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**Wednesday, 24 July 2019**

*Parliament met at 2.22 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.*

PRAYERS

*(The Speaker, Ms Rebecca Kadaga, in the Chair.)*

*The House was called to order.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I welcome you to this afternoon sitting. I have one small issue to communicate. This is to bring to the House a complaint of the people from Buyende who, since they suffered a catastrophe, the cement and the iron sheets which they were promised have never arrived. They are still sleeping in polythene-paper make-shifts and they are not in their homes. It is now several months since Government promised to support them.

Therefore, I hope the Prime Minister and the Minister, Office of the Prime Minister (Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees) will move quickly to handle that situation.

There are two matters of national importance. Let us start with hon. Nshaija.

2.25

**MS DOROTHY NSHAIJA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kamwenge):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance. In my district, we have a catastrophe of Elephantiasis, which has affecting our people since 2012. I have been reporting this matter on the Floor of Parliament since that time. I also wrote so many letters to the Ministry of Health and to NGOs.

However, we have not been given any attention yet the number of the people infected with this disease has increased from 56 to 273 and 12 people have so far died. The Government has not given us a positive response and I do not know why.

As a Member of Parliament, I was in the field last week and the situation is very alarming. Those who saw the photos I shared on the *WhatsApp* group for the members of Parliament can see how alarming the situation is. I request the Government to give us a positive response.

Madam Speaker, the disease is so intense that young girls and boys aged 13 are being infected. Their legs are swelling and its symptoms have changed from what they used to be. At first, the disease would affect the legs and the feet making them swell to the extent that the patient would not be able to wear shoes. Now, it has changed how it affects patients.

Some of the patients have had their private parts affected; their private parts are swollen. Some of them cannot urinate or move. They are bleeding. Regrettably, there is no medicine. We reported this matter several times to the Ministry of Health. I do not know why they have not responded positively yet people are dying.

Therefore, our prayer is that Government gives them special attention and the people be given protective gears. This is because they are telling us that from the research carried out in 2012, the disease comes from the volcanic soils. The people of Kamwenge, especially the ones of Busiriba Sub-county depend on agriculture. They have to till the land yet the more they stay in the soil, the more chances of being infected.

We need the Government to give them protective gear and send more researchers to carry out a study because if the disease was affecting the –*(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** The Minister of Health is not here but we direct the Minister of Health to immediately send the team to - what is the name of the sub-county?

**MS NSHAIJA:** Madam Speaker, it is Busiriba Sub-county in Kamwenge District. However, since the district has been split into two, Kitagwenda District also has a similar problem in the sub-counties of Ntara and Buhanda.

**THE SPEAKER**: The Ministry of Health is directed to go to Kamwenge and Kitagwenda to establish the causes of the incidences of Elephantiasis and its impact on the population and report to this House next Wednesday. This is urgent because the disease is affecting the lives of the population.

2.29

**MS BETTY NAMBOOZE (DP, Mukono Municipality, Mukono):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance regarding the staff crisis in Kampala Capital City Authority. It shall be recalled that the Executive Director of Kampala Capital City Authority resigned after her deputy had resigned earlier on in 2016. Also important to note is the fact that the Executive Director, all the directors and their deputies of the different directorates are appointed by the President.

The Director for the engineering department, Mr Kitaka, is now the Acting Executive Director. The Director for Education also resigned. Basically, Madam Speaker, let it be known that apart from the Directorate of Audit, all the other directors at KCCA have resigned together with their deputies. It is difficult to know why these officers are resigning because the KCCA offers high paying jobs and so, one would not expect people to leave them.

Secondly, when it comes to the issue of other members of staff, KCCA employs 700 workers on contract of four months. After every four months, a person’s contract is renewed yet the Ministry of Public Service recruited, appointed and sent people to KCCA to take over these jobs but they were not deployed.

The members of staff that were with the KCC took us to court and won the case. They were awarded Shs 500 billion in compensation. Very soon, even this group that was sent by the Ministry of Public Service to be deployed and they were not will also go to court and we shall lose more money; yet, it is not tenable that a city like Kampala would have staff running on a four-month contract that is renewable without directors.

Under section 17 of the Kampala Capital City Authority Act, the directors and their deputies are supposed to be appointed by the President. Most probably, His Excellency, the President needs to be reminded about these vacancies. I do not know what the Minister for Kampala Capital City Authority, is doing.

In the alternative, if the President is overwhelmed with the extra work, it would – (*Member timed out.*)

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the Minister for Kampala Capital City Authority is required to come and brief the House and the country on the staffing situation at KCCA, in particular the situation that relates to the directors of the different directorates in the KCCA. She should come on Thursday next week.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE TEDIOUS AND CUMBERSOME PROCESS OF REPLACEMENT OF NATIONAL IDENTITY CARDS (IDs)

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, you had begun responding. Therefore, you should continue.

3.23

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Mr Kania Obiga):** Madam Speaker, I do not know whether I should start at the beginning or I proceed from where I stopped yesterday.

**THE SPEAKER:** Just proceed from where you stopped.

**MR OBIGA:** Most obliged. For those of you who can document, it is on your iPads. It is on Page 4 *-(Interjection)–* no, I think that one was corrected, please. We are now on Page 4 of this document under the item of registration of learners and we are on the third paragraph where we said that;

A total number of 36,822 schools; government, private licensed and unlicensed turned up to pick registration forms against the 28,584 schools which were targeted at the planning stage of the project. That is the number of schools and institutions that came out to pick registration forms.

Learners from 21,774 schools, which was 76 per cent of the originally targeted number of schools but 59 per cent of the total schools that had registered to pick enrolment forms, were registered. It was estimated that about 2 million learners remained unregistered in different schools in that project.

At the close of the exercise, 9.6 million learners registered were uniquely identifiable; 7 million were assigned a National Identification Number (NIN), 300,000 cards were printed for learners aged l6 years and above and 2.3 million learners were given temporary identification numbers. These temporary numbers were given because they included foreigners, refugees and those pending clearance of their supporting documents. When we went to the schools, we registered everybody.

Learners’ data was sorted per school per district and has been availed at the respective NIRA district offices for collection by head teachers. This data is being distributed to schools working with district leaders in all districts so that it reaches each of the schools where these children were at the time of their registration. The schools are encouraged to transmit the NINs to the parents and learners through report cards or any other means available to the schools.

In addition, there has been a redesign of the NIRA user code to provide NINs to learners and their parents through MTN and Airtel telecommunications so that the schools and learners can access these numbers directly on that code, which we have given them.

Subsequently, NIRA rolled out registration of persons of zero plus years, where learners who missed the registration exercise at schools have been encouraged to register both at NIRA district offices and during outreach programmes like the recently concluded three month sub-county based registration in the whole country.

Madam Speaker, there is data and a table there that I will skip but it shows the current statistics of registered learners as per 15 July 2019. Members can refer to it; it includes category of learners of registrar, those above 16 years, rectified applications for refugees and foreigners etc.

I will go to item No.30. The data processing and ID production and this is where most of the delays occur.

Madam Speaker, the National Information System embeds elaborate processes and controls to ensure that persons are uniquely identified, that the information captured in the system complies with International Civil Aviation Authority standards and that checks are made to ensure applicants are verified using the four eyes principle.

The system also controls duplication of identity through the use of three identification systems which include;

1. Facial Recognition System
2. Automatic Fingerprint Identification System and,
3. Textual Data Check.

Using the above systems, every new application received is checked against the existing persons in the database to ensure that there is no duplication before a NIN is assigned. Yesterday and elsewhere, I had said that NIN is the National Identification Number which once given to you, it remains yours for life and thereafter. It will not be assigned to anybody else. Even when you die, it will not be reassigned to anybody. Life will continue without your NIN.

The system further checks applicants against existing relatives in the database in order to create a family tree. If you look at that application form, it refers to your parents and other relatives, wives and so forth. Therefore, there is need to build a family tree.

The data processing and production stages include the following:

1. Data input into the Central System
2. Automatic identification
3. Image enhancement - enhancing and approval of images/picture
4. Manual identification
5. Approval manual - approving replacement applications and
6. Citizenship verification - verifying support documents to confirm citizenship and approval.
7. Finally, the ID Production; once it is printed, you need quality control, batch them and scan the cards produced and then prepare the cards from quality control for dispatch to the centres where people pick them.

On average, a data processing officer handles 400 records per day while at production quality control and preparing IDs for dispatch, an officer handles an average of 600 records per day. Therefore, at production, we handle 400 cards but at dispatch, we are able to dispatch more; 600 per day per person handling them. This is shown in the table below; the number of applications at each of the stages, the current number of staff allocated and the daily output.

I would like to particularly invite colleagues to look at the number of staff allocated to each of the processes in order to show that the number of persons we assign is significantly low because the numbers of staff we have in NIRA for this particular process are few.

For example, image enhancement was two people; this means that they can handle 800 applications in a day. However, yesterday, I told you that we are now dealing with 11,000 applications a day. That therefore means that there is need to recruit more. However, as I will show you later, this has budgetary and resource implications.

As indicated above, there is serious backlog which affects the turnaround time since the system queues all the applications and cases and uses a first come first serve basis. Further delays are caused by the manual transmission of data from the district offices to headquarters, as I had stated earlier.

Concerns relating specifically to the replacement of IDs

Madam Speaker, NIRA has faced unprecedented demand for replacement of lost cards, far more than it had initially anticipated. Since inception of the replacement module, 124,381 applications for replacement of lost cards have been received at the central server. These are at different levels of processing.

Initially, the replacement of National Identification cards was done centrally at the headquarters. However, in March 2018, replacements were decentralised to the other NIRA offices and registration centres. Currently, replacement of National Identification cards is done at all the registration centres although the data processing and IDs production has to be done at a centralised place at Kololo.

The role of the district offices in this respect includes:

1. Providing the forms for ID replacement to the applicants;
2. Financial verification of the payment and receipts, which have been made – because as I told you, replacements are not free; one has to pay Shs 50,000 for replacing a lost ID;
3. Capturing the applicants’ information on the ID system; and
4. Preparing the data for onward transmission to NIRA Head Office in Kampala.

The status of replacement in district offices per region, as of 30 June 2019, is attached as *Appendix 2*. I will not go into detail; I kindly ask Members to refer to it. It indicates that we have a significant number of cards, which are pending. For example, the central region has 100,000 cards pending replacement. Mid-West - that is places like Buliisa, Kiboga and Ntoroko and so on have 4,726, among others.

The key challenge - and which is one of the issues causing the most delays - is that some persons got their IDs during the mass issuance exercise in 2015 without completing the process as required on the system. Here, I am referring to the fact that they did not append their thumb prints to confirm issuance at the time.

Once you have been given an ID, you are supposed to have attached your thumbprint on a document, which is transferred back to the central system in Kampala. However, if you did not do that, although you get the card, the data will not have been transmitted because that document for transmission will not be complete.

Therefore, when you lose that kind of card, it will not be easily reprinted because it does not appear in the central system; it will be difficult to look for it in the central server.

When such persons approach NIRA offices to process a replacement or change of particulars, their applications are automatically withheld by the system since their data is still active at the respective districts. Hence, there is need for them to first go back to the respective centre of registration and complete the issuance process of the first IDs before their application for a replacement can be processed. Currently, there are 3,761 applications in that category.

To be able to address the above, NIRA needs to communicate with these persons to come and complete this process. However, NIRA faces some challenges in this regard. Many of these applicants at the time did not provide telephone contacts and some who did, these contacts have since changed and they cannot be reactivated. Remember that people have been changing their SIM cards a number of times. If you got yours about two years ago, most likely your SIM card has changed.

Concerns regarding the mistreatment of applicants by NIRA staff

Madam Speaker, NIRA is committed to providing professional and customer-centred services. Staff interfacing with clients both at headquarters and the districts have been trained in Customer Care Skills to improve their skills in handling customers.

The Authority has investigated the cases of bribery and mistreatment of clients reported to it. In many of the instances, the people involved have been disciplined.

However, some are not staff of NIRA but persons purporting to be. For example, when you go to Kololo, the gates are open. The crowd you see seated in the pavilion are not all necessarily applicants. They will declare themselves at the gate that they have come to process their documents whereas they are conmen who go and con the real applicants. They tell them that the easier way to go is to work through them. This is what NIRA is fighting to reduce the number of those conmen by identifying them.

NIRA is doing that by:

1. Implementing staff uniforms for all client-facing staff;
2. Enforcing wearing of staff identity cards and name tags at all times while on duty;
3. Introducing complaint registers at all district offices and in Kampala itself; and
4. Introducing a toll-free line to enable clients call in.

The Authority also commits to continuous retraining of staff in soft skills in order to reduce such occurrences.

Concerns regarding payment of NIRA district and sub-county staff (Registration Assistants)

Madam Speaker, NIRA endeavours to make timely payments to its entire staff. However, with the registration assistants in the last concluded subcounty exercise, there were some delays caused as a result of setting up the over 2,000 registration assistants on the financial system called Integrated Financial Management System (IFMIS) to enable their payment.

Initially, it was planned to pay them via the e-cash payment platform, that is, the Mobile Money but the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development guided otherwise. Payments were made for the first instalment on 13 February to 20 March 2019.

Successful payments were made to 1,818 registration assistants out of the 1,946 on the first payment schedule. The 128 registration assistants who were not paid for the first payment was a result of wrong bank details submitted, which they were requested to correct.

The Authority also endeavoured to make some payments for the second period from 21 March to 10 May 2019 towards the end of the last financial year. The Authority is committed to ensuring that outstanding payments to staff are given the first call on the release for the first quarter for this financial year. They will probably be paid before the end of August once the processes are completed.

NIRA's plan to resolve the above-mentioned issues:

Short term planned interventions;

In order to improve processing time, the Authority plans short term and medium to long-term measures including:

1. Re-assignment of some staff from less busy registration centres to headquarters to support data processing. NIRA is going to recall people from some centres where activities are low in the short run to the headquarters to increase the number of people who are at Kololo.
2. Employment of temporary staff to handle the backlog. This will be for a short period until the backlog is reduced.
3. Review of the registration and operations processes and procedures with the view of improving efficiency and turnaround times.
4. Contracting courier services for timely delivery of cards and data to and from the service centres. Here, there are a number of courier services including our public transport. However, what we are looking at are those which are secure enough to deliver this without creating another problem of cards getting lost.
5. Enhanced sensitisation of the public to desist from multiple applications because it impacts the first application.
6. Decentralising this service to the district offices with clear guidelines so that a number of the services are done at the district rather than continue to be done at the headquarters.
7. Improve the user platform to use other features to obtain the status of application and the National Identification Number (NIN). For example, the ability to obtain your information using another person linked to you like a parent or child. I told you earlier that we trying to create a family platform. Once that family platform is created a member of that family will be able to give permission through the e-system as to who can access that platform to get the immediate information that they will require at any given time instead of coming to print.

The medium to long term measures include;

1. Connectivity of service centres for immediate online transmission of data to headquarters. This was presented earlier yesterday when we said that one of the two options where we want to do registration online.
2. Review of the existing structure to meet the growing demand.
3. Develop a module on the third-party interface to facilitate agencies without adequate infrastructure to access information via the web portal. The Ministry of Public Service is already doing this one very well. They can access information from the central server of NIRA.
4. Enable online applications with instant notification of biometric match.
5. Upgrade the system to include capture of iris for biometric identification.
6. An in-built notification system so that applicants can be notified of any changes which are required.
7. Web-portal where applicants will be able to check their application progress.

Why replacement of lost IDs is paid at Shs 50,000

Like I said, this is to encourage people to take great personal care of their identity cards, to reduce fraud and recover operational costs, which are created by the loss of the card.

Why do IDs have an expiry date?

Madam Speaker, as we have indicated, some of the features - this is because some of the personal data embedded in the IDs changes with time - your features will change; your picture will not be the same and other things. For example, you may lose your finger where you made the fingerprint. Internationally, it is estimated that 10 years is a reasonable period but the NIN assigned to you remains for the individual in life and after life. Thank you for listening to me, Madam Speaker and honourable members.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. Are there any comments? There are too many. Can we use two minutes? Okay, let us use the usual three minutes.

2.29

**MS JOY ATIM (UPC, Woman Representative, Lira):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister for the report that he has just given to this House. The IDs are a concern to the population.

It is embarrassing; in my district today, they are recruiting boys and girls for prison services. However, if you do not have a national identity card, even if you have the credits that are needed and you are within the age bracket, you are disqualified.

Even if you have the paper that shows that you have applied for the ID but you do not have the actual national identity card, you are disqualified. Majority of the population have been disqualified because of lack of IDs.

Madam Speaker, from the response of the Minister, he has given the data of people who have so far received their IDs and grading from Eastern, North-Eastern, Western, South-Western and the rest of it. However, I do not see my district, Lira. I do not know where he has graded the people of Lira, Oyam, Otuke and the rest.

In his response, he has also not stated how many IDs are pending in offices and have not been distributed. The reason people are making multiple applications is because their IDs might be there but they have not been distributed and therefore they have not accessed them.

To make matters worse, what is happening is that for you to replace your national identity card, it takes four to eight months. This is unacceptable. There are things that need our IDs. However, for the ordinary person down there to replace a national identity card, he or she must travel up to Kololo. It is so tedious and very expensive. You do not even know where to start from and the moment you apply, you must wait for so long.

This is cumbersome, Madam Speaker, and I feel that the Minister- yes, you have told us that there is shortage of manpower. However, if you went to Kololo, you will find all offices full; people seem busy but you do not see the outcome. It is unacceptable.

I feel that as we –*(Member timed out.)*

3.02

**MR ANTHONY AKOL (FDC, Kilak North County, Amuru):** Madam Speaker, my first time to learn about the national identity card was when I visited Rwanda even before I became a Member of Parliament and before the issues started in Uganda. We were told at the border that you risk here because defilement is a serious issue; you have to first ask a girlfriend for a national identity card to know whether she is not within the defilement age.

Now that it has come to Uganda, it is a document that we use even for voting; it is also a very important document that many visitors cannot even access many places in the country.

I listened carefully to the minister but he seemed to be lamenting. I would like to give two situations; there was a day that a lady came to my home at around 4.00 a.m. and I was woken up; I did not know why. The situation was that she was trying to rush to Kololo because she had come to look for a national identity card.

I think this Parliament should, first of all, stop giving services to Ugandans using the national identity card because a big percentage of Ugandans is not registered and it is not their fault.

The ministry should take the registration down to the people other than requesting people to move all the way from their villages to Kampala, when they do not have the resources. How can that happen when at the same time Government is recruiting LDUs and prisons officers with a condition that one must have a national identity card? I think this is unfair to the citizens of Uganda.

Therefore, I request that the ministry comes up with a deadline or a period – whether it is going to be a three-month activity - to make sure all Ugandans are registered and all the services are corrected. They should be corrected and taken back to the people *–(Interruption)*

**MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI:** Madam Speaker, I beg to give information. The minister’s statement falls short of details on figures and I would like to provide some figures, which will shock this Parliament.

The number of people who registered and whose identity cards were not issued due to insufficient documentation are 2 million Ugandans. Two million Ugandans went to register, they were captured by the biometric machine but they were not *–(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Half a minute to complete the point of information.

**MR KIVUMBI:** Two million people were not issued with their IDs. A number of identity cards that were printed and not issued are over two million, which they have.

In heavily populated districts - Wakiso, Kampala, Jinja and Mbale - up to the last two months, there were no operational division offices. The reason they gave was that once they opened a simple office, they were over flooded by numbers.

Madam Speaker, you will be shocked at the amount of money that has been availed to NIRA; it is one of the most heavily resourced institutions. We have given them billions of money to do this IDs project but up to now they are failing far short.

We have been at this issue with the Minister of Internal Affairs in retreats and meetings and so, I wonder why he comes before this Parliament and does not speak the truth. That is the information I would like to give.

3.07

**MR ASUMAN BASALIRWA (JEEMA, Bugiri Municipality, Bugiri):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the statement.

This Parliament enacted a law - the Registration of Persons Act, 2015. Under that law, Government is supposed to establish an adjudication committee. When NIRA takes a decision and a Ugandan is not satisfied with it, he or she is supposed to make an appeal. Unfortunately, that committee is not in place. Therefore, Ugandans are going to these places with all sorts of complaints but they do not have a forum to address those complaints.

Again, under that law, every birth in this country is supposed to be registered. So, the process of issuing a NIN begins at the time of birth. Unfortunately, the minister has not mentioned measures taken to ensure that births are registered, yet it is under the law.

Madam Speaker, Ugandans are also being made to pay for mistakes committed by NIRA. For example, somebody makes an application, gives the right particulars in terms of names but NIRA issues an identity card that has a mistake. When this Ugandan goes back and informs them of the mistake made on his name, NIRA requires them to pay to correct that mistake, yet it was their mistake.

They are also asking people for documents like statutory declarations to clarify on names yet somebody is not going to change a name. The mistake was NIRAs. With all due respect, NIRA cannot ask for a statutory declaration when the mistake was occasioned by them and where there is evidence that your forms were clearly given in correct spelling.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I have also received complaints that certain security agents are confiscating IDs. When our Local Defence Units (LDUS) and other people who do night patrol find these people moving around, one of the things they ask for is the national identity card but they confiscate it.

I do not know whether the ministry or Government has taken any decision to confiscate IDs from Ugandans who have committed crimes or are suspected to have committed crimes. It is causing a lot of worry, especially amongst our young people, who have been asked to get *“ndagamuntu”* across the country.

3.10

**MR EMMANUEL KIGOZI SSEMPALA (DP, Makindye-Ssabagabo Municipality, Wakiso):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to start from where he ended. I would like to confirm to this House that this crime is not only being committed in Jinja by the military police and other state organs, in my constituency, many young men who have been to the police for various reasons, have had their identity cards confiscated and others broken into pieces before they are returned. Therefore, it is a big problem and it looks like it is something that is being orchestrated by the move to deter the young people from voting.

Lastly, I am very worried; the statistics that the minister has given are worrying. He said that he has 9.6 million registered students and of all those, only 300 cards have been printed. The records from the Uganda National Examinations Board indicate that every year, we have a total of about 120,000 students in Advanced Level classes and 300,000 students in senior four.

If one now takes the statistics from about two years ago, they will notice that anybody that was in senior two then is supposed to vote in the next election of 2021. If they have only issued 300 IDs, it means all those students are not going to vote. That is sincerely very worrying in a population that has over 75 per cent of the population consisting of youths in the country. Something must be done, Madam Speaker. Thank you so much.

3.12

**MR KENNETH EITUNGANANE (Independent, Soroti County, Soroti):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for his statement.

This is supposed to be a national programme. Being a national programme, ideally, accessibility should have been made easier for all Ugandans, especially the people who come from upcountry.

On several occasions, I have heard complaints from the constituency. Getting the national identity card is the most challenging thing. When it is ready, it takes a lot of time for people to get the cards. What makes it worse is the issue of replacement and it can only be done in Kampala. Imagine that poor person in the village coming to Kampala; he has to incur costs of transport, accommodation and meals just for a national identity card, yet this is a national programme.

We appropriate money from this House to make it easy for people to access IDs. However, the ministry and NIRA are not reflecting this in the lives of Ugandans. I would like to appeal to the minister, at worst even if the resources are minimal; try to regionalise the process so that somebody from Soroti can at least look for transport to Mbale. Otherwise, the situation is alarming.

Secondly, the issue of information accessibility; you have millions of these cards stored in NIRA and you are not disseminating that information, yet the cards are ready. They should have been sent to the regional centres or to the districts so that people can go and pick them but the cards are here and are being stored. The owners are looking for them and they are not able to access them.

You are making Ugandans miss employment opportunities. Currently, you are recruiting police, LDUs and prison warders but people are losing chances and these are Ugandans, who are desperate. Some of them are not happy because they are missing opportunities due to lack of IDs.

Honourable minister, let us make this a necessity; let us make the exercise easy, simple and accessible for all Ugandans so that Ugandans can realise the benefit of these IDs. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, before hon. Fred Baseke comes, join me in welcoming a delegation of 98 head teachers and an inspector of schools from Lira District. They are represented by hon. Gutomoi Abacacon, hon. Jonathan Odur, hon. Jimmy Akena and hon. Joy Atim. Please stand up. You are welcome. *(Applause)*

Honourable minister, the situation is quite serious about these IDs. When the telecom companies made an announcement that they would switch off telephone lines of peoples who have not registered, one of my children misplaced her identity cards and she wanted her telephone line verified, to date, she has not.

From April, she has been trying to get her national identity card replaced. She is here in my house in Kampala and she has given up. That is how serious it is. What about the person from Nyabushozi?

3.16

**MR FRED BASEKE (Independent, Ntenjeru County South, Kayunga):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the statement.

One of the mandates of NIRA is to create, manage, maintain and operationalise the IDs by assigning the national identification unique numbers. In 2016, I misplaced my national identity card and I applied for a replacement. It took me eight months to get my national identity card replaced.

The minister has told us that the problem of getting replacements is because of insufficient documents. I imagine at the time of getting my national identity card, I even put my thumbprint meaning that all my documents were there. Since I have a unique identification number and I applied for a replacement, all that needs to be done is click somewhere and I get my national identity card replaced.

As a Member of Parliament, it took me eight months; what about the local person in the village? You have talked about the short term measures that you are putting in place; you want staff but you have not put a timeline? At the end of the day, we shall talk but nothing will happen. It would have been good for you to tell us that we are reassigning staff within this timeframe. We are deploying these people from here and this is the timeline. That would have helped Ugandans. Thank you.

3.17

**MS LYDIA CHEKWEL** **(Independent, Woman Representative, Kween):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I would like to start by giving evidence that the business of replacing IDs has been a nightmare. As a leader of the people of Kween, I have hosted very many people and even facilitated them by paying the Shs 50,000 and transport but it has taken very long. To date, they have not received their replacements.

Madam Speaker, like you have said, I have a daughter who was given a national identity card without the thumbprint. She has been going to NIRA since November last year and to date, she has not got the replacement. There is mismanagement and people are not helped. I think the best idea is for us to centralise and issue them at district level.

The issue of the students who registered – lately, the national identity card is the determinant of whatever you benefit from in the country. We have students who have applied for the loan scheme. Under the loan scheme, you have to produce a national identity card. Now, these students are worried and we do not know whether they will be considered.

I would like to use this opportunity - since we are aware of all these delays, let us instruct the loan board to consider these students, if what is missing is only the national identity card -*(Interruption)*

**MR ANGURA:** Thank you very much, colleague, for giving way. Madam Speaker, as we speak, we have a very important exercise that is taking place and that is recruitment of the various forces in the country: police, prisons and the UPDF.

**THE SPEAKER:** That has been said already.

3.20

**MS ROSEMARY NAUWAT (Independent, Woman Representative, Amudat):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for his statement. The minister told us that one of the key issues causing delays is that some persons got their IDs in 2015 without completing the process by appending their thumbprints to confirm issuance.

This is incompetence on the part of NIRA staff. Why would they present such a person to the headquarters when they know very well that the information is incomplete? During the registration in 2015, in Amudat District, many senior citizens both men and women, failed to get the IDs due to the thumbprints. They would come over and again but they would tell them that the machine would not capture their thumbprints. I would like to find out from the minister what mechanisms they have in place to ensure that those whose thumbprints cannot be captured get their IDs.

I would also like to thank the minister for the method they are applying. He has told us that they are using a system where all the applications are taken into consideration basing on the order in which they come, which is good. There are some people who are indisciplined and do not respect others. When they come, they want to be served first even when they came late.

However, I would like to find out what happened to the senior citizens and persons with disabilities. I would like to propose that you have special consideration for them and you should not queue them with the other able bodied Ugandans. I thank you.

3.22

**MS LILLY ADONG (Independent, Woman Representative, Nwoya):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The importance of IDs cannot be over emphasised. It is a necessity and not a choice. Service delivery in this country has been tagged to IDs. Recently, when registering children for schools, parents were required to have their IDs.

I remember one of the parents did not have the identity card and she requested my sister to register the child on her behalf. If you do not have the national identity card you cannot register a child in school or access these services, including inputs from NAADs and that is how serious the issue of the national ID is.

I would like to ask the minister a question; the driving permits, which are not a necessity, have regional centres where they are issued, why can’t you have regional centres for IDs? It is the same people who register people for IDs. They are registering fresh applicants but not reissuing identity cards.

We have staff at the Independent Electoral Commission offices in all districts. For fresh applications, they are registering but not reissuing yet we assume we already have the data? Why do you have to punish Ugandans? Why do you bring something that you cannot manage to punish Ugandans?

Madam Speaker, the burden is being shifted to members of Parliament because they know MPs want their votes. I have almost 100 requests. This morning I had four people asking, “Honourable, my ID got burnt in the house.” The burden is being shifted *–(Interruption.)*

**MR ALERO:** Thank you, colleague, for giving way. Madam Speaker, I have a school in Arua called Nile High School. Recently, they qualified to compete at the Copa *Coca-Cola* football championships in Jinja and the requirement was the national ID. As a result, six of my good players were left out. The minister in charge of education is here – this is very serious because we are sitting on the talent of these children just because they do not have the identity cards. That is the information I wanted to give.

**MS ADONG:** Madam Speaker, I have read that in Mukono, the national IDs are even being used as loan security. That is how serious the issue is. I request the Ministry of Internal Affairs to waive this business of coming to Kampala to check for IDs. Why punish Ugandans? Why bring something that is very important and indispensable but make all people come to Kampala? Do you want them to die *– (Member timed out.)*

3.25

**MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi):** Madam Speaker, I would like to pose this question to the minister. Honourable minister, do you think it is proper for us to go ahead and start naming animals before we have sorted the problems of identity cards? I have heard that the Government intends to name every animal – the cows and goats. You name this one Opolot, the other one Jessica before we have sorted out the problem of IDs?

Madam Speaker, there is a big problem. We jump in as if we know everything. Before we have sorted this one, we have jumped onto the other one. You want to name people’s pets yet traditionally, they had a way of calling them.

We are talking about IDs but there are three documents: the national ID, the driving permit and the passport. It is very cumbersome for somebody to get a replacement for those documents yet the lives of the majority of the youth in this country rotate around these documents.

Madam Speaker, there is a problem with the names they write on the IDs. The incorrect names are because we are allowing people from different tribes to register people of different tribes. A Muganda registers an Itesot and a Karimojong registers an Itesot. Instead of writing my name as “Aogon”, you write “Logon” because you are from Karamoja. This has to be checked. This is not discrimination or tribalism; let the Itesots register the Itesots, the Baganda register the Baganda, the Bagisu register the Bagisu and the Acholi register the Acholi because they know the proper names.

We need to decentralise this system. Our decision as Parliament is for NIRA to take this process back to the people because it is for the people. In Kumi, I expect you to give everything so that my people can access the service locally and not in Kampala. Majority of them get accidents in Kampala because crossing the road is a nightmare for them. Just look at the traffic in Nakawa from where they are supposed to cross the road. They have to call me first, asking, “How do I cross? The cars are very many here.”

Madam Speaker, the teachers have to leave their jobs to come and look for their IDs, several times. The doctors have to leave the hospitals and patients will die because the doctor was trying to chase after his ID. I think this House demands a lot. Of course, honourable minister, you have done a lot but we still demand a lot from you. Please do –*(Member timed out.)*

3.28

**MR ANDREW BARYAYANGA (Independent, Kabale Municipality, Kabale):** Madam Speaker, I would like to tell Members that if you have not lost your ID, do not lose it. I lost mine and it took me six months before I could get a replacement. You will be at NIRA here in Kololo everyday but it is hard to get a replacement. I was there almost every day. I have got it but since I got it I cannot move with it because I have to keep it safe such that I do not lose it again. *(Laughter)*

Madam Speaker, one of the concerns I have is on the expiry date of the national identity card. I wonder how a citizen expires from becoming a citizen. Maybe the wording could have been wrong but I do not believe you should have an expiry date. You should change the wording in that respect.

Secondly, the amount of money invested for this massive registration means that after every 10 years, there will still be massive registration and that means a lot of money is going to be sunk in again; there should be a check.

Also, how does the national identity card rhyme with the other national documents such as the passport and the driving permit? How do you know that the owner of this ID is the owner of this passport? They capture our fingerprints when registering for the IDs; why doesn’t it rhyme with the ones on the passport or the driving permit such that we stop this hide and seek game whereby a lady gets married and because she has adopted the name of the husband, you no longer see her as that very lady but consider her as someone else? There should be something common among these national identification documents in order for us to move on well.

Honourable minister, if you can explain to me about the expiry date and how the ID rhymes with the other documents, I will say I am done. Thank you.

3.31

**MS BEATRICE ANYWAR (Independent, Kitgum Municipality, Kitgum):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. We thank the minister for the effort made to bring this report to the House. The issue of IDs cannot be emphasised enough. Members have already highlighted the problems that Ugandans are facing with the issue of national IDs.

Even widows are failing to claim what is due to them because they do not have national IDs. If one loses a husband but they had not yet received their national ID, it becomes very difficult for them to claim anything. For example, widows of the army officers who cannot go and make any claims; that is how bad it is.

It is also funny that as Ugandans, we are struggling to get the IDs or replace them - I witnessed the exercise being done abroad. It is quite fast for Ugandans who are living abroad to get their IDs. I do not know how long it takes for replacements but I wish the same could apply here. If it is not the same, then it is a big challenge *–(Interruption)*

**MR OKUPA:** Thank you, hon. Beatrice Anywar, I wish the minister could listen. When we complained about this matter - I think there is something wrong because even within Kololo, I bet you can get your identity card replaced within one week.

It happened to me; I went there on Monday and the following Monday, they called me that my identity card was ready. Honourable minister, what is this that makes some people fail to get IDs whereas others can get them within a short time?

**MS ANYWAR:** Thank you, for the information. As a way forward to ease some of these problems, for those IDs which are lying idle, purportedly not picked by Ugandans; they might not even know that their IDs are ready or they are being kept somewhere else where these Ugandans cannot access them.

We advise the minister to get all the details of these IDs which were not picked. Get funds to advertise them in all the newspapers in the country and indicate the regional offices where the IDs can be picked. Let it run in the media especially the newspapers so that our people can know their IDs are lying somewhere.

Lastly, we cannot afford to continue this way with the issue of national IDs; we would like the minister to come to this House with comprehensive details of what it takes his ministry to ensure that all Ugandans shave their IDs and can easily replace them.

If need be we would even sanction a supplementary to enable this exercise come to an end; otherwise if we go in circles like this, we are not going to solve this problem. We have non Ugandans who have national IDs; what are you doing about those people who are holding our national IDs, what effort are you making to ensure that they are removed from our system.

Sooner or later, we shall append the services of this country to national IDs. That is why we have a very huge budget for schools, hospitals because they are being accessed by none Ugandans. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, we gave that ministry Shs 35 billion for that exercise; it was not little money; so, they must tell us why they are not doing well.

3.35

**MR DAVID ABALA (NRM, Ngora County, Ngora):** Thank you, so much, Madam Speaker, an ID is a right to the citizens of this country. The mere fact that the ministry is failing to provide Ugandans with IDs is a way of abusing the rights of Ugandans. Even in the Bible, God commanded Moses to make sure all the tribes of Israel assemble together to register. In Numbers 1:17-19, God commanded Moses and he did it.

I am shocked that the ministry has failed on a noble job that could help Ugandans because they were given Shs 35 billion; it was not free. They have been well facilitated by this House and by the Government of Uganda; why should the minister come and lament before Ugandans? The most important thing is that Ugandans need their IDs. That is the benchmark.

When it comes to recruitment; today there is recruitment for prisons in Soroti. As we talk, five of my young men from my constituency have been chased away because they did not have IDs. It was not in their interest to be chased away but the ministry did not do what it was supposed to have done and that is where we are.

One Rev. Iriso from Koloin - I first led him to NIRA here; he moved from Koloin in Ngora County up to here for more than a year. A parish priest - *(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, join me in welcoming in the distinguished strangers’ gallery, a delegation of 100 Bishops from different African countries. *(Applause)*

They are here to attend a Symposium of the Episcopal Conference of Africa and Madagascar. Welcome to Uganda, welcome to Kampala. Thank you.

3.37

**MR HATWIB KATOTO (NRM, Katerera County, Rubirizi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, I will begin on a humble note. Most of the issues on national IDs are about ICT. We have a whole ministry, with a mere chip like this; you can make one million cards at ago. However, we have a whole ministry lamenting about making cards of 40 million people; so, do we have a ministry for ICT?

I would also like to ask the minister whether storage of finished cards - are they going to cook and eat them, are they beans, are they coffee? You wonder where Uganda is and you stand here in front of Parliament, the Speaker and the whole country is listening to you saying that you are storing finished cards and you are proud of that?

We also maybe need to check the computers they have because when you go aboard, you do not see any traffic officer on the road but should you commit a traffic offence, immediately a message appears on your phone. With that process, crimes are reduced but you are here playing with national IDs and you expect us to entertain such.

I implore the Government - first of all, if these people are incompetent, fire them and bring new people who can work and produce the IDs for Ugandans.

He also mentioned something that got me annoyed; he said that scientifically, my face and other features can change within five years without being burnt with acid or fire. Maybe that can apply to children but not to adults. Therefore, you should consider the fact that a human being cannot change unless there are some other external circumstances.

I do not know whether the minister has researchers who can go and research on how many Ugandans and foreigners have those IDs. This has created many problems that even Nigerians have our national IDs and passports. There are countries where people commit crime but when you visit them, you find that they are Nigerians. If you do not hasten this process of providing national IDs to Ugandans, then you are creating a menace and a catastrophe to Uganda. I beg to I submit.

3.41

**MR JOHNSON MUYANJA (NRM, Mukono County South, Mukono):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the report. However, he talked about 2 million plus students who were registered in schools.

To our surprise, when these students complete their courses, for example if they were registered last year and they have completed senior 4, senior 6 and have changed schools, they do not know where to pick their IDs from.

If the ministry was serious enough, those IDs would have been taken back to those schools where the students were registered. I registered 590 students at my school last year but only three were able to get their identity cards with my effort because they were traveling out of the country. What is this?

Another problem, Madam Speaker, is with us the islanders. If you, the people on the mainland where the means of transport is at least affordable can complain – for example, for one to travel all the way from Koome to Mukono District Headquarters, they mustn’t have less than Shs 60,000 to be safe. That is if they will not stay overnight.

What is happening now is people saying, “Since we have been told that the IDs are going to be used for voting, make arrangements, as our candidate.” As a result, we are spending beyond our normal budgets. Therefore, honourable minister, you should consider those people.

Another issue is that we have so many IDs lying at the district headquarters and the reason is that they should be issued from there. Why shouldn’t they be issued at subcounties? You registered some workers; they should go to the sub counties and issue out those IDs. Let announcements be made so that – in Mukono alone, I saw seven boxes filled with IDs yet the owners of the identity cards are not aware. Even if they were aware, how can somebody come all the way from Kasawo?

Secondly, some of the members of staff are arrogant. The reason the other honourable member was able to get his national identity card was because he was smartly dressed. If someone is shabby, they will look at them and say, “Sit there” and the person will wait for a whole day. Their supervisors should get interested in this. Even corruption – please, help us because IDs are not for a few people; they are for all of us.

3.45

**MS JANE AVUR (NRM, Woman Representative, Pakwach):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the report presented. Most of the services in Uganda now require one to have a national identity card. The most painful thing is for the older persons who are supposed to receive their SAGE monthly payment.

Madam Speaker, one of my sub-counties is 56 kilometres away from Pakwach Town Council. Some of these people have lived all these years without reaching Pakwach. They have lost their IDs but the ministry is telling them to come to Kololo, which is next to impossible. The burden is, therefore, transferred to us the leaders. I have been approached by many elderly women to bring them to Kololo.

They are recruiting the young people into the Local Defence Unit (LDU), prisons and police. A number of our youth not only in Pakwach but all over the country have been left out. I speak with pain because as I speak now, there are youth camped at my home because they do not have IDs. They demand to talk to me. This is unbearable for Ugandans.

Last week, I was somewhere in Nakasero shopping and somebody referred to me as honourable. A lady next to me requested if she could talk to me. She asked, “What is Parliament doing about our fate on the IDs?” She said that they cannot register their phones because they do not have the IDs.

Therefore, for the minister to say that some of the challenges the ministry is facing is because of facial changes is a lie. They are registering adults. Tall as I am, my fingers are no longer changing. My fingerprints cannot change. Probably my face can swell a bit because of some weight gain but my fingerprints cannot change. Therefore, to say they have a challenge because of body changes does not hold water.

Madam Speaker, it is our right, as Ugandans, to be identified as such. The Government should align the different programmes. I do not see why the recruitment exercise should continue when the issuance of the IDs is not aligned with it because many of our people are being left out especially the youth in Pakwach. I am overburdened and that is why I am crying here –*(Laughter).*

3.48

**MS GRACE NAMUKHULA (NRM, Woman Representative, Namisindwa):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I also would like to add my voice to appreciate the statement of the minister. However, I am a Member of the Committee on East African Community Affairs and I also come from the border.

The process of getting a national identity card has been affected by corruption. Many of our neighbours are getting our IDs faster than we do. When we went round as a committee, we were informed that our neighbours come in and get letters from the LCI and they move to Kampala to get the IDs.

As someone who comes from the border, I have evidence that when people come to Kololo to get the IDs, those who have something better in addition to the official Shs 50,000 get their cards in seven days, like the honourable member said – *(Interjections)* – they do and I have evidence. I think more of our neighbours get our IDs because they have better pockets than our nationals. Therefore, I request the minister to intervene in that. Thank you.

3.49

**MR RAPHAEL MAGYEZI (NRM, Igara County West, Bushenyi):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. From our Constitution and all other laws, clearly receiving the national identity card is a right for every Ugandan. It is not a privilege or a favour for any other person; it is an entitlement.

Madam Speaker, we have been to other countries. We visited the United Arabs Emirates with you and you remember we were told that every child that is born is immediately registered and issued a national passport free. If you visit Kololo, you will not believe what you will see; a very ugly sight of hundreds and thousands of Ugandans, day in day out, lining up; very cumbersome and now even costly now.

What are we being told? In his statement, the minister said - and I was surprised he gave this explanation - that they are charging Shs 50,000 for replacement of IDs and he gave three reasons. The first reason is to encourage people to become more serious and take care of their IDs.

It is as if the loss of a national identity card is a result of carelessness or lack of seriousness. Identity cards are lost in accidents, fires and when people’s bags are stolen. Now, imagine somebody who has lost an identity card in an accident and you are saying to him or her, “you must take greater care now and say pay Shs 50,000 for that.” Why are you punishing this Ugandan for a right to which he or she is entitled?

The second one he cited is in order to reduce fraud. Honourable minister, there is more fraud in your ministry than in the person looking for an identity card. I do not see how we say that if you have lost an identity card, you are a fraudster. I do not get the argument there. How much fraud have we reduced by charging people Shs 50,000 for the identity cards?

Then he says, “We do that so as to recover operational costs.” However, NIRA is given money within the National Budget. What are you getting from this poor peasant who is failing to raise Shs 50,000 annually for maintenance and sustenance of the home? Now you want it for an identity card. Madam Speaker, I would like to propose that we take a decision that this Shs 50,000 for replacement of identity cards should be scrapped. It is absolutely not necessary.

Finally, you will make matters worse that people will run away from this exercise. They will think it is for the rich; that it is a punishment to have a national identity card and I do not think that this is raising such revenue that you would like to justify.

Finally, I have a question to the honourable minister through you, Madam Speaker; we have now moved to the point of talking of the East African passports a result of regional integration. What steps have you taken, together with your colleagues in the region, to push for a regional identification document? I thank you, Madam Speaker.

3.54

**MR GEORGE KUMAMA (NRM, Bbaale County, Kayunga):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I must add my voice to express the disappointment in this matter.

Honourable minister, you have raised many issues in your report and we thank you for the report. However, I do not know what the ministry is doing to answer the country’s lamentations. When you come and see what the ministry is doing - when you reach Kololo, you cannot understand what is happening in this country.

Is there any deliberate effort to decentralise these services from Kololo? And we know very well that centralising this service in Kololo is too expensive for Ugandans and promotes corruption and inefficiency. What plans do you have to fight this vice?

This national identification programme should be dressed with a national character. However, as I speak, it is centralised in one place and the entire country is left without this service. I do not know why you cannot send these services to sub-counties where most of our population is. Is it the funding? You have been given Shs 35 billion. What is the problem? Can you tell this Parliament? Is it the money that is unavailable to send these services to our people or it is a deliberate effort to punish Ugandans?

A person takes between 2 to 8 months without accessing an identity card and that denies them access to any services. Sooner or later, you will be asking for identity cards for treatment in hospitals and access to schools. It has actually started. Now this kind of attitude and approach is going to keep our population from accessing these services. Where shall we go, as representatives of these people?

I, therefore, request that you work out a plan to decentralise these services to subcounties or parishes where most of our people are so that they can access services; the widows, the elderly and the young people who cannot come to Kololo looking for an identity card.

Hon. Magyezi has cited that in advanced countries or in other countries, immediately a child is born, they are registered with an identity card. What plans do you have to move in that direction, if we are still rotating around Kololo-Kampala? That is not going to take us any farther. Having all services at Kololo must stop and things should move to the countryside where our people live. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I had to extend time because of the importance of this matter. It should have been one hour but we have gone beyond but I thought that it is important.

3.57

**MR ALEX RUHUNDA (NRM, Fort Portal Municipality, Kabarole):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I look at the minister with sympathy because I cannot believe he is prevailing over a situation that is as nasty as is being described here. It is terrible; this is a total mess. From just the statistics, you can see that there is something terribly wrong with these IDs.

I wonder whether there was any serious thinking done before we started implementing the national identity card policy. Did some people sit in a boardroom and plan seriously for this? By the time you think of moving billions of money -

In the Ninth Parliament, we had this - there is a demon in this national identity project. The corruption that bedevilled this scheme even before it set off was too much. By the time we thought that finally we have overcome the big problem - now, look at what is going on.

I think there is a very big crisis in this country. How can we fail to have a proper execution plan while you have even secured Shs 35 billion to make sure that Ugandans get a service? We have failed to have a competent human capital in place *– (Interjection) -* Shs 35 billion. Annually, we put money into the national identity card project as Parliament.

Can’t those people be remorseful or even feel ashamed that we are getting all this taxpayers’ money and we are making them suffer? I cannot believe this. I feel embarrassed and what i have heard is very embarrassing. Ugandans have now gotten used to this kind of environment where we have to accept this *laisser-faire* attitude; this kind of poor performance where people are not taking their jobs seriously. I cannot believe this.

What we see here, any sane entity cannot afford to stand it. In the private sector, you cannot service even for a day with officers *–(Member timed out.)*

4.01

**MR GEOFFREY MACHO (NRM, Busia Municipality, Busia):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for his submission which I still remain confused about because he did not specify the challenges he is getting. That is why I have stood up.

On the border, we having challenges *–(Interjections)-*­ Madam Speaker, I need your protection.

**THE SPEAKER:** Order, Members!

**MR MACHO:** Thank you. Madam Speaker, as a person born at the border, we have serious challenges. First of all, the distance from the border at Busia to the capital city of Uganda is long. If it were the old regime of President Obote, the fare would buy a plot of land in a place called Namayingo.

When you come to Kololo, you find brokers almost at Hotel Africana. People keep paying bribes from Hotel Africana to where they issue identification cards from.

My area of interest, which is affecting my people at the border, is that some of our mothers were born in Kenya. Our fathers met them when they went to carry out cross-border trade. The condition of getting a national identification card in Uganda is that you must present your mother’s birth certificate. This is affecting very many people at the border –*(Interjections)–* yes, that is one of the conditions being advanced.

In fact, how they treat us at the border is different from the way other people in this country are treated. That is why I would like my colleagues to stand with me. It is easier to go and buy a kilogram of sugar or wheat flour from Lira than buying it from Kenya to Uganda. Therefore, I request that the process of acquiring identification cards at the border should be the same as for people in other parts of Uganda because we are also Ugandans by birth.

In addition, we have a serious challenge of the delay in the replacement of identification cards. That is why I have a piece of advice to the minister and Government. I am happy that I am speaking when the Prime Minister has come in. Otherwise, I was wondering why we could talk about such a very important matter without the presence of the first, second, third and fourth prime ministers - I am happy that at least – *(Member timed out.)*

4.04

**MS DOROTHY NSHAIJA: (NRM, Woman Representative, Kamwenge):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the presentation. I have three or four issues to talk about.

I registered my children at primary school level. Right now, they require birth certificates - not the short ones we used to get from the subcounties but the long ones, which are produced by NIRA. I presented my documents; the delivery birth certificates and immunisation cards among others because I delivered in hospital.

However, when I brought that information to NIRA, they said they could not give me the certificates. I had to go back and check with the hospitals where I delivered my children from.

After 15 years, how do I go to hospital and ask them to verify whether or not I delivered children from there or not yet –*(Interjection)*– I beg to be protected.

**THE SPEAKER:** Order, Members. The issue of identification cards is very serious. Listen to the different issues being raised.

**MS NSHAIJA:** On the document I filled, I was required to indicate the National Identification Number for my husband and myself, which could provide enough evidence that these are our children. However, they still required verification from the hospital.

When I went to the hospital where I delivered my children from they asked, “Who will go to the records after 15 years to look for your file?” My children do not have birth certificates from NIRA because the verification from the hospital proved impossible.

We are talking about the national identification cards but people have more than one; these are in circulation in this country. We do not have the machines that read national identification cards to find out whether they are genuine or not. What is the purpose of having them when, whenever you take them somewhere for verification, they cannot read any information imbedded in there? Not even banks have machines to read the information on the national identification card.

We need to do something to reduce the crime rate in the country. If we are being identified for the good of this country, then we should have enough machines to read what is on the identification cards so that when one is caught from somewhere, the information is captured.

Madam Speaker, I would like to request the minister to give us data. Why are we doing double expenditure yet NIRA has all the data? Why do you go to internal –*(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, not everybody will be able to speak and so, if someone has said something, do not repeat it. Get different points if they are still there.

4.07

**MR STEPHEN KISA (NRM, Luuka South County, Luuka):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I do not know what is lacking in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Is it the materials used for printing identification cards or is there something funny taking place there?

The banks capture one’s data and in a short time, one has an Automated Teller Machine (ATM) card for withdrawing money. I wonder what is in the Ministry of Internal Affairs where identification cards take over six months to be processed.

Recently, there was verification for the elderly who were supposed to get their little money. An argument between the elderly people and those verifying has erupted because many of them do not have the identification cards and so they cannot prove their age. These people expect the old people to move from villages in Luuka to Kampala to do that. This is a very serious disservice.

I think processing identification cards should be made instant if we are to fight criminals and fraud in this country. People have double identification, among other issues, because we do not do that. I think that would be the best for the ministry to ensure that every Ugandan has an identification card to - *(Interruption.)*

**MR ACON:** Thank you, colleague. I would like to give information. On Tuesday, I went to Kololo because my names had not been captured in the right order. On reaching the place, the brokers welcome you from the gate and inside are senior brokers. Look at this kind of corruption in our country. Everything needs money.

Therefore, I request the minister to ensure that they chase all the junior brokers from the gate. Let the senior ones remain inside if Government cannot make things happen. Thank you.

**MR KISA:** My view is that Parliament should direct the ministry to give a timeframe as to when we need the national identification cards processed for every Ugandan. Thank you.

4.10

**MR TERRENCE ACHIA (NRM, Bokora County, Napak):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the minister for the statement presented.

Whereas we are impressed that the system for processing national identification cards is decentralised, and having heard from your, what strategy is the ministry putting in place to overcome this? At one time when I was home, some people came from my constituency and they stayed for quite a long time in my home, looking for their IDs.

One of them told me that I got mine after paying this amount of money in some place not Kololo. How many gazzetted areas are here in Kampala where you can get these IDs? Are you aware of that?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have a bit of a problem because their Lordships are here and they are going to Namugongo. We had a motion on the Order Paper to pay tribute to Pope Paul. If you do not mind, can we suspend for 15 minutes so that we can have that debate and then we conclude our issues. Is that okay, Members? Do not speak much, hon. Lucy; I am giving you just 10 minutes - the three of you.

4.13

**MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate the time given to pay tribute. This is a motion for a Resolution of Parliament to pay tribute to the late St Pope Paul VI and welcome the SECAM Bishops to Uganda. It is moved under rule 55 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament of Uganda. I beg to lay a copy of the same.

*“WHEREAS St Pope Paul VI was the first Pope to visit Africa and Uganda in 1969;*

*AND WHEREAS on 31 July 1969, St Pope Paul VI launched a Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) at St Mary’s Cathedral Rubaga;*

*RECALLING that the 2016 SECAM Assembly bestowed upon Uganda the honour of hosting the 50th Anniversary Celebration of SECAM in 2019;*

*AWARE THAT on 18 October 1964 and with efforts of Bishop Joseph N. Kiwanuka and Bishop Adrian Kivumbi Ddungu of Masaka Diocese, the late St Pope Paul proclaimed the 22 Catholic Uganda Martyrs as Saints;*

*NOTING THAT it was as a result of the declaration by St Pope Paul VI on the 2 August 1969 that his visit to Uganda was in honour of the Uganda Martyrs that 3 June was declared an International Martyrs Day of celebration and commemoration which has brought great honour and international status to Uganda;*

*RECOGNISING that on 1 August 1969, St Pope Paul VI presided over the consecration of 12 catholic bishops in Uganda, which was the largest number of bishops to be consecrated in a single ceremony by the Pope in Africa;*

*APPRECIATING that more than 400 African Bishops have converged in Kampala this July 2019 to celebrate 50 years of SECAM achievements and commemorate the great work and teachings of St Pope Paul VI and the late Archbishop Joseph Kiwanuka;*

*NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by this Parliament that;*

1. *Parliament honours St Pope Paul VI and the late Archbishop Joseph Kiwanuka.*
2. *Parliament takes cognisance of the distinguished service rendered and contribution made by St Pope Paul VI and the late Archbishop Joseph Kiwanuka not only in religious realms but also in the social development of Uganda.*
3. *Parliament urges Government to install monuments of St Pope Paul VI and the late Archbishop Joseph Kiwanuka in commemoration of their works towards the development of Uganda.*
4. *Parliament welcomes all Bishops and dignitaries to the 50th SECAM meeting and wishes them fruitful deliberations.”*

I beg to move, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Is the motion seconded? It is seconded by several Members of the House.

*(Motion seconded.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Give the justification very quickly.

**MS LUCY AKELLO:** Madam Speaker, with us here, Parliament is once again hosting Bishops and like we have said on the 1st August 1969, St. Pope Paul VI was here and talked to the Parliament of Uganda and preached peace.

It is on this ground that we move this motion and ask Members to support the prayers in the motion and welcome the Bishops’ Conference, which is here. They will be here until 29th.

We will be having the final Mass in Namugongo on 28th July and all Members here are welcome to celebrate with the over 400 bishops from Africa and Madagascar. Thank you.

4.18

**MR THOMAS TAYEBWA (NRM, Ruhinda North County, Mitooma):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I stand to support the motion. It is very important because when St Pope Paul VI commemorated all this, it ushered another sense of spirituality in this country. Our Uganda Martyrs ended up becoming icons and saints all over the world.

To crown it all, the golden jubilee of SECAM is the one taking place in Kampala. This is very important. I have been attending prayers at Munyonyo and I am the treasurer and chairperson of the fundraising committee of the national organising committee for SECAM. I would like to appreciate you, Madam Speaker and the Institution of Parliament. When we were stuck, you came in and covered all the transportation. *(Applause)*

I must appreciate Members. When I came fundraising for this occasion, no one told me that they were not catholic or that this was my event. Moslems, non-Christians, very one contributed and Members, allow me to thank you. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker, allow me to take this opportunity to thank the President of this country and the Government. He took it more or less as a personal project to ensure it succeeds. *(Applause)*

I can tell you that the catholic fraternity would not have managed this alone - our bill at Munyonyo and other costs; I know he will be appreciated. It needs to go on record that His Excellency took personal interest in ensuring the golden jubilee of SECAM succeeds and I appreciate that.

Finally, the conference going on helps us as a country and as legislators to know that politics is not just a mere calling. It is a vocation. We must understand that we must make laws that protect the family, life of the unborn child and in consonance with what the Bible says; a man is a man and a woman is a woman and therefore, you can never have a man and a man making a family. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker, we must be very cautious with the loans we move, the statutes and the international declarations we come to approve.

We have very many challenges. Last time, at the UN Convention, they wanted to make a resolution that each Government must have a budget for abortion on demand. We managed to mobilise ourselves and put it in our motion that all African legislators and Christians opposed it; it was blocked. We should be very cautious of the loans we accept and the donor aid we get.

Madam Speaker, if you knew what is going on – what is being done by Marie Stops; the abortion going on in this country called abortion on demand in a country, whereby our motto is, “For God and my country”, you will really feel bad.

Therefore, I would like to thank you again, Members and Madam Speaker, for allowing us to welcome our guests. *Asante Sana*! *(Applause)*

4.22

**MR EMMANUEL KALULE SSENGO (NRM, Gomba East County, Gomba):** Madam Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity. I stand here to support the motion in honour of St Pope Paul VI.

It is not normal in the Catholic Church to have someone proclaimed a saint especially in the modern times. Therefore, when you find that Pope John Paul VI was proclaimed a saint in these modern times, a few years after his death, it means he was a great and very pious Pope.

The significance of the SECAM meeting in Uganda is a reflection of the respect that the whole world has for Uganda as a very pious country. *(Applause)*

When St Pope Paul VI was here, he consecrated 12 Bishops and four of them Ugandans. This was a very rare occasion. That is why we have got to honour him; coming to a country and consecrating 12 Bishops, where four of them were Ugandans is a very rare happening and that is why he deserves the honour that we are asking Parliament to bestow upon him.

Madam Speaker, you will appreciate that when St Pope Paul VI was here, he addressed this Parliament. He appealed to the Government to work for peace and as you will appreciate, no country can be worth the name if it is not peaceful. Due to the peace that this Government has maintained in this country, we are having the SECAM meeting here.

In conclusion, it is my humble appeal that this Parliament honours the late Pope Paul IV. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** I will just have two more contributions from the Leader of the Opposition and – it is not about Catholics but about all the martyrs - I am in trouble!

4.25

**THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Ms Betty Aol):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I would like to say that I was privileged, last year, to witness the canonisation of Pope Paul IV. He is actually not John Paul but St Pope Paul VI. After his canonisation - and I was very happy because we were told that he was the first Pope to visit Uganda and Africa and he did a lot.

I would also like to say that while we pay tribute to that today, Pope Francis is actually celebrating his golden jubilee as a Priest. Even though he is a Pope, he was ordained a Priest. So, Uganda is really privileged.

There are a lot of things that we still have to do in this area of religion. Look at how our children are suffering. Why do they suffer? Is it just because we forget about the values of religion and the values of Christianity or Islam? Indeed, we know that wisdom comes from knowing God. It is not about the knowledge that we get in schools. For example, you will find a very bright person in maths, physics, chemistry and so on but if they are not properly nurtured through the values of knowing God, sometimes, all those can go to waste. Therefore, the fact that we are hosting the Bishops here in Uganda means that our motto, which is, “For God and my country” is greatly honoured.

My dear colleagues, I feel that when we talk about helping our children better – I always say that I did Biology, which is about our lives. We know that our brains develop best at that tender age from the womb to about six years. That period is very critical and so, we need to do something about it.

We always talk about early childhood development but we probably need to come out with a law so that these young people, especially the boys who keep on impregnating girls all over – when do you give love to those children if you impregnate many girls at ago? You should stick to one woman; one woman, one man. Love the gifts that God gives out of that marriage because the best gifts in the world are the children that God gives and so, take care of them.

If you impregnate a girl and leave her, she will be very angry and the child born will also be very angry and will not grow well. Then, later, we will have street children because these children were not nurtured well. Therefore, I thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity and I welcome the Bishops to this Parliament. Thank you very much, for honouring Parliament. I thank you.

4.30

**THE FIRST DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS IN PARLIAMENT (Gen. (Rtd) Moses Ali):** Madam Speaker, I stand on behalf of the Government to convey our warm greetings and welcome the Bishops from all over Africa. The Government is honoured for this visit since very few African countries have had this opportunity. *(Applause)*

All of us are believers and our over 300 bishops are from Africa. In our belief, these are the people nearer to God. *(Applause)* We believe, with their openly or undeclared blessings, Uganda is blessed. To confirm that Uganda is blessed, this was the first pope to come to Uganda in 1969. We had two other visits of popes that followed *– (Interjections) -* but his position is that of a pope.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank God for making it possible for me to have met three popes so far; starting with the pope we are talking about. *(Laughter)*

In 1969, I was in Namugongo protecting the pope. *(Laughter)* I accompanied the former Vice President, Dr Specioza Wandira Kazibwe to Rome, when our two priests from the North were being ordained. We met the late Pope John Paul IV, from Poland. He was the second pope, I met. Two years ago, I was in Vatican with my wife and we met the current pope. I challenge anybody here to have had that opportunity to meet as many popes.

In Cabinet, we discussed this visit extensively and we were all blessed, including His Excellency, the President. We are happy that they are here and staying for all this long. I am sure Uganda is a peaceful country. It is peaceful and we can relate it to the prayers made by the first pope who came here and said that this country should be peaceful. That is why it is peaceful. Much as physically some people must take guard on the road junctions, but that is with his prayers, which many of us may not understand.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the missionaries, who did the work of the popes. These missionaries are the ones who brought religion to this country. In 1877, the Church Missionary Society came in and the following year; 1878 – 1879, the White Fathers who are now based in Nsambya followed.

However, the Muslims came 40 years before that. In 1840, the Muslims had already come here. Missionaries, Christians and Muslims have different missions. Although the Muslims came here 40 years before the Christians, they had no impact in terms of religion. The missionaries came purposely to spread the religion, which is new here and that is why we have more Christians in Uganda than Muslims. This is because everybody who came here had a different purpose. Muslims came here for business. Since they must pray five times a day, people wondered, what is this? Where is your God, you are praying to?

Madam Speaker, this country is lucky because of these missionaries who came and made it possible for us to believe in two Gods -*(Interjection)-* I am speaking Oxford English, if you do not understand *– (Laughter)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Members, Order!

**GEN. (RTD) ALI:** Madam Speaker, I am saying that before missionaries came with this new religion, Africans were not short of gods. We had the god of the sun, we have the god of happiness, we have a god for marriage and god for everything - because we were; the ones making them anyway; so we could not run short of gods? However, this God we are talking about is invisible; you cannot see this God, but He sees you. *(Laughter)*

The most important thing these missionaries brought is that we understand each other and respect all religions. I do not know how Uganda would be without the coming of these people. The impact of the prayers by religious leaders, every time they pray - they pray for this country. They pray for the President, for the Speaker and everybody. I think God hears them and that is why we are peaceful. May their visit be a success. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Agnes Taaka, you can conclude.

4.40

**MS AGNES TAAKA (NRM, Woman Representative, Bugiri):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to make my submission after the Rt Hon. Deputy Prime Minister.

I wish to support the motion and acknowledge the contribution of St Pope Paul VI to Uganda. The first step that he took was the canonisation of the Uganda Martyrs, which has remained a landmark for Uganda. It does not only contribute to our religious growth but also to the economic growth.

Right now, Namugongo is a centre of tourism and the place has really developed; it is unbelievable and it has added to the beauty of Uganda. Whoever comes to Uganda and believes in God wants to reach Namugongo to get the blessings of the Uganda Martyrs.

Therefore, I really acknowledge and support the contribution that St Pope Paul VI made to Uganda. I also recognise the decision taken by SECAM for Uganda to host the symposium when they are commemorating their 50th anniversary. It was good for them to remember the origin of SECAM. Thank you for recognising Uganda and coming back home. *(Applause)*

I take the opportunity to welcome you to Uganda, our beautiful country; the pearl of Africa. *(Applause)* Please, take time and move around to see the waters in Busoga, the green in the west *–(Laughter)-* and the hills and the Sipi Falls in the east. You will enjoy our lovely country. Our people are very friendly. We really appreciate and pray that the symposium is a success. Thank you for the opportunity, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I know many Members want to contribute and I do not expect opposition to this motion. However, we have pending work, which we need to conclude and also allow the bishops to go to Namugongo because we called them back so that we could have this motion.

Therefore, I put the question that the question be put.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** I put the question that the motion be adopted.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

*(Motion adopted.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Let me thank the bishops for coming and say that Pope Paul VI opened the door for every pope to come to Uganda. Thank you very much and thank you for the prayers.

Let us have hon. Mungoma but as he comes, honourable minister, there are three recurring themes:

1. The need to remove the centre from Kampala and take it to other regions;

2. In this exercise of the recruitment and others, the requirement to have a national ID should be waived; and

3. To distribute the remaining IDs to the owners. You will address those themes as you conclude.

4.44

**MR ALEX BURUNDO MUNGOMA (NRM, Bulambuli County, Bulambuli):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is unfortunate that I am one of the people suffering as a result of failing to get a national ID. One of my names was misspelt and as a law-abiding citizen, I approached NIRA three months ago to correct my name and at NIRA it was a disaster.

Madam Speaker, this is a very serious issue and we must handle it with a lot of strength so that we help our people. Those people told to go and register with the Uganda Registration Services Bureau. From there, I was told to go to the Uganda Gazette, which takes three months. I took all those documents to them. To my dismay - they asked for my old national ID, which I presented and I thought they were just checking data. However, when they returned it, it had holes punched in. I am going to lay it on the Table. Sometimes they say politicians speak lies, which is not true. My punched ID is here.

Of recent, my driving permit expired and I had to go to where they renew the permits in Kyambogo. They asked me to present my national ID. I showed them the punched ID and they said, “No, this is a forged ID.” I pleaded – a Member of Parliament kneeling before these young girls! They asked me to prove that I was an MP but I had left my Parliament ID at home; I was forced to drive back to Seeta. The poor me came back to present the punched national ID *– (Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Please conclude.

**MR MUNGOMA:** Madam Speaker, I think NIRA has a problem. You recall they recruited young boys to register people for the national IDs. Six months down the road, those young boys have not been paid. Honestly, what is happening with NIRA? Who has bewitched this country? I hope our young boys are going to be paid *–(Interruption.)*

**MS CHEMUTAI:** Thank you, honourable colleague, for giving way. Madam Speaker, I have had the same problem. My national ID was punched and I have not had an ID since March this year. When I went to get my visa card from the bank, they asked for my identity card and I gave them the punched ID and they rejected it.

Yesterday, I went to upgrade my phone from 3GB to 4GB and they asked for a national ID. When I showed them this punched one, they refused. Therefore, we cannot get services because of the punched identity cards. It has now taken five months yet I paid Shs 50,000 just to correct my name. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

4.48

**MR PIUS WAKABI (NRM, Bugahya County, Hoima):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. My concern is about the mode of payment when you lose your national ID. The minister said you pay Shs 50,000 but it is not true. When you lose your ID, you are given a bank slip to pay Shs 50,000 in the bank and another bank slip for Shs 1,000 bank charges. Then you are given another bank slip to pay and the bank again charges you “bank charges” on the Shs 1,000. In the end, you are charged twice. Why can’t they consolidate this amount for one to pay these amounts once?

If the Government is going digital, even the ID registration process should be digitalised. The current process of acquiring the ID is analogue. We have mobile money; why can’t we pay using our mobile phones? Why should Ugandans waste time lining up in the banks to pay Shs 1,000?

Another thing - and this happens in Hoima; I do not know about the other areas – is that they send you to go to Dfcu Bank only to pay the Shs 1,000. Do they have a connection with NIRA? Why not use other banks? Thank you.

4.49

**MR DENIS OBUA (NRM, Ajuri County, Alebtong):** Madam Speaker, I would like to pose two questions to the minister because the challenges hovering over NIRA rotate around two areas. One is the question of connectivity and the other is human resource.

Honourable minister, why is it that to date, despite resource allocation through appropriation by Parliament, when Obua registers in Ajuri, his information is manually and physically carried to the centre?

Secondly, of all the districts of Uganda, how many have been connected to the headquarters as opposed to the analogue system?

On the question of human resource, the issue of corruption is emanating from the fact that the majority of the staff working in NIRA is either volunteers or temporary staff. With all the resources we have allocated, why is it that the permanent staff of NIRA are very few to the extent that these volunteers and temporary staff do not have job security. At the end of the day they must look for financial resources from those who are seeking for services from NIRA.

Those are two areas that you need to handle holistically because NIRA is one of those authorities entrusted with the responsibility of taking care in terms of registration of the citizens of Uganda from birth to some extent until we die.

Honourable members, the greatest prophet in the history of the Bible was Jesus because he was not full of lamentations; he was full of action. When he entered the temple and found people trading, you know what he did. NIRA needs more action than lamentations, thank you.

4.52

**MS CATHELINE NDAMIRA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kabale):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would also like to thank the minister for a job well done. However, are we proceeding well because the debate at hand concerns ministers of ICT but to my surprise, they are nowhere to be seen? Madam Speaker, I will wait for your guidance.

In the process of registration, data for a number of people was not fully captured. I come from Kabale where people work hard with their hands but most of them were not captured. I do not know whether it was due to rough hands but up to now, those officers have never bothered to come back and register those people.

They have their photos but they do not have the IDs because they were not fully captured. I would like to know whether the ministry or the officers at NIRA have a plan for those people who were left out.

I would like to differ from the minister who said that the process takes only Shs 50,000. I lost my ID and when I went with the receipt of Shs 50,000, I found that my name was misspelt; I was forced to pay an extra Shs 50,000 to rectify that error.

We come from hard-to-reach areas so for those people who cannot get enough transport to town and to pay that amount - we have to take charge as Government; that is all I can tell the ministry.

4.55

**MS MILLY MUGENI (NRM, Woman Representative, Butaleja):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the statement and the members for their contributions. All Members of Parliament have had a lot of challenges with the issue of national IDs, especially for our voters.

Although we support the issue of decentralising the distribution or the issuance of national IDs, there are challenges even in the offices at our sub counties and district headquarters. The voters who go to pick national IDs are told that their data is not in the computers and yet we have staff of NIRA who sit in these offices daily. I wonder whether the ministry has staff who are not trained to do this work. The minister should make a follow up to the district level.

Secondly, as Parliament, we have fought so hard to have programmes for our local people; programmes that can deliver our country to the middle-income status, especially the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP) and Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP) but they require our people to have national IDs for registration.

As a Member who sits on the committee of Local Government, I found out that so many groups missed out on registration because so many women and youth lacked national IDs. How shall we deliver our country to middle-income status, which the President is preaching about around the country when our people do not have national IDs? It means that they are going to miss out and we shall only have beneficiaries who are already empowered.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank you because you have been a pillar in fighting for these things, which I am talking about. However, I request you to come out especially on behalf of the women to make sure that Government changes this strategy of national IDs. Otherwise, the women and youth, who cannot fight for themselves in our local communities, are going to miss out on this issue. Thank you.

4.57

**MR LAWRENCE AKUGIZIBWE (NRM, Mwenge County North, Kyenjojo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, the issue of national IDs is more serious than we thought. I went to pick my national ID at the district but my details could not be traced anywhere in the computer yet the ID was ready.

I was sent to Kololo and at Kololo, they sent me back to Kyenjojo and from Kyenjojo, I was told that it is easier in Kololo. It took the entire year to rectify that problem. Recently, I was at Nakulabye Police Post and there was a woman who had been arrested and she had four IDs of four countries and when she was asked where she got the Ugandan National ID, she said that it was given to her by the chairman.

There are so many defects in this national ID process that as Government we need to rectify. They should be accessible and affordable to all Ugandans. For example, if a woman has to travel from the village to the district to pick an ID and spend Shs 20,000 and back that is Shs 40,000.

Why can’t we move them to the subcounties where everybody has access so that these problems will not be there? My prayer is that they should be accessed and afforded by every Ugandan. Thank you, so much.

4.59

**MR TOM AZA (NRM, West Moyo County, Moyo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker and thank you, honourable minister for the report. However, I would like you to clarify on the following;

1. Do you have the statistics of all those who have got IDs in your ministry?

2. Do you have the data and are there no issues of incompetence in the exercise of distribution of IDs - because I possess two IDs *– (Interjections) –* yes, I have two IDs. One has the names Alero Tom Aza with a NIN number and the second one also has the same name: Alero Tom Aza but with a different NIN. The first ID was issued to us in the Ninth Parliament. I would like to find out from the minister whether it has been deactivated or not.

Since then, I have not used it the second one is active because I was able to activate my phone number using its NIN. I would like to request the minister to be serious and have data, enough statistics of those who have the IDs and be able to follow up. Otherwise, we are going to have people with three or four IDS and in the process, one person can vote three or four times in any constituency. This has to be addressed.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity.

5.01

**MR TONNY AYOO (NRM, Kwania County, Kwania):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to inform the minister and NIRA that the debate which is going on in this House points towards their inefficiency and ineffectiveness towards providing IDs to the citizens.

Madam Speaker, the question I would like to put to the minister is whether they have ever sat down, since we started this programme in 2015 and done a review to see how far they have progressed, the challenges which are there and the emerging issues that are being presented in this House.

One glaring concern that I see is that while we talk of going digital in the issuance of the IDs, the whole process is almost analogue. I would like to know whether it is not possible for the ministry to provide the IDs. Just like in banks, one can go to any branch of Centenary Bank and renew their ATM card. Also, one can go to any bank using a visa card and withdraw money. They protect it more seriously because it is money *–(Interruption)*

**MS AMEEDE:** Thank you, for giving way for me to give this information. I would like to inform this House that before the Ministry of Internal Affairs came up with the national identity card project, a lot of studies and benchmarking were done. At the time of the implementation, however, all the members of staff who started up this project were thrown out and new people were recruited by the powers above. I would like the minister to inform this House whether many of these problems are emanating from the irregular recruitments that are distorting the entire public service.

This House should note that many directorates and departments in the general public service work are being distorted. It is not like you would read in the history books but in the 60s, the Uganda Civil Service was applauded as the best in Africa. Thank you.

**MR AYOO:** Thank you. So, we call for a review and total digitalisation so that we are able to electronically process IDs and provide the right service to the people. This is what the ministry must concern itself with. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I know this is very interesting but we have other work to do. I would like to close the debate. Over 30 Members have contributed but I would like the minister to answer the issues that have been raised before we decide on how to move.

5.04

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Mr Kania Obiga):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank you and the Members for the valuable comments and contributions that they have made. They are so many. I do not know whether I should respond to each of them.

**THE SPEAKER:** There are some common themes. For instance, making it possible for the people to go to their regional headquarters rather than come to Kampala; that is a very common complaint. Instead of coming to Kololo, we would like you to give Ugandans the opportunity to operate from their areas.

Then, on the recruitment which is going on, the people who do not have the IDs are being eliminated. We want answers about that.

There are people whose IDs are sitting in offices; what are your strategies to take the cards to them?

**MR OBIGA:** I am grateful for your guidance, Madam Speaker. First of all, as an opening statement, I would like to say that there is no doubt, as a ministry, we recognise the importance of the national identity card at this stage of our operations and development in Uganda; we do.

Secondly, there is no doubt that we are trying our best. There may be mistakes that we are making and there are or there may be actions, which we have taken that we should not. That is why I am grateful for your proposals, which will enrich our actions.

When you read this statement in detail, you will find we have provided answers to some of your comments. On the issue of decentralisation, I have said that in the short run, for those activities, which are backlogged at the headquarters, we will withdraw some staff and process them quickly. By the end of August, we should be able to deal with that backlog. That is what I said in my statement.

In the same period, we are decentralising our activities for the registration. In fact, since March 2019, we have been making the districts active for purposes of continuous registration and replacement of IDs. Shall we be able to reach -?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, did you say March 2019 or 2020?

**MR OBIGA:** It is since March 2018 but it became operational since we started the registration, which we did three months later at the sub-county levels. We are now activating the centres at the district level.

People can now lodge their complaints at the district, process – and that is we said - what are the districts doing? Let me read briefly their roles: providing the forms for the IDs and their replacement, financial verification of the payment receipts which people have made, capturing the applicants’ information on the IDs system and preparing the data for onward transmission to NIRA head office. The data would be transferred to the NIRA head office in Kololo, Kampala for purposes of printing.

At the moment, we are only able to print in Kololo. First, it is because of the security of the document. Secondly, the only printing machine we currently have for printing those hard cards is only at Kololo. I said earlier that in the process of printing every day, we are able to print only 400 cards with the current machine’s capacity. However, if we could print more, we would dispatch more 600 cards to the district. The dispatch rate is more efficient than the printing rate.

Therefore, the bottleneck is not in the dispatch but in the capacity to print and that is what I said –

**THE SPEAKER:** Let him respond first.

**MR OBIGA:** Madam Speaker, I kindly ask Members not to respond to every word I said because my words have to be connected if they are to make meaning. What are we doing? On the page where we have explained the manual transfer of data, we are saying our next move is to connect the entire system, such that we will be registering online in the districts. Online means that when your data is captured there, it will automatically be transmitted to Kololo, unlike the current one where we have to put them on an analogy machine and physically bring them to be processed in Kampala.

Therefore, our next stage is to eliminate that process by making sure that the district centres are connected to Kololo. That will need both time and money. It will also need parliamentary approval and we shall come here for that because we need those machines. The good question is when? Let me go and work out the figures. I will come out here and then we should be able to do that. However, that is not in the short-run. That is a move in the medium-term.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, have you allowed?

**MR KANIA:** I thought you are asking Members to clarify. Thank you very much. Therefore, the process to go back is on. This is not something you can just wish and say, “Today, let it be and it shall be.” It will take time.

In the short-run, the timeframe even for the manual will take us a minimum of a month to make those fully fledged to start people to work. Therefore, we are committed and we do not want our people to go to Kololo. That is our commitment.

Regarding the issue of the money, which was given to NIRA for this project; Shs 35 billion was given specifically for the registration of the learners. Was that money appropriately used or not? Colleagues, you have a committee, which looked at these figures. If you so wish, we can bring them up and the Auditor-General is perusing them. I do not have them right now.

However, the point is Shs 35 billion not $35 billion, sounds big. When you look at that - you would be dealing with 120 plus districts, which are already connected and have got NIRA operational offices. It is a small amount of money.

Additionally, when you go the sub counties, which are about 8000 now and you want to operationalise those, you obviously will have bigger figures. However, we are willing to bring these estimates and figures for you to see the difficulty of doing it immediately. Therefore, it is a gradual process; we will get there.

The issue of the recruitment of our people and some of those who have missed recruitment - I have to check out with the recruitment agencies tonight and find out what they are doing to those people; whether they are disqualifying them or they could be given any other opportunity.

Many of these young people were registered in the schools. When they were given a NIN, it means there is a record in the server in Kampala. That NIN can be printed together with the application data and can be verified as adequate information for somebody who is waiting for the hardcopy document, which hon. Aza mentioned.

However, I will check on that and see. It may not necessarily be that people are disqualified because of that but also other factors, which are attached to it. I will find out and if you want, I can give information tomorrow on that one.

**THE SPEAKER:** We would appreciate because the exercise is countrywide.

**MR KANIA:** The recruitment is an on-going process. The third area on which I would like to comment is the issue of information. I am happy you have drawn our attention to this area that information has been inadequate. Many people are not able to know - even if these cards are available in the districts.

If somebody does not want to give this information to them, it is possible that these cards can be lying there but the people may not know. We will find out the stock of cards, which have not yet been sent to districts and where they are; and make sure that this information goes to the rest of the public and they are able to pick the cards from wherever they are, as long as they are not in - whether they are in Kololo or the district, we will make sure that they are able to pick them.

The other last point I would like to *-(Interjections)-* I am sorry the Speaker has limited my time, I cannot*-(Interjections)-* yes, but what I am saying is useful for you. Thank you very much.

There was an important issue regarding the linkage between the national identity card and all other documents. That is where we are going. Since we are under the same ministry, for example, in the processing of passports, we are minimising the use of those letters from the local councils as long as you have an identity card.

The reason is that the verification of citizenship at the villages also has its own problems. Some of the local councils can be compromised. Although we had insisted that is must be a committee, many times the chairpersons - because they have the stamps, misuse them and that is beyond what the ministry can monitor.

As long as there is a stamp and signatures of the relevant people on that form, we have no other way of establishing whether this person is a citizen or not; other than to say he has been verified as a citizen.

Therefore, that will be our primary document on which we shall rely in order to make sure that we are able to issue passports to Ugandans, and not foreigners. Therefore, *-(Interjections)-* I said my time has been limited by the Speaker. All the issues you have raised are extremely important and I do not want to engage in this.

Have we mentioned our challenges? Yes, we have mentioned the challenges in this document. When you read it in detail, under every issue among the nine issues raised here, we have mentioned the challenges. We have not mentioned all the challenges but we have taken note of those that have been mentioned here. We will welcome other challenges that you think we should consider.

On the issue of those payment - the payment was approved here. We brought the regulations here, gave our reasons as to why we think people should pay Shs 50,000. In our wisdom, together with Parliament, we agreed and it is Shs 50,000 plus the bank charges.

However, I do not see any reason somebody should be given two payslips. I will find out whether that is true or not. Why should somebody be given two separate payslips and incur more bank charges? I do not know. This is information for me to find out.

However, the important reason and what we gave here is what we gave when we appeared here; that if Parliament, in its wisdom, thinks this should not be paid, at an appropriate time, since it was part of the regulations, we can formally discuss it and come out with the proposal.

It is not that everybody must pay. If we find it necessary that people should not pay, which we think will encourage carelessness or that we should put exceptions for someone who has lost a card, then that is a matter that can be discussed and agreed on.

Many suggestions were good and we shall incorporate them. If you agree with me, I would wish to end my comments unless there is something that you think is so important that I should handle it.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, I would like to know whether you would be happy to organise a meeting, maybe in the Conference Hall, so that Members can ask questions concerning this issue of IDs. We do not have enough time here but can you have a workshop where you would come with your team and answer Members’ questions?

**MR KANIA:** Most obliged, Madam Speaker. I would be extremely happy to welcome that. Since this idea has just come up, let me consult and then I will inform the House.

I cannot say it right now. You need to give me time to go and consult with my team. It is an extremely important activity. I said that this is a process in which we are together. It is neither the ministry nor the Government. If it is Government, then it is all of us because we need it.

Madam Speaker, I undertake to do that. I will make consultations and then, we can discuss the timeframe with you before we can inform Parliament about when that can be done.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. Hon. Karungi, under what rule do you rise? Rule 83 is about – you mean on the use of unparliamentarily language?

**MS KARUNGI:** Madam Speaker, it could be Rule 77; it was probably a mistake. Anyhow, the procedural issue I am trying to raise is that I remember that in one of the Parliamentary sessions we have had, we suggested that we should stop making our Government employees permanent but rather have them work on contract. We looked at this as one of the ways that could help Government employees work harder and yield results.

From what we have been talking about today, I realise that some of the reasons NIRA is not doing well could be due to the workers being incompetent and not doing the right thing.

When are we going to look at this and put it in practice since it is important? It will not only affect staff at the Ministry of Internal Affairs but will cut across. Most of our employees are not serious with the work they are supposed to do. I do not know how we are going to handle it. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, that would involve an evaluation of the entire service. It is quite a process. May be, we will get back to the *Hansard* and see what we decided regarding the issue.

**MR OKUPA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Since the Minister of State for Primary Education and Sports and the Minister of State for Internal Affairs are here, two months ago, there was a threat by teachers to go on strike. Later on, because of the issues we kept raising here about teachers missing salaries, I remember reading that the Ministry of Education and Sports asked teachers to register for IDs; otherwise, they would not be on the payroll.

Two head teachers came to me to help them at Kololo. You had given the teachers 70 days. Listening to the Members here, some have taken a year without getting IDs. What is going to happen to those teachers who have not got their cards up to now, when the 70 days have passed? Will they get their salaries?

We should ask the Minister of Education and Sports to extend the time until NIRA is able to give people their IDs within a specified period. Otherwise, that problem will continue. Some teachers have just called me when they heard this debate going on. The two ministries should help the teachers.

**THE SPEAKER:** The Ministry of Education and Sports and the Ministry of Internal Affairs will consult and come back on that specific issue.

Honourable members, there was a question we asked the Minister of Education and Sports yesterday. She said she would clarify today. Please, answer in two minutes.

5.27

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (PRIMARY EDUCATION)(Ms Rosemary Seninde):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Allow me to make a brief presentation on the response to yesterday’s question, which was asked by hon. James Kaberuka. He raised a matter of national importance on the effectiveness of Higher Education Students’ Financing Scheme. You then asked me to clarify on the financing to the Students’ Loan Scheme.

I wish to inform you that the budget of the Students’ Loan Scheme has grown from Shs 27.78 billion, in the Financial Year 2018/2019, to Shs 30.18 billion because of the additional resource of the Shs 2.4 billion that was increased for the financial year we are yet to start.

These funds will cater for a total of 4,908 continuing students and 1,535 first year students, making a total of 6,443 students. The Board had asked for additional resource of Shs 7.5 billion to add to the existing resource in the budget in order to fund 2,000 new cohort of students, hence bringing the total number of students in the first year to 3,000.

However, we were only given additional resource of Shs 2.4 billion in the Financial Year 2019/2020, creating a shortfall of Shs 5.1 billion.

To date, the Board has received a total of 7,000 applications and hopes to receive more 500 from the Diploma applicants and those intending to join Soroti University whose deadline was extended to 31 July 2019.

With the current funding at Shs 30.18 billion, the Board shall only fund 1,535 new students and 4,908 continuing students leaving out a total of 6,000 first year applicants.

According to the Ministry of Education and Sports priority funding, we presented a budget for an additional resource of Shs 7.5 billion but Parliament provided only Shs 2.4 billion, leaving a gap of Shs 5.1 billion.

The purpose of this communication is to appraise Parliament as requested, in the critical demand for an additional resource of Shs 5.1 billion to increase the current number of applicants to be funded to at least 3,000 new students. I beg to inform the House.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, what we wanted to know was whether you would be willing, in view of this shortage, to make a proposal for a supplementary. That is what we wanted to hear. Would your ministry be willing to put there a request for a supplementary?

**MS SENINDE:** Madam Speaker, giving this information to the House indicates that there is need for more resources. For that matter, honourable colleagues, we shall be able to speak to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development on whether it is possible to give us a supplementary.

However, the mere fact that I have presented this to Parliament, Madam Speaker, I think now it is upon Parliament to *–(Interjections)–* what I am saying is to support us in case the ministry comes with that kind of -

**THE SPEAKER:** We would want you to make the request, we cannot support you without your request.

**MS SENINDE:** Madam Speaker, we pledge to request for that additional resource.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES ON THE STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS ON THE OPERATIONS OF THE FISHERIES PROTECTION FORCE (FPF)

**THE SPEAKER:** But the Minister is there. This statement was given, wasn’t it? Are you supposed to give it? So, it is for debate? You know we had asked the committee to stay their debate until we have heard from the minister.

For now, make a quick summary of your report.

5.33

**MS JANET OKORI-MOE (NRM, Woman Representative, Abim):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. This report was presented on the floor of the House in March this year after the committee made a fact-finding visit to Namayingo, Busia, Buvuma and Mayuge districts.

Madam Speaker, you recall that before the debate could ensue on the day the report was presented, Members raised concern as to which legal regime the Fisheries Protection Unit was operating on the water bodies. You then directed the Attorney-General to give his opinion on two issues.

First, was under what law the Fisheries Protection Force (FPF) was established.

The second one was whether the directives issued by H.E the President on the said deployment and establishment of the FPF usurped powers of Parliament under Fisheries Act, Cap 197.

This opinion was later given by the Attorney-General on the 3 April 2019. Madam Speaker, it is now at your discretion to allow debate to take place unless if Members have forgotten since it is a long time since we presented the report. I beg to submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Do you want to give the highlights? Just give highlights.

**MR MAJEGERE:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The procedural issue I am raising is; when the committee did the consultations, it was told that there were stores in Nakasongola and other areas where they keep the impounded vehicles.

Madam Speaker, the committee did not visit those stores. The procedural issue I am raising is- I do not know whether it is okay for us to proceed with the report without the committee visiting those stores in Bugiri, Nakasongola, Masese and in Mayunge. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Has any one said that the stores are not there or whether the vehicles are not there? I think it is common knowledge that the vehicles are there. Honourable members, those trucks have been there for over two years, let us debate and find a solution for the Ugandans. Please give the highlights.

**MS OKORI-MOE:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The committee in its investigations based its findings on the allegations that were given on the floor of the House.

The first was a ban on smoked and sun-dried fish. The community wherever the committee went informed the committee that they were denied that chance of enjoying smoked fish. We confirmed that it was true that the allegation that was made on the Floor was also reflected in our findings.

The other allegation was on extending brutality to Kenyan technical marine and Kenyan fishermen which the committee also found to be true especially in Sigulu islands. The committee was informed that the owners of transport boats that ply the route between Sigulu and Port Victoria in Kenya are threatened and subjected to beatings. Sometimes, the passengers and riders are ordered out of the boats and the boats are left to float on the water.

The other allegation was arbitrary arrest and detention without due process of the law. This was also confirmed and the matter was even made more complicated because of the middlemen that are used by the forces especially an organisation called *afalu*. They are community members who have an association but sometimes, they take sides. That allegation was confirmed to be true.

The allegation of torture and extortion from the people- yes. In all the four districts that the committee visited, members of the community testified that this was very true in the community where the fishing communities live.

These were the four allegations that we based our findings on. The recommendations are on Members’ iPads. I do not think I should again read them one by one. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable chair. I think I had given hon. Okello that you will give the first shot on this issue.

5.39

**MR ANTHONY OKELLO (NRM, Kioga County, Amolatar):** Thank you, Madam Speaker for the privilege. I would like to thank the committee for the good report that they have produced.

I will go to the indiscriminate destruction of boats. I would like to comment that the Fish Act, Cap. 197, 1951, which is the main legislation currently being applied is outdated and not applicable to the current situation. I think Government needs to take this on so that it is amended.

The recommended boat size of 28 inches is too big, too long and too heavy to be rowed by an ore. It can only be moved by an engine. However, above all, universal application of this boat size is unfair to fishermen in other lakes like Kyoga and Lake Kwania which are fairly shallow.

Madam Speaker, for meaningful involvement of fishermen into fishing as an economic activity, I request Government to allow boat size 24 inches on Lake Kyoga and probably on Lake Kwania, given the depths of these water bodies.

Madam Speaker, I have looked at page nine of this report and I would like to draw your attention to the statement made by the Commander of the Fisheries Protection Force (FPF) upon which the committee said that the FPF Operations commander confirmed only death of a one Frederick Omondi.

When the FPF Operations Commander confirmed this death, this should have been the beginning of starting an investigation process against the enforcement team. This is because without fear or favour, the commander confirmed the death of Mr Omondi, as if causing death was one of the terms of reference of that enforcement team.

In this country, Madam Speaker, we have the Prevention and Prohibition of Torture Act of 2012 that was enacted by this august House, which gives effect to Article 24 and 44 (a) of the Constitution to respect of human dignity and protection from inhumane treatment. It also prohibits and prevents any form of torture or cruel or inhumane degrading treatment and provides for crime for torture.

Uganda is a state party to the UN Convention against torture. However, what defeats my understanding is why the enforcement team acts with impunity as if such a law does not exist in this country. In spite of causing death, none of these enforcement teams has ever been brought to book.

The committee has also made us understand that the Fisheries Protection Force has in all cases where they see the matter needs prosecution, brought in court and police.

I would like to state that this is not true; it is not in all cases. They have their own detention centre because in Amolator District, for instance, at Bangladesh Landing Site, there is a detention centre for that enforcement team, where the torture - and this happens without knowledge of police, which is only informed when death occurs.

For example, Lutaya died under the detention of this force. The police was only informed when he died. This is unfortunate and so, it is not true to say that in all cases, they make reference to police and court when such a thing occurs.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries has also stated here that they fund the operation of this team. Here, they are indicating about 300 million per quarter.

Madam Speaker, the current concern of the people of Amolator or Kyoga is the scope of coverage and the ability to monitor the operation at the same time and the even application of the operation with the same effect to all. The concern my people have is that the operation is currently resident in Amolator but it is not evident that this operation is also applicable in other parts of the water body.

People are complaining because if sanity is to be brought to the lake, then, we would like to see a situation where the entire lake is pacified and for how long. Therefore, this is one area where we need clarification.

All the landing sites found in Kyoga have been closed and the water body has gone on holiday. The people would like to know when the water body will be opened for sustainable fishing. We need to know this in good time so that we can organise the necessary logistics to get back to the lake. It has now taken over two months, since the lake was closed from the fishing community but to date, we do not know when we shall be allowed to go back.

As I conclude, I have two issues. One is to thank the committee for the recommendation concerning importation of counterfeit fishing gears. The Ministry of Trade and Cooperatives, especially the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) is mandated to ensure quality and standards.

Therefore, I am appealing to UNBS to take seriously the recommendation of this committee because if monofilament nets are the source of illegal fishing, why do we allow them into the country. They need to take this seriously and make sure that we do not get monofilament nets coming into the country again.

Lastly, I would like to applaud the committee about recommendations to the fisheries subsector. All the agricultural inputs go to farming but the fisheries subsectors, even inputs like good fishing gears and fishing boats are never given to this category.

The committee has recommended here that Government needs to facilitate the fisheries subsector. This is what we want to see. I think this part of the community needs to be supported by Government so as to bring about meaningful fishing. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank you for the opportunity.

**THE SPEAKER:** I do not see the Minister of Works and Transport here but I received a delegation from the islands sometime back who complained about the cost of life jackets. The schools and hospitals are all located across the waters but they said the cost of life jackets was exceedingly high.

5.48

**MS JUSTINE KHAINZA (NRM, Woman Representative, Bududa):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I thank the committee for the report. Some of the issues I want to highlight are: there is need to amend the Fish Act Cap 197 of 1951. We need to amend this Act to streamline it with the international and national changes in the fishing industry or sector.

For instance, the members from Buvuma talked about burning of smoked fish yet the old Act does not come out clearly on how to handle persons who are found with the smoked fish so we need to revise that area.

Secondly, the docket of fisheries needs to have a substantive minister because we have raised so many issues. Colleagues from islands have raised these issues but the sector not having a parent minister seems not to get enough attention. Probably, the appointing authority needs to come out on this so that it helps the ministry monitor and closely supervise some of these issues.

On the issue of standards, the ministry needs to work with Uganda Revenue Authority and Uganda Bureau of Standards to check the quality of fishing nets, boats and all the gear that is used in that area because these are some of the complaints that come up - confiscation of some of the nets, poor quality nets and so much more. They should clearly define what standard nets are; the ones they need on the water.

On page three of the report, the committee points out that when the Fisheries Protection Unit runs out of firewood, they destroy the boats so as to use its wood for firewood. Even somewhere, they talked about housing. This shows that as Government, maybe, we have not taken good care of the police unit. Why would they use the firewood from there? Why did they use boats for firewood?

On page 14, they talked about the Shs 300 million, which is allocated to the unit quarterly. Probably this money is not sufficient and that is why we see the Fisheries Protection Unit engaging in such inhumane acts; destroying people’s boats. That is not good for our communities and that means we are not living harmoniously and so, we need to look into that.

The Fisheries Protection Unit must be given clear guidelines. These are policemen who were just picked and sent to guard Namayingo and Buvuma islands. However, you may have not prescribed what they are supposed to do and how they are supposed to conduct themselves. Do they train them before they are deployed in these islands? We have seen very many issues, which are coming up; like undressing fishermen and parading them before the communities. Don’t you know that we have different cultural values in our communities?

They should at least have meetings with the communities where they are deployed to appreciate the different cultures. Why would they undress men before children and women, as if they are foreigners? They should know and appreciate the different cultures because that is against our tradition. These are some of the issues that I had in the report. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

5.51

**MR DAVID MUTEBI (NRM, Buikwe County South, Buikwe):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. We are debating this report in conjunction with the responses from the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs. By the time, you directed the committee to go and establish the facts behind this operation, we had very many concerns and complaints, most of which have been confirmed by the committee report.

Unfortunately, the response by the minister was punctuated by denials. If we are to have a meaningful way forward, we need to appreciate the problems that have been associated with this operation in order to find an appropriate way forward that can help our people.

The manner in which the operation was conducted was inhumane and unacceptable, much as we all appreciate that we need this operation. We, therefore, have to accept all these shortcomings and the two ministries should be committed to finding lasting solutions to these problems. For instance, when we consider the sizes of boats, the ministry believes that the sizes of boats cannot be used for everything. There has been a study, which was commissioned to establish the appropriate sizes of boats. However, when will this come out?

The law in which UPDF has been operating may not be relevant at this moment. Parliament has been asking the ministry to bring an amendment Bill that can meet the demands of the time. When will that Bill come? Unless we resolve and get these things out of the way, we may not find lasting solutions to this.

Many of our people have been forced to leave the waters and this has added a lot of insecurity within our communities. Cattle keepers and crop farmers have been supported through programmes committed to that. As Parliament, we need to resolve that there should be an affirmative programme, which is committed to assisting our poor fishermen in order for them to acquire the appropriate gears that we believe should be used for the purposes.

If we do not do that, this problem will continue. By the time we brought this on the Floor, we had made a lot of efforts including to the Chief Executive Officer of this country. The only major commitment is that the operation will continue. We need to agree on the methodology of this operation for it to be humane and for people to be treated within the bounds of the law. Otherwise, we may raise all these issues here but there must be commitment to do things in the right manner. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

5.55

**MR RICHARD OTIENO OKOTH** **(NRM, West Budama County North, Tororo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I would like to thank the committee for the good report. It is not in dispute that there has been indiscipline in the lakes. It is also not in dispute that ever since the exercise started, there have been some positive outcomes. In the report, it is stated that some factories are now reopening.

However, whereas we all support the exercise, we need to condemn some negative aspects of this exercise, which we read in the report. The enforcement team needs to appreciate that a boat is the only means of transport available to the people living in the islands. Therefore, it defeats one’s understanding why there should be a deliberate attempt to deny the people who are living in the islands to use the boats as their only means of transport. In the report, we read very disturbing revelation; that “whenever these people run out of firewood, they go to the extent of capturing these boats that are clearly known and marked as those used for merely transporting or enabling people to move from one point to another.”

This is unacceptable. As Parliament, we should not condone this because much as Government is promising to provide free fuel and boats, these have not come. What can the people do in a situation where Government promises have not been realised, Government has not yet delivered the boats and there is no free fuel? How does Government expect people living on the lakes to carry on their daily businesses?

Madam Speaker, I have relatives who live near Luzira. These people cannot visit me because they are no longer allowed to row the boats on the lake. Whenever these people see the boats, they think these are illegal fishermen or people who are engaged in illegal fishing. Therefore, these kinds of activities are disturbing the livelihood of the people living in the islands.

We would like to call upon the Government to protect the population and afford them their basic livelihood, by allowing them to operate their boats as we await the coming of the promised Government boats as we read in the report.

Another disturbing information in this report is that even now, it is like there is a ban on eating fish. Whenever the population is found with smoked fish or eating smoked fish, they are arrested and accused of catching immature fish.

Madam Speaker, we know that the Government is trying to promote aquaculture but you cannot promote aquaculture in the islands. People who live in the islands already have the lakes and water. Therefore, it defeats man’s understanding that Government is criminalising even eating of fish. The islanders are used of smoking fish, before they eat. According to these people, it is an offence for somebody to be found eating or possessing smoked fish. This is an area where the ministry must come out clear and tell Ugandans - We appreciate that you are promoting aquaculture but how are you going to promote it in the islands? *(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** I would like to get a clarification; when did the Government promise to give free boats and fuel?

**MR OKOTH OTHIENO:** Madam Speaker, that is what I have seen in the report here; that the Government promised that they were going to give people free boats and free fuel.

6.00

**MS VERONICA ERAGU (NRM, Kaberamaido County, Kaberamaido):** Madam Speaker, I would like to join the speakers before me by thanking the committee on its report and the conclusions. I would like to talk more about the operations of the Fisheries Protection Unit: the brutality; the arbitrary arrests; the torture and extortion and the vehicles that were taken away from people and have not been seen up to now. I have four sub counties that border Lake Kyoga and I have people whose vehicles have been confiscated since May this year; the vehicles are with the owners.

We thought the whole purpose of this unit was to protect the fish and the lives of our fishermen. However, what we are seeing is the opposite and the committee report confirms it and what has been happening in our constituencies. For example, on one landing site in Amolatar, I had to spend two days ferrying people from Kaberamaido who had been beaten, arrested and they left the landing site without even a mattress. The way they came is the way they went back.

Madam Speaker, it is about the law, fairness, justice and human rights in this country. Torture is not just prohibited but infringes on the non-derogable right and it really means *–(Member timed out.)*

6.03

**MS LOY KATALI (NRM, Woman Representative, Jinja):** Thank you for the opportunity, Madam Speaker. I thank the committee for the detailed report presented. I know Government had good intentions when it deployed officers on these lakes. I have been told that in Rwabitoke at least there is fish in the lake right now.

However, the behaviour of these officers of beating people, burning their houses and killing people brings tears in people’s eyes. Our people are suffering and Government has not come up to help the fishermen, as my colleagues have already said.

When it comes to agriculture and livestock, they normally provide output but when it comes to fisheries, it is “to whom it may concern.” They have no jobs right now because most of their boats were burnt and they lay back to us as they cannot afford fees and food for their children.

We request Government, as the committee says, to come up with an alternative source of income for these people.

It is true the committee has recommended that these officers be deployed on rotational basis. However, Madam Speaker, I would suggest that all those officers be removed from these islands and they deploy new officers on a rotational basis. This is because it seems when they get there, they become the “landlords” and do not work with the local communities. They are untouchable.

Members have talked about the Fish Act and I think we need to repeal that law because it is outdated. It seems this operation has become business to the officers and they are making a lot of money from it.

On 15 March last year, during the Jinja Municipality East by-election, at around 7.00 a.m., the UPDF crossed over to Kisima Island and started beating people for a reason we do not know. We just had calls from the island that: “These guys are here. They came with their boat and they are beating us.” We call on *-(Member timed out.)*

6.06

**MR TONNY AYOO (NRM, Kwania County, Kwania):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. My village in Chawente is just on the shores of Lake Kwania. In this civilised and democratic country, which is governed by the Constitution and the need to protect the fish and fisheries industry, I would like to know from the minister why we are still using the jungle law to mistreat fishermen instead of using that law to handle people who have murdered, stolen Government money or committed all sorts of crime?

This is the question we would like the Government and minister to respond to. If there are laws that govern how people should be treated, why would we prefer to use the jungle law? When you remove a man’s trouser, would you be looking for fish in his trouser?

Madam Speaker, the jungle law has gone to the extent that mere passengers moving from my village to hon. Anthony Okello’s village – we are just opposite the lake – are stopped. Does it mean that to protect the fish people should not even use water transport to cross to the other side? What rules are we using here, honourable minister? Protect the fishing industry but respect the rights of people. Do not use criminality in the process of protecting the fish because you will be violating the laws of this country.

Secondly, this process is tainting the reputation of Uganda People’s Defence Force (UPDF), which is a professional army that we are proud of and respect. However, because we cannot control corruption in the sector, we have brought the army in and they are getting sucked in a very confused situation. We are undermining the integrity and respect that Ugandans have for the UPDF.

We call upon the ministry to have the law and policy to deal with corruption so that you control the fishing industry without affecting the lives of people. You are violating their rights by torturing them. You will continue to torture but they will also continue to run around to see how to survive because this is a question of survival. People along the lakes have got very unreliable rainfall and they only survive on the water. Because of that, the Government must be considerate.

Right now, we have closed the landing sites but I wonder; who is fishing and taking fish to Kenya, yet the landing sites were closed? That means the people are not the problem but the team you are sending and praising as they continue to torture people, are committing the very crime you think the other Ugandans are committing. That is why we now call for order in this process *–(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Ayo, the reason they chased people from the landing sites and burnt their boats was so that they can now do it themselves.

6.09

**MR HENRY KIBALYA (NRM, Bugabula County South, Kamuli):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. At times we get disturbed. Every Ugandan would wish to preserve fish and we must respect whatever law runs in this country. We have always asked ourselves whether these UPDF on water are answerable to someone.

From the time they went on water, how clean are they that we have never heard anybody who did something wrong and has been prosecuted.

For all the crimes that the community has been crying about, we have not heard anybody who did something wrong or maybe killed someone and that they were against the law; and he is being prosecuted.

On several occasions, even in UPDF itself, you hear that this soldier shot this one and has been arrested; he is going to face the court martial.

Why is it that it is only the other side but not this side when it comes to water bodies? Who is supervising the good work that we are praising the UPDF people on water bodies to be doing?

That these are very good people, who are doing everything that is very clean. Every day they confiscate fish but where does it go.

Secondly, in a situation where you go and pick somebody from the House and shoot when everybody is waiting and you say that person was practising illegal fishing - Are we fighting for the wellbeing of this country and Ugandans or there is a given motive that people are trying to champion.

When the UPDF on water bodies do their work, how many times do they hold sensitisation meetings with the communities, to tell them, “This is bad; this is right”.

They sensitise the public but how often do they do so? Every time you see them, you hear; “This was a passenger boat, which was arrested. Some of them drowned in the water and other boats were split into pieces”. All the time, we hear cries *-(Member timed out.)*

**MR MAGYEZI:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I beg the indulgence of the honourable members. I remember that the last time we debated this report, I was here and some of these human rights issues, the boats and so on were mentioned.

However, you suspended the debate that time on a technicality, which in my memory was raised by hon. Mwiru and it was regarding the legality of this force on the lake.

The question was under what mandate were they appointed and operating? There was no answer and I was expecting that the committee had carried out some investigation and sought guidance from the Attorney-General so that we now know how to proceed.

I can see we are going back as if there was no initial debate on the matter. I thought that you would guide us on this. It was the matter that halted the debate that time and I do not seem to hear the answer from the committee or from the Government.

Procedurally, shouldn’t we go back to this key technical issue that halted the debate that time? I seek your guidance.

**THE SPEAKER:** Apparently, on 3rd April, the Deputy Attorney-General came here and gave some kind of opinion on the legal regime. I wasn’t here but I do not know whether Members still recall. Were you satisfied with it?

6.13

**MS JANET OKORI-MOE (NRM, Woman Representative, Abim):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Deputy Attorney-General gave his opinion on Wednesday 3rd April; I was not in the House but I was able to access his statement from the intranet.

Therefore, if you refer to the proceedings of 3rd April, you will get the response of the Attorney-General because he was requested to respond to two issues; one was under what law the Fisheries Protection Forces was established.

He said that the law that was applicable was the Fisheries Act CAP, 192 that regulates the control of fishing, conservation, the purchase, sale, marketing and processing of fish. However, he also pointed out that this law has a lot of gaps which need to be amended by Parliament.

The other thing he responded to was about the directives issued by His Excellency the President on the deployment of the UPDF on water bodies.

He agreed that there was nothing contravening the deployment of the FPF on the water bodies and he quoted Article 99 of the Constitution, which vests executive authority in the President.

He said the President having noticed the deteriorating conditions of the lakes, the fish stocks, the high level of illegal fishing and harvesting of premature fish and cognisant of the limitations and inadequacies in the law.

He directed the establishment of the FPF as a measure to address the situation on the lakes and the landing site.

He said that it was absolutely right because the President may not do it directly but through delegated officers who are the UPDF officers that are deployed in the waters.

He also said that the only solution that could help us address this problem is the amendment of this Act and he informed the House that the draft Bill, Fisheries and Aquaculture Bill is already with the First Parliamentary Counsel that he said is on process, which was his submission.

Otherwise, he said everything happening was okay and he also said, like we found out; from the operations of the UPDF or the Fisheries Protection Unit, four factories that had earlier on closed have been reopened.

However, he also accepts that there are those elements within the unit that could have caused havoc in some of the water bodies and they could be handled by the administration of the UPDF. I beg to submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the query arose because from the debate, it was clear that the UPDF do not report to anybody under the Fish Act - because it has civilian officers who have no control over them. Who controls them? That is what Members want to know. Where do you report?

6.20

**MR ALEX BURUNDO (NRM, Bulambuli County, Bulambuli):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I also take the opportunity to thank the chairperson for presenting the report.

I need to correct the record: Members of Parliament are pointing fingers at me claiming that I am only interested in “*malewa”* which is bamboo shoots. *(Laughter)* Hon. Ouma will attest to the fact that when we went to Bukooli Islands to fundraise for the women groups there, I found out that almost three quarters of the women there were Bagisu. Also when I visited Bunya with hon. Ntende, I got to realise that a whole sub county is composed of Bagisu.

Above all, I am a national Member of Parliament to deliberate for the people of Uganda and not only for Bugisu sub-region.

It is, therefore, very unfortunate that our people on the lakes are being maimed, beaten and killed. I am concerned, as a Member of Parliament, who represents the people of Uganda.

Instead of maiming, beating and killing people, it would be wise to engage the communities through sensitisation about illegal fishing. We should work on changing people’s minds other than beating them. If you continue beating people, they will continue to be hostile. As you have witnessed, the population of Uganda is increasing daily. Those people that live alongside the lakes derive their livelihood from the waters unlike us, the Gishus, who do cultivation. Their major economic activity is fishing.

The only thing we can do is to engage the communities in economic development and livelihood diversification so that their incomes do not rely only on fishing.

Finally, Uganda is not an island. We have neighbours like Kenya and Tanzania that share L. Victoria with us. We need to borrow a leaf from other countries on how they are sustainably –*(Member timed out.)*

6.22

**MR GEORGE OUMA (NRM, Bukooli Island County, Namayingo):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. In 2017, this issue came up. I would like to ask these questions before I submit: today, we are discussing the issue of the islands in this House. Are people of Buvuma, Mayuge and Bukooli safe after this discussion?

Whenever this issue comes up, the following day, brutality becomes the order of the day and they will say, “Those fools” and I can repeat that. When you visited the island, over 300 boats were destroyed after you left. When we discussed the issue in this House, boats were destroyed.

Last week, I was in Kenya for a burial and a Member of Parliament in Kenya said to me, “Your refugees are here. What should we do with them?”

The people who have run away from Sigulu Island are now refugees in Kenya, fishing there. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries even wrote a letter saying they have no problem with smoked fish and everybody has a copy of that letter. However, the enforcers on the water insist those are useless directives.

When the chairperson was there, the officer concerned agreed to the fact that they have local arrangement with the fishermen. What is the local arrangement? The fishermen pay them before they are allowed to fish.

On the issue of killing Omondi and Otieno, the officer agreed but said only one person was killed on the orders of a lady whom they were using called Namubiru.

When these people were there, they said, “Let us ask the army to first go away so that the people can talk freely.” The officer refused and stood to see who was going to talk about them. The people of Lolwe feared *–(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** One additional minute for the Chairperson of the Committee on East African Community Affairs.

**MR OUMA:** The people who talked faced the wrath of the army the next day. Madam Speaker, in the islands, we have special boats for sports. There are two people - Akumu and Abasa who on every 24th December, hold boat sporting activities. These boats do not fish but the officers destroyed them.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries is saying they are double pointed boats and that they were destroyed by mistake. What is the Government going to do with the boats, which they said were destroyed accidentally? Are they going to compensate the owners?

My other question, which my friend had asked, is: where do they report? They said they report to one person who deployed them? If we do not have a chain of command and we can see the RDC being belittled and abused before the public, where are the fishermen? I request this Parliament, with a lot of pain that if the Government has no special programme for the islanders, let these people be withdrawn. Unless there is a special programme like it was in other areas – we should remove them.

Why are rich people being taken with soft gloves? The law of agriculture talks about double, triple and quadruple nets not being allowed but the rich people in the islands are now the ones who –*(Member timed out.)*

6.27

**MR GEOFFREY MACHO (NRM, Busia Municipality, Busia):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the chairperson for her good report. In fact, since I came to Parliament, this is one of the best reports I have ever read.

In this country where I am one of the senior leaders in the position of a Member of Parliament, the UPDF who are deployed on the waters are more powerful than even the Prime Minister. They are more powerful than even the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs and Minister of Internal Affairs. Madam Speaker, they are even more powerful than you because it is in the history and on record that since we started discussing this matter, all the boats that were named Kadaga were destroyed with a lot of heavy words that I will not repeat here because what happened to hon. Cecilia Atim yesterday might happen to me.

That is why as we discuss this report, I do not know where the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs will get the courage to face those soldiers; we have to pray for him. I say so, because, the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries in the Republic of Uganda is in tears because people from four of his villages were evicted, regardless of the fact that he is a minister. Four villages full of NRM voters and I do not know where they went and he does not know where they are. That is why I say they are more powerful than ministers and the Prime Minister.

One of my colleagues called it the jungle law. Leaving alone the jungle law, let us put the political party I belong to that has been in power for 30 years in consideration. It is very difficult to be in the Opposition because I know what happens on the other side. All the actions showing that we are torturing our people according to the report, all the vandalism and confiscation of vehicles are making my ruling Government unpopular. I keep talking about this.

That is why we who are here on the Government side say that we are sitting on fire. Whenever we say this, they think we are joking. We are not joking; do research and survey and you find the statistics of the popularity of our Government now.

Honourable Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs, I do not know where you would go today *-(Member time out.)*

6.31

**MS LOWILA OKETAYOT (NRM, Woman Representative, Pader):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I would like to thank the committee for the elaborate report. The committee in its report indicates improvement in the quantities, sizes of the fish stocks as a result of the operations. They also reported that some of the factories that had closed down have reopened.

However, at the same time, the committee reports of the excesses of the operations of the forces. The entire problem is centred on the issue of the legal framework. Though the Attorney-General in his opinion tried to sugar-coat the legality of the operation of the forces, the whole issue is centred on the legal framework.

The Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs is here but this issue majorly goes to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries because fisheries as a subsector.

Madam Speaker, you might recall that over the years, concerns have been raised, not only once but time and again about the inadequate existence of legal framework as far as the agricultural sector is concerned. I know we have raised it a number of times.

If we look at the State of the Nation Addresses from the Ninth Parliament, the issue of a Bill to amend the Fisheries Act has been appearing. However, the Bill has never seen the light of the day on the Floor of Parliament.

Therefore, if we can update, review and amend the existing law, we will be able to address some of these gaps and challenges. In the meantime *–(Member timed out.)*

6.34

**MR KENNETH LUBOGO (NRM, Bulamogi County, Kaliro):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson of the committee for the report. I would like to make a few comments particularly on the mode of operation of this regulatory process as they call it.

It seems that this sector appears to be operating under different laws; as if they are not operating under the laws of this country. Many people are suffering out there and they cannot get redress.

In Kaliro District, some vehicles were impounded in November last year. The name, which comes very fast in my mind is that of a one Kaviri, whose vehicle was impounded but there are many others. They were driven from Kaliro to Nakasongola side and to-date, these people have had no access to their vehicles.

Somebody asked if they have already been found guilty. If someone feels that these people are guilty, why not subject them to the process of the law? What then happens if these people are found innocent? What is the condition of their vehicles?

Madam Speaker, I notice that there is abuse of the whole process and probably of some people because they have tried to trace their vehicles in vain. I think some people are using other tactics to take or rob people of their property.

Secondly, about the issue of fishing gears, I am very sure that in this country, we do not manufacture fishing nets. These monofilament fishing nets are illegal by law but they come into the country through the due process of import, clearance and taxation and they are on the market.

If I may ask, what is the other use of these nets that somebody may have in mind when they are being cleared and left to come into the country after payment of taxes? Other than fishing, is there anything else that these illegal nets could be intended for in this country?

Therefore, these fishermen are challenged because they say that they move to the shops, ask for different prices from the licensed traders and buy the nets for use. Therefore, why is *–(Member timed out.)*

6.37

**MR DENIS OBUA (NRM, Ajur County, Alebtong):** Madam Speaker, I would like to start by making an analysis on the heading of the subject matter that we are debating. This is a committee report on the operations of the Fisheries Protection Force. Mark the words “…operation and Fisheries Protection Force.”

As Parliament and as a person who underwent some basic military training under the Amuka Militia it is important for us to internalise what these people are doing using the military lenses. When you talk about an operation, in any operation, there is what they call operational orders.

As a Parliament, may we first find out what the particulars of the operational orders issues to the Fisheries Protection Force were? Were they meant to kill the fishermen, to destroy or steal? That we must demand.

In any military operation, the UPDF officers are here and may not speak; an operation is short-lived depending on the nature of the problem. It has a timeframe. Why is it that this operation has gone on and on? *(Applause)*

In any deployment, once any person trained militarily is deployed, the mind-set is operational. For a police officer, it is about law and order. By the name of this force, I am tempted to submit that its primary role and responsibility is to protect nothing but the fish –*(Interjections)* Yes, because it is called the Fisheries Protection Force. This is my literal understanding.

In my opinion, if we do not use some aspect of military lenses combined with the human rights ones in an attempt to protect the fish, we shall be depleting this country in terms of the citizens. Those who have died are now many. From the reports we get from the Members of Parliament –*(Member time out.)*

6.40

**MS FLORENCE NAMAYANJA (DP, Bukoto County East, Masaka):** Thank you, Madam, Speaker. I can see the Minister of Karamoja Affairs smiling because he suspects what I am going to say.

I would like to thank the committee for the recommendations made in this report. The Leader of the Opposition sent us on a fact-finding tour at the landing sites. We went to Kasensero and Lambu. It is unfortunate the report does not mention these sites.

Recently, the Minister for Karamoja Affairs, who is here looking at me, had a *Baraza* at Lambu Landing site. People spoke their hearts out; they were crying. Their homes, property and livelihood are no more. People depended on the lake.

The people wished Government had come out with clear guidelines to guide them on the actual things the soldiers want because even when they are doing the right thing, they are not allowed to sell the fish.

There are individuals who are allowed to purchase fish from those who are operating, maybe the new fishermen. Most of these people live in the villages surrounding the landing sites. They have nowhere to get the food; children are out of school and they have no activity to earn a living from.

The minister made a commitment - I expect him from that commitment, because I have a duty to go back and report, to tell us how far he has gone with what he got –*(Member timed out.)*

6.43

**MR ROBERT NTENDE (Independent, Bunya County South, Mayuge):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries for the wonderful job. They brought out the true picture of our force on the waters.

One aspect they mentioned in the report is about the excessive use of force and torture. When there is torture, women suffer because majority of the people that operate on water are men that go fishing. The women do the mainland activities. When men die, the women are left as widows and the children as orphans.

Indeed, children are suffering; they will never see their parents nor have someone to fend for them and probably, they will lose out on the education because the father was tortured and possibly killed.

The report recommends compensation for the victims. I would strongly request Parliament to push Government to recommend this for the widows and orphans who are languishing in my constituency and elsewhere. We can even go and bring them to the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs so that they are fed if at all the ministry has capacity to do so.

Another issue is that there are individuals who have been facilitating the activities of these officers. There is an association called Association of Fishers and Lake Users of Uganda (AFALU). It is a private association that the force teamed up with. Honourable minister, we would like to know whether there is any memorandum of understanding with this association.

These individuals under AFALU need to be investigated and brought before courts of law. Their wealth should also be investigated. If it is found to be in the excess of what they earn, it should be confiscated.

We know some of these individuals –*(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, about AFALU, when I called the minister, the soldiers and civilians there on this matter, I discovered that it is AFALU that went on radio to say the Speaker does not know anything about fishing. They addressed press conferences, instigated by the army.

6.47

**MR ATKINS KATUSABE (FDC, Bukonjo County West, Kasese):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will struggle now to cite the Constitution, yet, I feel so guilty every time I make a citation but this is still our Constitution. We have nowhere to run to except this and Article 2 (1) is crystal clear. It states: “This Constitution is the supreme law of Uganda and shall have binding force on all authorities and persons throughout Uganda.” I will say it again. “This Constitution is the supreme law of Uganda…” Specifically, what that means is just simple and plain that nobody in Uganda, not even the President, is above the law.

Madam Speaker, you have been to my community, Bukonjo County West at a fundraising and you saw the women and the men weeping, mourning and crying before you because their only source of livelihood has been shut down. They do not stop at that, they beat up the women and force them to kneel-walk on the tarmac. They impound even the mature fish and get that fish back into the barracks, from the barracks into the market for sale.

The President went there to visit and I mobilised literary my entire constituency. He thought these people were going to cheer him up. The voice and the cry was just simple – “You shut down our only source of livelihood and we want to hear from you because your fish enforcement officers say they are acting on your orders”.

When the President said, “illegal fish”, they asked him, “what about the mature fish?” As I speak, even *mukene* *- (Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Half a minute to conclude.

**MR KATUSABE:** Thank you very much. Even the silver fish, was being impounded. There is a lot of suffering. Madam Speaker, people have nowhere to run to except this House. I ask you, Madam Speaker, to encourage the entire House to stand with the people because they are crying out and there is no one to turn to, except this House. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

6.51

**MS ROSEMARY NAUWAT (Independent, Woman Representative, Amudat):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. When suspects are arrested with exhibits, these exhibits are not supposed to be destroyed until the case is investigated and concluded. However, we are told that the army barracks at Lolwe Island was constructed using remains from dismantled boats and that some of the wood was used as fuel.

If the owners of these boats were in the wrong, then the officers who dismantled and used the wood from the boat are accomplices in the crime and they should, therefore, be brought to book.

Madam Speaker, on stopping the smoking of fish as strategy to increase fresh fish in factories, to me, this is unrealistic because people have their own preferences. There are those who like fresh fish; others smoked fish. Therefore, if the factories want fresh fish, let them go and get the fresh fish but other people can go for the smoked one.

I do not think that the fish factories are located near the fishing communities. In addition, I do not think some of these fishermen have refrigerators or cool boxes to keep the fish fresh. Therefore, we should allow them to use methods that they can afford.

The committee has shown concern about the force being dominated only by males and I am worried that if the force is to continue with its operations on the water bodies, then there is a worry that they will be harassing the women in case they are found in the wrong. Therefore, if the force is to continue operating there, then we need female officers to be deployed there so that women are handled in the right way in case they are in the wrong.

6.54

**JANE NABULINDO (NRM, Woman Representative, Busia):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the chairperson of the committee for producing a very good report. As you are aware, Samia’s are brilliant because of eating the heads of fish. (*Laughter*) However, we are now in tears.

The enforcement officers destroy every small boat they get at the lake and yet, some of these boats are used for sports and for us when we are going to check on our neighbours and relatives across. We use them for fetching firewood and water.

Madam Speaker, we had one factory at Majenje processing Nile Perch but it collapsed because of the rudeness and torture. It is very sad for the people of Busia.

Madam Speaker, confiscating of these vehicles for over one year is bad because these vehicles do not fish. They are just used for transporting the fish. The owners of these vehicles are in pain. They are ever calling us to go to Nakasongola since they cannot access that place. The people of Busia are not happy.

Check on the performance of the children - we are no longer number one because we have been denied eating the fish heads. The performance has gone down. I beg to submit, Madam Speaker.

6.56

**MR ELIJAH OKUPA (FDC, Kasilo County, Serere):** I would like to agree with my colleague who has just sat down. The situation on the landing sites is worrying especially for the young generation. Fish is known to be one of the pretentious foods and it is very rich in nutrients.

Madam Speaker, when we were growing up, you would not see anybody in Serere District and more so in Kasilo having Kwashiorkor. However, currently, many people have developed it.

When we were growing up, there is what we used to call the fisheries officers and they were able to manage the lake and at that time, in Kasilo alone, every Sunday and Wednesday, we were delivering five Leyland trucks of fish to Busia. That is how we were able to get to the best schools of the time. However, today, you can see fish only on *boda bodas*. The fisheries officers were able to do that.

However, today, we have army officers on the lake but have not reached that capacity. Madam Speaker, I wonder whether this force is trained in fish. For us who have grown on the lake - all Kasilo subcounties touch the water. It is in the peninsula. There are different species of fish and it is the only living thing where sex reversal is possible - if you studied Aquaculture.

There is what they call *apingiri*. It is the size of a finger. However, today, if you are found with that fish, the boat is destroyed and your hut is burnt. It is the size of silver fish. There is another typeand it is the size of the hand; it does not grow bigger than that. Yet, if you are found with it, they say that is immature fish. That is why it was very important for the people who are posted on the lakes for enforcement to understand the species of fish in the waters.

Therefore, why are we using army to deal with people who are depleting the resources yet all over - is it because there are only rich people who have invaded the wetlands? Why can’t we use a similar force to deal with those who are depleting the wetlands? A wetland is also a natural resource. Why can’t we use the same force to deal with that?

The UPDF is ranked the 15th in strength in Africa. It is not for beating people but for defending the territories of Uganda and helping other countries. It is well known for that.

Can we have the fisheries officers’ reinstated to deal with enforcement of fishing in the lakes of Uganda? In that way, we shall be able to restore the fish productivity and numbers in the water. Please, help us do that.

6.59

**MR WAIRA MAJEGERE (Independent, Bunya County East, Mayuge):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this chance. I wish to appreciate the committee because when they were coming to Mayuge, they co-opted me, much as I am not a member.

When these people impound a boda boda, they charge Shs 1.2 million from its rider. I do not know how much they charge the truck driver. This is the gospel truth.

I tried to call one of the soldiers who asked me for money. When I asked him what he wanted the money for, he told me that he uses his fuel and so he needed a refund for it. Those that cannot pay the Shs 1.2 million have had their motorcycles taken to places such as Nakasongola, Masese and another store, which I am told, is in Bugiri.

Madam Speaker, as an outcome of this debate, I would like to request that we call upon all those people whose trucks and *boda-bodas* were impounded to come up and probably lead us so that we go and open those stores in Nakasongola, Bugiri, Masese and Mayuge –*(Interjections)*– yes, because these are our voters and they have petitioned me. I even wrote to the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs and I made a follow up. To reach the office of the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs, they tell you to leave your vehicle somewhere and walk for a kilometre. Even when I told them that I am Majegere, a Member of Parliament, they told me that I had to walk. It is only the minister who is allowed to drive to that office. Why should we reach that extent?

When the committee came to Mayuge, the fishing community told them that they wanted a fish fund or bank because people on the mainland have different terms for acquiring loans. The fishing community is asked for land title, which they do not have. That issue was not captured in the report.

Therefore, I would like to request that this issue is considered here on the Floor of the House, so that the fishing community could get that special fund, where they get loans because the terms and conditions are quite far different from the ones that the people on the mainland have to fulfil when asking for loans. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

7.02

**MR GILBERT OLANYA (FDC, Kilak County South, Amuru):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The issue of soldiers terrorising fishermen has been there for a long time.

I would like to find this out from the army representatives here in Parliament. Your voters are terrorising, looting and killing our people. I wonder whether you normally engage your voters. You are 10 in the House and you represent them; your constituents are the ones disorganising the fishermen on the lakes.

Madam Speaker, I am happy that you mentioned that you will give them opportunities to speak. Let them tell us how often they normally engage their voters and tell them how to act and behave with the civilians.

Secondly, if the Government is determined to stop fishing, what alternatives is it giving to the people in that sector? Madam Speaker *– (Member timed out.)*

7.03

**MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi):** I am happy that my colleague made quick points. Madam Speaker, as a way forward, I request that you give an instruction to the relevant authorities here to bring the Bill as soon as possible because they are saying that it is with the First Parliamentary Counsel. When are they bringing it here?

We shall run around in circles discussing this thing. Last time, again, we had a debate of this nature and another time, some other one will come up. Until when shall we keep doing this? We want to see the Bill here so that we handle this matter.

We also have these officers who are named in the report. They should table their names so that we know these people and when we meet them, we know they are the ones.

Madam Speaker, there are also people who say that they are protecting the waters. The factories are now opening up but this is a sign that we are protecting exports and leaving our people to die. The people that live near the waters enjoy their livelihood from the fish but now, we are saying that what we want is money abroad.

One time, during campaigns, Dr Kiiza Besigye made a statement in Teso. He told us that while we were sleeping, the lakes and rivers were being sold. Could this be true? Probably, someone has sold these waters and now, we are in a troubled situation, where we do not know what is happening. How can we now say the people who have factories can do fishing when some of them might even be foreigners, when our own are dying?

I went with hon. Abott Ouma to Sigulu and I saw how miserable his people were. They wanted to kneel before me but I told them to kneel before hon. Abott Ouma who is their Member of Parliament. Due to the fact that I am also a Member of Parliament, the tears were combined. Madam Speaker, this is terrible. It is not okay and we cannot condone this kind of situation; we must condemn it.

I think it has gone beyond - these are human rights issues and we need to put a ban on export of fish for some time. We need to call these people to the table and first have a discussion with them. If we close those factories for a while, you will see things getting okay so that we can first discuss what is wrong; the torture, the human rights abuses and what needs to be put right. If we do it, you will see things getting okay. This growing impunity –*(Member timed out.)*

7.06

**MR JAMES WALUSWAKA (NRM, Bunyole County West, Butaleja):** Madam Speaker, my mother was a “*Mukenye”* and the head of the clan, my grandfather, is hon. Kumama Nsamba. The *Bakenye* feed on fish. Let me tell you that most bright people eat fish, especially the head.

Honourable minister, can you give us the list of those UPDF officers you sent out to the lakes? Are they qualified in fisheries? If this is a professional army, why take an engineer to the fisheries sector? For example, you find that the UPDF just smashed my sister’s boats at a landing site and I had to call the Community Development Officer *–(Interjections –* yes, I instructed. *(Laughter)*

Madam Speaker, even when they see you catching *Mukene* - you cannot expect I, Waluswaka to be the size of hon. Anthony Akol. *(Laughter)* That is why hon. Okupa said there are different sizes of fish.

Honourable minister, can we know the officers deployed on the lakes and are misbehaving? Can they be brought to book? No one is above the law. If you say these officers are errant, can we get the names?

Madam Speaker, some of us meet the President and so we shall tell him the names of the officers, since he is the head of the armed forces; they will then be brought to book. The UPDF representatives are here and the allegations by the committee were made against your voters. What is your say on your voters? (*Interjections)* Yes, these are your voters, unless you say you were not voted*. (Laughter)*

Madam Speaker, I would like to say that as a man from Butaleja who feeds on fish, it is true that – honourable minister, even climate change can cause the fish stock to diminish. There is environmental degradation and pollution of the water, which can also kill the fish. However, you are blaming and punishing people.

These are our voters. Please, as we draw nearer to the general elections, can you relax? Otherwise, you may not want to reason beyond the unreasonable.

Finally, Madam Speaker –*(Member timed out.)*

7.09

**MR DAVID ABALA (NRM, Ngora County, Ngora):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank you very much, for giving me this opportunity. Fish is food for the brain as well as a good protein. Fish is the food for the most excellent nutrition value; providing high quality proteins and wide variety of vitamins and minerals. Like my senior brother and other Members said, if you want to be sharp, eat fish. If you want to be a person whose brain is not proper, ignore fish. We must be open and tell the people the reality.

Madam Speaker, according to research, the fertility rate in this country, around the lakes is high because of fish. In Teso region, it is high because of fish together with eating groundnuts and greens. In this operation, if you deny Ugandans this type of nice food, which makes them sharp, think about how we shall manage tomorrow, then we have a big problem. I am worried because of the harassment, brutality, arbitrary arrests, torture and mismanagement of human lives by some few errant individuals. I strongly condemn it.

The first weakness is on the Fishery Department. That is why the appointing authority thought that the only medicine is by deploying the army to the waters -*(Member timed out.)*

7.12

**MS DOREEN AMULE (NRM, Woman Representative, Amolatar):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. It is true that what is going on with the operation is very painful. I would like to raise to this House the voice of my people of Amolatar. In the beginning, the people of Amolatar were very happy and pleased with this operation. When we were growing up, the fish and all the benefits we are talking about here were enormous.

In the late 1990s, 2000s and to date, fish is getting depleted. That is why people said, if the operation is to restore the fish species in the waters, they are welcome. However, what we questioned was the mandate of these soldiers because they went there as drunkards doing all sorts of things without guidelines, sensitisation, direction, involvement and without anybody’s participation.

Together with my honourable colleague, we went to my district because we had an activity. I heard that there is something called Lake Kyoga Integrated Management Organisation(LAKIMO). None of us the stakeholders at the highest peak of the leadership of Amolatar District was invited in that meeting. However, we are here expected to give answers to our voters who are also our local people.

When I hear from the report that there is allocation of Shs 300 million, this money is not to the soldiers. That is why in my district now, the soldiers stopped everybody and destroyed all boats and fishing nets from Amolatar.

It is now their specific persons fishing. I can quote a vehicle number UAY 178N, that belongs to Muhammed Muloni, which is escorted by the soldiers who go fishing from Amolatar District. They take fish to various markets. *(Interruption)*

**MR ANTHONY OKELLO:** Madam Speaker, so far, they have constructed 13 new boats and they are fishing by themselves.

**MS AMULE:** Thank you very much, hon. Okello. Today, when I inquired, it is now 16 new boats. None of my people are supposed to make a boat. When I inquired from Capt. Niwagaba, who is the head of fisheries operation throughout the country, he told me that their intention is to wipe-out all the nets and boats; then, they will come and teach people how to make boats. We ask ourselves, if you are coming to teach, what about the 16 boats, which are guarded by the soldiers?

I have the names of the men and women whom they are using to go and sell fish in the markets. One of them is called Saidi from Entebbe Landing Site. Another one is called Kato Mubulezi, Amina the wife to Yubu and Meddy the owner of the vehicle. On the beating of my people - despite the suffering that people have gone through - I went as far as reaching the President but I would like to assure you that this man who is the head of the operation is bigger than the President. I met the President with my people – *(Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** One minute for the chairperson.

**MS AMULE:** Madam Speaker, I would like to say that the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, should check his steps. What is happening in the water is actually a vote of no confidence in him and the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

In my culture, when your husband brings your sister to wash his clothes and do all the house chores, it means you are no longer a woman in that home. For the President to consider the soldiers, yet you are there and you have not brought us any Bill or proposal, then you need to check yourself.

This House needs to call the whole country to sit and look into the issues of the fisheries. If we go to the President, we do not get answers. We come here and at the end of the day, we do not have answers. What are we going to tell our voters? Thank you.

7.18

**MR GEORGE KUMAMA (NRM, Bbaale County, Kayunga):** Thank you very much for this opportunity, Madam Speaker. Whereas, the protection of small fish in the waters is a good thing; to allow them grow is good, the method being used is very inhumane. The Baganda have a saying that “*Ensiba embi eddibya mutele”* which means *“*bad packaging actually rots all you are trying to package.”

When this idea was mooted, it could have been good but our people needed to be sensitised first. People needed to be brought on board that: “We are doing all these for you – the people and the nation’s benefit.” No sensitisation was done. That sensitisation could have included the time limits for this exercise and explained how these people who had been depending on fish were going to survive. Where were they going to get food and money that they had been relying on to take their children to school?

When they came to Galilaya, which is in my area, people were beaten. They were posting to me photos of beaten people with their clothes torn and their “behinds” just out, exposed. It was terrible. They were dragged from Galilaya to Amolatar. Others were dragged from Nakasongola and Buyende and taken to Amolatar; it was a terrible thing. People were lamenting and families were on rampage calling us all kinds of names.

Madam Speaker, people needed to be oriented on a new method of fishing instead of using these underhand methods. People were beaten, their property grabbed and some of them killed. They confiscated all the boats and fishing gears without any replacement. What is Government going to do? Are they going to compensate these people who have suffered this much? Can we know and take the information to our people.

The other day, I had to solicit food from the Office of the Prime Minister to take to the people of Galilaya *– (Member timed out.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable member, I do not know why you are not seeing it. I think the intention is that the ordinary people should not be in that industry. Yes, that is happening – the citizens of Uganda should not be in that industry.

7.21

**MS RUKIYA CHEKAMONDO (NRM, Woman Representative, Kapchorwa):** Madam Speaker, I would like join my colleagues to thank the committee for presenting this report. When I look at the lakes, the people of Uganda need the lakes and the lakes also need the people of Uganda just like the forests need the people and the people need the forests.

In the forest sector, they have given people two days in a week to enter the forests and harvest herbs and whatever they want. If we really want the 68 per cent of the population to also come out of poverty, Government should allow these people two days or a number of days to go and do some fishing. We have the *Mukene* fish *–(Interruption.)*

**MR MACHO:** Madam Speaker, the people of Busia such as my grandfather were born on the waters. Our people live on the islands in the waters, not in the boats. Therefore, is it in order for the Member of Parliament to stand on the Floor of the Parliament of the Republic of Uganda and say that people should be given two days to go back in the waters and come to the mainland as if they are crocodiles? Is she in order to speak on the livelihood of people where she has never lived? *(Laughter)*

Is the honourable member in order to give conditions for our people who were born in the waters to be coming out as if they are hippopotamus, which come out to eat and go back? *(Laughter)*

**THE SPEAKER:** She is just giving a proposal, honourable member. *(Laughter)*

**MS CHEKAMONDO:** Thank you very much. He cut me short before I finished my point. We have people who live outside and come to do fishing. There are also those who are living on the islands. I was first handling those who stay out and go for fishing. If they come to fish to get money, something should be done. However, for those who are inside the waters, it is their way of life and I think that must be looked into.

I was also saying that the UPDF has been praised for working very well in other areas. This time, they should do something about their work in the fishing sector. We in Kapchorwa used to get fish but these days there is no fish. We need to do something. Let us identify some activities that can reduce *– (Interruption.)*

**MR ALERO:** Thank you for giving way. Madam Speaker, Gen. (Rtd) Moses Ali and I are no longer enjoying fish simply because the landing site at Laropi has been closed and the surface of the river has been blocked by the Kariba Weed. The Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and fisheries (Fisheries) has intentionally refused to remove the kariba weed and therefore, we no longer get fish from Laropi.

**MS CHEKAMONDO:** Madam Speaker, what has been raised really touches our people. It is real suffering and we need to do something about it. People should be allowed to carry out fishing and people should be left to move freely. If there is no freedom of movement, there is no way people can generate money.

Another issue is that if we want to limit the amount of fish being harvested, we must identify other activities for the people to do and generate money. Otherwise, we need this fish for everybody in this country and something must be done about this situation.

Lastly, if I have made a mistake, let them arrest me but let the vehicle be taken back to generate money for the people. Can the items such as the cars and motorcycles that were confiscated be given back to the people so that they can use them to generate money and help their families? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

7.27

**BRIG. FLAVIA BYEKWASO (UPDF Representative):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to add my voice, first of all, to thank the committee for presenting the report but also to add to the voice of those who are condemning those illegal excesses that have been reported. UPDF is not a force that is known for torturing people. Where it has happened – *(Interjections) -* I do not want to stand here and say it has not happened but where it has happened, it is not an institutional arrangement but those are isolated cases *– (Interjections) -* hold on. We operate within the law. For example, they said that at first, it was the question about the law under which this force operated but that has been cleared.

Madam Speaker, I would like to tell this House that in most of the UPDF operations, we are guided by the strategic relationship with Ugandans and our first call always is to protect the people, the security and protection of their property. If what we have heard is indeed true, that is regrettable and we condemn it. *(Interruption)*

**MS AMULE:** I just want to give information that you can verify. Thank you very much my colleague for giving me way. Go to a place called Biku Landing Site in Namasale sub county, Amolatar District, look for Olikidi and find out whether this man for the last two months can put on a trouser. He was brutally beaten.

Go to Namasale Landing Site and ask for a man called Okwir, go to Kayago and ask for a man called Pule, you will get your evidence. Thank you.

**BRIG. GEN. BYEKWASO:** Thank you, for the information and we strongly condemn what has happened and I know*-(Interruption)*

**MR OLANYA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The issue of soldiers terrorising the fishermen started almost one year ago and right now, the army officer is pretending as if the army representatives have never heard about this at all.

Is the General in order to pretend to this august House that they have never heard about this issue and yet, it has been in Parliament since last year and they are aware of what is going on?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, you know we are dealing with a very serious situation. I think it is not the time to hide our heads under the sand. There is a problem.

There is a man called Sebukeera in the islands who was responsible for burning boats, killing people but he was promoted despite our reports. He is now a Major.

I reported in writing to the President but he and others were promoted. Please, there is a problem. Do not try to whitewash it; deal with it.

**BRIG.GEN. BYEKWASO:** Much obliged, Madam Speaker. We strongly condemn those acts and I know that wherever we are, the report - the good thing the minister is here. Through the chain of command, the report will reach where it is supposed to go.

There are some other issues I wanted to talk about, which were mentioned here. There was a Member who reported that even when someone eats smoked fish, they are arrested.

I pass through Busega, where we have a very big market of fish and I have always seen smoked fish. The minister informed us that there has been no ban on smoked fish. I do not know where that comes from.

The issue of sensitisation is indeed true. Before we had this operation, perhaps we did not do enough sensitisation and this is a take home for us.

We will take it to the forces that before we do this, we need to sensitise the people but there is also the law as was given in the directive. Where the law is wanting and where some specifications are not very clear, we request the House to move and help the UPDF.

We may not close the operation but we can change and correct the method. We all appreciate that there has been some improvement in terms of fish stock and numbers. However, the method; we do not dispute that we can go back and change the method used by soldiers. The Member who talked about prosecution *-(Interruption)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Allow her to conclude.

**BRIG.GEN. BYEKWASO:** Madam Speaker, that case you cited is very unfortunate, in such cases maybe, but we prosecute wrong doers. Perhaps it is not very easy to come and inform every day because the court martial sits daily but if that is the request of Members it can be done.

**MR KIBALYA:** Madam Speaker, the General said that as UPDF, they are on record for punishing wrong doers. We have been crying about all those that have committed crimes on water bodies. Give us one or two names in UPDF that have been punished for the crimes they have committed.

**BRIG.GEN. BYEKWASO:** Madam Speaker -

**THE SPEAKER:** Let us finish. We need to hear from the last contributor. Are you intimidating the honourable General?

**BRIG. GEN. BYEKWASO:** Madam Speaker, as I conclude, we do not deny that some members have betrayed this operation. That the operation should have a time limit, yes, it can be from one day to ten years until we are content that the number of fish has increased to the levels.

However, I appreciate all the concerns and once again, we strongly condemn the acts we have heard because that is not the institution and it is not part of the operational orders. I beg to submit.

7.36

**MR JACOB OBOTH (Independent, West Budama County South, Tororo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Balancing of rights and interests of the State vis-a-vis the human rights of Ugandans is a matter that is going to be complex both for the State imperatives, the law makers and courts in Uganda.

This Parliament of Uganda should be commended for one thing among others; that we passed the Human Rights Enforcement Law. It is a new piece of legislation that many people still do not know.

On the 31st March 2019, the President assented to one wonderful piece of legislation; our rating human rights enforcement has gone higher by enacting that piece of law.

The debate here - the UPDF, law enforcement agencies, those who arrest anyhow, who manhandle, even the Government denying people service-under that law you can be sued.

I would like to give this caution, under section 10 of the Human Right Enforcement Act, 2019, which states, “*An officer will be personally held liable*.” Hon. Henry Kibalya asked for one officer who has been arraigned in court over the same thing to be named. This is going to end. We are going to see much litigation on the right to health or right to education and all the fundamental human rights under Chapter 4.

That law was to give effect to Article 50, clause 4 of the Constitution. After several other litigations in the Supreme Court, Parliament passed that law this year. I do not know whether the journalists and the people of Uganda were not told deliberately but finally, they will get to know.

This kind of beating people over fish; Government did not create fish in the lakes. The fish is a gift – (*Member timed out.*)

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable members. We have been here for five hours and so, the last contributor will be the Leader of the Opposition. However, honourable members, I think we should have a test case. Let us organise and file a suit against those we know under that Act*.* I think we should. Not just in Amolatar; I think even in Namayingo. I know that man. He was photographed burning boats of Ugandans. Let us organise and file a suit personally.

7.40

**THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Ms Betty Aol):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for presenting a good report. They have come up with very many recommendations.

Unfortunately, probably after six or seven months, we will find that not a single recommendation has been taken up seriously. These ministers disappoint us very much. I do not know whom you are working for. Are you working for Ugandans? If so, why don’t you get serious and do your work?

Try to investigate those who export fish because they are the root cause of all this. Who are these people who export fish and deny us Ugandans a chance to have it and even brutally beat up our people?

When hon. Ruth Nankabirwa was the Minister of State for Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (Fisheries) at one time, I complained bitterly and she went up to Gulu and helped my women.

Even when we are not surrounded by water, we eat fish and we have fishmongers. These fishmongers have their vehicles confiscated, yet, these are very poor people.

At one time, when there was a problem with health, UPDF was involved. When there was a problem with planting, it was UPDF. Now in fisheries, UPDF is involved. Planting mangoes, it is UPDF. Everything has UPDF in it; can we now leave everything to UPDF? We are militarising everything. The UPDF brutally commits human rights abuses without remorse. It is the ministers disappointing us.

The Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs are the people to explain all this. Do not allow us to come again on the Floor of Parliament before you start to implement some of these recommendations.

One of the recommendations talks about free boats and fuel for our fishermen – *(interjections)*– just to conclude, I doubt if that recommendation will be implemented.

If we love Ugandans, let us do this. You have decided to burn their boats and deny them a lot of things and made them very poor. Now, provide free boats and fuel for them. Please, implement all the recommendations given by the committee. We will come back and get on your neck if you do not do it. Whom are you working for? Are you working for one person? You should work for and love all Ugandans. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much honourable members. Over 33 Members have contributed to this debate. We need to close. The minister should prepare and respond tomorrow.We have been here for five hours.

Let the Clerk extract the recommendations so that we deal with them one by one tomorrow.

House adjourned to 2.00 p.m. tomorrow.

*(The House rose at exactly 7.44 p.m. and adjourned until Thursday, 25 July 2019 at 2.00 p.m.)*