the
proportion of staff properly housed, from
42.6 to 44.1 per cent. Shs 1.4 billion has been

allocated towards the construction of staff houses in the Financial Year 2023/2024.

The strategy is to cut down construction costs by adopting different designs, using low-cost solutions/Force on Account, and phasing construction using the incremental approach of 500 staff housing units, starting with 900 housing units. Shs 46.5 billion is required to construct the 900 housing units in different designs and sizes using Force on Account as shown in the table below. I think the honourable members have it.

The design

One is to have a block of two houses (two-bedroom and self-contained). A total of 150 blocks of 300 houses are planned at a unit cost of Shs 0.140 million. The quantity required is 150 and the amount needed is Shs 21 billion.

Two, a block of four houses (two-roomed houses with external sanitation facilities) – 150 blocks of 600 houses. The unit cost is Shs 0.170 million, quantity needed is 150 and the total amount needed is Shs 25.5 billion. The total for the 900 housing units is Shs 46.5 billion. Provided in the budget is Shs 1.4 billion and so, the shortfall is Shs 45.1 billion.

Another issue raised is mistreatment of prisoners. They recommended that we strengthen the monitoring department to periodically interface with the inmates to identify issues that affect them.

The response is that the monitoring and observation of human rights for both staff and prisoners is conducted through the regular supervision of all human rights activities, supporting and monitoring the activities of staff and prisoners' human rights committees in 266 prisons.

The Service has a Department of Inspectorate and Quality Assurance headed by a Commissioner of Prisons and charged with the responsibility of monitoring human rights of observance. However, this needs to be strengthened in terms of both human resource, financial support and facilitation.

In addition, in order to strengthen human rights monitoring observance, we undertake to appoint and induct visiting justices in accordance with Section 109(1) and (2) of the Prisons Act.

In the Financial Year 2022/2023, the Service appointed and inducted 33 visiting justices to undertake supervision of prisons in the Eastern Region in respect of human rights observance and compliance to custodial standards.

In Financial Year 2023/2024, the plan is to induct visiting justices to monitor human rights practices and observances in northern, southern, Kooki, mid-central, north-central and mid-western regions. Shs 2 billion is required to appoint, induct and facilitate the visiting justices to monitor human rights observance and practice in all prisons countrywide.

Another issue was the distance between prisons and courts of law. The committee's recommendation was that the location of adjudicating courts of law should be well planned to be in proximity with prison facilities to reduce distances that inmates have to travel.

Our response is that there is a misalignment of prisons locations to courts of judicature, which overstretches prisons operations in delivery of prisoners to court in terms of long distances between courts and prisons.

The Service has been in constant engagement with other criminal justice agencies as well as the ministry of finance, to have the misalignment of the criminal justice agencies addressed, especially prisons and courts. As a result, the Service established new prisons at Paidha, Nebbi, Amuru, Oyam, Lugore, Koboko, Kapchorwa, Sheema, Kyenjonjo, Nwoya, Mutufu, Kotido, Nyarushanje, Mityana West, Patongo West, Sanga, Nakapiriprit and Amudat.

The challenge of misalignment still exists as reflected in the table that follows:

- i) Rubirizi - Bushenyi - the distance in between is 45 kilometres;
- ii) Rubindi - Mbarara – 43km;

- iii) Zeu -Paidha - 45km;
- iv) Warr - Paidha – 35km;
- v) Bukakata - Buwunga – 35km;
- vi) Pakwach - Ragem -35km;
- vii) Butoolo – Nsangi - 33km;
- viii) Bwizibwera - Mbarara -28km;
- ix) Kiganda - Myanzi -22km; and
- x) Ndeija - Mbarara – 20km.

In partnership with the Administration of Justice Programme, the Service has established online courts/ virtual conferencing facilities in 19 prisons to enhance and mitigate the misalignment challenge.

The other recommendation in this respect is that more vehicles should be purchased and provided with sufficient fuel to ensure timely delivery of inmates to courts.

The status of vehicles for delivery of prisoners to courts is also elaborated in the table that follows.

Buses which are below one year, zero. Those between one year and three years in terms of age are six, those between three and five years of age are six and those above five years are seven. We have a total of only 19 buses in all categories.

Minibuses

We have zero below one year; 10 between one and three years; five between three; and five years and we have one above five years. The total is Lorries.

We have six below one year, 27 between one and three years, 14 between three and five years and we have 38 above five years. The total is 85.

Tricycles

We have two in the first category, none in the second, two in the third and fourth categories. The total is four.

The totals of these vehicles - the heavy ones are eight in the first category, 43 in the second,

27 in the third, 46 in the fourth. The grand total is 124.

Only 107 of the 266 prisons have vehicles. Out of the 124 vehicles listed above, 46 are old and this of course translates into maintenance costs.

In the Financial Year 2023/2024, the Service requires Shs 21.434 billion for timely delivery of prisoners to courts as reflected below:

Fuel for delivery of prisoners to court - amount required is Shs 4.895 billion but amount provided is Shs 2.706 billion; and shortfall is Shs 2.189 billion.

Vehicle maintenance - amount required is Shs 5.064 billion but amount provided is Shs 3.600 billion; and the shortfall is Shs 1.464 billion.

Escort duties – the amount required Shs 7.550 billion but amount provided is Shs 0.416 billion. The shortfall is Shs 7.134 billion.

Subtotal - the amount required is Shs 17.509 billion, but the amount provided is Shs 6.722 billion; and the shortfall is Shs 10.787 billion.

Transport equipment – the amount required is Shs 3.925 billion; amount provided is Shs 1.451 billion and the shortfall is Shs 2.474 billion.

The total requirement in all the categories is Shs 21.434 billion, but provided is Shs 8.173 billion and the shortfall is Shs 13.261 billion.

Another issue raised was land grabbing, and the recommendation is that the Uganda Prisons Service Management should expedite land survey and title acquisition to avoid future encroachment on prison's land.

Our response is the Uganda Prisons Services (UPS) operates 266 prisons, 79 of these are located in the kingdom land; Kingdom of Buganda, 40 on district land and 146 on Central Government land. Prisons cannot survey and title kingdom or district land. Sixty two out of 147 central Prisons land is not surveyed.

In the Financial Year 2022/2023, the Service surveyed and titled five prisons land at Alocha, Kanungu, Ndorwa, Kibuku and Pece and procured land survey equipment aimed at fast-tracking the land surveying process.

Mr Speaker, Shs 1.84 billion is required to survey and title all the unsurvey land. In the Financial Year 2023/2024, The Prisons plans to survey and title 24 prisons. What is required is Shs 0.75 billion, but provided is Shs 0.25 billion, giving a shortfall of Shs 0.5 billion.

On gender and equity, mainstreaming the recommendation is that gender should be mainstreamed in all prison activities to increase gender sensitisation of all the inmates, and that gender monitoring office should be strengthened to monitor integration of gender in prison life and activities.

The response is that all UPS programmes and activities are gender and equity compliant. In Financial Year 2023/2024, UPS was assessed as being compliant and awarded 70 per cent. For example, the UPS staff establishment is composed of 30 per cent females. The strategy is to be above 30 per cent female staff in the medium term.

The service, Mr Speaker, established a fully-fledged gender office at Uganda Prisons headquarters, headed by a Commissioner of Prisons, Rehabilitation and Reintegration, who is charged with the responsibility of ensuring gender mainstreaming in all prisons activities and operations, as well as handling all the gender-related matters.

Mr Speaker, the other issue raised is the Night-Soil-Bucket System, and the recommendation of the committee was that Prisons Service should provide adequate sanitary facilities and totally eliminate the Night-Soil-Bucket System in all prisons in Uganda.

Our response is that the remaining prisons with no water closets are those with uniports and those in small single dilapidated houses at sub-counties former LAP, which cannot accommodate waterborne facilities. These are temporary holding facilities and the plan is to

have permanent structures that have waterborne facilities, which will fully address the issue.

The service plans to install water closets in the remaining 27 prisons, in a phased manner, through the construction of new prisoners' wards fitted with water closets in their respective prisons.

In Financial Year 2022/2023, the service constructed prisoners' wards with water closets in Kiruhura and Kamuli prisons. Shs 10.8 billion is required to construct prisoners' wards fitted with water closets in the remaining prisons.

The committee also recommends that prison service should consider using bio-digesters and construct permanent latrines. The service will study the feasibility of the construction of bio-digesters in prisons.

The other issue raised by the committee was about the rehabilitation programmes in prison service and it recommended that Government should enhance budgetary allocations for Uganda Prisons Service to boost implementations of the Presidential directives as well as funding for rehabilitation programmes to improve the lives of inmates while in custody and thereafter.

We would like to respond to the point that the Uganda Prisons Service is currently undertaking a number of Presidential directives and these include seed production, cotton production, food and animal feed security intervention, prisons industries and staff welfare programmes, including staff accommodation. Shs 711.144 billion is required to establish production systems and undertake Presidential directives as shown in the table in the presentation as follows.

Intervention

- i) Grain production – the required amount is Shs 76.140 billion; the provided amount is Shs 11.279 billion; the shortfall is Shs 64.861 billion.
- ii) Seed production – the required amount is Shs 86.990 billion; the provided amount

- is Shs 1.33 billion; the shortfall is Shs 85.654 billion.
- iii) Cotton production – the required amount is Shs 80.550 billion; the provided amount is Shs 2.329 billion; the shortfall is Shs 78.221 billion.
- iv) Food and animal feed security – the required amount is Shs 152.434 billion; nothing is provided and the same is outstanding in its entirety.
- v) Prisons industries - Shs 268.530 billion is needed; only Shs 2.266 billion is provided; and the shortfall is 2.664 billion.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, point of procedure.

MR EKANYA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I have been hesitant to raise procedure on Gen. Muhoozi, because of my relationship with him but I am having difficulty in continuing to sit and listen based on the recommendation and the decision of Parliament. As per the recommendation of Parliament, the report is supposed to be action taken, like the Treasury Memoranda received from the Auditor-General, and that is according to our Rules of Procedure.

However, I think that the technical people in the Ministry of Internal Affairs did not read the rules and the position of Parliament, and have decided to prepare a report for the minister on policy position for the future. Is the minister proceeding according to the guidance, Mr Speaker?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You have provoked me into recalling something, which I wanted - but I was trying to be lenient because the minister is complying with the directives given him.

Anyhow, first, when you are submitting here, never fear anyone because you swear that “without fear or favour”. Therefore, these things of a relationship - do not betray anything upon which you took an oath to protect.

On Rule 220 of the Rules of Procedure, my guidance for now, as I consult further, is that

the minister submits. He should in fact be laying; he should not be presenting and after the laying, we then refer it to the sectoral committee. The sectoral committee will then dissect all these reports because they are referring to many issues - moreover, this is the right time because we are going into the budget process, and so, they will compare and see if there are gaps, then they will call him.

You have put it very well. This is like a Treasury Memoranda. So, because of that, I really want to – I just wanted to wait for him to finish this component. Let me just guide properly; honourable minister, lay the three reports. Just lay and I refer them to the relevant committees. In addition, all action-taken reports should be laid like how it is for the Treasury Memoranda.

GEN. MUHOOZI: Thank you, Mr Speaker and my friend, the Hon. Ekanya, for making my work easy. On that note, I beg to lay the paper, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is not a paper; it is a report. You will read each of them separately; you will be called, so start with one.

GEN. MUHOOZI: I will start with Responses to the report of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs on field visits to Government Prisons and prison farms. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister.

LAYING OF THE ACTION-TAKEN
REPORT ON DISPARITIES IN DISTRICT
QUOTAS FOR SHORTLISTED
APPLICANTS FOR THE POST OF
PROBATIONER POLICE CONSTABLE
(PPC) AND DRIVERS IN THE
RECRUITMENT EXERCISE BY UGANDA
POLICE FORCE

GEN. MUHOOZI: Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the report of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs on disparities in district quotas for shortlisted applicants for the post of Probationer Police Constables (PPC) –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, honourable minister, you are laying the action-taken report, not a report.

GEN. MUHOOZI: I beg to lay the action-taken report, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You know, staff of the *Hansard* usually call me at midnight when they are struggling with what we have said here and there. Just for clarity, honourable minister, if you can repeat it so that the *Hansard* team can capture it well.

GEN. MUHOOZI: Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the action-taken report on the recommendations of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs, regarding disparities in district quotas for shortlisted applicants for the post of Probationer Police Constables (PPC) and drivers in the recruitment exercise by the Uganda Police Force. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: *Hansard*, you will clean it up because these are on the report; recommendations on the report, because the House adopted, it is no longer now the committee report alone because that was already adopted by the House.

LAYING OF THE ACTION-TAKEN
REPORT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS
ON THE MINISTERIAL POLICY
STATEMENT AND BUDGET ESTIMATES
FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/2024 FOR
MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

GEN. MUHOOZI: Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the action-taken report on the recommendations of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs on the Ministerial Policy Statement and budget estimates for Financial Year 2023/2024. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Honourable colleagues, we shall handle the Sugar (Amendment) Bill tomorrow. I promised that I would give you notice about it, so let us be here in big numbers so that we sort out this Bill. (*Hon. Kaaya rose* _)

You have a point of procedure, honourable member?

MS KAAYA: Mr Speaker, you had also given notice to the Minister responsible for animal farming and veterinary services concerning the quarantine. We were happy when the ban was lifted but when I looked at the content of the letter that led to the opening up of the farms and animal products, I realised it is still wanting.

When you also look at the Cabinet resolution, Mr Speaker, you had promised that the Minister would come today and we harmonise.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister requested for Thursday. On the same day, I asked him to come on Tuesday but he requested to come on Thursday and I granted it. House adjourned to tomorrow at 2.00 p.m.

(The House rose at 6.01 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 7 February 2024 at 2.00 p.m.)