



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

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THIRD SESSION - FIRST MEETING

THURSDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER 2023



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

THIRD SESSION - 27TH SITTING - FIRST MEETING

Thursday, 7 September 2023

Parliament met at 2.00 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

(The Speaker, Ms Anita Among, in the Chair.)

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I welcome you to this afternoon's sitting. As you are aware, Rule 114 of our Rules of Procedure requires ministers to attend sittings of the House and where one is unable to attend, you communicate effectively to the presiding officer.

The failure of some ministers to regularly attend the House brings business in the House to a standstill. Remember, you are here to respond as the Executive and we are holding these offices in public trust. When you abdicate your responsibility as ministers, that is a breach of trust. As leaders, elected Members of Parliament and appointed ministers, let us be responsible. The absence of ministers in this House impedes the efficiency and effectiveness of the Legislature. *(Applause)*

As Members of Parliament, we come here to work and represent our people so honourable ministers, kindly help us and be in the House to support the people and answer queries that arise. As I said, it is a total breach of your duty.

You may not like the presiding officer but that is not my business. You are here to work for your people. There are those saying, "I did not go because I do not like the presiding officer." So what? Come and represent your people, come and work for this country.

I would like the Chief Executive of the country to know - and this goes to the Appointments Committee - that for ministers who will be moved from their positions to another sector, the first thing we shall check is, "Did you attend Parliament? How many times?" That should be one of the bases.

I am happy that Members on the Appointments Committee are here. I want you to take note of that. Prime Minister, we are going to give you a list of ministers' attendance from when you started; how many times they have attended and how many have not attended the House.

I will not get tired of thanking Hon. Bahati, Hon. Musasizi, and Hon. Rusoke. That group is always here. Even my *mzee* of the Ministry of Energy is here; Hon. Okaasai -*(Applause)*- but of course the Prime Minister is always here.

Honourable members, the rains have started. I am happy that the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries - being one of the good ministers that we have - has come. Honourable minister, we had requested for seeds and now that Members are going on recess, we need a response from you on what we are going with. We will need -

2.06

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for that compliment that I am one of your good ministers. *(Laughter)* I pledge to continue being one. I request that you convene a meeting with the Ministry of Finance to discuss how to go about it. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I have the Prime Minister here.

2.07

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Rukia Nakadama): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for your motherly kindness. I apologise, on behalf of the ministers, for not being here yesterday. Many of them came in a bit late; after 2.00 p.m. They had the intention to come. I request you to continue working with the ministers who are also committed to continue working with you and I pledge that we shall improve on time keeping.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, I had not finished my communication. However, thank you for your apology. I will always work with the ministers and you have no choice but to work with me within these five years. I am open and it is not about Hon. Anita but the people of this country.

About Members who come here all the time and there is nobody to respond to what they are raising - I have nothing personal against anybody and whoever feels that there is anything personal –

Honourable members, at the end of today's sitting, we will go on recess until 28 September 2023. Unlike other recess periods where some committees will continue to transact, this recess shall be absolute. I expect you to head to your constituencies to monitor and implement Government programmes.

We are also tired of saying that Members are not in the House because we have opponents,

like what was raised the other day. Now, go and work with those opponents and make sure that you protect your constituency. Nobody should tell their voters that we had a committee. To the voters out there, your Members are coming home.

Once again, I want to thank you for coming. We have a very congested Order Paper - There is a procedural matter. Let us start with the lady.

MS NYAKIKONGORO: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for your communication and for taking us on, especially regarding our absence in the House. I was perturbed, particularly when you mentioned that some ministers are saying that they do not feel comfortable attending this Parliament because of the presiding officers. That leaves us wondering whether the ministers are serving the presiding officers or the country.

I also understand that most of the ministers are Members of Parliament. Therefore, if that allegation keeps on lingering, should we assume that the ministers are not in tandem with what the presiding officers are doing? If that is the case, can the Prime Minister call the ministers and find out who those specific ones are because we shall assume that it is the whole Front Bench undermining the presiding officers. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, whether you want to come inside because you like Anita or Thomas is not something for discussion. However, you must take note, as ministers, that we are still here for five years.

MR SILWANY: Madam Speaker, I want to thank you for your communication and I thank the Prime Minister for coming to apologise –

THE SPEAKER: By the way, the Rt Hon. Nabbanja also called me this morning apologising.

MR SILWANY: I want to thank her for apologising. However, this is not the first time that Hon. Nakadama is coming to apologise here whenever we do not have ministers in the

House. Madam Speaker, I am on record for raising the issue of ministers not once, twice or 20 times. Since the Prime Minister is here today, wouldn't it be procedurally right for it to be on record that the Prime Minister commits that what happened yesterday will never happen again in the 11th Parliament? They come and apologise casually and the same thing happens the following day.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, what the honourable member is raising is very pertinent. We need a commitment from the Government.

MR SSEGGONA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. On my part, I am very happy that you are asserting our authority on our behalf.

Secondly, I am seeking your guidance as to whether the ministers instructed to appear in Parliament will include the Minister of Education and Sports who has been adjudged to proceed with us on Zoom and if these other ministers are free, like her, to attend on Zoom.

THE SPEAKER: Let us first get a commitment from the Prime Minister.

MS NAKADAMA: Madam Speaker, in the religion that I believe in, people do wrong and seek forgiveness. The following day, they do another wrong and seek forgiveness. God is always forgiving them. That is our Creator. When I commit that honourable ministers will do better, I believe that they will all continue improving every day. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the issue that Hon. Ssegona has raised is under Rule 114 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament on "Attendance of Sittings by Minister."

(1) *"For any ministry, the minister or at least the Minister of State shall attend sittings of the House and where none of them is able to attend, the Minister shall request another Minister to represent that Ministry's interests in the House and notify the Speaker accordingly."*

I was notified by the First Lady that she would be sending Hon. Ogwang who is also here. Hon. Ogwang, aren't you representing the First Lady? Hon. Muyingo is also here - I got a letter –(Laughter)– Hon. Zijjan, you are not a minister. Let us have respect for the House. On what issue is your procedural matter?

I got a letter from the minister sending the two and I am okay with it, as the presiding officer. Thank you. Leader of the Opposition, you will come last. Honourable members, you are the same people with matters of national importance.

MR LUTTAMAGUZI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. You raised a pertinent issue about seeds. Majority of the Members here are part of food security in this country and we need a clear response since Members are going on holiday. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the seeds.

MS NAKADAMA: Since we have the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries here, let him come and inform us about the seeds issue.

MR TUMWEBAZE: Madam Speaker, I presented a substantive statement here pointing out that the Ministry for Agriculture no longer gives out seeds. We have zero budget for that. The policy changed to PDM.

However, we have had exceptional circumstances where this House has intervened and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has accepted and made supplementary provisions. That is why I was saying that I cannot make a commitment without the involvement of the Ministry for Finance. As long as it makes provision –(Interruption)– Just hold on. Under the Commitment Control System, the accounting officer of any entity cannot commit funds that they do not have in their budget.

If we get a commitment that some funds will be released, we will be able to instruct all the input

dealers who have been in the system to give seeds to Members of Parliament. Therefore, I beg that we have a dialogue with the Speaker, representing Parliament and the Ministry of Finance and find a solution. As of now, I am non-committal.

DR BWANIKA: Madam Speaker, we need only Shs 4 billion to ensure that all the constituencies in this country get seeds. When we do that, we will secure this country, in terms of food, for the next season.

Madam Speaker, you have always paid attention to issues that are crucial to the people of Uganda. We ask you to prevail. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should find the Shs 4 billion. Thank you.

2.20

MS JANE PACUTO (NRM, Woman Representative, Pakwach): Madam Speaker, as the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development labours to find resources to give people seeds, a good number of people in Uganda are fishermen and in most cases, they are not supported. There are those doing aquaculture and are not given fingerlings. Those fishermen, sometimes, have their boats and nets burnt, but they are not supported with fishing tools. They should be considered as well.

THE SPEAKER: I can see that the minister is excited. Honourable minister?

2.21

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (FISHERIES) (Ms Hellen Adoa): Thank you, Madam Speaker. My boss is around but since you have given me the opportunity – just as the honourable minister said – it is urgent that we sit with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Surely, as the honourable members go back to their communities, it would be good for them to go with the seeds, fingerlings and also animals. I am ready to move around and support the Members of

Parliament, when given the opportunity, especially financially.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Can we hear from the Government? It is a serious matter. Let us first resolve this; what you want is what we have asked for.

MS NAKADAMA: Madam Speaker, I am going to call the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to meet tomorrow and we shall come back here with feedback.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members – Yes, procedure?

MR SSEGGONA: Madam Speaker, you guided this House earlier that we are proceeding to recess today. When the Prime Minister – I will not call her the Deputy Prime Minister because of where she is seated today – says, “we will come back,” yet we shall be on recess up to the 28th – This is how this Government has been playing games.

The second point is about how we run the Government. Those of us who have been around know how governments are run – and I mean governments of civilised men and women. The minister responsible raises a budget and presents it to the ministry responsible for finance.

We are deceiving ourselves by asking, “where is the money?” when we did not put it in the budget. Either the reason we did not put it in the budget is that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries did not present it to the finance ministry or we rejected it ourselves. The second option is that maybe we do not have a Prime Minister because you do not coordinate the Cabinet from here. What they are displaying here is a show that, actually, they do not know what they are doing.

Borrowing the words of the late Hon. Jacob Oulanyah, while seated where you are, Madam Speaker, he would turn, as you have done, to look at the person speaking - (*Laughter*)- and

he used to say, “You have ministers running around like headless chickens.” Since I am not the Speaker, I will not repeat the same words.

May I request that you, procedurally, guide the Prime Minister to coordinate the Cabinet from elsewhere and just present to us what they are meant to present to us.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, honourable member?

MR TUMWEBAZE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I like honesty because my name is “Frank”. It is not that we are really clueless about what is required. Rather, the Government follows policy. You may reach a point and say that this policy is not working so, let us change it.

The Government reached a point and said that distribution of seedlings was counterproductive as the people who were involved in distributing were distributing to themselves and outside of the planting time. Therefore, the Executive took the decision for money to go through Parish Development Model (PDM) for people to buy seedlings for themselves.

However, repeatedly, in this House, Members continue to bring out an argument that giving seedlings directly is still relevant and I seem to agree with that proposition. On our side, I cannot decide here; we have to get back to the position of the Executive and see how we can reform the policy, with input from your submissions. That is why I am requesting the Speaker to coordinate, have a meeting with us and give us the position so that we are able to move together.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, if that was a policy made by the Cabinet, we will not change it here but the fact remains that we want seeds. *(Applause)* Since we are able to rescue people out there, let us now rescue the whole country by giving them seeds. I would love to be part of that meeting tomorrow. Let us have it in my office at 2.00 p.m. and we will then communicate to the Members. *(Applause)*

MR BATARINGAYA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on two points of clarification. One, the Prime Minister is the supervisor of the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. The policy may have changed and we are now giving money to people through the PDM. However, not all people receive money –

THE SPEAKER: It is 39 per cent.

MR BATARINGAYA: Yes. What about those within the 39 per cent who have not received the seeds?

THE SPEAKER: No, outside the 39 per cent.

MR BATARINGAYA: Yes. The second issue is that the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries has talked about the change in policy, which is correct. However, as I have already noted – I will raise it as a matter of national importance.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Akiiki?

MR RUHUNDA: Madam Speaker, I want this to go on record because we elected you overwhelmingly. Even these ministers elected you. I do not see why some ministers can even imagine, in their heads, that while you are presiding, they cannot step here. That is unacceptable.

Parliament is an independent organ with its powers and our duty is to check the Executive. We have to check you, whether you like it or not because it is our mandate. I do not want to come here and begin imagining that I have to be at the mercy of a minister. That would be giving away the powers that the people of Fort Portal gave me.

A minister has to be put to order and from today, we do not want to hear anything like the Speaker complaining about ministers. Ministers must go and check themselves and if not, we are going to deal with you in the committees. We will not pass your ministerial statements and we will even block the budget;

we have all this power. *(Laughter)* We do not want this business of ministers undermining our Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I said that some ministers may say, “I am not going to the House because I do not like the Presiding Officer”, not particularly Rt Hon. Anita Among or Rt Hon. Thomas Tayebwa. They may have that perception but as I have said, that is up to those who feel they do not like the Presiding Officer. We are still here for some good time. *(Laughter)* The Leader of the Opposition?

2.30

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Mathias Mpuuga): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Without being mistaken for regurgitating matters already debated by Members, in the 8th Parliament, there was a motion to separate the role of ministers and Members of Parliament. Unfortunately, it was lost.

I believe the goings-on are offering potent education on the nature of conflict that arises when ministers play a dual role of being Members of Parliament and Cabinet ministers. In other jurisdictions, even within the East African region, that problem has been solved and I think Parliaments are working better.

Madam Speaker, today is the 27th Sitting of the First Meeting of the Third Session. In this document, I have catalogued 50 issues for which Parliament gave instructions to ministers and none of them was responded to in the Second Session yet this is the Third Session. If I had sought your leave, I would have read this catalogue out stating matters over which Parliament offered instructions. The Speaker ordered and there was no response from the Front Bench.

We have the Prime Minister and other ministers around. It has somehow become the culture that Parliament will forget. Fortunately, I do not forget because I have the catalogue stating dates, the Members who raised these issues and the instructions given on matters ranging

from human rights, finance, environment and health. However, we have had no statements or responses.

Madam Speaker, the ministers come around, peep inside and know that we shall forget. I find it a bit disturbing that we go into the Third session when matters from the Second Session were not attended to and we allow ministers to proceed on the Floor.

Madam Speaker, I want to suggest, with your indulgence, that since we are going on recess, no minister with a pending statement be allowed on the Floor unless they have cleared their backlog with Parliament because then, we are simply doing a ritual here. If a minister has a matter from 2022 that has not been presented and Members continue raising the same issue using different languages, why should we allow the minister back without resolving backlog over unanswered questions?

Madam Speaker, with your permission, I will share this document with your office and if you allow me, when Parliament resumes, I will read out this backlog of unanswered questions from all sectors. The ministers continue to come around appearing very serious. These Members are returning to their constituencies to respond to issues which ministers have failed to act upon. I leave it up to the Presiding Officer to choose the course of action upon which this could be acted. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Leader of the Opposition, could you lay that on the Table so that I can forward it to the respective ministers to bring written responses?

MR MPUUGA: Yes, Madam Speaker. Because it is your order, I will lay it on the Table but these ministers have this information. They are just reluctant to perform their duty.

THE SPEAKER: That is why you are in the opposition.

MR MPUUGA: I will lay this ministers' list of shame. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Is it entitled, “List of Shame”? How can you lay shame? *(Laughter)*

MR MPUUGA: Madam Speaker, I beg to lay a document entitled, “Consolidated Plenary Follow-up Issues from the Second Session not acted upon as of August 2023.” I beg to lay.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I will forward it to the Prime Minister. Yes?

2.35

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for coming up with that document. However, some issues are solved and we do not come back to Parliament. In addition, there are issues which are supposed to be put on the Order Paper and these ministers are not in charge of the Order Paper. I request that -

THE SPEAKER: That is not correct. We have had issues like regulation of education that have not been responded to, and a number of other issues. Do not defend yourself, just get the document and work on it.

MS NAKADAMA: Madam Speaker, that is why I was saying ‘some’ but I thank him. We are going to respond to those issues, if given the opportunity. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Oboth, do you have something to say?

MR SSEMUJJU: Thank you, Madam Speaker -

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Oboth is responding to something first.

2.37

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (Mr Jacob Oboth): Are you Oboth-Oboth? *(Laughter)* Thank you, Madam Speaker. After the Prime Minister’s intervention, I wanted to interrupt the Leader of the Opposition within our rules. When you look at the Front Bench,

Madam Speaker, there is no minister despising or undermining you. We are all here and some are over-flooded on your left side. When we come here and hear about “a list of shame” and how things were not -

THE SPEAKER: No, that “list of shame” was withdrawn.

MR OBOTH: When the Leader of the Opposition was speaking, behind him were empty seats. The focus should be giving legislative services to this country, Madam Speaker. The call to attend this House should be so that when we come here, we add value to the debate and move this country forward. It should not be one-sided. My good friend from Masaka, Hon. Mpuuga, we need to work together to add value.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Oboth, much as we are saying it is not one-sided, I want to give you an example. Yesterday, we had very important motions and issues in the House to discuss but the Front Bench was not there. Even Hon. Bahati, who is always the first one in the House, was not present. I even called him and asked whether he was sick. I had to ask because it was unusual of him to miss the House. All of us are important. Thank you.

MR OBOTH: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs wrote to you and to the Prime Minister. We are three ministers and we are all here today. Hon. Ssempijja is supposed to attend plenary on Tuesday, Hon. Huda on Wednesday, and Hon. Oboth on Thursday. Today we all came to show that -

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order from the Member for Tororo.

MR OBOTH: That order *-(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, in the public gallery this afternoon we have a delegation from Kachwamba Abaamu Group from Fort Portal City - the tourism city - Fort Portal District. They are represented by Hon. Ruhunda Alex, Hon. Mugisha Margaret

Muhanga and Hon. Linda Irene. You are most welcome. Honourable members, join me in welcoming the team. (*Applause*) This is your Parliament, please come again.

Yes, a procedural matter - Honourable members, we have very many matters of national importance.

MR SSEMUJJU: Madam Speaker, we started this Parliament during the COVID-19 time and there are things that we take for granted. You are dressed the way you are for a reason but we have progressively become casual. I have seen ministers dressed like they are going to milk cows and that tells you the mental frame of some of our colleagues. Madam Speaker, you are the one who has been lenient; when we raise this matter, you find a way of defending them. You can look at them; I do not have to mention their names today -

THE SPEAKER: No, mention their names.

MR SSEMUJJU: Someone enters Parliament as if he is going to milk cows -

THE SPEAKER: Mention the names.

MR SSEMUJJU: For example, the honourable Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries who was saying, “order” before I even mentioned his name. (*Laughter*)

The casual way that people dress to attend Parliament is the reason why we had two ministers bring fake statements on Tuesday and they were asked to take them back. I am speaking about the casual way - It is not just a matter of ministers bringing their bodies to Parliament; they must add value. There is one who has been celebrating that all of them are here. Wait for them to begin answering questions. That is when you will know that they are actually useless because -

THE SPEAKER: There is nothing useless. You are responding in anticipation because they have not -

MR SSEMUJJU: I am speaking -

THE SPEAKER: Listen. They have not started responding to anything; you are speaking in anticipation.

Honourable member, Hon. Frank that you are talking about - it is unfortunate that not all of us can afford “Mandela” shirts. Hon. Sarah wants Hon. Tumwebaze to hang himself because I know she is used to buttoning. Let us go to the next item.

URGENT QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PURSUANT TO RULE 49 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, you will recall that on Tuesday, I promised you that today I will give you two hours to bring up your matters of national importance. Unfortunately, you have already used one hour. I am aware that we have a number of ministers here who should be able to respond to your issues. Allow me to start with Hon. Mutiwa. Use two minutes.

2.44

MR GEOFFREY MUTIWA (NRM, Bunyole West County, Butaleja): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am concerned about the unnecessary arrest of my people who reside along the railway line in Budumba and Busolwe Rural subcounties in Butaleja District.

THE SPEAKER: Is that around the railway line?

MR MUTIWA: Yes, along the railway line -

THE SPEAKER: What are they doing there?

MR MUTIWA: Madam Speaker, the Government of Uganda, through Uganda Railway Corporation, engaged M/S China Road and Bridge Corporation -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, let us listen because at the end of the day, we will need to know who the intruder is.

MR MUTIWA: Madam Speaker, the Government of Uganda, through Uganda Railways Corporation, engaged M/S China

Road and Bridge Corporation to undertake rehabilitation works for the Tororo-Namanve Railway Line, which passes through my constituency.

The said company employed security personnel, including the UPDF, to take care of their construction materials, but on the contrary, the security personnel have instead resorted to arresting whoever crosses or moves near the railway line. They seize animals such as cows and goats, which are grazing on their owner's land near the railway line.

To make matters worse, those who are arrested are taken to Busematya Police Station, a distance of over 60 kilometres from my constituency. As a result, many of these people have lost their animals and they pay a lot of money whenever they are taken there.

People also cross through gazetted roads. We had an incident last week where one person was crossing from Bubalya to Busabi. He was arrested by the security personnel who tortured him. This issue has been happening for a long time.

My prayers are that:

1. The Ministry of Security visits the area and assesses it.
2. These arrests are stopped.
3. If possible, the people who paid their money have it refunded.

I have a list of many people who have been paying money to the police to either release their animals or get a police bond.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Mutiwa, who owns the land that those people are occupying?

MR MUTIWA: The land, where these people are, is theirs. However, they gave the railway land. You find that where the railway line crosses –

THE SPEAKER: Listen. Was that land given by the people to Uganda Railway Corporation?

MR MUTIWA: But when they are cultivating their land, which is next to the railway, they are arrested. For instance, last week, the person who was arrested was crossing the railway on a gazetted road which runs from Busolwe to Busabi subcounty. What happens is that these security personnel –

THE SPEAKER: You cannot have a gazetted road across the railway.

MR MUTIWA: Madam Speaker, we all use this gazetted road –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Works and Transport.

2.48

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT (Gen. Edward Katumba Wamala): Thank you, Madam Speaker. First, I request the honourable Member of Parliament to give me the particulars of that particular person and I will look into that matter.

However, there is no grazing land along the railway line. So, you cannot say that you are protecting people from grazing on the railway line. There is even no grass. What are they grazing there? What they graze there are the railway materials; they come and vandalise them under the guise of grazing.

I will take up that particular issue of the person who was arrested but remember, Madam Speaker, that here on this Floor, Parliament directed that all people who are violating and encroaching on the railway land must leave. That is my position.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, do we have farming land around the railway line?

GEN. KATUMBA: None at all, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Give the particulars to the honourable minister.

2.49

MS CHRISTINE NDIWALANA (NUP, Bukomansimbi North County, Bukomansimbi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance regarding the natural disaster which occurred in Bukomansimbi due to extreme weather hazards.

Two days ago, on the night of Tuesday, 5 September 2023, Bukomansimbi Town Council was hit by heavy rainfall which caused damage to buildings, infrastructure, crops and livestock. As a result, 70 households were totally damaged.

I request the Office of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees to send relief items like food, iron sheets, cement and seedlings to the six villages of Kagando, Kyango, Kyeguluso, Kitaasa, Kyanakibi, Bukoba and others in Bukomansimbi Town Council which were affected.

On 30 January 2023, I raised a similar matter when this happened in Kagorogoro Town Council but the response from the Office of the Prime Minister came last week. Twenty thousand (20,000) kilogrammes of maize were received but the report I am getting from the residents is that the maize flour was rotten with maggots in it. So, this time –

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Ndiwalana, I do not want us to debate hearsay.

MS NDIWALANA: That is the report and –

THE SPEAKER: I want evidence that it was rotten; come and lay it on the Table. In the absence of evidence, withdraw the statement.

MS NDIWALANA: Madam Speaker, I am going to ask them to give me the evidence –

THE SPEAKER: Withdraw the statement then bring and lay the evidence on the Table.

MS NDIWALANA: I am withdrawing it but I am going to come and lay it on the Table. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Regarding your question, do you have a district disaster committee report?

MS NDIWALANA: Yes, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Government?

2.52

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (MS RUKIA NAKADAMA): Madam Speaker, I request that the honourable Member of Parliament shares the report with us so that action can be taken.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ngompek?

2.52

MR LINOS NGOMPEK (NRM, Kibanda North County, Kiryandongo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. In February 2017, I was the Resident District Commissioner of Kiryandongo District. The then Minister of Local Government, Hon. Col Tom Butime, visited Bweyale and Kiryandongo Markets - these are mud and wattle markets that belong to the local government. He promised the women that the local government would take over those markets and develop them.

Unfortunately, eight years down the road, the Ministry of Local Government has done nothing in respect to the markets and our women. When it rains, it is really a problem. My prayer is that the local government minister visits these markets and gives assurance to our mothers that the Government will construct these markets because what our women go through is really saddening.

Finally, every year, Kiryandongo Local Government subjects these women to yearly bidding to manage the market. It is a tedious process that promotes corruption. I also pray to the minister to allow these women to sign a memorandum with the Kiryandongo Local Government so that they manage this market for a period of three or four years in order to move – *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister?

2.55

THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Mr Raphael Magyezi):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the Member for raising this important issue. The markets are important for our people for the sale of their commodities and also for local governments to raise some revenue.

I will send a technical team to visit Kiryandongo so that we see the action that can be taken on these markets. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Write back to the Member giving him a response and kindly give me a copy.

MR MAGYEZI: Sure. I will do that, Madam Speaker.

MR SSEGGONA: Madam Speaker, would it not be procedurally right for the minister to simply give guidelines across the country? Otherwise, if it is going to be applied in a haphazard manner, every Member of Parliament must come here and do this. As I said earlier, that is not how people run the Government. There must be a policy across the country.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, he is responding to what has been raised. If you had raised an issue that is in Kasilo -

MR SSEGGONA: No, he is not here but it is Kasilo. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Or in Busiro that there is a need for a market. What Hon. Ssegona is raising is important for you. You need to do it across the whole country and assess where we need a good market, like the one we have in Soroti. Make that assessment and see what you can do in different areas; it will help you. It will also help us in the next budgeting process.

MR MAGYEZI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I fully agree. Indeed, if there was a question on the policy of the Government on markets, I would respond. Specifically, on markets, Members may have heard that we are

constructing markets in a number of big towns, municipalities and cities, with the support of the African Development Bank.

I take your guidance, Madam Speaker, about looking at the entire framework of markets in the country. Remember, with the support of Hon. Margaret Rwabushaija, we now have a new law on markets and it is the one that we are trying to implement. We thank her for that.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, after we passed the Markets' Bill - now an Act - have you made a regulation for us to operationalise it? Because it should have those aspects that have been raised.

MR MAGYEZI: Madam Speaker, the Markets Act was assented to on 22 May this year. We have started with some pilot - Because we are talking about different types of markets. At Bwera in Kasese, we are looking at a cattle market. In Kabale, we are looking at a market where vendors are already in the stalls. In Masaka, we are looking at a fully constructed market. However, we are trying to operate the law looking at how to resettle the vendors. In the next two months, we should be able to come up with regulations that take into account the various pilots we have looked at.

THE SPEAKER: We have a problem in this House. We have passed many Bills and we are very proud that we have passed them but the regulations to operationalise them are not there. We will wait for the regulations but people will continue raising these matters.

2.59

MS STELLA ISODO (FDC, Woman Representative, Ngora):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Under Rules 49 and 54(1) of Rules of the Procedure, I rise on a matter of national importance regarding a petition by the defunct East African Community beneficiaries of the Greater Teso Region. I have received a petition from the Chairperson, Greater Teso -

THE SPEAKER: The way of handling petitions is different from matters of national importance. First bring the petition to my office for approval before you present it on the Floor.

MS ISODO: Most obliged, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I am looking at matters of national importance. Hon. Joab Businge –

3.00

MR JOAB BUSINGE (FDC, Masindi Municipality, Masindi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of urgent national importance regarding the fraudulent transfer of a land title in Buruuli namely Block 5, Plot 39 at Kayanja. It is 52.7 hectares in Nyangahya Division, Masindi Municipality, Masindi District. The land in question was, in the 1990s, offered by the local communities to the former National Teachers' College, Masindi, which had hitherto operated on church land for educational purposes.

In 2001, a land title was issued in the names of the Board of Governors, National Teachers' College, Masindi. When this college was phased out by the Ministry of Education and Sports in 2005, the said land was one of the assets that was passed on to Kamurasi Primary Teachers' College (PTC) in Masindi. The title was handed over to the Ministry of Education and Sports for formal transfer to the Board of Governors of Kamurasi PTC, Masindi.

In the process of identifying land for the establishment of the proposed Bunyoro Public University, we were dismayed to discover that this land was fraudulently transferred to a one Magalies Distillers (U) Ltd with a letter of no objection written by a one, Mr Mwongyere Methodius, acting for the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education and Sports, on 21 August 2007.

Madam Speaker, in his letter, he incorrectly indicated that His Excellency the President had recommended the investment by Magalies Distillers (U) Ltd to Masindi yet the President's letter directed this investment to Ntungamo.

Owing to this, the Mayor, Masindi Municipality, wrote a petition and he is in the gallery to see how I raise this matter. In the circumstances, my prayers are:

1. That this House causes an investigation into fraud to bring justice to the people who donated this land for educational purposes.
2. That this House directs the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and the Ministry of Education and Sports to cancel the transfer of title to Magalies Distillers (U) Ltd and registers the land in the names of either Bunyoro Public University or Masindi Municipal Council.

Madam Speaker, I beg your permission to lay a petition to the Minister of State –

THE SPEAKER: Under rule 30, petitions are handled in a different way. Give me your prayers.

MR BUSINGE: My prayers are that you direct an investigation into this fraud and that the Minister of Land, Housing and Urban Development and the Minister of Education and Sports are *-(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Switch on the microphone.

MR BUSINGE: Cancel the title because they did it without the knowledge of the local government in the district.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Prime Minister –

3.04

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Rt Hon. Rukia Nakadama): Madam Speaker, I will call the Ministry of Education together with the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development so that we can solve this matter but the honourable Member of Parliament will also be called to attend that meeting. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I happened to see those documents that were brought by Hon. Joab Businge.

First of all, the Mayor of Masindi Municipality, you are most welcome to the Parliament of Uganda. I looked at the documents and there was a presidential directive to Ntungamo for land to be given. I do not know what happened but they instead gave land from Masindi, not from Ntungamo.

That land was gazetted for the university - maybe the minister needs to find out what happened for the land belonging to the Ministry of Education and Sports to be transferred to an individual or to a company. I think that is not correct. Honourable Minister of Education and Sports, are you the one with the rota?

3.07

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (HIGHER EDUCATION) (Dr John Chrysostom Muyingo): Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Where is hon. Nandala-Mafabi? *(Laughter)* To whom are you raising the point of order?

MR SSEMUJJU: Madam Speaker, a while ago, you told us that the Minister of Education and Sports is represented by Hon. Ogwang.

THE SPEAKER: I said hon. Peter Ogwang and hon. Muyingo.

MR SSEMUJJU: Hon. Ogwang brought a letter here saying he is the only one who will represent the First Lady on Thursdays.

THE SPEAKER: Did he bring the letter to you?

MR SSEMUJJU: Is Hon. Muyingo in order to appoint himself yet the boss has already appointed Hon. Ogwang to be here on Thursday? *(Laughter)*

DR MUYINGO: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I do not know whether Hon. Ssemujju has become my secretary. To the best of my knowledge, that letter was not delivered to me. What I know is that Dr Muyingo and

all the ministers are here and any of them can answer. *(Whereupon Mr Matia Kasaija entered the Chamber.)* Even the Minister of Finance has come. *(Applause)*

DR MUYINGO: Madam Speaker, may I use this opportunity to inform my brothers –

THE SPEAKER: Simply answer the issue of the –

DR MUYINGO: Madam Speaker, I have just received the news now. We are going to investigate the matter and I will report back to the House.

THE SPEAKER: Kindly, I want you to investigate that matter because that land belongs to Bunyoro Public University. We need feedback on that. Honourable Minister of Finance, you are most welcome and while you were away, we missed you so much. We have something that we need from you; we are going for recess and our voters will be asking us for seeds.

We know the only person who can rescue us is you, a very good and able minister. We do not need to have a meeting anymore since the minister is here. It is just a matter of a minister telling those suppliers to give the agriculture ministry the seeds and we go for one month. We need to have the seeds so that we do not continue buying food. *(Applause)*

3.09

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Mr Matia Kasaija): Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: The cost of the seeds is only Shs 4 billion.

MR KASAIJA: Madam Speaker, we discussed this issue last time; do you remember? When we were discussing payment for coffee and tea seedlings, I think that issue came up. I have discussed this with the Commissioner-General, Uganda Prisons Service because they produce seeds and good ones at that.

Now that you have rejuvenated me, I will go and make an arrangement. My only problem is that you have to guide me on how these seeds will be distributed. Do I send them to the –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, the guidelines are there. All you need to do is to provide the Members – They always write to the Members to pick seeds for their constituencies. However, they go through NAADs.

MR KASAIJA: Okay. Madam Speaker, I will give you the full facts tomorrow. I know we are going on recess today; am I right? I will deal with you, Madam Speaker, and then you will communicate to the Members of Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I will communicate to you on where to pick the seeds from. *(Applause)*

Hon. Herbert Ariko, we are on matters of national importance. *(Members rose)* I have said that I will communicate on where to pick the seeds from. Now that we are getting them from prisons, those are actually the best seeds – Government to Government.

3.12

MR HERBERT ARIKO (NRM, Soroti East Division, Soroti City): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Close to two months ago, I was on this Floor raising a matter regarding the constant power blackout affecting Soroti City and the surrounding areas. We all know that His Excellency the President issued a letter to the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development that the Umeme concession is, probably, one that we are not going to renew.

The challenges of Umeme are escalating by the day. In the constituency where I come from, Umeme no longer replaces transformers, services the power lines or invests in infrastructure yet, according to the concession agreement, the Government and Ugandans continue to meet their obligations.

The people that I represent, who comprise those that live in the central business district (CBD) of Soroti and most of whom are involved in

manufacturing, industrial work and other artisanal kinds of engagements, cannot operate anymore because they do not have power. I know the Rt Hon. Prime Minister promised that she would call a meeting in which the Umeme people and I would be in attendance. Madam Speaker, I wish to report that, that meeting has not happened.

I therefore pray that this House takes up the matter of Umeme failing to supply electricity to Ugandans thereby affecting their economic productivity. We have a committee that can delve into this matter in detail – *[Mr Sseggon: “Information.”]* - I grant you the opportunity. *(Interruption)*

MR SSEGGONA: Thank you. Madam Speaker, as you may be aware, in the Ninth Parliament, in an ad hoc committee chaired by Hon. Jacob Oboth Oboth – I saw him dressed differently today – we conducted inquiries into the affairs of this sector. Under his able leadership, we came up with recommendations, including terminating this concession.

As we speak, the price of electricity has skyrocketed, contrary to the law because they need, first of all, approval from the Electricity Regulatory Authority and the process includes advertising in the newspapers. In addition to what Hon. Herbert Ariko is saying, even in areas where they are supplying electricity, people can no longer afford it and businesses are closing down.

Therefore, to strengthen the point raised by my honourable colleague and son, Hon. Ariko, there must be a deeper inquiry. I understand that seven years after our report, the President came out and said we ought to terminate the concession. However, to date, it is still running and Ugandans cannot afford electricity.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Sseggon, you are aware that the Umeme concession is coming to an end soon. Maybe we need to have an exit strategy for the Umeme concession.

MR ARIKO: Madam Speaker, much obliged. In accordance with your guidance, before 2025

when the concession terminates itself by the expiry date –

THE SPEAKER: Let us have prayers in regard to the load shedding.

MR ARIKO: Madam Speaker, besides what the minister is going to tell us here, we require him to give this House tangible response that are punitive in nature because the concession has certain provisions which make it painful for the service provider to continue acting unilaterally. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: On top of the load shedding, when the power comes back, it is heavy and destroys appliances in the house and at the end of the day, the cost is on you.

3.17

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (ENERGY) (Mr Sidronius Okaasai): Madam Speaker, I thank Hon. Ariko for raising that issue. First of all, the current outage that Hon. Ariko is pointing out is actually true. We have a challenge in north-eastern and eastern Uganda; there was vandalism that happened on the line which takes power to the eastern and north-eastern regions. Just after Kakira, four pylons were brought down and that caused what Hon. Ariko is talking about. We are putting up those pylons, temporarily, to enable power to flow.

We were forced to bring power from Karuma, but the wooden line between Lira and Soroti-Opuyo could not accommodate stable power to enable manufacturing and all the processes in eastern and northern-eastern Uganda. We are only able to take 75 megawatts from Karuma through that transmission line and that power has to be shared by the whole region. 75 megawatts are not adequate to run all the industries in eastern Uganda. That explains the rationing of electricity.

What is the ministry doing about it? There are a number of measures that the ministry has put in place:

1. To remedy the vandalised transmission lines. We are putting temporary structures to enable that line to continue taking power to eastern and north-eastern Uganda.
2. On the transmission of power from Karuma, one of our agencies, Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited (UEDCL) is working on the interconnectors to improve the power flow and increase the power that can be transmitted from Karuma, which is now producing about 300 megawatts. If the line is improved, that would enable us to have a double-circuit which would enable us to provide power from Karuma to the eastern and north-eastern region.

The areas which are affected are Tororo, Mbale, Soroti and Moroto and we are working to improve the power supply in those areas.

The question on Umeme -

THE SPEAKER: How much timeline have you given for all that?

MR OKAASAI: I will talk to the timelines:

1. To improve the transmission line which was vandalised, we have put temporary measures to improve that line to eastern and north-eastern region -

THE SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter.

MS NAMBOOZE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. As Hon. Ariko put it, issues to do with electricity; the way it is supplied, the inefficiencies and all those matters were captured by the Committee on Government Assurances and Implementation which was led by my deputy, Hon. Ssewungu. The committee already has a report on that matter.

Madam Speaker, if it would please you, wouldn't it be procedurally right that you allow that report to be presented to you so that you determine whether it covers that area and the same be listed for discussion in this plenary?

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. It does not cause any harm for a Member to raise what is urgent in his or her constituency. For now, let us have a response. Your report will come and be discussed.

MR OKAASAI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. On Umeme, this House has asked several questions on when the concession will come to an end and why we don't terminate it. Cabinet decided to allow the concession to run its course up to 2025. It is cheaper for us than terminating it midway, which was going to be very costly.

THE SPEAKER: That is why I was telling you to have an exit strategy.

MR OKAASAI: To continue reducing the investment costs of Umeme, we have slowed them down regarding investing their money and only allow them to do activities where we have the money.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Okaasai Opolot, the question is very simple: how do we mitigate load-shedding? Tell us in a layman's language how to mitigate load-shedding. We do not want those stories. Clarification?

MR BATARINGAYA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. In 2021, when we were sitting in the tent, I raised the issue of electricity vandalism in Kashari North Constituency where lines were vandalised in 2020 under Umeme. It also affects my house; I do not have power.

I am seeking clarification because I have heard the honourable minister talking about temporary restoration in the east. How about Kashari North which I talked about a long time ago? When will it be attended to?

THE SPEAKER: Can we have a response for the whole country, not specifically Soroti? At least the Soroti representative has raised it. Honourable minister, I know you are an engineer but tell us in a way that our voters will understand, that you are going to restore power and load-shedding is going to reduce. Clarification?

MR ARIKO: Madam Speaker, as the minister gives us the strategy that he is going to offer this House, he mentioned that they have asked Umeme to slow down on the grid investment.

Madam Speaker, part of the problem of lack of supply is failed transformers, which can only be replaced by way of investment. As the minister gives his explanation, like you have guided very clearly, in what way is he going to give assurance to Ugandans that in the next two years, as we wait for this concession to terminate itself, they are going to survive by way of business and economic productivity? I thank you.

MR MPUUGA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I heard the minister stating that they have since advised Umeme to scale down on investment in the sector. One of the indictments on Umeme is failure to invest as per the concession agreement.

Is the minister informing the country that Umeme has over-invested and therefore, you have advised them to scale down on investment? Members are reporting vandalism and failure of replacement of transformers and basic repairs. Has Umeme over-invested beyond the concession?

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR OKAASAI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. To answer your question on what we are going to do, as a ministry, to ensure reliable supply of electricity countrywide, we are taking the following measures:

1. Controlling vandalism. This is about all of us because it is in your constituency that vandalism takes place. We must get involved in controlling vandalism. In Kashari, eastern Uganda and your district, it is vandalism –(Interjections)- Can I continue?

THE SPEAKER: Let the minister first finish.

MR OKAASAI: I have given you one measure; control vandalism. The second is –

THE SPEAKER: But he is also saying that there are no transformers. How do they vandalise what is not there?

MR OKAASAI: Honestly, it is not only the lines, which are vandalised. They also siphon transformer oil, which is common knowledge. Therefore, vandalism is the primary cause of power upsurges.

The second is that wherever it is reported, we provide clearance for Umeme to replace the transformers. Where there is no report, we cannot clear. We have attended to many areas where reports were made.

The Leader of the Opposition asked, what is the sustainable mechanism to do this and why should we stop Umeme from investment? The project, which you approved, has been declared effective and we are going to use it for the sustainability of power supply wherever there is an upsurge of electricity.

For Hon. Ariko, yes, Umeme may have continued and made many of us comfortable and it is true Umeme had invested and we owe them a lot of money. I came here one time and requested that we provide for a supplementary to pay off Umeme, but it was not given.

We have to continuously reduce the buyout amount for Umeme or else we shall not - In the agreement, Umeme will only relinquish supply when we have paid the amount which we owe them. We are more mindful of the future than what is pertaining now and we have interim measures to provide electricity to the country as of now. I wish to submit, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I need an answer to what has been asked. What we have got is not what our people understand. You may give a response through action. How do you work on the issue of load shedding? It is not only in Soroti or whichever place. Even here in Parliament, I can tell you that now we are on a generator. We get load-shedding in this building over three times a day and we do not know what is happening. What about Soroti which is far away or Kabale, which is like out

of this country? *(Laughter)* We need a response to that through action.

MR OKAASAI: Most obliged, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: You need to move throughout the country and have that sorted out.

3.33

MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise regarding an urgent and very painful situation that happened on 30 August at around 3.00 p.m. A group of about 100 people invaded a village called Bedmot in Apaa, killed four people, injured 10 and about eight are unaccounted for up to now.

Madam Speaker, if you saw the pictures that were circulating on social media, it is a very painful situation. The bodies were tied and ferried on boda bodas to Mungula Hospital under the watch of our good police officers.

Just two days before this incident happened, the people in Apaa raised a security alert. For your information, Apaa is very lucky that there is an army barracks and a police station. They reported the incident that they were seeing suspicious movements of people but the army and security did nothing until we lost lives.

The issue of Apaa has come here, I do not know how many times. What pains me is the continuous human rights violation with impunity. I say "impunity" because no human being has ever been arrested about the cumulative number of over 30 people so far killed. We have a barracks there but no one is doing anything.

My prayers are:

1. The people of Apaa deserve better and their security must be guaranteed; and
2. This Parliament finds it necessary to revisit the decision it made in 2002 that is costing the lives of people. In my opinion,

that decision was made when the people of Acholi were in IDP camps. Their opinion was not sought and the place was gazetted.

Come to the rescue of the people because 286 houses have been burnt down and the people have nowhere to sleep –(*Interruption*)

THE SPEAKER: There is information from Hon. Santa. Incidentally, she raised that issue on Tuesday. She can complement.

MS SANTA OKOT: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The information I want to give to the House is on this issue of Apaa. I want the honourable members who do not know to get to know that I am a shadow Minister for Special Regions. There are five, one of which is Northern Uganda. (*Applause*)

On the same issue of Apaa –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, listen to the minister speaking. (*Laughter*)

MS SANTA OKOT: We were all surprised because the President of this country has so far set up about three different Commissions to try and find out the boundaries of Acholi, Amuru and Madi. The other two Commissions did not bring a report to the Floor of Parliament.

Recently, the President again set up another Commission headed by the former Chief Justice, Bart Katureebe on the issue of Apaa land. However, the whole of the Acholi subregion was surprised when on Saturday, the President and one of his daughters went to Gulu to hold prayers at Boma grounds. The President made a shocking statement that the land in Apaa belongs to the Madi, even before the Commission set foot there. This was a very surprising statement because the four people who were killed in Apaa were not Madi, they were Acholi. If that land belonged to the Madi, the people who were killed should have been Madi.

I think some people want to cause confusion and conflict between the Acholi and the Madi

for their other intentions. That is why we want the Government to explain to us who these people are. All the Acholi are concerned despite -

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Santa Okot, we may not be able to rely on what you are saying that the President said and since he is not in this House, we cannot discuss him. If you make a passing statement, we cannot refer to it in this House.

The fact is, we need to have issues of Apaa resolved because they have existed for so long and we have seen so many dead bodies. I do not know which minister is going to respond to this. The Prime Minister? Gen. Katumba would be in a better position as he has been involved - Hon. Oboth, listen to the Prime Minister.

3.40

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): His Excellency the President set up a commission of inquiry and I would like us to be patient. All the Ministers for Security should take up the urgent issues as far as Apaa is concerned so, I want to call Hon. Oboth -

THE SPEAKER: A right to live – We need those people secure. That is what is most important. As we wait for the report from the Commission, come and tell us how you are going to protect our people.

3.41

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Mathias Mpuuga): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The comfort given by the Prime Minister is well accommodated. The third Commission is well received and I hope the people of Acholi and Madi will take it in good faith. Remember that the second Commission was led by none other than Gen. Moses Ali and there were flares on this Floor over the same because of conflict of interest.

The issue of the President decreeing who owns land is public information and that is most disturbing to the people of northern Uganda.

The President, after setting up a Commission, decreed the owners. It is a bit disturbing that the decree was made by the President –

THE SPEAKER: I cannot rule on what I did not hear. If you were in Gulu and you heard it - The Leader of the Opposition did not hear anything but is just relying on what is -

MR MPUUGA: Madam Speaker, my office is a consumer of intelligence information. What should come to bear –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, please. There is information from Hon. Mapenduzi.

MR MAPENDUZI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Prime Minister has talked about the Judicial -

THE SPEAKER: You are debating. I thought you were giving him information.

MR MAPENDUZI: I am giving him information. The Prime Minister said that the Judicial Commission of Inquiry will solve this problem but even with the –

THE SPEAKER: First of all, I do not want the Acholi and West Nilers to speak. You politicians from Acholi and West Nile are the ones causing these problems. What I want is to first secure the people. You are all conflicted. Honourable, you are conflicted. You are going to start talking about -

MR MPUUGA: The minister should give us assurance and also assure Hon. Lucy Akello that the allegation of intelligence being received and ignored by security will be responded to. Otherwise, as a minister, he will be liable for criminal negligence because he is aware of his duty.

Again, this time round, the report from the Commission should be made public. Otherwise, a third Commission in line, without one being made public, is suspect. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I do not want us to reduce the issues of Apaa to land or boundary issues. What is happening now is criminality, especially the aspect of killing people. Yes, honourable minister.

3.44

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (DEFENCE) (Mr Jacob Oboth): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I sympathise and share in the sorrow of hearing those great Ugandans being murdered. I am getting this information from this House; from Hon. Lucy Akello and she knows that I have been to Amuru with her, among other people.

I pray that you allow the three Ministries of Security, Internal Affairs and Defence to caucus with the Honourable Member so that we can find a way forward and make sure that the area and the people are secured. We can make that undertaking right away –*(Interruption)*

MR SSEGGONA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Hon. Jacob Oboth and I have known each other for a long time and I want to insist –against his protests – that he is an intelligent man who is able to appreciate these issues.

The matter where you guided - and I had earlier sought to rise on - is a matter of life and death. Informing us that four ministries – you know they are mutilated into so many subsections – intend to sit is diversionary. What you demanded - and I am behind this 100 per cent – are immediate measures to ensure security and tranquillity. We can wait for this report for a thousand years as long as the beneficiaries of the report will be alive.

We have so far lost 30 people, according to the reports. I have been looking at the person I designated by description to be Prime Minister today – not Deputy Prime Minister – and this is the person supposed to be coordinating the ministries. However, she is quiet and not giving us any way forward on providing security as a matter of immediate concern. The others could be policy issues. Are we proceeding well? I saw

Hon. Oboth leaving the microphone without guarantees, as of now.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Ssegona, it is unfortunate that you got the microphone before he finished. The Prime Minister calling Hon. Oboth to speak was a coordination role for him to give us a position from a security perspective. So, she is doing her work.

MR OBOTH: As I conclude, I know Hon. Ssegona misses me. The honest truth is that a meeting of the three ministers does not have to take a day. It can be a matter of a phone call. The security infrastructure is already there and we are going to find out more details and act. This Government cares. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Oboth, kindly coordinate the issue of protecting the people of Apaa. Let us have their lives protected.

3.48

MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri): Madam Speaker, I rise on a matter of national importance concerning the Civil Aviation Authority in Entebbe. A new departure terminal was commissioned last year by His Excellency the President. As I talk, when it rains, there is a lot of tension as the whole place floods.

Actually, when it is going to rain, there is a lot of tension; officers are almost looking for buckets in the departure lounge. Madam Speaker, I have shared photographs of this with several Members and I even forwarded some to the Minister of Works and Transport. I do not know if he received them. The situation is very bad. Why would we have a departure lounge which is flooding? You cannot walk, water is almost at the knee *—(Laughter)—* Honourable members, I have the photos.

THE SPEAKER: What are your prayers?

MR SILWANY: My prayer is, the Minister of Works and Transport should immediately give us a response to this matter and have it sorted because tourists are starting to run away as they are getting discouraged and you know the airport is our face.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Member, do you have factual information or it is social media information? Uganda's social media can write and do anything so if you have actual pictures from the ground, can you lay them on the Table?

MR SILWANY: Madam Speaker, what I am saying is not hearsay. I saw it with my own eyes and took photographs, which I have been sharing with Members -

THE SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter.

MR KAYONDO: Madam Speaker, this is the Parliament of Uganda and it is being watched internationally. We have a Commissioner of Parliament here. Without evidence -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, first sit. You know that, that place is under construction. You could have taken a picture of where they are constructing. Do not make our visitors fail to come to Uganda because they will not have a way of exiting Uganda. Let us not use WhatsApp and media messages to destroy our own country. It is not true. Hon. Minister?

3.52

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT (Gen. Katumba Wamala): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Hon. Members, we all belong to this country and it is the only nation we have. When something is happening to our nation, we should not put it out and even make it look worse than what it is. It is not true that the departure lounge was commissioned last year. The President has never commissioned anything on that airport so that is not true.

Secondly, the departure lounge -

THE SPEAKER: General, cool down. *(Laughter)*

GEN. KATUMBA: Yes, Madam Speaker. The departure lounge is under construction; we are doing an expansion of both the departure lounge and the arrivals lounge and we have

targeted October 2023, before Independence Day, for those two facilities to be opened.

During construction, there are some areas which have not yet been fully finalised. For those who have travelled through the airport, the tent is the area he is referring to. Please, let us be nationalistic; the place has not flooded as he says that the water is up to the knees. It is not true -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, listen to the minister. By the way, the person speaking is a military general. The Entebbe International Airport is very safe. I came this morning and I used the same terminal. When you are constructing and even if it is your own house, that happens automatically. Let us be proud of our country and we should not discourage other people from coming. Hon. Ebwalu? Yes, diplomacy. Hon. Silwany, first withdraw your statement.

MR SILWANY: Madam Speaker, in the interest of the country –(*Interruption*) -

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Silwany, withdraw your statement and apologise.

MR SILWANY: Madam Speaker, I withdraw –(*Interruption*)

THE SPEAKER: Apologise.

MR SILWANY: Madam Speaker, on which - I withdraw the statement but -

THE SPEAKER: Apologise.

MR SILWANY: Madam Speaker, I seek your guidance. Apologise for what?

THE SPEAKER: For bringing social media information which is false.

MR SILWANY: Madam Speaker, I apologise. (*Applause*)

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ebwalu?

3.55

MR JONATHAN EBWALU (Independent, Soroti West Division, Soroti City): Thank you, Madam Speaker. On 14 December 2021, I raised a matter of land grabbing in Soroti District concerning Soroti Golf Club that has been grabbed from the owners yet this is public land measuring up to 40 acres.

Madam Speaker, the land has been grabbed by a company called Pilgrim and they have subdivided it into two: Pilgrim and Shinda Holding Limited -

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order. Hon. Sanon? Honourable members, I am constrained to give Hon. Sanon the microphone because I know the history. You are a member of Pilgrim Company. Please go ahead and raise your issue.

MR EBWALU: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the protection. The same Pilgrim Company, with Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC) in a *kaveera*, duped the President and they are now planting trees on that land.

Madam Speaker, Soroti Golf Club is now being guarded by soldiers all over that place. You cannot reach there and they have started construction of a hotel. Anybody who passes on that land is arrested.

Madam Speaker, on 14 August, I laid on the Floor of Parliament documents and you ably referred this matter to the Attorney-General to follow up and report to this Parliament. Just like my Leader of the Opposition said, there is a lot of backlog; the Attorney-General has never reported back to this Parliament.

Madam Speaker, my prayer is that you refer this matter to the relevant committee of Parliament so that it can be investigated and they report back to this House. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, I do not want you to bring your Soroti issues here. On this issue, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, there was an aspect of the golf course land that was raised in this House and the Attorney-General was supposed to handle.

There was also an issue of UBC land; 236 acres that are in the process of being grabbed. This issue was in our report of the Committee on Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises (COSASE) together with Hon. Ssegona when we were still members of the committee. We need that issue to be resolved. Can we have the Committee on Physical Infrastructure?

MR SSEGGONA: Madam Speaker, I appreciate your guidance and I am very glad that you have a vivid memory of what we traversed in respect to UBC. One aspect that remains outstanding, which that has been stated, is the presence of soldiers guarding suspected land grabbers –

THE SPEAKER: That is okay; I am going to rule on that.

MR SSEGGONA: You have the minister there.

THE SPEAKER: That is okay. I want the committee to look at the said properties. On the issues of security guarding the said land, can we hear from the minister?

3.59

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (DEFENCE) (Mr Jacob Oboth): About soldiers being deployed to guard either private or the property in question is a matter that I have also just heard about from here –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, can you make a phone call to Soroti and give me feedback? That is Government land.

MR OBOOTH: With your permission, allow me to exit the plenary so that I can -

THE SPEAKER: Please, do.

3.59

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Mathias Mpuuga): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for your kindness over this matter. Allow me a minute or less to raise a red flag -

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Oboth, we may have another issue on security; just hold on.

MR MPUUGA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Now that you have informed the House that you are sending Members to their constituencies, allow me to raise a red flag in earnest to Members of Parliament, especially those coming from urban authorities, cities and municipalities. There is actually an ongoing syndicate of denuding local governments, cities and municipalities of their assets.

Public servants in cities and municipalities are conniving with politicians, in some places, and officers at the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development – the land registry. In many municipalities and cities, public land is being parcelled out and there are titles sitting upon titles.

I would like to invite –(Interjection)- of course, with the indulgence of the Speaker, the Member wants to give information -

THE SPEAKER: We are stopping the discussion on this matter now.

MR MPUUGA: The red flag, for the attention of the House, is for Members to use this recess to go and check on the asset registers of their local governments: something amiss, sinister and deliberate is going on. Please, go and conduct a citizen arrest.

In my constituency, I have just arrested one asset being transferred. So, the syndicate is in sharing and selling public assets. I would like to alert the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and the Ministry of Local Government to issue a circular stopping the transfer of public assets and even audit public assets. Cities and municipalities do not have asset registers. When we demand for them, they give excuses. It will be the prerogative of the –(Interjection)- Madam Speaker, the honourable member is a senior and insistent, allow me to cede ground for him.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Magyezi, can you respond to the issue of the circular?

4.02

THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Mr Raphael Magyezi):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the Leader of the Opposition, for raising this very important matter.

I see, on the Order Paper, an item on the report of the Committee on Public Service and Local Government and this matter is covered under that. However, I can quickly say that we have issued two circulars to the 10 districts, with mother the cities. Nobody is allowed to sell, exchange and dispose of public land within these areas.

We also know that under the Public Finance Management Act, such acts require the approval of Parliament and I have not submitted any request to you, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: That is in the policy but, in actual sense, it is happening – it is going on.

MR MAGYEZI: Madam Speaker, allow me to make a request, through you, to the House. The critical asset in these cities, which is a matter for us, as the local government sector, is the headquarters of the districts, which mothered those cities. They need to shift. It is actually a big matter. All we need is at least Shs 1 billion right now to make sure that we start the process of relocating these districts.

Madam Speaker, I want to give you the assurance that within the next one to two months, we are having asset negotiations between the cities and those districts, and we shall resolve this matter. This is a pertinent request that I am making to you.

THE SPEAKER: What the Members are raising is on the sale of local government assets. Do not talk about the buildings alone; even land is an asset. So, these people are even selling the land.

MR MAGYEZI: Madam Speaker, those are fraudulent sales –

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Mugema was here raising a matter to do with green park in Iganga being sold.

MR MAGYEZI: That is illegal and such people must be arrested. We shall investigate. We are going to send a team next week to investigate these matters in all the 10 cities.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, as you go to your constituencies, interest yourself in these things.

4.05

MR IDDI ISABIRYE (NRM, Bunya County South, Mayuge): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. The issue of land is a very sensitive one because land is an asset, not only to individuals, but to the Government.

There is something that Government should investigate in the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development. I raised a matter here that there is a forest reserve in my constituency, Bunya County South, which has not been de-gazetted.

However, the lands ministry has continued to issue land titles on the same land that has not been de-gazetted, although there is a will by His Excellency the President - he explained to the people about 48 villages to be de-gazetted. However, this has to be done through Parliament. I wonder how the ministry can issue land titles in an area that has not been de-gazetted.

Madam Speaker, this area is regarded as a forest, as I speak. The National Forestry Authority is chasing people day after day in an area where the lands ministry is issuing land titles.

Madam Speaker, yesterday, you met a delegation of leaders from Mayuge District and they raised their petition, through your office. I beg that you give me an opportunity, after recess, to raise their petition on the issue of the land titles being issued in an area that has not been de-gazetted.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, on the issues of government land, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development should not transfer any public land before we finish these investigations. *(Applause)* I am giving an order; the lands ministry should not transfer public land everywhere. You cannot transfer public land like the one that the Hon. Joab Businge was talking about; you are transferring land belonging to a school; land belonging to a market.

There is land next to me here in Nakasero; a football pitch being transferred.

MR MAGYEZI: Madam Speaker, we would like to take this up, as Government. Give us, as the local government and lands ministries together, two months. We are going to investigate this, take action and submit a report to you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, as you go into recess, where you see there is an anomaly, take action. *(Applause)* Do not wait for these two months.

4.09

MR PATRICK BINGI (NRM, Butemba County, Kyankwanzi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am concerned about the irregular impounding of animals by Nile Fiber Board Limited, which is currently manning Kikonda Forest Reserve in Kyankwanzi District.

This vast forest reserve –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Prime Minister, are you listening?

MR BINGI: This vast forest reserve stretches through the four subcounties of Bananywa, Nsambya, Kigando and Ntunda, and has very open borders.

There is an animal-keeping community surrounding the forest reserve and quite often, animals stray into it and are impounded. This company has its own animal detention centre and when the animals are impounded, they are charged per animal at rates that are not justified and they are not issued with the receipts.

Madam Speaker, my prayer is that the Ministry of Water and Environment prevails over Nile Fiber Board Limited to stop this because the community is completely impoverished. We can, perhaps, do an assessment to ascertain the kind of damage caused. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries can help us because this is an animal-keeping community which is affected.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Prime Minister.

4.11

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Madam Speaker, before I go to the issue of the animals, I am instructing the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development not to transfer any title belonging to the Government to individuals.

These individuals are getting opportunities to steal Government land because they know that when they come to the lands ministry, the titles can be transferred. Like Hon. Magyezi said, they will work together to see that they come back here with action taken.

Secondly, on the issue of the forest – *(Interruption)-*

THE SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter.

MR KIBALYA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is disturbing to see the Prime Minister also requesting the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development not to issue land titles.

THE SPEAKER: She said she is instructing.

MR KIBALYA: My procedural matter is: we have suffered with the lands ministry for long. Now that it has affected the Prime Minister in her district, we should not only stop at her statement of stopping the issuance of titles. Can we investigate the people who are behind this?

Somebody doing that knows very well that this is Government land and they know what they

are doing. So, when we say we stop, they will disguise that they are stopping but connive. Can we, through your office, dig to the last root of this?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I saw the Committee on Physical Infrastructure – (*Hon. David Kabanda rose*) - do you have any information?

MR DAVID KABANDA: Madam Speaker, I heard the Minister of Local Government requesting for two months to go and sit with the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development to harmonise. I see this as connivance. These two ministries have to harmonise on how to share the Government land. (*Laughter*)

I am of a view that we do not trust –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, listen to Hon. David Kabanda.

MR DAVID KABANDA: I am of the view that as Parliament, we do not trust these two ministers. (*Laughter*) Refer this matter to the committee that is responsible so that it investigates properly and comes back here with a –(*Interruption*)

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order. Honourable members, I saw the Committee on Physical Infrastructure investigating the lands ministry and it is ongoing. So, the committee should give us a report. Yes, do you have a point of order?

MR MAGYEZI: Madam Speaker, I heard my wonderful brother saying, “We do not trust these ministers. They are conniving to steal Government land.” It is Parliament, which approved us. These are ministries in charge of Government service delivery.

Without any substantive evidence and without substantiating the Member’s assertion, is it in order for Hon. Kabanda to assert that ministers of local government and lands are not trustworthy, and should not be entrusted with Government work?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, if there was no evidence in place that the land that belongs to Government is not being transferred, then he would be wrong. However, the fact is that there is even somebody who raised an issue here that the land belonging to Bunyoro University, where our able Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development comes from, was being transferred to into the name of a private person. So, he is in order. (*Applause*)

I know I still have Members; we will continue from there. We also need some good business. We need a response on Hon. Bingi’s issue.

MS NAKADAMA: Madam Speaker, I am going to inform the ministry in charge to take up this issue.

4.16

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for this opportunity. At the beginning of this year, the Ministry of Education and Sports issued a calendar for schools to follow; school opening and closing. However, continuously, I have been observing schools having their own calendars.

As per the calendar issued by the Ministry of Education and Sports, schools are supposed to open for the third term on 18th September. However, there are schools that are opening on the 9th and 10th this weekend.

Madam Speaker, I would like to know, from the Minister of Education and Sports, whether these school calendars were issued for formality or schools are supposed to comply with them. This is a matter that I would like information on because that has an effect; stressing parents with school fees.

Children came back home; it is barely two weeks and they are now supposed to report back. (*Applause*) Children are supposed to rest, but you find a child comes home; barely two weeks, yet they are supposed to report back. That has an effect on the mental health of both the parent and the child.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, can I find out from, the Minister of Education and Sports, whether these schools - I appreciate the Hon. Dr Muyingo - I have read your circulars saying that schools should open on 18th September, but others are not complying. So, can I find out whether it is for the sake?

THE SPEAKER: Is it on the same - Honourable members, on matters of national importance, we shall first stop there. Let us first give time to the two reports of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), and then we come back to matters of national importance; we must finish them. If we finish all the matters now, these ministers will take off. Yes, Hon. Okwalinga.

MR OKWALINGA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to seek clarification from the Hon. Sarah Opendi on whether it would be possible for her to specifically guide the ministry on the examples of the schools that have opened such that when they are investigating, they are certain of which schools because I am aware of some schools that have not opened.

MS APOLOT: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I support the position of Hon. Sarah Opendi.

As we speak, there are schools operating and they have termed it a holiday program yet in the regulations from the Ministry of Health, it is not allowed.

As I speak, Tororo Girls is operating because my daughter is there. So how much time do they give students to rest as they prepare for the third term? It is especially private schools that do not respect the programs of Government and they think that is one way -

THE SPEAKER: Is Tororo Girls, a private school?

MS CHRISTINE APOLOT: No, it is a government school, but I am speaking in terms of percentage. So what my brother is saying is that if given time, we can give a list of schools that are operating now with others planning to

open on the 11th of this month - (*Interjection*) - no, before the 18th there are those opening on the 11th; I know some of them. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable - that is still Kumi. Your Woman Representative has talked, therefore, you sit. Hon. Aogon, do you have something else?

MR AOGON: Madam Speaker, when my Woman Member of Parliament speaks, it is good for me to complement. I have the other part of the point.

Besides the parents being stressed, families do not have the opportunity to parent their children. We do not have time with the children because, within one week, they have taken away the child. When do we have that touch; that parental touch? That is the point I want to stress. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, Hon. Aogon has raised a very important issue. On top of the financial stress, you do not have time for your children, and then at the end of the day, you fail in parenting. When is the exact day of reporting to schools as a ministry?

4.21

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS) (Mr Peter Ogwang): Thank you, Madam Speaker. First of all, I begin by thanking colleagues, for raising these pertinent issues. However, it is also important that I inform our colleagues, that our offices are open and we have an office here near Members. It would be prudent that some of this very useful information is given to us for action. Hon. Sarah Opendi, I just want you to tell us the names of the schools like my honourable colleague from Kumi has identified Tororo Girls.

Otherwise, as the Ministry of Education and Sports, we might be issuing circulars, giving dates of when schools are going to be open meaning the proprietors of these schools do not follow the instructions in our circulars. It is important - we are going to follow up on Tororo Girls to know why they have reopened

before the official date for school opening? That is the information we need. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister - honourable members, listen - it takes you back to what I was raising the other day that much as you issue circulars, the monitoring process; who monitors?

MR OGWANG: Madam Speaker, we have District Educational Officers (DEOs) and Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) across the country; the ministry is housed here in Embassy House.

In terms of monitoring the circulars and follow-up, it is the respective officers I have mentioned who are meant to follow up though the ministry also does so. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I am going to wait for a response from the minister. Even when the House is in recess, write to me about your findings. Yes, Hon. David Kabanda?

MR DAVID KABANDA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is very good that we have received information from Hon. Peter Ogwang on how they have the Inspector of Schools, District Educational Officer (DEO), a CAO and a ministry here.

The honourable minister has heard information from the two Members complaining about schools in various districts. I am just seeking clarification from the minister: of all the departments you have mentioned that are monitoring, according to you, are they really working or they are just occupying space?

MR OGWANG: Madam Speaker, I want to put this on record. It is true we have these respective officers employed by the Government of Uganda. It is true Parliament appropriates money for these specific officers to work for and on behalf of the people of Uganda.

Failure by an officer to perform should not be a responsibility of the entire Government. It is your role to work for Uganda as her employee. For that purpose, it is our responsibility as

Members of Parliament to monitor and carry out an oversight role on all Government programmes.

Now that she has raised it, I have asked, if I can be given the name of a specific school so that we follow up as Ministry of Education and Sports. Thank you.

MR KABANDA: Madam Speaker, Hon. Sarah Opendi and the Member of Parliament from Kumi, including myself, we are privileged that we can come to this House and talk and give you this information. What happens to a villager who is there watching this television, who is not an MP and so, cannot access you or the DEO?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, when you continue making noise - why don't you listen? When one person is speaking, give that person time to speak. I know there is laxity in our teams, say, the DEO, the Inspector of Schools and the CAO. However, I want to refer you to the Constitution. What is our role as leaders?

One of our very vital roles is oversight. I have told you Members not to wait for anybody to take action. You are responsible for that district and when you learn of such things happening, take action.

Now, Hon. Opendi, you have been with that information, the Ministry of Education and Sports is not very far from here; why were you keeping that information? Why didn't you take the information to the respective ministries?

Anyhow, respective ministries, how many times do you get reports from each district? That takes us back to the issue of regulations. We have a law but we have no regulations.

MR OGWANG: Madam Speaker, as the Ministry of Education and Sports, we shall come back to Parliament and lay the regulations that we have come up with. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: What date are you giving this country for the opening of schools?

MR OGWANG: Madam Speaker, the official date of re-opening of schools is 18 September 2023 just like Hon. Sarah Opendi has stated.

THE SPEAKER: In the circumstances that you get a school that has opened before the 18th, what are you going to do?

MR OGWANG: That is why I am asking for specific schools for action because it is against the policy of Government.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, the members who are here are parents and they know what is happening. It is not a matter of us having a debate, we need to guide this country.

MR OGWANG: I would like to put it on record and call upon my honourable colleagues: first of all, it is a policy and a directive of the Government that schools must open on the 18th of this month.

THE SPEAKER: Have you issued a circular to that effect?

MR OGWANG: Madam Speaker, it was issued to the entire country and most members of Parliament here know that the official opening of schools is 18th September.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister and the Member of Parliament for Ngariam, can we have that circular saying that schools open on the 18th laid on the Table?

MR OGWANG: I will bring that on Tuesday. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I can give you time to get out, pick the circular and lay it on the Table. We will give you ten minutes as we go to the next item.

MR OGWANG: Much obliged.

THE SPEAKER: We will allow you to lay when you return to the Chamber.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
COMMITTEE, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT,
ON THE REPORT OF THE AUDITOR
GENERAL ON NATIONAL REGIONAL
REFERRAL HOSPITALS AND OTHER
SPECIALISED HEALTH VOTES FOR THE
YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, can I have order in the House? We have a very important motion. As I guided yesterday, the House will accord a very significant part of our time to the reports from PAC. The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development needs these reports from PAC for his other actions.

We are going into the budgeting period and we need these reports to be considered here. As you know very well the Constitution gives us six months under Article 163(5) of the Constitution.

These reports are supposed to be submitted within six months. As I said the other day, if the reports are not submitted by end of the month, say by the beginning of next month, we will adopt them omnibus.

For today, we have a report from PAC and I want to invite the Chairperson of PAC to give us an executive summary. I ask the Clerk to upload all the reports.

MR SSEMUJJU: Madam speaker, you had instructed the Minister of State for Defence not to exit and I thought you were going to allow me because I was on your list to raise the issue of the plight of UPDF officers -

THE SPEAKER: I am going to allow you time after this report has been presented. As I have said before, we will continue with the matters of national importance after PAC Central has presented their report. So, the minister can go and confirm the issues about Soroti Golf Course and Apaa because we need security in Apaa.

4.32

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (CENTRAL GOVERNMENT) (Mr Medard Sseggon):

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank you, for the opportunity and also invite you to ask Hon. Kabanda from Kasambya to keep quiet.

On behalf of the Public Accounts Committee (Central Government), permit me to present the reports after scrutinising the report of the Auditor-General in respect of the health sector and particularly the following institutions - there are quite a number, but as you guided me, I have prepared an executive summary and the reports have been uploaded onto the Members' iPads. But before I proceed, permit me to lay, on the Table, the minutes as required by the rules in respect of all the proceedings of the committee. I humbly do so.

Permit me also to lay, on the Table, as a matter of procedure and constitutional requirement, one of the annexures to the committee report. It is a report of the CID as tasked by the committee in respect to the existence of coffee shops established by the Office of the Prime Minister and a private partner, Inspire Africa Limited, in selected districts; which the committee established to be non-existent despite the expenditure of Shs 20 billion. I lay the report of the CID on the Table.

With respect to the regional referral hospitals and other specialised health votes. I now proceed with the summary as guided.

Article 163(4) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda mandates the Auditor-General to submit to Parliament an annual report on all accounts audited by him for the financial year immediately preceding.

The Constitution further, under Article 163(5), requires Parliament to debate and consider the report and take appropriate action within six months after the submission of the report by the Auditor-General.

The report of the Auditor-General on regional and national referral hospitals for the Fiscal

Year 2021/2022 was presented to the House on the 19th of February and referred to the Public Accounts Committee (Central Government) for consideration.

In accordance with Rule 174 of the Rules of Procedure of the House, the Committee considered these reports and proceeded to satisfy itself, among others, that –

- (a) the monies appropriated by Parliament and disbursed were legally available for, and applicable to, the service or purpose for which they have been applied and charged;
- (b) the expenditure conforms to the authority, which governs it; and
- (c) re-appropriation has been made in accordance with the provisions of the rules of a competent authority; and
- (d) the intended value of the expended monies was attained.

Scope

The report covers audit queries contained in the report of the Auditor-General for the period ended 30th June 2022, in respect of the national and regional referral hospitals, namely:

- 1) Mulago National Referral Hospital;
- 2) Mulago National Specialised Women and Neonatal Hospital;
- 3) Butabika National Mental Referral Hospital; and
- 4) Kawempe, Kiruddu, and China-Uganda Friendship Hospitals.

Others include; Entebbe Hospital, Mubende, Kabale, Jinja, Soroti, Lira, Gulu, Arua and Hoima Regional Referral Hospitals.

In addition, the report further covers findings on other specialised health-related institutions and votes, as well as programs such as the Uganda Cancer Institute and the Uganda Virus Research Institute.

The methodology adopted by the committee included holding meetings with the accounting officers and staff of the mentioned votes.

The committee further conducted desk research to understand the legal and policy provisions relating to appropriation, disbursement, expenditure and accountability of public funds.

The committee examined the report of the Auditor-General in respect of all the entities in issue for the accounts for the year under review, the memoranda/responses and other documents submitted by witnesses, to whom we are grateful, for the commitment exhibited.

Madam Speaker, because the volume of the report, allow me to present an overview of the general observations and recommendations on issues that cut across almost all the entities of the sector.

I beg your indulgence that members may be allowed to refer to the report uploaded on their iPads for the details and findings as well as recommendations.

General observations and recommendations

The implementation of quantified outputs Section 13(15)(b) of the Public Finance Management Act 2015 provides that a policy statement submitted by a vote shall contain the annual and three months' work plans, outputs, targets and performance indicators of work plans.

Equally, Regulation 11(3) of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015 requires that a Vote should prepare work plans that indicate the outputs of the Vote for the financial year; the indicators that are to be used to gauge the performance of the outputs and funds allocated to each entity or activity.

From the report of the Auditor General, most entities whose votes are listed did not implement their outputs fully despite having received the required funds.

Many accounting officers, the committee interacted with attributed this partial implementation to the lockdown instituted by the Government at the time, as a measure to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. It should be noted, however, that though COVID-19 disruptions were a reality, health workers were categorised as essential workers at the time and therefore, expected to carry on implementing some of the planned activities.

Although the committee notes that a number of staff at these institutions had been significantly reduced at the time, which hampered the implementation of the quantified outputs. This especially relates to the non-medical staff.

At Kawempe National Referral Hospital, for example, the Auditor-General noted that 26 quantified outputs worth Shs 11.557 billion were assessed and established that 23 activities, representing 88 per cent, were fully implemented while three activities, representing 12 per cent, were partially implemented.

At Kiruddu Regional Referral Hospital, 26 quantified outputs worth Shs 11.557 billion were assessed and established that 23 activities, representing 88 per cent, were fully implemented while three activities, representing 12 per cent, were partially implemented.

The same cases of partial implementation can be seen in Naguru and Mubende regional referral hospitals.

The committee recommends that accounting officers should ensure that the planned and approved outputs are implemented and those that fail should be penalised.

Absorption of Funds and utilisation of warrants

A number of entities were noted in the Auditor-General's report to have failed to optimally absorb the funds that were allocated to them, causing money to be swept back to the treasury. These funds were mostly meant for wages, gratuity and pension that were not fully paid by the end of the financial year.

While interacting with some of these entities, the committee discovered that the majority of the affected accounting officers did not seek revision of their budget and work plans as provided for under Section 17(3) of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015.

For example, Kiruddu Referral Hospital had a total warrant, for the financial year, of Shs 21.287 billion. Only Shs 20.656 billion was spent by the entity, resulting in an unspent balance of Shs 0.63 billion, representing an absorption capacity of only 75.6 per cent

Kawempe Hospital had a total warrant for the financial year of Shs 13.168 billion. The Hospital spent Shs 13.03 billion, resulting in an unspent balance of Shs 0.139 billion, representing an absorption capacity of 99 per cent.

Entebbe Hospital had warrants amounting to Shs 3.88 billion, Shs 3.35 billion was spent by the entity, resulting in an unspent balance of 0.329 billion, representing an under absorption of 1 per cent. The unspent balance of Shs 0.329 billion was on salaries occasioned by the late release of funds. And I wish to invite colleagues to underline “late release of funds”.

Naguru Hospital had total warrants for the FY of Shs 10.87 billion, only Shs 9.99 billion was spent by the entity, resulting in an unspent balance of Shs 0.878 billion, representing an absorption of Shs 91.9 per cent.

Jinja Hospital had a total receipt of Shs 11.065 billion of which Shs 9.97 billion was spent, resulting in an unspent balance of Shs 1.086 billion, representing an absorption capacity of 90 per cent.

The committee also noted with concern that some of the unspent funds were as a result of late releases of funds, especially supplementary budget for salaries, which defeats the conditionalities of approval for supplementary budgets as laid down in the Public Finance Management Act 2015.

The committee notes that this is one of the causes of under absorption. Section 17 of the Public Finance Management Act states that any appropriation by Parliament expires by 30 June and ceases to have any effect at the close of the financial year for which it was made.

The committee recommends as follows:

- 1) the Accountant-General strictly enforces Section 15(2) of the Public Finance Management Act 2015, which requires that the annual cash flow plans issued under subsection (1) be the basis for the release of funds to entities.
- 2) That the accounting officers should strictly adhere to the annual budget performance contract signed with PS/ST pursuant to section 45 of the Public Finance Management Act 2015. The contract binds accounting officers to deliver on activities in the work plan of the vote for the financial year submitted under Section 15 of the Public Finance Management Act 2015.
- 3) All releases for wages must be made in a timely manner to ensure recruitment for service delivery. 1.3 is on miss classification of expenditure miss charge.

The Audit established that a number of entities irregularly diverted funds from the activities for which they were budgeted and spent them on other activities without seeking and obtaining the necessary approvals.

The accounting officers explained that this was due to the inadequate budget allocation to the entities yet the hospitals experienced unplanned emergencies like frequent equipment break down, water and sewerage crisis and frequent power outages that required more fuel and infections in the wards and theatres due to high patient numbers thus the need for urgent fumigation services.

Other accounting officers explained that the hospitals had shortfalls in pension. But there were extra funds on the gratuity budget.

So, they would mingle in order to avoid the accumulation of pension arrears, the hospitals paid pension from the gratuity budget.

The committee observed that misclassification is diversion of funds, and most of the diversions were affected by statutory expenditure lines of salary, pension and gratuity. For example, Lira, Kawempe, and Jinja hospitals registered mischarges amounting to Shs 105 million, Shs 47.1 million and Shs 75 million respectively.

It was also noted that, in some instances, the accounting officers over-budgeted and concealed funds under statutory items yet they were over and above the actual requirement.

The committee further observed that diversion of funds is not only contrary to the provisions of the Public Finance Management Act, but negatively affects the delivery of services, and negates the purpose of budgeting by distorting approved plans.

We recommend, therefore, that the affected accounting officers be reprimanded by the PS/ST for diverting funds from one expenditure item without seeking authority and a report be given to Parliament within six months.

The committee further recommends that the accounting officers should utilise the PFMA, 2015, which gives guidance on the virement and reallocation of funds within a Vote, should need arise.

Unauthorised loan deductions

Madam Speaker, this is a matter that keeps recurring year after year. The Auditor-General noted that in most regional referral hospitals, there were unauthorised loan deductions from employees' salaries without letters of undertaking from the responsible officers. Accounting officers explained that this mainly arose from the staff transferred to new stations without their personnel files.

In such cases, employees would have active deduction accounts without complete records at new stations. In some cases, non-transferred

staff faced similar predicaments, thus attracting the attention of the Auditor-General.

Accounting officers further informed the committee that problematic loans were contracted before Payroll Consults Africa came into existence and were being granted at the Ministry of Public Service level. However, currently, all loans are forwarded and granted, basing on a letter of undertaking by the accounting officer.

Indeed, Madam Speaker, we have raised similar concerns of loan deductions, on behalf of the affected civil servants. We have also passed resolutions about this vice, but it continues. In Lira Hospital, for example, audit established that UCLA/UBA deducted Shs 12,591,781 from 15 staff without approval of the accounting officer from the payroll deduction management system (PDMS). The 15 staff were not in the "my approval report" but in the "active deduction report."

At Hoima Referral Hospital, the same group deducted Shs 21,015,298 from eight staff without the approval of the accounting officer from the PDMS.

The committee observed thus:

- 1) Government continues to maintain manual staff files, which are not easily movable upon transfer of the affected staff; and
- 2) That the practice poses a risk of causing deduction without liability, thus depriving staff of their hard-earned funds. This may also expose the Government to litigation and, in some cases, industrial action.

Further, the committee is cognisant of clauses 2.1.2 and 2.1.4 of the public service agreement between the Ministry of Public Service and the Uganda Consumers Lenders Association/ Uganda Bankers Association, which requires a letter of undertaking for each Government employee before making employee reservation on the PDMS. Therefore, under the said clauses, only deductions consented to by employees, in writing, should be submitted to the Ministry of Public Service for timely monthly payroll

processing, or as advised by the employer/entity.

The committee, therefore, recommends as follows:

- 1) Accounting officers should ensure that all loan applications are streamlined with all data being reconciled in liaison with the PCA management and approvals done through the PDMS;
- 2) The hospital management should, within three months from the adoption of this report by Parliament, seek guidance from the Ministry of Public Service on the usage of the PCA and the PDMS interface to accurately manage their loan database; and
- 3) The Government should migrate from the manual to digital automated files and no deduction should be made without fully implementing this.

Longstanding payables

Madam Speaker, this is another monster. The audit established that the amount of arrears in hospitals over time and the current budget allocation do not match. For instance, at Kiruddu Hospital, management reported a closing balance of payables of Shs 458 million, Kawempe Hospital reported Shs 932 million, Jinja reported Shs 1.5 billion while Entebbe reported Shs 824 million.

The accounting officers explained that accumulated arrears were mainly arising from inadequate funding for the entities as well as insufficient releases that escalated utility costs.

The committee observed that in some instances, the approved budget estimates for the year under review had no provision for the settlement of domestic arrears. These entities cannot run effectively without some of these services.

The committee further observed that incurring more debt is contrary to the commitment

control system instituted by the Government to curb budgetary indiscipline by accounting officers.

Also, the accounting officers committed the Government beyond the approved budget without authorisation, contrary to the commitment control system.

The committee, therefore, recommends as follows:

- 1) That accounting officers should ensure adherence to the commitment control systems to minimise accumulation of domestic arrears, budget for payment of domestic arrears and also come up with a debt settlement plan with the various creditors to avoid possible litigation and associated costs;
- 2) That accounting officers should be held responsible for creation of arrears without authorisation; and
- 3) The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should also be held liable for failure to clear domestic arrears, which poses a danger of insufficient and ineffective service delivery.

IT governance

This entails leadership structures and processes that enable an organisation to make decisions to ensure that its IT sustains and extends its strategies and objectives. However, a review of the IT governance structures in some of the entities revealed that:

- i) There were no specific structures that steer and oversee IT implementation;
- ii) Most entities had an approved IT staff structure in place, but not implemented. For instance, Mulago Specialised Hospital has one (16 per cent) out of the IT staff establishment of six. Similar findings were made in respect of Kiruddu and China-Uganda Naguru Hospital;

- iii) There was no approved IT risk management framework policy at the entity and risk register; and
- iv) There was no business continuity plan, contrary to Section 4.6 of the National Information Security Policy, 2014.

The accounting officers explained that management is engaging NITA-U, Ministry of ICT and National Guidance to establish an IT risk management framework and business continuity plan. Note that the policy is one of 2014, which is now nine years ago.

The accounting officers further explained that hospitals were undertaking consultations with the relevant stakeholders to institute an IT governance structure to effectively and efficiently manage the hospitals' IT resources.

The committee observed that the absence of an ICT governance structure hampers formulation of appropriate ICT policies, strategies and real-time upgrade of ICT interventions. In addition, it may lead to misalignment of IT investments with the overall Government strategic objectives.

We recommend, therefore, that the accounting officers should expedite the processes of engaging NITA-U, Ministry of ICT and National Guidance in establishing an IT risk management and business continuity plan.

The committee further recommends that the accounting officers institute governance policies and structures to effectively manage IT investments in consultation with other stakeholders such as NITA-U.

Understaffing in health facilities

Madam Speaker, the Auditor-General observed that national and regional referral hospitals have staff structures that need to be adequately filled for efficient and effective service delivery.

The audit further established that critical gaps – mark the words “critical gaps” – were mainly observed in the national referral hospitals

that were recently elevated from the regional referral status, whose staff structures are yet to be approved by the Ministry of Public Service. They are in place for years but the structure is not approved by the Ministry of Public Service.

Most of the accounting officers explained that most of the facilities do not have funds for recruitment, while for others funds for recruitment of staff were warranted and released in the last quarter of the Financial Year 2022. As a result, there was not enough time for the Health Service Commission to recruit staff so that the facilities can absorb funds. Funds were thus returned to the Consolidated Fund.

Madam Speaker, I want to lay emphasis on this. You identify the gaps, scamper around and get the funds, but the funds are released in the last quarter, in May, yet you are supposed to undertake a recruitment process, which takes a minimum of six months.

The committee observed that inadequate staffing results in heavy workloads and exploitation of existing staff. It creates job-related stress, which negatively affects the quality of service delivery to the community. The committee further observes that this partly explains the rampant unemployment and under-employment yet the Government has the relevant budget.

The committee recommends that Government should ensure that adequate funds are provided in the budget, and released on time to ensure recruitment plans for health facilities are implemented within the available timelines provided. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should be held liable for the late release of such critical funds.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, for the specific query and recommendations delineated per Vote, I invite you to refer to the main report, which is uploaded to your iPad.

May I take this humble opportunity, Madam Speaker, to thank you immensely for this time and for your continuous guidance as we proceed for the future. I have been delighted to

hear from you, that you have given committees up to the end of this month – subject to lifting lockdown during the recess, we undertake to present all the other reports. For now, for your information and guidance, we also have the reports on the ministries ready. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Can we first adopt the one on the hospitals before we move to the reports on the ministries?

Thank you, honourable committee chairperson, for the good and exhaustive report presented.

When you look at what the honourable committee chairperson has presented, you notice that the issues raised are that the hospitals are acting against Section 22 of the Public Finance Management Act; that is mischarge of expenditure. You can only do a mischarge after getting an approval from the Permanent Secretary and Secretary to the Treasury (PS/ST).

The unauthorised loan deductions from the staff emoluments is criminal. Imagine if it is you whose money is being deducted without your authorisation.

Then there is the issue of late releases, which we talked about the other day. It is because of so many factors. Either you submit your supplementary budgets very late, and we release money late, which is not correct, or you start the procurement late. That late release of funds is really dangerous.

There is understaffing in hospitals. I am happy that the interns have been deployed because that should help us.

The accumulation of domestic arrears, largely attributed to inadequate budget releases is dangerous. Why don't you accumulate receivables? You put the people who have supplied you at a disadvantage. They accrue interest and go as far as litigation. We need to make sure we spend within what we have. If the institution has made a commitment, release the money. This is because it affects the economy, the supplier and everybody.

The lapse in management of land has been talked about a lot. I am glad we made a resolution that there will be no transfer of Government land without the authorisation of this House.

The stock-outs and non-delivery of medical supplies – you go to a hospital and cannot even get Panadol. When you go to a referral hospital, you find nothing; not even a scanner. When you go to Soroti Hospital, you find it smelling from the gate. Why? It is terrible! There are issues in these hospitals.

Can we hear from the minister? We are not going to debate a lot on these reports because they are straightforward.

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (GENERAL DUTIES) (Ms Anifa Kawooya): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to apologise; yesterday I was not in the House yet it was my turn. As you are aware, I have not been well and I have not fully recovered. However, because of the importance of this report, I had to come in.

I want to thank the chairperson of the committee for an elaborate, extensive and well-laid out report. I also want to thank the Auditor-General for the issues of concern raised, on the national and regional referral hospitals and specialised health services.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Kabasharira.

MS KABASHARIRA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I did not want to disturb my good friend, Hon. Kawooya. However, she told us that she has not been well, but because of this important report, she was forced to come. She has been seated quietly -

THE SPEAKER: She is actually not well.

MS KABASHARIRA: Madam Speaker, we have a senior minister and other ministers; they are three. I always see her come, whether she is okay or not. What has happened to the senior minister and your colleagues, that you must come when you are sick? Are we procedurally

right to let a patient come and talk about these patients in –(Laughter).

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I want to excuse Hon. Kawooya. Hon. Kawooya, go and rest. The report is there and we will expect to get feedback within six months of the treasury memoranda. I do not want you to collapse while on the Floor.

MS KAWOOYA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to commit that within the six months, we shall take the recommendations and observations seriously and report back on the actions taken.

My senior minister has been aware but she came in she had an engagement with the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development yesterday and today, so, she asked me to come in-

THE SPEAKER: She has been sent to Moroto Hospital to - I received a letter.

MS KAWOOYA: And my other colleague is on leave. I had to do the right thing to come here perform this duty. I thank you, Members for your concerns, and thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. The matters that are raised, are financial in nature. When you look at issues of mischarge and domestic arrears, you notice that you are the one supposed to release the money. On the issues of - of course, the understaffing comes in because of lack of money. If you do not give enough money, how can they recruit more staff?

The issue of stock-outs and non-delivery is still financial in nature. National Medical Stores (NMS) will tell you that they did not have the money.

The issue of unauthorised deductions can be taken to the local government but it still comes back to you, because of having accounting officers who are not compliant with the law. What do you say about it?

5.09

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Mr Matia Kasaija): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will directly respond to three issues and I beg your indulgence, that on the rest, I will need to retire and bring a written explanation.

Late release of funds

Colleagues, the way the Treasury operates –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, you do not need to retire.

MR KASAIJA: Sorry!

THE SPEAKER: You do not need to retire to give us a written explanation. We only need a Treasury Memorandum. That is by law. You are going to look at these items, one by one, and respond to them, put the action you have taken, and then bring it back to the House.

MR KASAIJA: Okay. That means I do not need to respond right now. Am I right?

THE SPEAKER: Yes, you have taken note of what is happening.

MR KASAIJA: Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, honourable member.

DR SAMUEL OPIO: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I had wanted the minister to give clarification on two or three issues. The first is about drug stock-outs.

Madam Speaker, this Parliament resolved last year that the money to NMS would be frontloaded for operational funds at the start of the quarter, within the first week of the first month. This has not been implemented, and as we speak, NMS has not yet delivered within the first quarter, so, we are losing one quarter yet this is something that was supposed to be implemented. It would be important if the minister clarified that.

The other is on the absorption. We had recommended earlier on, that if the funds for recruitment, can be released within the first two quarters, in the same way development budgets are released, because for boreholes, for example, are released within the first two quarters, then you have six months.

I raise those two issues so that they can be captured as action items.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister - let him answer one by one. You are talking to an old man. First respond to the issue of NMS and the release of money in the first quarter and then after, you move on to the issue of absorption.

MR KASAIJA: Madam Speaker, I thought you had given me a leeway to go and prepare a written explanation on what has been raised.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, as you bring a Treasury Memorandum, this House is saying that it was an agreed position, that the money for NMS should be frontloaded in the first quarter so that it procures and supplies drugs to all hospitals in time.

In terms of absorption, that money should also be given within the first and second quarters to avoid under-absorption. That is what the honourable minister is saying. He says how come you have not given NMS money by now? Is that true or false?

MR KASAIJA: I cannot confirm right now because I do not have the record with me. If I had known these issues very early, I would have definitely given you a definite answer. That is why I am saying -

THE SPEAKER: But you can also make a commitment, honourable minister that you are going to ensure, if it has not been done in the first quarter, that money to NMS is all given in the second quarter.

MR KASAIJA: We shall oblige, Madam Speaker and colleagues.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Mugole.

MR MUGOLE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also seek clarification on a matter that might be left out. Whereas we are talking about late releases, what of the miss release? The money which is needed is for salaries, but you instead release money for pension, which is causing the mischarge by these officers.

THE SPEAKER: You are mixing two things; what is a mischarge?

MR MUGOLE: It is like a diversion, but the diversion is being caused because money has been sent -

THE SPEAKER: I can do a mischarge - for instance, if I am given money for Parliament for salaries but the money I have been given is not enough, and because it is not enough, I get money from the development account, without seeking authorisation - I am just reminding you that I used to be a chairperson of an accountability committee.

MR MUGOLE: But why do they do that? Money is supposed to be released for particular aspects but they release for something else.

THE SPEAKER: Committee chairperson, can you clarify to him to understand the issue of pension versus salary and gratuity.

MR SSEGGONA: Madam Speaker, these are all statutory expenditures. What happens in some cases, is you would find the entity budgeted less, for pension but -

THE SPEAKER: The entity budgeted less, not finance.

MR SSEGGONA: Or was given less -

THE SPEAKER: Or released less.

MR SSEGGONA: Yes, released less for pension. So, what they would do is to go to the gratuity item and use it to pay pension.

In some other cases, they would use pension funds to pay salaries or they would use the pension budget to pay gratuity; they would use them interchangeably. That is the conundrum we are talking about.

THE SPEAKER: That is the mischarge we are talking about.

MR SSEGGONA: And it is about two. First, it may be about the accounting officer budgeting less, but in other cases, it is about the finance ministry releasing less, for a statutory expenditure and now the accounting officers find themselves in a tight corner. The pensioners are suing them but they have some excess money somewhere - let us use it -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, there are some statutory votes or activities, for instance, if you are paying salaries, you cannot give us less than what we are supposed to spend. That is what the honourable member said because salary, pension, gratuity are statutory and you ought to give all the money. Not to release some and retain some.

MR KASAIJA: Madam Speaker, at times we get constrained by cash and you know that we operate a cash budget. Now with the needs, at times, we apportion and release less money simply because at that time of the quarter - we release cash to the spending agencies at the beginning of a very quarter, just like we did in July this year.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, we are saying that pension, salaries and gratuity being statutory; you must decide whether you want it or not. It takes a first call. What you are saying should not happen.

That is why in the first quarter you did not release any money for development; you only considered the recurrent. You rather leave something else but pay somebody's salary because it is their entitlement.

MR KASAIJA: Then, I must admit that definitely the Treasury does not read the law correctly and we apologise for that. I would

like to assure you that it will not be repeated now that it has come to my full attention.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS KAAYA: Madam Speaker, I would like to get clarification on some of the issues raised, especially on disaster management in some of these hospitals. I would like to know the plans -prioritisation at some of these institutions is really challenging.

At the moment, we do not see the need to build infrastructure for rainwater harvesting and then later, we find that it is essential.

Could there be a circular, especially at this time, to guide some of these institutions to prioritise? I am saying because it is going to destroy much of the infrastructure at these institutions. I would like to also get clarity on supplies and staff performance. In most of these hospitals, it is -

THE SPEAKER: What about supplies?

MS KAAYA: What is the percentage of the ability of an institution to serve our people?

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Kaaya, you are now going into issues of policy; those are policy matters. We are looking at accountability.

The matters that you are raising should now go to Dr Acuti's committee; that is the Committee on Health. Talk about accountability issues.

MS KAAYA: Yes, Madam Speaker. The other issue of accountability is on staff time allocation to some of these institutions. We need accountability -

THE SPEAKER: You still go back to what I am saying.

MS KAAYA: It is an accountability issue.

THE SPEAKER: No, those are policies.

5.21

MR JOHN TEIRA (NRM, Bugabula County North, Kamuli): Thank you, Madam Speaker. There seems to be a clear admission from the finance minister that the problem is not singularly with the accounting officers yet the report has recommended punitive action against accounting officers, especially for realignment of resources. Would it be prudent that this recommendation by the committee be adjusted to go case by case because in many occasions, it was beyond –

THE SPEAKER: It is in the report. He was reading an executive summary. If you are talking about Soroti or Lira, they have their own reports. What he read was generic.

MR TEIRA: Thank you. Secondly, the issue of late releases has been discussed since Tuesday and the days before. However, it could be prudent that we guide the ministry, especially when it comes to requests. For example, last financial year, we received a loan request for budget support in June when the financial year was ending.

Could we come up with a policy where there is a time limitation on when money in the form of budget support but in term of loans, can come to this House for approval? I am saying this because approvals are done very late and that definitely points to the late release of the resources. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Budget support means that the budget is there and you are not able to pay any money because there is no money so they bring it in seeking for a loan, but we should be specific to the recurrent not the development budget.

You cannot avoid budget support because without it you will not have money to pay salaries. So, you have to bring in money to support the budget to end the financial year. What matters is what you are funding with that budget. If it is salaries, then it will definitely be absorbed because it will be within the time.

5.24

MR DICKSONS KATESHUMBWA (NRM, Sheema Municipality, Sheema): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the chairperson for the presentation. As much as you are talking about issues of accountability, I would like the finance minister and the Cabinet to understand that the issues being raised here are largely attributed to lack of synchronised planning.

You allocate money for infrastructure, which is completed but then it is not resourced with equipment and later on, drugs and human resource.

We cannot be surprised that people are going to retire and then we do not plan for their gratuity. What we need from Government is asynchronisation.

When you look at the health sector - do not come up with infrastructure while you have not planned that that infrastructure will be resourced with equipment and the human resource that is required.

We would have also appreciated the report if there were some policy recommendations that can go to the relevant committee so that we work on the weaknesses in this sector. You have looked at the major hospitals, but if you go down to the health centre IVs, the situation is not any different. It could be worse.

We would like the responsible sectoral committee to look at these issues and maybe even have a bigger debate about how we can strengthen this sector and help our people. Thank you.

5.26

MS GORRETH NAMUGGA (NUP, Mawogoola County South, Ssembabule): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to remind the House that I am the Shadow Minister of Science, Innovation and Technology. In this regard, I am very interested in IT governance. In almost every sector, there is a general complaint about IT issues. I would like to inform this House that there was a general cut in the Ministry of ICT budget of up to close to

50 per cent. The ministry is stuck. Actually, if it were not for UCC and NITA-U, the Ministry of ICT would not have been able to survive financially.

So, the Minister of Finance should specifically answer why it underfunds the Ministry of ICT. Digital transformation –

THE SPEAKER: Are we talking about ICT?

MS NAMUGGA: No, Madam Speaker, but there is the issue of IT governance in the report that has just been presented. This has become general in almost every report. I am only informing the minister of these cuts across, which have to do with the underfunding of the ICT sector.

So, I would like him to pick an interest in the Ministry of ICT because digital transformation is a very important programme for this country yet it has been ignored across board. This needs to be sorted.

THE SPEAKER: Chairperson, doesn't that budget go to specific hospitals? Isn't it embedded in the budget of specific hospitals for ICT?

MR SSEGGONA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. From our findings, each entity receives a budget for ICT. Of course, the general problems that we have mentioned still affect the ministries.

However, one of the things I have just mentioned here relates to staffing. I have mentioned that where there is need for six staff, there is only one. I mean, those are some of the chronic problems that we continue to grapple with.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, I now put the question that the report of the Committee of Public Accounts (Central Government) on the report of the Auditor-General on National Regional Referral Hospitals and Other Specialised Health Votes for the Financial Year ended 30 June 2022 be adopted by this honourable House.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE SPEAKER: I will ask the Clerk to extract the report and forward it to the Permanent Secretary/Secretary to Treasury to prepare a Treasury Memoranda, pursuant to Section 53(1) of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE CONSOLIDATED REPORTS OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (CENTRAL GOVERNMENT) ON THE AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022, COVERING 14 VOTES

THE SPEAKER: As I said before, we had two reports. Could you summarise for us this remaining one? You do not need to go through the methodology because it is the same. *(A member rose.)* Honourable member, I moved a motion and ruled that, "The ayes have it".

5.29

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (CENTRAL GOVERNMENT) (Mr Medard Ssegona): Madam Speaker, thank you. With respect to the ministries as mentioned, in terms of the introduction, it is the same. The methodology is the same, as well as the scope. With regard to the specific observations –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, before you go ahead, can we first have our circular on schools? I have seen both ministers here.

5.30

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (Mr Peter Ogwang): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. With your permission, I would like to read it verbatim and also read the schools and other institutions' calendars for 2023. I have them.

I am reading Circular No.10/2023 written on 16 May 2023. It is written to all head teachers of government-aided and private secondary

schools, all head teachers of government-aided and private primary schools, and all proprietors of private secondary and primary schools.

It reads:

“Teaching learners during the holidays

The Ministry of Education and Sports is in receipt of continuous reports that some schools and parents are planning to conduct lessons during holidays for the first term of the academic year 2023. This is against and in contradiction of the ministry’s policy and calendar, and deprives the learners the opportunity to rest, in preparation for the next academic term.

The purpose of this circular is to instruct you not to conduct or allow any person to conduct holiday lessons in your schools. Any school found in contravention of this instruction will have its licence revoked, in the case of private schools; or have the administrator subjected to disciplinary proceedings, in the case of government schools.

By copy of this circular, the Chief Administrative Officers, the District Education Officers and the District Inspectors of Schools are requested to ensure that no lessons are conducted in any school in their areas of jurisdiction during holidays.

Signed by Ms Ketty Lamaro, the Permanent Secretary.”

I would like to lay this on the Table, Madam Speaker. *(Applause)*

Secondly, I would like to lay the Schools and Other Institutions Calendar for 2023. When I talk about schools, I mean primary, secondary, technical and community polytechnics.

As far as the record is concerned, term three opens on Monday, 18 September 2023 and ends on 1 December 2023. This is an official record of the Ministry of Education and Sports. With your permission, the other details are inside here. I beg to lay on the Table. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Members take note. Do you want to debate what we asked for? We still have time. Members, we will sit here even up to 10 o’clock. Let us first conclude the report.

MR SSEGGONA: Madam Speaker, with respect to the ministries, the report relates to the following ministries:

1. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development;
2. The Ministry of Health;
3. The Ministry of Works and Transport;
4. The Ministry of Water and Environment;
5. The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development;
6. The Ministry of Education and Sports;
7. The Ministry of Local Government;
8. The Ministry of Internal Affairs – *(Interruption)*

MR RAUBEN ARINAITWE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. With due respect to the chairperson of this committee, who is a very respectable legal guru in this country, my procedural issue is on Rule 204 of our Rules of Procedure.

With your permission, Madam Speaker, I can read it.

“A report of a committee shall be signed or initialled by at least one-third of all the members of the committee...”

The members of the committee are 45 and one-third should be at least 15 but for this report, there are eight. I do not know whether that rule applies to this report. Thank you. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the report, which was uploaded is what was brought first. You need to change what was uploaded because the one, which is uploaded has more than 17 members. Go ahead.

MR SSEGGONA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. That is true for the honourable colleague, but even mathematically, it is not about 15. It might come to 13.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Okema, can I have the last report, which was uploaded; the one which has more members that signed?

MR SSEGGONA: Thank you. I was continuing to say –

THE SPEAKER: It is substance over –

MR SSEGGONA:

9. Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development;
10. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries;
11. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
12. The Ministry of Public Service;
13. Office of the President; and
14. Office of the Prime Minister.

General observations and recommendations

Performance of NTR

On NTR, the committee reviewed the estimates and established two fundamental problems. Some entities under-budget and then seemed to shoot over and above the expectation because of under-budgeting. Other entities do not budget for NTR and the others over-budget.

We recommend that the accounting officers should make realistic projections in liaison with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

Implementation of quantified outputs

Our recommendations are that:

1. All entities should hire qualified personnel to do the planning function in their entities. Those with such personnel should ensure that they receive adequate and regular training to align with the development goals of the country.

2. All entities that fail to comply with Section 13(15) of the PFMA or that delay to submit their quantified outputs should be sanctioned and have their budgets rejected.
3. All entities, without exception, should mandatorily submit their quantified outputs for effective assessment of their performance in relation to the budget.
4. Accounting officers who divert funds meant for the implementation of planned activities be held responsible and money recovered.
5. All accounting officers should ensure that they undertake deliberate steps in enhancing the capacity of their staff in planning, budgeting and monitoring as well as evaluation, with specific emphasis on the tracking of outputs as per the strategic plan.

Utilisation/absorption of funds

The committee did observe that there were significant cases of noncompliance with the PFMA and we recommended that:

1. The Accountant-General strictly enforces Section 15 of the PFMA, which requires that annual cash flow plans issued under subsection (1) be the basis of the release of funds; and
2. Accounting officers should strictly adhere to the annual budget performance contract signed between the Permanent Secretary/Secretary to the Treasury and the accounting officers.

Performance of Government receipts

Madam Speaker, we did enumerate the specifics and the corresponding numerics in relation to the entities and our recommendations, arising out of the observations, are that:

1. Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should

endeavour to adequately fund the entities, as appropriated by Parliament, to enable implementation of the planned activities because deviation from that amounts to usurping the powers of Parliament in appropriating; and

2. Government should put in place a robust disaster management plan to avoid catastrophic effects similar to what we witnessed with COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I think Hon. Kateshumbwa raised the issue of policy recommendations. In our reports, we make policy recommendations, especially on matters that are meant to go to the sectoral committees. The case in point is the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, where there were issues, which fell under the committee, as the Speaker guided. We recommended that those ones be transferred because they were not accountability issues.

However, on the issue of the health centres IV, I would like to remind my colleague that we do not handle them; we handle regional and national referral hospitals.

Madam Speaker, I move that the House finds pleasure in adopting the report, as presented, with any necessary amendments as it may deem appropriate. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. When you look at this report, you notice that there are issues, which are generic in nature, such as mischarge, lack of strategic plans, contrary to Section 13 of the Public Management Act, unaccounted for funds, lapse in the rollout of the Parish Development Model (PDM), rising domestic arrears – that is, payables; and staffing gaps.

Honourable members, that is the report that has been presented. Can we suspend the House for five minutes and then come back and debate?

(The House was suspended at 5.42 p.m.)

(On resumption at 5.47 p.m. the Speaker presiding_)

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, we have that motion. Before we start on the same note, we want to congratulate the King of Busoga for getting his better half. You have heard from the chairperson of the committee. There is a procedural matter?

5.51?

THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Mr Raphael Magezi):

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I want to thank the committee for the good report. As Government, we will study the report and take actions as required and produce a report; a Treasury Memorandum to Parliament. I thank you and beg that Parliament approves the committee report. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Tonny Ayoo.

MR TONNY AYO: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to thank the committee for a good exposition of the situation in the new cities and districts. I want to appeal to this House and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, and the Ministry of Local Government, especially in the case of Lira City and Lira District - among the cities and districts that were created, Lira got embroiled in a very serious conflict that has affected service delivery and performance.

There are a lot of accusations. So many people have been sent to prison, many others are interdicted. All this has been because after the new city was created, the Government was not able to provide enough funding for Lira District to relocate to the new site.

They remained within their premises, which was in the old district though within the city, and people started admiring and not wanting to leave the assets, the buildings, and the land that was within the city, and they ended up in wars. Right now, the district needs about Shs 10 billion to construct the new district headquarters. I would appeal, even for –

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Ayoo, that is going to come in the report that is going to be presented shortly by Hon. Mapenduzi.

MR TONY AYO: Madam Speaker, it is even in the report of the Committee on Public Accounts (Central Government).

THE SPEAKER: Yes, because the report that is going to come is specific on the issues that you are raising, but it is a good observation.

MR TONY AYO: The Minister of Local Government here was asking Parliament to provide him with Shs 1 billion.

THE SPEAKER: What was the basis of Shs 1 billion?

MR TONY AYO: For the new districts that have been carved out - to go and construct –

THE SPEAKER: What is Shs 1 billion meant to do?

MR TONY AYO: For the construction of new district headquarters, which is not enough.

THE SPEAKER: Why do you say it is not enough? First of all, I want to know the basis of Shs 1 billion and that is why I am asking you wait to hear from the other report because we need to understand the basis of Shs 1 billion and what is it meant to do.

MR MAGYEZI: Madam Speaker, I beg that the Member agrees that he waits until that report is presented; it is comprehensive; it is more detailed.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Tonny Ayoo -

MR TONY AYO: Much obliged, Madam Speaker. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Karim Masaba.

MR KARIM MASABA (Independent, Industrial Division, Mbale City): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will comment on the issue of domestic arrears because it is cross-cutting; I have seen it again here. The law is very clear on debt because before you even pay salaries,

the debt has to take the first call on the budget. The way we do it in Uganda, yes, we prioritise external borrowing, but we forget to pay people who have done or delivered services for the Government. That is why the stock of domestic arrears keeps growing.

I think the recommendation is a bit weak where it says, "...deliberate effort should be taken to clear domestic debt." I think before we do anything else, we need to focus on the domestic debt.

THE SPEAKER: You are saying the recommendation is weak. Reframe it the way you want it to be.

MR MASABA: I would propose that the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development takes it upon himself to clear at least 20 per cent of the domestic debt in domestic arrears.

THE SPEAKER: That is even weaker because first of all, you know the debt takes first priority. The issue is, finance ministry must clear.

MR MASABA: Then finance ministry should follow the law and clear domestic debt during the budgeting process. They should prioritise both domestic and external borrowing such that they can reduce the stock of domestic debt that keeps accumulating. Secondly –

THE SPEAKER: This goes to the sectoral committee on this - ensure that the domestic debt is embedded in the report.

MR MASABA: Yes, Madam Speaker. I was suggesting the 20 percent because the figure is huge, clocking over Shs 4 trillion. Which I thought was a lot but if planned well, they can clear it.

Secondly, it concerns the Ministry of Health. Section 5(1)(4) concerning-

THE SPEAKER: Are we still on Health or on Local Government now? We are on Central.

MR MASABA: The Ministry of Health was among the votes. There is where they talked about the agreement with the UPDF Engineering Brigade to go ahead and do the construction and one of the projects that I believe is supposed to be taken up is the construction of Mbale Regional Referral Hospital's ICU Unit because we do not have it there.

The project is at about 85 percent. So, we expect the project to get done. However, we were told that the project has stalled and nothing is happening. When I interacted with the hospital administration they said no funds were appropriated for completion of that project.

All the machines that are required for the ICU and the beds were procured. So, this is a waste of government money if we cannot provide about Shs 2 billion that is required to conclude that project. I think this is something that they need to take a keen interest in. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. He raises a very important issue. You cannot procure the equipment before finishing the building. Hon. Oboth, can your people finish our building?

5.58

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (DEFENCE) (Mr Jacob Oboth): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes. What Hon. Karim is saying is nearly true because we got the instructions to do about 16-18 units. We have completed a few and I think even in Mbale we are on course. Maybe by the end of next month, it should be done. We are working to make sure that it is done.

What is also true is that the equipment was brought as the constructions were going on. I was personally in Kabale, there is one in Yumbe, Jinja is nearly done and all these other regional hospitals. The challenges of money notwithstanding, we have made the undertaking to make sure that we complete.

THE SPEAKER: Give us feedback on the completion of those hospitals that you have started.

MR OBOTH: If you accept, Madam Speaker, the best feedback would be that you gladly accept to commission some of them.

THE SPEAKER: No problem. I would be glad to launch the Mbale one tomorrow. Hon. Onzima and then Sheema-

5.59

MR GODFREY ONZIMA (NRM, Aringa North County, Yumbe): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to add to the issue that was raised particularly about cutting money from staff's salary without their notice.

When I was still the Chairperson of the Committee on Public Service, we also carried out an investigation and realised that this problem is all over the country. And sometimes some of these deductions are without the attention of accounting officers and are beyond 50 per cent of the salary of these employees.

Once it is above 50 percent, their names disappear. When we interrogated further, the accounting officers testified that these deductions were without their knowledge. And that a private body had been hired to issue codes for these deductions.

I wonder why Government allows such kind of thing to happen. I thought this had been put to an end because it was thoroughly debated some time back. But if reports are brought here with serious issues, debated, no action is taken and the same things continue to happen, I do not know whether we are serious about some of these things.

Then two, the issue of returning gratuity and pension funds; the major challenge has been verification. Our recommendation for all these years has been that why doesn't the Government ensure that people's names transfer from salary payroll to pension payroll without the hustle of verification?

The verification process also subjects retirees to extortion; issues of corruption. If those could be effected, the idea that money for pension is always returned will never be there because people will always get their money. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

6.00

MS ROSEMARY NYAKIKONGORO (NRM, Woman Representative, Sheema): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Let me add on the issue of domestic arrears. Some entities are not considered during the budgeting process. They refer to it as an unfunded priority. So you can imagine suppliers who supply the Government and then they are considered as an “unfunded priority”; how will it come within in the budget when it is not considered?

I think the Government is doing a disservice to the people who supply it because they are not paid. For example, I am happy the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs is here. There is some land that was taken by Defence for strategic positioning, but it has taken 15 to 20 years without paying them. Land appreciates value and people are moving up and down. Some still think that I am the chairperson and they come to me. They are crying. And this is part of the accumulated domestic arrears.

Another issue is the Non-Tax Revenue (NTR) that is not declared by the entities. This is an area where money is misused. Imagine they generate money, they do not declare it, and it does not go to the Consolidated Fund. In fact, I do not know if you found out that some entities get external financing which they do not even reflect during the budgeting. It is hidden there unless you use a different lens to find out.

I believe that these are areas that the Finance Ministry should take care of in order to ensure that money is not used at source.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The other question would be, when you delay pay money, do you pay it with interest? The fact that you pay external loans with interest, do you pay these payables with interest?

6.03

MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru): Thank you. I want to start with the issue of non-tax revenue. Thank you, honourable chairperson for the good report. I know you gave us a summary but the bigger report is good.

On the issue with NTR, some of the entities under declare or give a low projection to show that they have actually performed well. If you are not critical you may see a good performance and clap but underneath there is a lot that is not going on well.

My recommendation to the Finance Ministry is that it comes back to planning. You need to sit with these ministries and entities and really make sure that you guide them appropriately because if you leave this to them, they will do whatever they want especially when it comes to projections.

As Parliament, when it comes to time for budgeting, we need to look into these things very seriously before budgets are passed. We need to task these ministries and entities to show us how they derived the projections for the NTR. Otherwise, we will continue to have these issues.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kabanda David, Member from Isingiro

MR DAVID KABANDA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the chairperson for the good report. However, I seek clarification from both the chairperson of the committee and the minister. Did I hear you well that Shs 20 billion was spent on Ugandans just to teach them on how to take coffee? Would you please take us through? Maybe the minister was also taught; we would like to know where the schools are, which people you were teaching; did I hear you well, Mr Chairman? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MR SSEGGONA: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the honourable colleagues who have raised matters of interest. First of all, with respect to loans as mentioned by Hon. Onzima,

our report highlights all those incidents and cases.

We were short of recommending a total abolition to this loaning system because it would be adverse to the beneficiaries who are our workers. Instead, we recommended that the system be streamlined such that they do not deduct without authority.

Two, in those cases where we are running manual files-you must have seen my facial expression. In the year 2023, our Government still runs manual files. We said, “You need to go digital.” I am sure Government will not find difficulty in adopting it.

With regard to domestic arrears, we raised all the issues that have been mentioned by Hon. Masaba and all the other honourable members. We could not recommend 20 per cent. We said, “Clear all outstanding arrears.” And, Madam Speaker, you guided that these constitute the first call.

Why would we continue running an economy where we are impoverishing? If you read our report, we mentioned that this is causing businesses to collapse.

With regard to the Ministry of Health and the UPDF, we made specific recommendations on that. We did not go to the extent of mentioning Mbale, Hon. Masaba, but we gave general policy recommendations.

Hon. Nyakikongoro, with respect to unfunded priorities, that also to relates domestic arrears and I have been exhaustive on that. Non-Tax Revenue not declared, yes, there are instances that we came across and made specific observations. When people would come and say; “I did not know the procedure, but yes, we got-”

This is a dichotomy from our findings; you may find a development partner that does not want to channel funding through the Consolidated Fund. Yet the provisions of the Public Finance Management Act require that all monies must go through the Fund.

We said, yes, we cannot compel our development partners to use our channel but we compel our accounting officers to declare it to the Treasury once they receive it; for planning purposes and to avoid double spending. You may find that Government has funded the project but also somebody else is funding the same.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, we did not come across specific entities that received double funding for the same project. Of course, I did not mention that there are entities we need to commend.

In our report, there are those we commend for being compliant with the law and we mentioned them because we do not want to be seen to be always looking for faults.

For external financing- payment with interest - Madam Speaker, you raised a legitimate question but the way we looked at it we said that it poses a risk for litigation and attendant costs. Those will include interests, damages and legal fees.

With regard to Hon. Lucy Akello’s issue, one of our recommendation is - and the Speaker guided in the past that when we get this report adopted, the sectoral committees should pick it up and take interest because it informs the budgeting process on where to do and what. I think Parliament has already taken a stand.

Finally, Hon. David Kabanda asked whether he heard me right. I am not sure. I do not know whether you actually heard me right, but for what we produced in the report, is that yes, Shs 20 billion was expended by the Office of the Prime Minister to promote the drinking of coffee by building coffee kiosks across the country.

The committee has made specific findings on how far the partner went on in implementing this. We came up with the conclusions that:

- 1) They are not there; and
- 2) An observation that it was an unnecessary expenditure because we have coffee, tea, milk etcetera.

THE SPEAKER: They call it a nugatory expenditure.

MR SSEGGONA: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for teaching me accounting. I think that is one way of paying me back for teaching you the law - I receive information because he is a member and he was-

MR BATARINGAYA: Thank you, Madam Speaker and our committee chairperson for giving me the opportunity to supplement this report. First, the Shs 20 billion that was spent on teaching Ugandans how to drink coffee – *(Laughter)*- is pitied against the Shs 4 billion we are looking for to buy seedlings for our people, including coffee seedlings.

Secondly, the people of Kashari North and even the others across the region were hit by disasters. Some of their coffee plantations were destroyed and need coffee seedlings now. When you take Shs 20 billion to teach people how to drink coffee, this is absolutely -

MS OPENDI: I am just giving information. It is a pity that we sit in this House and raise very pertinent issues that require money- remember how I have spoken and another colleague raised a matter of the students who were about to drop out of school. And the Higher Education Students Financing Board (HESFB) needed just Shs 5 billion to save these students and we could not find it.

However, money being given- The Prime Minister was here when I was raising these matters, but Shs 20 billion was given to an individual to go and purportedly teach Ugandans how to drink coffee. Can you imagine? This wasteful expenditure –

MR SSEGGONA: Madam Speaker -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable committee chairperson, get all the clarification Members want.

MS OPENDI: This wastage is unacceptable and we must ensure that action is taken so that we stop it. We are now looking for Shs 4 billion

for seeds. Imagine how many Ugandans would benefit if we took seeds to them. Imagine how many students would be supported in school if we gave the Higher Education Students Financing Board (HESFB) Shs 5 billion for 1,000 students.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable committee chairperson, are you taking notes? At the end of the day we want to know who disbursed that money, to whom and which areas benefitted from the Shs 20 billion.

MR IDDI ISABIRYE: Madam Speaker, I represent a constituency which has seven islands without a single secondary school although we have primary schools. I only need Shs 2 billion to put up a secondary school that will feed about seven government primary schools on the islands without a secondary school.

I think there are people in this Government fighting my Government. There are several ways of fighting a Government from within. The people we represent in this House, should not hear that Shs 20 billion was spent on teaching people how to take coffee. Madam Speaker, it is impunity and a strong recommendation should be given. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Silwany. Honourable members, you are all going to speak.

MR SILWANY: Madam Speaker, the clarification I seek is; where are these kiosks? For example, I come from the Busoga sub-region. –

THE SPEAKER: The committee chairperson said that they are not there. They are ghost kiosks.

MR SILWANY: Madam Speaker, I am coming.

THE SPEAKER: Where are you coming to? *(Laughter)*

MR SILWANY: Now that these kiosks are ghosts, this Parliament must stand, take a

serious decision and punitive measures against these individuals.

Look at what farmers go through. Today, we were tasking the minister for finance for Shs 4 billion. However, we are talking about Shs 20 billion on kiosks that do not exist yet they are accounted for.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Kibalya.

6.17

MR MAURICE KIBALYA (NRM, Bugabula County South, Kamuli): Thank you, Madam Speaker. For us to cure this, we need to get to its root. It has been the practice that people come up with formulas, cheat and take Ugandans for granted, and walk away. We cannot wait for six months to receive the treasury memoranda.

Madam Speaker, who began the idea of kiosks, because there must be someone behind it? For the years we have been growing coffee, my great-grandparents were not taught how to take it. Who came up with the idea of appropriating Shs 20 billion? Who disbursed it and where did it go?

If we wait for the report and send it to the Government, it is in the Government where somebody is seated on this money. So, I suggest that as Parliament, we zero in on that person; like a tick that looks for a soft spot on a cow and sticks there. Let us teach a lesson to some of these people.

6.19

MR SANON BWIIRE (NRM, Bulamogi County, Kaliro): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have 24 primary schools without a single structure in my constituency and every time we raise those issues on the Floor of Parliament, we are given excuses that there is no money.

I am shocked, surprised and disturbed. Who initiated this activity of teaching Ugandans to drink coffee, and that it should be allocated Shs 20 billion?

Uganda is internationally recognised as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. They

can see that one of the activities in Uganda is to teach Ugandans how to drink coffee. This is total theft.

Madam Speaker, I appeal to you to be strict and exemplary in tracing how this came up. They even confused us that they established kiosks which do not exist.

By the time we leave Parliament, some of those people should be in Luzira Maximum Security Prison. Thank you.

6.21

MR MOSES OGWAL (NRM, Dokolo North County, Dokolo): Thank you, Rt Hon. Speaker. My contribution is -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to correct the record that the money which was spent was Shs 9,662,236,680. The items are: production of coffee – that is training of farmers – was Shs 3.831 billion; consumption of coffee, putting up a coffee shop and attendant infrastructure was Shs 1.906 billion; capacity building - teaching the youth - financial literacy and business management skills, was Shs 2.652 billion; project administration was Shs 1.271 billion; and the company is Inspire Africa Uganda Ltd. We gave this company money during the budgeting period.

Now you have the information.

MR MOSES OGWAL: My concern is on the issue of domestic arrears. I want to make an observation –

THE SPEAKER: Let us first finish with the coffee issue.

MR MOSES OGWAL: My proposal on the coffee issue is that if there are wrong people in those companies, we need to blacklist them. You need to find out the other businesses these companies are doing in the economy. Thank you.

6.23

MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru): Madam Speaker, now that you mention the company, “Inspire Africa” -

THE SPEAKER: I read the company from the document.

MS LUCY AKELLO: Now that you read the company name from the report, these people charge a lot of money for you to take coffee there.

THE SPEAKER: Where?

MS LUCY AKELLO: In Gulu. I thought they were just doing business. *(Interjections)*- yes, in the Post Office; they are in a Government building, and they renovated the structure. I used to pass by and see it –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, Hon. Lucy Akello is saying that the Auditor-General noted that except for Gulu, the coffee shops were either non-existent or in some places, non-operational. So, you are right that they exist in Gulu.

MS LUCY AKELLO: It is one in Gulu. *Mama* has said that the one in Gulu is now closed. The one I used to see; people would go to drink very expensive coffee –

THE SPEAKER: Did you also take the coffee?

MS LUCY AKELLO: No, I used to just pass by but people used to tell me –

THE SPEAKER: How did you know it was expensive?

MS LUCY AKELLO: People used to tell me that it is a very expensive place.

THE SPEAKER: That is hearsay.

6.25

MS BETTY AOL (FDC, Woman Representative, Gulu City): Thank you, Rt Hon. Speaker. Inspire Africa Coffee Shop in Gulu was closed because they failed to pay rent for the shop. However, it was meant to be a youth project and it was initiated by State House and failed to manage. They ran it for close to three years. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I think what the report is saying is from OPM, not State House. Let us have Hon. Mutembuli, Hon. John and Hon. Fred.

6.26

MR YUSUF MUTEMBULI (NRM, Bunyole East County, Butaleja): Thank you. Madam Speaker, personally, I have consumed coffee from Inspire Africa, one, in Mbale. It was there and they used to employ the youth. *(Interjection)* No, we were buying it.

Two, at Twed Towers, where there is the Court of Appeal, there used to be Inspire Africa coffee shop. However, for the last one year, I do not know where they went – *(Interjection)*- they have closed; that is what I am told.

So, looking at the figures that you have read for us, honestly, this was so –

THE SPEAKER: The ones I read from the report?

MR MUTEMBULI: Yes, the one you read from the report. These are very exaggerated because even the services – for some of us who went there once or twice – were not worth what we are talking about. Imagine if you have all that money, but still charge a lot of money for the coffee.

Nobody came to me to tell me how to take coffee when I was there. Honestly, when I went, I asked for coffee and they gave it to me and nobody told me. “This is how coffee is taken.” *(Laughter)* I just took coffee myself because I know how to take coffee. So, whoever gave money for the purposes of teaching people how to take coffee, I did not benefit from it;

nobody taught me. I just bought and took it without anyone teaching me. So, that money was misused. Thank you.

6.27

MR JOHN TEIRA (NRM, Bugabula County North, Kamuli): Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is a call for us to start being intentionally serious about some of these matters. If we do not take action against the specific officers who perpetrated this, very soon the Ministry of Health will come up with a budget to teach us how to use condoms. You will see the minister - I mean; anyone is going to come up with anything.

The Leader of the Opposition has been very categorical on how the Office of the Prime Minister is run on many occasions. This must be another additional wake-up call to take action against the members who perpetrated this –*(Interruption)*

MR BWIIRE: I rise on a point of order because some issues and words, to some of us who are pastors in churches, do not need to be mentioned – like what you heard from my colleague. I think there should be a better word to substitute the one that he mentioned.

So, Madam Speaker, is my colleague really in order to plainly mention that word, yet it could be substituted with another one which is better accommodated by everybody?

MR TEIRA: Madam Speaker, I went to school with Hon. Sanon Bwiire. When we were at campus, they used to have a shrine in their home. I do not know when he became a pastor. *(Laughter)*

MR BWIIRE: Madam Speaker, it is on record that I come from a Christian background. When Hon. Teira contested for Guild President, coming from the same region, we saw that he could not go through. So, we supported the candidate who could go through. As a Christian, I told him that when we were praying –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, can we move on? Hon. Teira, have you finished?

You can go and sort out those things from – Hon. Fred?

6.31

MR FRED KAYONDO (DP, Mukono County South, Mukono): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Giving such volume of money to Inspire Africa to teach Ugandans how to consume coffee is a clear indication of what the Government prioritises the most. It is an indication that the Government prioritises teaching.

THE SPEAKER: Which Government? It is the ministry.

MR KAYONDO: It is the ministry of this Government.

THE SPEAKER: It is under the Government – even you, you are under the Government. So, is that what you prioritise? Is your priority teaching people how to take coffee? You and I are part of the Government.

MR KAYONDO: Madam Speaker, if we can get –

THE SPEAKER: Let us look at the Vote where the money came from. Let us be specific and not make sweeping statements.

6.32

MR MILTON MUWUMA (NRM, Kigulu County South, Iganga): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. My heart is really bleeding. When we hear such revelations, we shudder and feel sorry for the Office of the Prime Minister because every scandal, one after the other, rotates around the Office of the Prime Minister. I have the first Muslim secondary school in eastern Uganda, called Bukoyo Secondary School.

They have never got Government infrastructure in that school. We have written – it is Government-aided, but apart from paying teachers, they are still operating under asbestos dormitories. When we hear colossal sums of money being misappropriated like this, we really feel sick. I appeal, painfully, to the Office of the Prime Minister to get saved.

Save Ugandans. Let us bring the country on rail. Otherwise, the public will begin losing trust in whatever we do because things are going in the wrong direction. I thank you.

6.34

MR TOM EKUDO (FDC, Gweri County, Soroti): Thank you, Madam Speaker. When I was growing up, my mother and dad could cool tea for me to take. I do not know whether that is what Inspire Africa was doing. When it came to porridge, my mother could tell me: “Down there, it is hot. You need to first cool it down.” I could get tea from the shop, mix and take it and I have not got any disease.

I do not know how special this programme was. We have problems in Gweri. We have problems at Soroti Hospital. I do not have a technical school in Gweri. I do not have secondary schools in Gweri – and we are playing around with these things! How I wish we could appropriate for bigger things that could benefit our people. I thank you.

6.53

MR NABOTH NAMANYA (FDC, Rubabo County, Rukungiri): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Teaching and all activities surrounding imparting knowledge are a preserve of the Ministry of Education and Sports. To teach, you must develop a syllabus and know who to teach.

The one who initiated the teaching of drinking coffee - whoever has had the consultation from the Ministry of Education and Sports - who is charged and designed the syllabus? Who were you to teach? Who built the schools where they taught drinking coffee? We need to find out.

Madam Speaker, appropriation is a preserve of Parliament. Who appropriated this money? Who initiated the deal? We need to know the proprietors and promoters of the company, Inspire Africa. We need to help this country and dig deep to find out who exactly caused this loss to the country, so that we take a punitive action against the individuals who initiated this.

Other than that, we are facing a problem where we come here, appropriate and people go there and disregard our decision, as Parliament, and do their own activity. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Aeku.

6.36

MR PATRICK AEKU (NRM, Soroti County, Soroti): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Mine is just a concern; how does one begin to drink coffee? I have also been to Inspire Africa, Mbale, but when I was there, it was more of a corporate setting whereby they were charging Shs 20,000 for a flask of coffee. They basically had different flavours and you would feel that there was something going on.

However, the aspect of teaching people to drink coffee for Shs 9 billion is very unfortunate. When you look at Teso, for example, the report says they taught people in the Teso region, but it is absurd because we have never seen it and we cannot even account for it being in that area.

Going forward, I think this is a very particular pick for Parliament. I think we need to look at who this person is. If you created it to enrich yourself with some wealth, you must vomit it. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Timuzigu?

6.38

MR MICHAEL TIMUZIGU (NRM, Kajjara County, Ntungamo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. On page 30 of the report, we have the East African Civil Aviation Academy, which has grounded aircrafts. Some of them are accident aircrafts and the school is waiting for the insurance company to compensate them. For that matter, most of the students have been sent home, as they wait for the aircrafts to be operational.

This school is called the East African Civil Aviation Academy, which means it should be at a higher level. When it was instituted, it was for the entire East Africa. At the moment, Uganda needs more pilots because we are developing our aviation industry –

THE SPEAKER: Maybe, to be specific, that is Soroti Flying School.

MR TIMUZIGU: Yes. At the moment, I think it is called Soroti Flying School. Madam Speaker, I see a recommendation which is as simple as this, "...the Government should avail more funds for the operation and maintenance of infrastructure and the flying school."

The Government should make this school more vibrant to give us more pilots to develop our aviation industry so that it goes in tandem with the aviation industry of Uganda. As we increase planes, our schools should also be advanced. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: On top of providing money for the aviation school, the Government should also ensure it protects the land for the flying school, because it has been encroached upon and taken by people. Yes, Hon. Chemonges.

6.40

MR WILLIAM CHEMONGES (NRM, Kween County, Kween): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I hope this is not true, but if it is true that we allocated –

THE SPEAKER: Please, any record that is brought to the Floor –

MR CHEMONGES: Madam Speaker, all the Ugandans are listening. Even now, someone just sent me a message from Kapchorwa saying, "Hon. Chemonges, is that what you people go to appropriate? We have been taking our coffee since we were born" –

THE SPEAKER: Let it be on record that this House did not appropriate money for teaching people how to take coffee.

MR CHEMONGES: Thank you. The Office of the Prime Minister is where we, the Members of this House, always run to in case of an emergency in our constituencies.

I remember, last year, my constituency was swept and people lost almost everything. I made a very serious report, took it to the Prime

Minister's office, but we did not even get a kilo of mice.

Madam Speaker, to sit here and listen to a very good report like this, which is showing us the expenditure of over Shs 9 billion on teaching people how to take coffee, we should all stand as one and fight it. You can imagine, we do not have health centres. One health centre III takes only Shs 1 billion to be completed, but now this is Shs 9 billion - in fact, I took that coffee in Kween, like Hon. Mutembuli said.

These people had just a small corner with a dispenser. I remember buying coffee for about Shs 12,000 in a plastic cup. Then –

THE SPEAKER: Even Hon. Harriet knows it.

MR CHEMONGES: Yes. So, Madam Speaker, I want to end by saying, the people who spent this money on pretense that they were teaching Ugandans to take coffee should be prosecuted immediately. If not, we can go out in public and face these people – *(Interruption)*

DR RUTAHIGWA: Thank you, my honourable colleague, for allowing me to give you information. Madam Speaker, teaching Ugandans how to take coffee, as a doctor, first of all, coffee has got a substance called caffeine, which is psychoactive; it is a psychotropic substance. It affects the heart, breathing, and our blood vessels.

I am only concerned about what the content of the training was, how many people there were and where they trained them. Training is not necessary. I had to stop drinking coffee because it affected my heart.

You may think that taking coffee the way you are taking it is how it is supposed to be taken, when there are steps in – *(Interruption)*

MR SSEGGONA: Madam Speaker, Hon. Dr Rutahigwa is actually a member of this committee. I thought he was giving information like the others did. We were looking for him to see if he would sign the report and he was nowhere to be seen.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you so much. Honourable members, we need to get a statement from the Prime Minister. Hon. Apolot?

6.45

MS CHRISTINE APOLOT (NRM, Woman Representative, Kumi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate the Members who made an observation on our roles, as appropriators in Parliament.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, for making the report clear that Parliament did not allocate this money for purposes of the public's consumption.

Madam Speaker, this is now a task for all legislators to be very keen at the time of budgeting. It is very common for them to give us block figures without a breakdown, when the presentations are made.

I believe that the technical persons take advantage of this to block the figures and in the end they break it down the way they want to benefit themselves. So, can we take that seriously?

It is very clear that the Office of the Prime Minister has to give us responses in writing so that we fully understand the diversion. If the Attorney-General was present, we would find out what the law says, if implementation is done contrary to the approved work plan of Parliament. Let the penalty be given to the Office of the Prime Minister for diverting, in terms of implementation.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. That could have caused a mischarge or whichever. Can we have the persons responsible for the disbursement or conceiving the idea investigated? Prime Minister.

6.47

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Madam Speaker, I thank members of the committee for this report. We know it is the Office of the Prime Minister that was in charge. We have taken note.

However, before I go to that, coffee has many benefits. As a country, it is one of our biggest exports and brings income to Uganda. So, I am requesting the honourable member who was giving the negative side of coffee - as Ugandans, we are not supposed to –

THE SPEAKER: Who was that?

MS NAKADAMA: The doctor.

THE SPEAKER: He is a doctor; he knows the effects of coffee.

MS NAKADAMA: Yes, he knows but as a country, it is one of our biggest exports.

THE SPEAKER: No problem; it is okay. That is why we provided money for it for value addition. We value coffee very much.

MS NAKADAMA: Secondly, the name that was given for drinking coffee was for popularising its intake, but not to teach people to drink. I think it was given the wrong heading. It should be “popularising the intake of coffee”.

Lastly, we have taken note of the concerns in the report and –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Prime Minister, as I read before, the items are:

- i. Production of coffee; that is training farmers;
- ii. Consumption of coffee, putting up coffee shops and attendant infrastructure;
- iii. Capacity building; teaching the youth financial literacy and business management skills;
- iv. Project administration;

Those are the aspects; it is not popularising coffee.

MR DAVID KABANDA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The clarification I seek from the Prime Minister is whether she clearly understands her role. As far as I know, the role of the Prime Minister is to coordinate the Government.

You are now saying that it is OPM that was in charge of implementing this activity. When did you become the implementer of roles that are supposed to be implemented by the agencies you supervise? That is the clarification I seek from you.

MS NAKADAMA: Madam Speaker, by the time the report came out; we were supposed to be supervising. We are going to come up with a Treasury Memorandum and –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Prime Minister, “coffee consumption” is a nugatory expenditure. I thank the committee for referring this issue to CID. Can we have an independent investigation on this matter? We are not going to wait for a Treasury Memorandum. Let this issue be handled on its own.

MS NAKADAMA: Most obliged, Madam Speaker.

MR MPUUGA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank my chairperson for the elaborate report and the House for the debate. My take away from this very good report and debate by the House is an invitation to Parliament to take stricter care of some of these social action programmes.

We know how people, under the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund, have been given a raw deal in a number of areas and the beneficiaries went home empty-handed, out of the so much money Parliament voted.

I think it is a very serious invitation to the House that whenever these kinds of social action programmes are brought here for funding, we undertake more elaborate scrutiny as to vote and purpose, and take more interest in how the common person is going to benefit.

Otherwise, the coffee scandal was an act of creaming off. Money was voted but the specifics were not probably elaborate. Otherwise, how do you explain, as the Prime Minister, how money leaves your vote? You are not even sure of how you are going to measure output.

I want to look at the work plan of the coffee consumption project, as an economist, and see how the kind of –

THE SPEAKER: You need to get a work plan plus the output.

MR MPUUGA: What were the Key Performance Indicators for that project that somebody signed that the money should move in billions for that kind of undertaking?

It is one of the scandals of our time, but it is educative of the House to undertake more scrutiny because we are now undertaking a postmortem. I hope money could be returned to the people who are supposed to benefit from this project.

The whole idea of promoting coffee is being handled at the tail end. Before promoting production en masse, we are promoting consumption of what is not available. I am a coffee farmer at a large scale and as we speak, there is not enough coffee to supply the world market.

We should be supporting the communities to grow coffee. Those who want to consume coffee will find motivation to take the coffee but at least there is a general motivation of growing and selling to get money. We must promote that. However, on consumption, we can take lessons and do more as Parliament, so that our people can benefit from these small resources.

Finally, again, there are very big stars in the Office of the Prime Minister for observation on how it operates and implements projects. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. We need that money; that nugatory expenditure. The person responsible for it should bear the liability and we need a serious investigation into that.

I now put the question that the consolidated report of the Committee on Public Accounts (Central Government), on the report of Auditor

General for the year ending 30th June 2022 be adopted by this House.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE SPEAKER: As per Section 53(1) of the Public Finance Management Act 2015, we need a Treasury Memoranda on what has been passed in this House and you can bring it before the six months.

We need a report on the consumption of coffee in the first week of resumption. If we are going to report on Tuesday, then we need the report on Tuesday.

MS NAKADAMA: Most obliged, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The committee chairperson, Public Accounts Committee on (Central Government), we thank you and your members for the exhaustive reports. I want to give you a kind reminder that we need the rest of the reports short of that, we will do an omnibus.

MR SSEGGONA: It is my undertaking and my team. We pray subject to lifting restrictions during lockdown.

THE SPEAKER: I do not know how you will handle it but I want the reports.

MS OPENDI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Auditor-General presents his reports to you and they are brought to this House in December. And immediately after that, the committees focus on the ministerial policy statements and the budget process. Therefore, all the way up to April, May -

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Opendi, I am not the maker of the Constitution.

MS OPENDI: Madam Speaker, even that constitutional provision -

THE SPEAKER: Do not deviate from what the law requires of you, next item.

MS OPENDI: Madam Speaker, I am going to seek for interpretation. I am giving notice.

THE SPEAKER: We have an Attorney-General, you can write to him.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC SERVICE AND
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ON THE
FUNCTIONALITY AND SERVICE
DELIVERY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS
SPECIFICALLY IN THE 10 CITIES AND
THE DISTRICTS THEY ARE CARVED
FROM

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, in furtherance to Rule 189 of the Rules of Procedure, the Committee of Public Service and Local Government inquired into the state of service delivery in the new cities.

I am aware that the honourable chairperson is around and he asked for only five minutes. Therefore, we shall give you five minutes to present and as you see, these cities are not operational –

I am told that Hon. Magyezi wants to start creating other constituencies but we shall not allow new constituencies in this House.

6.59

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Mr Ojara Mapenduzi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will plead with you to give me at least 10 minutes not five.

However, permit me to begin by laying on the Table, the report of the Committee on Public Service, Local Government on the functionality and service delivery in local governments, specifically in the 10 cities and the districts from where these cities were created. I beg to lay.

THE SPEAKER: Please lay.

MR MAPENDUZI: I lay on the Table as well, the minutes of the committee meetings that produced this report.

THE SPEAKER: Please do.

MR MAPENDUZI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will request that you kindly allow me to run through the report in summary so that we save time.

The introductory part gives details on the mandate of the committee and also indicates the task that the committee undertook; making oversight visits to the newly created cities and the districts to assess;

- i. The level of preparedness of these districts to relocate following the creation of the new cities;
- ii. To look at the status of payment of *ex-gratia* and honoraria for local councillors for both the cities and the districts; and
- iii. Looking at other matters that are related to service delivery.

Background

We indicated how the cities were created and I would not want to take a lot of time but it is important to mention that these cities were created and were supposed to be operational in a phased manner with clear time frames.

Unfortunately, the cities of Moroto, Nakasongola, Kabale, Wakiso have not yet been operational and will be operationalised as resources are provided.

It is also important to mention and to guide members who are following on their iPads, that is on page three that these cities that were created-their councillors are entitled to *ex-gratia* just like in other districts and the Government has been providing resources.

Unfortunately, in those cities and the districts the *ex-gratia* that has been provided has not been coming consistently so there is a lot of

money in the form of arrears that have not been given and so you can imagine how leaders are struggling without being paid consistently. We will also provide those details.

When we made consultation with the Ministry of Local Government and Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, it is true that indeed resources have not been provided adequately hence the need to have the arrears cleared.

The creation of the cities required that the districts from where the cities were created needed to relocate and have new administrative headquarters.

You will agree that these cities are at the level of districts and so they are all higher local governments and therefore, you cannot have two higher local governments in the same area of jurisdiction.

Unfortunately, both the Minister of Local Government and Minister of Finance admitted that there was no money provided to facilitate the relocation processes in the Financial Year 2023/2024 despite the urgency.

The committee came up with terms of references, methodology and interacted with different stakeholders, you will find all that on page four.

Madam Speaker, just to take members through the very important terms of reference, especially on page five which is very important;

- (i) To assess the status of payment of *ex-gratia* and honoraria for local councillors as of June 30th 2023.

Government has been providing a conditional grant to finance *ex-gratia* for councillors at sub-county and town councils, municipality divisions, districts and cities.

Ex-gratia is also given to municipal district and city deputy speakers. Government also provides honoraria to LCI and LCII chairpersons.

During our interaction with the Ministry of Local Government, the committee was informed that the budget provision for *ex-gratia* and honoraria for local government leaders has fallen short over the last five years and that is from Financial Year 2018/2019 to FY 2022/2023 leading to an outstanding amount of Shs 9,074,258,232.

These are the monies that should be paid and these leaders are struggling but they are not receiving that money.

- (ii) The committee also noted that in the current Financial Year 2023/2024, no provision or IPF was sent to the local governments on *ex-gratia* and honoraria, amounting to Uganda Shs 48.19 billion as required for the *ex-gratia* and on honoraria amounting to Shs 48.19 billion as required for the *ex-gratia* and honoraria.

We have given a breakdown, you can look through page six where you will find we have 70,500 LCI and 10,585 LCII - they need this financial year Shs 9.7 billion for their payment and it is not catered for. You will look through and it gives you a total of Shs 48 billion we have provided the details in the table.

The committee also looked at the arrears; we have given a breakdown on page seven and the breakdown we have provided covers only the cities and the districts that we visited, but when you look at the annex, you will find a detailed breakdown of how much money was not sent to which entity, giving the total of the Shs 9 billion I talked about.

Madam Speaker, we made observations on page 8 that you will look through, and the observations, if I may just run through very quickly:

- (i) There were figures that were not correlating with the figures provided by the minutes of local government and what we found in the field.
- (ii) We also received a list of the arrears from the Ministry of Local Government that

were submitted. The Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development received this list and committed that they would include this in the 3 per cent supplementary since they had not included it in the budget which is a big mistake.

- (iii) The Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development also acknowledged the omission of *ex-gratia* and honoraria in the budget for 2023-2024.

Recommendation

- (i) The Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, and the affected local government entities should harmonise the arrears for *ex-gratia* and honoraria; and
- (ii) The Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development to expedite the verification process of the *ex-gratia* arrears and honoraria to ensure that the requisite funds are provided for in the supplementary budget in line with Section 25 of the Public Finance Management Act.

Terms of reference two and three, I will just give a summary. Here, our intention as a committee was to establish the availability of land in the different districts from where the cities were created and also to look at their level of preparedness as far as the relocation is concerned.

We went to Soroti District where we found they prepared a council resolution; it is important to inform Members that Soroti had gone a step ahead and started construction after they received Shs 1 billion from the Ministry of Finance and this financial year they expected to receive an additional Shs 800 million.

However, the other nine districts of Gulu, Arua, Masaka, Mbarara, Hoima, Jinja, Mbale, and Kabarole: all these are the cities which were created apart from Soroti. All the others have

not received a cent despite the appeal from the Ministry of Local Government that each is given Shs 1 billion.

So, I have given a summary that includes how much land is available from every entity, and council resolution and we have also attached the necessary documents and proof of land ownership to show that these entities are ready to receive the money to start construction to relocate but the resources have not been provided. I have given a summary of all these other entities.

However, I would like to take us - without going through each entity, because every entity has land, but it is important to mention two other entities, that is Kabarole and Jinja, these are entities that have gone ahead using their locally generated revenue to put structures for the new districts.

However, all these projects have stalled because their local revenue is continuously dwindling because most of the cities took over most of the viable local revenue sources. Much as Jinja and Kabarole started construction, they cannot continue now because they do not have the resources. They need to have the money given to them.

Now, permit me to proceed to general observations and recommendations to conclude on that so I do not need to repeat those other different entities.

The committee made the following general observations:

- (i) The MoFPED noted the funds for the relocation of the districts displaced by the new cities were being disbursed on a case-by-case basis, depending on the availability of land and readiness to utilise the funds asked for. I mentioned only Soroti received this money.
- (ii) MoLG has not yet issued clear guidelines for the sharing of assets between the new cities and the affected entities. This is particularly because the conflicts in those local governments are unbearable. The cities and the districts are not working harmoniously because they are struggling to prove who is more powerful.
- (iii) Whereas the districts and the cities were coexisting, there were cases of conflicts arising from the distribution and sharing of assets as well as the location of the district headquarters.
- (iv) Following delays by the Government to provide start-up funds, local government through the respective council made efforts to establish new headquarters, find resources, and set up structures. However, construction works for most of the new headquarters have stalled, just as I said, due to a lack of funds;
- (v) Councils of the different local governments had resolved on the new locations for the district headquarters. However, there are petitions challenging some of them.
- (vi) Some of the districts are clinging, and this is important, Madam Speaker, Some of the districts are clinging on to assets located within the cities, especially those that were constructed using, I would call it purportedly, local revenue.
- (vii) Many districts are disposing of property within the cities as they prepare to relocate to frustrate the handover of these properties to the new cities. Some districts even plan to sell off or let out district headquarters. For example, the districts of Masaka and Lira are threatening to dispose of district council halls or administration blocks in the city and use the money for the construction of their new headquarters.
- (viii) There are disagreements between the district and the city land boards whereby some district land boards refuse to hand over files and are still carrying out transactions on land outside their areas of jurisdiction. For example, in

- Lira, there is already a functional Lira city land board, but the district land board is still receiving applications and processing titles for lands in the city when it is actually not within their areas of jurisdiction. So we gave the example of Lira and Arua and the other entities.
- (ix) The Ministry of Public Service ban on recruitment as strained service delivery on the cities and the districts from where the cities were carved.
- (x) Cities and districts are constrained with office space since the two entities are sharing the same premises. For example, Arua City, for instance, recruited 406 staff but lacked space to accommodate them. So some of these staff are sitting under trees.
- (xi) Lack of adequate laws or guidelines for the operationalisation of the cities. Whereas a city is the equivalent of a district as outlined under Section 4 of the Local Government Act CAP 243 as amended, there are several gaps that affect the operation of the cities. For instance, a city division should be treated at the level of a municipality, but currently, in line with Local Government Act CAP 243, Section 4(b), they are still treated at the level of subcounties.
- (xii) Local Governments have continuously been faced with the issue of late releases and returns. This is important, Madam Speaker. Late releases and return of funds to the consolidated fund. For example, in the Financial Year 2022/2023, Arua City, Gulu City, Mbale City, Mbale District, and others received over Shs 3 billion far above what they had planned for by 19 of June. All this money went back within two weeks. To throw more light when we asked them, they said this was money they had not planned for. They had not budgeted for it, so they could not explain how the monies came. But these are monies considered returned back to Treasury;
- (xiii) New subcounties have continued depending on the mother subcounties in as far as road funds are concerned since 2021 without having their own allocation as required by law.
- (xiv) Continuous recentralisation of decentralised services such as decision concerning collection and remittance of local revenue and procurement.

General committee recommendations

The committee recommends the following:

- (1) In addition to the supplementary for ex-gratia and honoraria, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should provide funds in line with Section 25 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015 to cater for the following as indicated below - these are areas we consider very important, as a committee.
 - a. Vehicles for city mayors and district chairpersons. These are political heads of the districts and some of them have ended up grabbing vehicles for school inspections and for health centres, including ambulances, because they lack means of transport. The committee recommends that Shs 35.2 billion be provided so that they can have means of transport.
 - b. Relocation of the 10 cities. In addition to what has been given to Soroti, all the other nine entities should also be given Shs 1 billion each as a start-up for putting structures. They would relocate in phases.
 - c. The committee recommends that Shs 2 billion be provided to review the decentralisation policy because there are a lot of gaps. We need to make sure that we strengthen and deepen decentralisation and the best way is to have a review. The ministry requires the Shs 2 billion to undertake this process.

- (2) The Ministry of Local Government should ensure equitable sharing of assets between the affected districts and the new cities in accordance with Section 188 of the Local Government Act, Cap. 243. The ministry should also provide clear guidance on the transition of the districts from the cities within two months from the time of adoption of this report.
- (3) The districts should not dispose of any property within the city until the Ministry of Local Government issues the required guidelines in accordance with Section 188 of the Local Government Act.
- (4) The Ministry of Local Government should ensure that the decisions of the local government councils on location of the new district headquarters are respected.
- (5) The Minister of Public Service, through affirmative action, should lift the ban on recruitment, especially for the cities and the districts from where the cities were created, so that they can have those vacant positions filled.

Madam Speaker, I beg to submit and pray that the House considers and takes the recommendations and positions of the committee as outlined in the report. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very, committee chairperson. Minister?

7.18

THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Mr Raphael Magyezi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the committee chairperson and members for a very good report. I would like to confirm that we interacted with the committee on these matters and fully agree with them.

Secondly, Madam Speaker, I thank Parliament for agreeing, in 2020, to create the new cities. We may have had a difficulty in starting, but, generally, the cities are progressing quite well. They bear a good future in terms of urbanisation

in the country.

I look at some urban centres that are growing. Right now, if you were to ask me if we were to create new municipalities - we are not about to do that. However, for anybody who has visited Luweero Town Council, you cannot believe that it is a town council. The size of urbanisation and level of economic activities there – it is a question of getting them to that level where we give them the necessary technical staff at the level of the municipality.

Look at Dokolo and Bukedea town councils –*(Laughter)*-

THE SPEAKER: No, do not bribe me. Honourable minister, remove Bukedea. You have not done anything.

MR MAGYEZI: Madam Speaker, with due respect, I have been to these local governments for some time. I have seen that little trading centre at Bukedea. When you go there now, you see the level of urbanisation – the new buildings, the streets and so on – that is coming up. The point I am making is that it is a critical decision we have to take as the leaders of our country.

Uganda is one of the fastest urbanising countries in Africa – even in the world. It is at about 5.8 per cent. When you go home, you find that, all of a sudden, people have moved to what was a little town when you left.

I want to make it clear to Parliament and the country that the Cabinet put a ban on the creation of new administrative units. Also, in the case of *Kwizera v. the Government of Uganda*, it was ruled that we do not create new administrative units in between the term of office. So, in this *kisanja*, the only time we can look at creating new administrative units is 2025, as we head to the next elections in 2026.

Therefore, to friends who have been sending their proposals – you know, we cannot refuse what is in Article 179 of the Constitution: the will of the people. These councils sit and send the proposals, but as far as I am

concerned, at the moment, we can only look at operationalisation of those units, which are already created. I am talking about the 312 subcounties, which had to relocate because we created town councils some time back. A good number of them are under the trees while others are in rented buildings.

Madam Speaker, allow me to request the House. In addition to what the chairperson of the committee has presented as critical priorities - we presented a number and the list is there, but he has singled out three of them. The first one is vehicles for district chairpersons.

Madam Speaker, the vehicles were procured in 2015/2016 and they have broken down; they are no longer there. These are chairpersons of districts. Some of them are moving on boda bodas. We need at least Shs 200 million for the 176 units that we have. That is Shs 35.2 billion –*(Interjections)*– Madam Speaker, I beg to take that information. It may be very important –*(Interruption)*

MR AOGON: Madam Speaker, speaking about the issue of transport, even a majority of the municipality mayors do not have vehicles. So, I wanted us to amend that particular recommendation to include municipality mayors.

MR MAGYEZI: Thank you for that information. It is actually included. When I talk of 176 units, I mean 135 districts plus 10 cities and 31 municipal mayors. When you get 176 times Shs 200 million, it is the Shs 35.2 billion, which the committee chairperson has actually recommended.

The other that he has recommended is the Shs 10 billion for relocation of the districts. You had asked the question: why Shs 1 billion? Madam Speaker, that was a very valid question. We provide, for now, a start-up fund for design of the new building, physical planning, fencing of the land, titling in cases where it is not and relocation of the subcounties. For example, Gulu District tried to relocate to Awach Subcounty, but the subcounty said: “Where are you going? This is my home.” So, they have to be assisted to relocate.

Let us take the example of Soroti District. They have already been given Shs 1.8 billion. No other district, among the 10, has got even a single shilling –

THE SPEAKER: They have been given Shs 1 billion.

MR MAGYEZI: Shs 1.8 billion.

THE SPEAKER: What did the committee chairperson say? You said they had given them Shs 1 billion and they want additional Shs 800 million.

MR OJARA MAPENDUZI: Madam Speaker, in Financial Year 2023/2024, they received Shs 1 billion and this financial year, they are supposed to receive Shs 800 million.

THE SPEAKER: They have not yet received it.

MR OJARA MAPENDUZI: They have not yet received it. It is in the budget.

MR MAGYEZI: Madam Speaker, we can confirm later, but there is a provision –

THE SPEAKER: No, there is no confirming later. The chairperson has confirmed.

MR MAGYEZI: I go with the chairperson’s position.

THE SPEAKER: That will be discrimination. How can Soroti get Shs 1.8 billion when Gulu has not got even one?

MR MAGYEZI: That is the question, Madam Speaker. Even the Shs 1 billion. What we need now is the Shs 10 billion for exactly what I have mentioned - start-up, so that next financial year, we get them what they need. Relocation should be in 2025.

Therefore, I will need about Shs 3 billion per district next financial year. I want to thank these districts. They have exercised restraint and are having harmonious relationship, generally, with the cities. Madam Speaker, I beg that you

allow me to give exactly what I am requesting from Parliament.

The third, which the committee chairperson has presented is the Shs 2 billion for policy review. After 30 years of decentralisation, time has come to review the policy. I want to request that the chairperson of the committee agrees with me that at least in this year, you provide Shs 5 billion for the subcounties which are really badly off. These requests keep on coming from our own.

The other one is induction of councillors. Two years down the road we have not trained them. We have trained a few, like I thanked Parliament last time. We trained the city councillors of Gulu by your magnanimity. We need Shs 15 billion.

You have seen the chairs flying in the air in council meetings. These people need to be trained to understand where the councillors' role begins and ends.

The last one, which I want to emphasise is what he has presented; ex-gratia for our councillors. Friends, the political leaders in the districts, subcounties and villages have a statutory mandate so they must be paid. It is an obligation on us. Remember, we only pay these chairpersons of villages and parishes Shs 10,000 per month. It is so little that we aggregate it to Shs 120,000 a year. As I speak, the arrears for paying them have accumulated to Shs 9 billion. I am talking about arrears of two years ago.

For this Financial Year 2023/2024, honourable colleagues, we have not provided for payment of honoraria and ex-gratia of our councillors because it was treated as an unfunded priority by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. We need Shs 48 billion. They are there. We keep them waiting for this. I hope the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development will confirm through you, Prime Minister, that this money will come in the next supplementary budget.

Should the supplementary budget be presented without the payment for councillors, my appeal to Parliament is to put a question on that request.

I would like to thank the committee. I totally agree with what they have presented here. As a sector, we shall implement, take action and present a report on actions taken, to Parliament. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. There is a motion.

7.28

MR IDDI ISABIRYE (NRM, Bunya County South, Mayuge): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move under Rule 59(1)(c) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament for a motion to adjourn debate on this report, having heard from the chairperson of the committee and the minister conceding to the recommendations of the report. I move that the debate be adjourned and we adopt the report therein. (*Interjections*)

THE SPEAKER: Seconded? Who is shouting on procedure? Is it seconded? It is seconded by Hon. Silwany, Hon. Kabanda, Hon. Ayoo – honourable members, can you all sit down.

The committee chairperson has presented the report with very good recommendations that would help all of you. Even where they are telling Hon. Kibalya to fundraise for Namwendwa is covered here. You would be able to get money here. The minister has made amendments. He is the one responsible for the ministry.

We are saying that we can talk from here but there is no money. What is going to happen? The minister is going to negotiate and comes up with a supplementary budget for the new cities to be operationalised. You will find constituencies cut out of cities like Omoro also suffering. Such constituencies also need to be supported. You want to continue talking - what is your amendment?

MR SSEGGONA: My amendment is to remove the word, “adjourning” to “terminating” debate. What was the minister doing?

MR MAGYEZI: Madam Speaker, I fully agree with a Member’s motion. I just want a little amendment that we adopt the report with amendments because I moved some amendments therein.

7.31

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (CENTRAL GOVERNMENT) (Mr Medard Sseggon): I am seconding the motion with the amendments, as proposed by the minister.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Amendment from the Leader of the Opposition.

7.31

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Mathias Mpuuga): Thank you, Madam Speaker. An amendment that the Minister of Local Government moves to give direction and guidance to the districts and cities in the matter relating to the sharing of assets in the immediacy with a circular guiding them.

Part of the conflict is that the local governments are not guided by the minister to the level that some districts think that the property were bought with their local revenue as if they are person to holder yet these are Government assets. I thought that amendment should be moved and the minister should do that in the next 30 days because before we know it, a local government will actually dispose of a public asset under the guise of buying them on their own revenue.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, that amendment is taken. Is it seconded?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Yes.

THE SPEAKER: It is seconded. Yes, honourable minister.

MR MAGYEZI: Thank you for that amendment, Leader of the Opposition. I fully

agree. Just to inform Parliament, we had already scheduled, as a ministry, the month of October. We are having asset negotiations between those districts and the cities. We shall also provide the circular he is talking about.

THE SPEAKER: Provide the circular.

MR MAGYEZI: The challenge has been the Shs 1 billion. Now that it has been approved –

THE SPEAKER: It is not yet approved.

MR MAGYEZI: Just waiting? (*Laughter*)

THE SPEAKER: Yes. Hon. Karim, an amendment?

7.33

MR KARIM MASABA (Independent, Industrial Division, Mbale City): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to make an amendment on the recommendation of the verification of the arrears. I would like us to give it a timeframe. At least, we could state that the Ministry of Finance –

THE SPEAKER: You cannot give a timeframe because we did not budget for that money and we are saying a supplementary will come here. We do not know when it will come to the House. Yes, Hon. Oboth?

7.33

MR JACOB OBOOTH (NRM, West Budama Central County, Tororo): I want to further amend the proposal by the Leader of the Opposition. The negotiation on asset-sharing should also include liabilities.

THE SPEAKER: When you are looking at a balance sheet, it is about assets and liabilities. Yes, Hon. Ekudo?

7.34

MR TOM EKUDO (FDC, Gweri County, Soroti City): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also want to say that let the procedures be followed and guided by the minister because somewhere somehow they are not followed. We need the minister’s attention –

THE SPEAKER: Is that an amendment?

MR EKUDO: It is. Thank you. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: That is not an amendment. Yes, Hon. Aogon.

7.34

MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi): Madam Speaker, my issue is on the matter of recruitment. Now that there is a ban, I recommend that the Government lifts that ban with an indicated date.

THE SPEAKER: It is in the recommendation. You cannot lift the ban when you do not have the money.

MR AOGON: The date should be there.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Kaaya.

7.35

MS CHRISTINE KAAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The local governments have been directed not to conflict with the management of the assets –

THE SPEAKER: Assets and liabilities.

MS KAAYA: Where land and buildings were given by institutions, especially the Buganda as an institution, the leaders of town councils and the new establishments are proposing to sell them. So, I propose that we organise them and advise them that they do not to sell these assets.

THE SPEAKER: That is in the circular that the minister is supposed to issue.

MS KAAYA: Madam Speaker, the circular was talking about the publicly acquired property. However, this was owned by individuals and organisations.

THE SPEAKER: It is about the property. Yes, Hon. Taaka.

7.36

MS AGNES TAAKA (NRM, Woman Representative, Bugiri): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The amendment I would like to suggest is about the local councils that were curved out of the town councils which were new. Many of the councillors have complained about their administration and management. So, I request for their inclusion as beneficiaries of ex gratia. They should also be empowered to do their work like getting stamps and whatever is required for them to work.

THE SPEAKER: Chair, who is the ex gratia for?

MS TAAKA: I do not know whether it is ex gratia but, it is money given to local councillors.

MR MAPENDUZI: Madam Speaker, every councillor at the local council three level is entitled to ex gratia.

THE SPEAKER: If they are councillors then they are automatically entitled. Hon. Ojok.

MS TAAKA: Madam Speaker, there are local councils that were created in the new town councils.

THE SPEAKER: Are they not councillors? They automatically benefit.

7.37

MR ANDREW OJOK (NRM, Omoro County, Omoro): Thank you, Madam Speaker. My amendment is in line with terms of reference three and five, where I request that we include districts beyond – for example, Gulu District and City were mentioned - how about districts beyond those where the city was created.

I can give you an example of Omoro District. There is an entire subcounty headquarter that is in Gulu City. Koro Subcounty needs Shs 740 million. Can we include that in the amendment that the districts which are affected beyond those two, which they have mentioned? Thank you.

MR MAPENDUZI: Madam Speaker, what the honourable member is raising is true. We interacted with the leadership of Omoro, and it is part of the Shs 5 billion the minister is requesting, for the subcounties.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Atima.

7.38

MR JACKSON ATIMA: (NRM, Arua Central Division, Arua City): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I propose the amendment that all the officials who have attempted to sell or have already sold the assets be arrested, prosecuted and the assets repossessed by the local government. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kibalya?

7.39

MR MAURICE KIBALYA (NRM, Bugabula County South, Kamuli): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I realised that the minister – even when the Leader of the Opposition was –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members for Soroti, leave my minister.

MR KIBALYA: While making their amendment, the minister and the Leader of the Opposition concentrated so much on districts and cities, yet these are newly created administrative units. There is a worry that when the minister brings the budget, they may forget the small units that are down.

Therefore, I move an amendment that the minister uses the words “newly created administrative units” instead of “cities” and “districts” to cater for even the small ones – *(Interjections)* – those are the new ones.

THE SPEAKER: Those are the local units.

MR KIBALYA: Secondly, as it was pointed out that the new subcounties have nowhere to sit, I propose an amendment that, in the meantime, since they have nowhere to sit, they should sit where they were before as they wait for facilitation that will come to create

them *-(Interjections)-* but they are not sitting anywhere.

THE SPEAKER: Has anybody reported that they do not have where to sit?

MR MAGYEZI: Madam Speaker, our policy is that when you create a town council, it takes over the headquarters of the mother subcounty and the mother subcounty relocates. You cannot say that they stay together, you will get a problem. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Onzima then Hon. Twalla.

7.41

MR GODFREY ONZIMA (NRM, Aringa North County, Yumbe): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I had an issue earlier but, let me start from where the minister ended.

He said that when a town council is created it takes over the subcounty. That is not always the case. There are some town councils which were created in a developing urban centre where there was no subcounty headquarters *-(Interjections)* - yes, they are there. Those will require allocations.

Secondly, we were debating the issue of cities but the issue of town councils and the lower – *(Interruption)*

MR SILWANY: Madam Speaker, I rise on a procedural matter. A substantive motion was moved by Hon. Iddi Isabirye, seconded by Hon. Sseggona, and accepted by the House and the honourable minister with amendments. Is it procedurally right for the honourable members to continue debating when there is a motion that has been passed, pending your decision?

THE SPEAKER: They are just making amendments.

MR ONZIMA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My amendment is to do with regulations –

THE SPEAKER: If I have not put a question on what you have raised, your amendment is null and void.

MR ONZIMA: From the committee report, it was observed that many of the challenges faced by these cities are a result of a lack of regulations to manage them.

Some time back, the Ministry of Local Government had brought regulations which were referred to the Committee on Public Service and Local Government. When they were scrutinised and brought to the Floor of Parliament, there were a number of loopholes. The ministry was asked to withdraw them and come back with new regulations. However, they have not been brought back up to now. Could they be part of the amendment?

THE SPEAKER: What is the amendment?

MR ONZIMA: The amendment is that there is a need for regulations of these cities to ensure their effective management.

THE SPEAKER: Operationalisation. Yes, Hon. Twalla.

7.34

MR FADIL TWALLA (NRM, Tingey County, Kapchorwa): Thank you, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Twalla is speaking.

MR TWALLA: Honourable minister, first sit down, the Floor is mine. *(Laughter)*

I would like to move an amendment – most public land in local governments is exposed to land grabbers. I would like to move an amendment that they evict and arrest those who have encroached on public land in local governments. We have an issue in Kapchorwa where our field has been encroached on.

So, for that case you need to consider these gold medals because that is where they always train and do a lot. The field has been completely tempered with. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: You need to look at all the land belonging to the Government and whichever has been taken, investigate on it and we see how we can repossess the land as Government.

7.45

MR BASIL BATARINGAYA (NRM, Kashari North County, Mbarara): Thank You, Madam Speaker. I recommend an amendment that before the assets are equitably shared, we provide funds to the Chief Government Valuer for the valuation of these assets. Secondly, express support to the local governments that were created after the town councils -

THE SPEAKER: Once you say that you need to determine the value of the assets, it is implied that the Government valuer has to do it and within the budget that will be provided. You do not have to put it -

MR BATARINGAYA: Lastly, to these local governments, it is like we have provided Shs 1 billion for the districts that are moving from towns. The subcounties which have moved from their headquarters under trees should be provided express money; say Shs 300, Shs 500 million to develop. Thank you.

7.46

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the committee for their report. The amendment that I want to make is that it is the Minister of Lands that appoints the district land boards and we have heard how undisciplined the district land boards are; performing tasks that are not theirs and trying to –

THE SPEAKER: The Ministry of Lands does not appoint. The list comes from the executive committee of the district.

MS OPENDI: Yes, they are approved by the executive and submitted to the ministry.

THE SPEAKER: There is a difference between “appointing” and “approval”.

MS OPENDI: I am stating so because I was Minister of State for Lands and we used to appoint the land boards.

THE SPEAKER: I think that is why the Ministry of Lands failed.

MS OPENDI: No, The Land Act has not been amended. That is what is in the law. So, the amendment that I want to make is that these members of the land board should immediately be relieved of their duties or suspended so that they do not continue transacting and causing -

The SPEAKER: Of where?

MS OPENDI: Of the districts that were mentioned by the chairperson of the committee in his report.

THE SPEAKER: First of all, it is not the Minister of Lands that appoints the district land board. It is the executive of the district and then approved by the ministry.

MR MAGYEZI: Clarification, Madam Speaker, the district land board members are proposed and recommended by the District Executive Committee (DEC) to council for approval.

Once done, they are sent to the Minister of Lands for scrutiny; but the approval is by the council. It is the same as the district service commission.

The DEC will take the names to the council. Once the council has agreed, these names have to be submitted to the public service commission for approval, but the final approval rests with the council. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, you have heard the amendments from LOP, hon. Oboth -

MR OKUPA: Madam Speaker, now if we are to provide the money - I know that there is a difference in topography across the country - is it possible for us to standardise the sub county headquarters, like we used to have? Such that if I came to your place, I know this is a subcounty headquarters, a town council headquarters. It is very important for us to standardise. So, can you take that into consideration? It is not an amendment, but it is just information to use as much as possible. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Public Service and Local Government on the functionality and the service delivery of the local governments, specifically the 10 cities and the parent districts from which they were carved from, be considered by this House with amendments.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Motion adopted

THE SPEAKER: For accountability, I want the chairpersons to check with Mr Kasirye on accountability and transparency; check on how much your committee has spent because I have got complaints from chairpersons, that our money has been used. So I want you to check and correct the record.

The business that we have transacted from 7th of June to 6th of September:

1. We have had 27 sittings;
2. We have administered one oath;
3. We have passed 11 Bills;
4. One Bill was withdrawn;
5. We have handled one petition;
6. We have nine resolutions adopted;
7. We have authorised borrowing of two loans;
8. You have granted leave to four Private Members;
9. We have paid two tributes; and other resolutions are three;
10. Reports that have been adopted are 14; and other documents adopted are two;
11. Questions responded to by the Prime Minister are 52;

12. Urgent questions responded to are 47;
13. Statements on Government Business for the proceeding week are four;
14. Ministerial statements are 11;
15. Statements by the Leader of the Opposition are two. That is what we have transacted from June to date.

Honourable members, I thank You for what you are doing for your country and I want to thank the ministers who have also stayed today up to this time.

We do not take this for granted, we always thank you and I wish you a fruitful recess and Members, this recess is for you to bond with your constituents. This recess is for you to monitor Government programmes; for you to be able to work for your way back to Parliament and we wish you well as the leadership of the House - and we will always be available in case there is anything.

Honourable members, I now adjourn the House *sine die*.

(The House rose at 7.53 p.m. and adjourned sine die.)