



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

THIRD SESSION - THIRD MEETING

THURSDAY, 4 APRIL 2024



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

THIRD SESSION - 21ST SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Thursday, 4 April 2024

Parliament met at 2.17 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to today's sitting. It has been a tough week for us because our honourable colleagues have lost their loved ones. The other day, we lost, Ms Edinance Kyomugyemo, the mother to the Minister of State for Internal Affairs, Gen. David Muhoozi, and the burial is today. The Government Chief Whip is representing us.

Last night, we received very sad news of our very own; Hon. Abdu Katuntu, who lost a brother, Ramathan Waiswa, who was a lawyer. From what Hon. Abdu Katuntu told me this morning, he was coming from a court session and got into a nasty accident that claimed his life.

The burial is today and the Rt Hon. Speaker and other Members of Parliament are representing us. Honourable colleagues, I request that we observe a moment of silence for the brother of our honourable member.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, Thursdays are dedicated especially to Members' issues as per Rule 25 of our Rules of Procedure, therefore, let us go through this very important aspect of the Bills then we go to the Prime Minister's Time and receive Members' issues. So, matters of national importance will come later.

We are focusing on the budgeting process - committee chairperson, our deadline - if I do not receive the reports early, then we will not have a more engaging and constructive debate. When we are discussing policy statements reports, this is where you bring out the salient issues which you identified at the committee level as well as in your constituencies and bring them to the Floor so that they are given serious attention during the budgeting process.

I need the reports completed. Today, we are going to handle some, but all through next week, I want us to give ardent time to the budget so that the final figures and priorities are given serious scrutiny during plenary because when we are doing the final budget report we usually do not have much time. This is the most critical time we have to discuss.

I hope committee chairpersons are doing very well in terms of time and for those who have not yet submitted their reports, please ensure that next week; we have all of them and have them considered. Therefore, matters of national importance will be handled afterwards.

Next item. Do you have a procedural matter, Leader of the Opposition?

2.23

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Yesterday, for some reason, we did not have a meeting of minds on a matter that is quite imperative.

We have discussed in this House, missing Ugandans on account of their political affiliations, people who have been in jail for years, some over three years because of their political persuasions. The trial has not kicked off because there is no evidence against them and like I called it yesterday, it is persecution as opposed to prosecution.

These matters are in the public arena; we have tabled those lists here in Parliament several times, and forwarded the same to the Prime Minister, Uganda Human Rights Commission and they are on court record because these people are being processed through the courts of law.

Mr Speaker, I seek your indulgence so that I, for the umpteenth time, table those lists again such that there be no excuse from anybody. There are people who are saying that the National Unity Platform (NUP) is not availing those lists because all of a sudden, there are some people who are saying that they care so much about these people.

It is good that they now agree with us that these people are simply being persecuted, otherwise, if there was any offence they committed, three years down the road, somebody should have been tried. It is good that they are seeing what we have been saying.

For there to be no pretence and excuse, especially from the Government officials who sit with us in Parliament where we have tabled these lists, I seek your indulgence that I table these lists again. Let the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the Attorney-General, the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs and anybody else anyway who has an interest in this matter, the same way we do and thinks they can pick it

up, have access to the record. There should be no pretence.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ssenyonyi, in Parliament, when colleagues come here to submit, they are not pretending; they mean serious business. *(Applause)*

Yesterday, Hon. Balaam raised this issue; he has not been a Government official nor a Member of Parliament. These are lists you were giving to Government officials and he had not received any prior copy of those lists.

I took it that he was asking in good faith. *(Applause)* To me, considering how we have grappled with this issue, anyone who can put a block, use their own tactics; might be tactics, their influence, we give them chance so that these young people who are alleged to be in prison can be helped.

I know *—(Mr Afidra rose_)* Please, the Speaker is speaking; you do not interrupt the Speaker with a procedural matter when he is speaking.

I know we received the copy, but for it to be witnessed by the Hon. Balaam - I will ensure that indeed he received it before he leaves. Hon. Ssenyonyi, you can lay on the Table the copy you have.

MR SSENYONYI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Yesterday, when I mentioned the issue of orientation, some people thought I said it in bad faith. We all do need it; when we got here in Parliament, we had to be oriented and we continued to learn.

It is a good thing that when new Members join us, if there is information they require, maybe they should be helped on where to access it because like you have rightly said, we tabled those lists severally and they are within the records.

However, for there to be no excuse anymore, I would like to lay on the Table, the list of NUP supporters on remand in various courts; the likes of Olivia Lutaaya and others who have been held for over three years and the trial has not kicked off. We have been demanding

and continue to demand that they be released because –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, the procedure for laying is that you read the document and lay.

MR SSENYONYI: Mr Speaker, I was simply explaining the document that I am laying. I have laid that list. I would like also lay to the list of missing NUP supporters, which includes John Bosco Kibalama, and others, who by the way, the Prime Minister told us was arrested and she knows where he is. I lay on the Table. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Colleagues, managing politicians is a difficult job. I am still talking. The Speaker is heard in silence. You know what the rules say.

Hon. Ssenyonyi. I think this is okay, honourable colleagues. The best way to win an argument on this Floor of Parliament is by being courteous to each other. That way you win many hearts, and then we focus on the argument. Please, Clerk, ensure that a copy is formally given to Hon. Balaam Barugahara as he requested.

Procedure, Hon. Enos? I hope it is not on this issue because this is a closed issue.

MR ENOS ASIIMWE: It is on how we handle business. Rule 25 of our Rules of Procedure is very clear on the order of business and how we get to have matters on the Order Paper. Is it procedurally right - because you keep insisting that we follow the rules of the House - is it procedurally right for Members to keep bringing items to be discussed when they are not on the Order Paper, claiming that they are procedural matters?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, if I were to interpret these rules strictly, most of you would have trouble. Depending on the situation and the issue, if something is solving a problem, I will be flexible. That flexibility is needed, but indeed, as Hon. Enos is saying, let us try to remain in the lane of our rules. Hon. Kibalya, you had a procedural matter.

MR KIBALYA: Yes, Mr Speaker. You said we should not comment on what the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) had commented. My request to LoP - even us, members of NRM, feel for those people who are in custody. We request that when we get volunteers who are ready to intervene in this thing, let us put politics aside and get people ready to help.

What happens on most occasions is that when somebody is moving towards getting a solution, you see the party coming in and people trying to play politics here and there. Through your office, Mr Speaker, given that LoP now has tabled, and has said that he is going to work with the Members who are ready to intervene, we request that this time we do not want politics to get involved. Let us solve this, whether it is an NRM person who is solving it, or any other person intervening, let us have it done.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I see order in the House. Hon. Tinkasiimire? There is no one on the Floor, Hon. Ssenyonyi.

MR TINKASIIMIRE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of order granted.

MR SSENYONYI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have tabled the lists and you have advised that whoever wants to have access to these lists -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssenyonyi, please, wait a little bit. Rule 78 of our Rules of Procedure; point of order applies when there is someone on the Floor. Now I don't have anyone holding the Floor. Then also, there is when a point of order is raised to do with decorum; in terms of dressing. That is why I was insisting; I thought you have seen someone who is not wearing a tie or someone putting on slippers. That is why I was allowing it.

If it is on the matter, which we have just finished, let us close this matter. Let us not exchange. My brother, thank you, LoP. Hon. Tinkasiimire, I hope it is not on the same.

MR TINKASIIMIRE: Mr Speaker, for the record, I am moving under rules 7 and 8 because I am finding what we are discussing strange and I will need your guidance. We have the amnesty law in this country. I was not privileged to hear the submission of the good addition from Bunyoro yesterday. With the lists laid on the Floor of the House, on request from Hon. Balaam Barugahara, I am asking myself, are we handling some kind of amnesty process?

As far as I know, when you are suspected of committing a crime, you are produced before courts of law, and due process is followed. It is those who choose to ask for amnesty and formally apply for it in the Amnesty Commission that are given amnesty. I said I was not privileged to hear the submissions from my honourable colleague, I said a good addition from Bunyoro, was he applying for amnesty?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Tinkasiimire is another good addition from Bunyoro to this House. Hon. Barugahara Balaam said here on the Floor yesterday that he would also, as a member of the Cabinet, he would want to be appraised on this matter and see how he can contribute his effort like how other people have been contributing their efforts.

The information provided here is for him to also add the effort on the other efforts that have been going on to solve the matter. To me, as long as someone knows he is going to add value - by the way, now he has authority. This is not the Balaam we knew of - yesterday reminded us, he said, "I am a full minister now." So, we only need to wish him well and give him all the support necessary. You never know where his hand can reach. So, let us give him that support.

Honourable colleagues, today we have a special guest in the VIP gallery. Hon. Kabanda, we have a special guest. This special guest is, on a very personal note - honourable colleagues I implore you, if you have a special guest, you should always bring them here and they see what you are doing. This is Mr Bebaze

James, who is in the VIP gallery; stand up for recognition. He is my primary school teacher – *(Applause)* - he taught me from primary four to primary seven- Hon. Ssenyonyi is asking about how much *kiboko* he gave me, but whatever he did shaped me into what I am today.

Above all teachers, I picked on him because when I was in primary four - do not interpret it to mean child labour - he appointed me a salesman. *(Laughter)* To get additional income, he would make pancakes and you know how good those pancakes, which are wrapped in banana leaves are.

I would be selling his pancakes during break time and at the close of school; then make accountability the next day. Issues of transparency will be discussed later – *(Laughter)* - from that, I learnt that you can do something and benefit from it because he used to give me commission only that it was in form of pancakes, so I would consume it all right away. *(Laughter)*

I remember we had agreed that for every 10 pancakes, he would give me one - 10 per cent. I think I was a good negotiator at that young age. At the end of the day, I would have like four pancakes.

Of course, at that time, we were just admiring, so you would give one or two to the one you admire - to settle that bill of admiring someone. You also remained with some. *(Laughter)* I think each one of us has such a story – yes, you start admiring early and then go into real things much later when you are legally allowed.

He is my special guest today. Please join me in welcoming him once again. *(Applause)*

Also, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have students and teachers of St John Baptist Primary School from Makindye East Kampala District, represented by Hon. Nyeko Derrick and Hon. Malende Shamim. They have come to observe proceedings of this House. *(Applause)*

Please, stand up for recognition. They are well dressed. I think they have balanced the colours properly. You can take your seats.

Still in the public gallery this afternoon, we have students from Makerere University Acholi Students Association. They have come to observe proceedings of this House. Please, join me in giving them a very warm welcome. *(Applause)* Thank you. In the interest of time, I think we should - Hon. Afidra, you seem to be burning-

2.41

MR RONALD AFIDRA (NRM, Lower Madi County, Madi-Okollo): Yes. Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me chance to speak, especially in reference to your communication as regards to the accident where our colleague, Hon. Katuntu's brother, lost his life.

All of us are quite aware of the way accidents happen in this country to the extent that - some of our colleagues - met their demise through it.

The day before yesterday, in Arua District, a staff of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), Solomon Abenika, who was riding his OPM motorbike, was knocked on the streets of Arua City and sustained three fractures in the limbs. As he was being prepared to be operated on, he breathed his last. Today, his body is in St. Philip's and all that was due to reckless driving in Arua City.

In Madi-Okollo yesterday, the chairperson for a SACCO group, George, again was knocked by a reckless driver. He also broke both his limbs and he is being prepared for an operation.

You are aware that the police in their Easter message brought to the attention of this country that during Easter alone, Ugandans who lost their lives through accidents were more than 80 and there were more than 200 accidents.

I am bringing this in reference to your communication because it is the proper time for us to review the traffic laws in this country. I do remember that Rwanda revised the speed limit within the city, bringing it down from 120 to 80 km per hour and that will reduce the accident rates in this country to 60.

My appeal through you, Mr Speaker, is that this Parliament considers reviewing the speed

limit for different vehicles on the streets of this city, leaving alone even the motorbikes that are rampantly killing us. If it pleases you and more so on the side of Government, it is time for us to review, move forward and then we see over time how that can impact on the accidents.

Finally, this is related to the road infrastructure that we have in this country. My Madi-Okollo is a village road. We just received Shs 500 million for the Road Fund, which you presided over that every constituency should receive. However, accidents are still happening across the constituencies in the villages. People are dying.

Maybe through you, the minister can expedite the process of releasing more Shs 500 million so that we are in line with reducing the road carnage throughout the country. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, what we have just heard is very sad and it is very important for us to also respect and pray for the soul of our colleague from the Office of the Prime Minister who died in that motor accident. Kindly rise up.

(Members rose and observed a moment of silence.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We pray for the chairman of the SACCO to go through a successful operation and quick recovery. Hon. Alex Ruhunda and the Forum on Road Safety have been bringing here very many issues to do with road safety and putting in a lot of effort. We need to support anything that can be done for road safety.

With regard to the issue of releasing money for our village roads, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Hon. Musasizi, is the one always here and the Acting Government Chief Whip today.

2.46

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is true that in the budget for the Financial Year 2023/2024, we provided an amount

of Shs 1 billion for each district. There was a commitment that we would be releasing Shs 250 million per quarter.

We managed to do it in the first and second quarters. In the third quarter, we had cash flow challenges, but we are looking forward in this final quarter to release the balance of the Shs 500 million. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I think that is positive, honourable colleagues. – No, we shall have issues much later during Prime Minister’s Time. I am going to give you a lot of time. Hon. Kabanda, do you have a procedural matter?

MR DAVID KABANDA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Recently, His Excellency the President of Uganda made some changes to his Cabinet and the UPDF, where Hon. Lt Gen. Elwelu, according to him, was promoted to, now, the position of senior presidential adviser. I am seeking your clarification and maybe that of the Attorney-General on whether one can be a Member of Parliament and, at the same time, a presidential adviser?

As far as I know, a presidential advisor is a public servant. We need to know; did he reject the other position or he is here illegally? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Or he is occupying both? *(Laughter)* Honourable Attorney-General, can you help us on that?

2.48

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa Kiwanuka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I must say that Lt Gen. Elwelu is well within his place to be here because he is a public servant. *(Applause)* I would also like to advise the honourable member that we, ministers, are also public servants, not civil servants. *(Applause)* Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am very sure this was a deal between Lt Gen. Elwelu and Hon. Kabanda so that we can confirm both positions for Lt Gen. Elwelu. *(Laughter)* They are ever seated together in that corner. They are best of

friends. As long as he does not draw a salary of a senior presidential adviser – he already has the salary of a Member of Parliament. As long as he does not draw another salary, he is in a perfect position.

Hon. Lucy Akello, there is an issue you brought to my office, which I would like the Attorney-General to handle before I go into other issues.

2.50

MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I received an urgent call from concerned people all over the world regarding a very important vote, which is supposed to take place at the World Health Organisation (WHO). It is about the international health regulation and the pandemic vote.

There is not much time, but I would have read verbatim what is here for Members to appreciate it. However, the gist of it is that there is going to be a very important vote and Uganda, being a member of the World Health Organisation, is supposed to be informed prior to this vote. However, as far as I know, none of this has been brought to the attention of Parliament, yet we have less than a month to go to these votes.

Mr Speaker, this is about the adoption at the 77th World Health Assembly, which states that: “... amendment shall be communicated to all State Parties by the Director-General at least four months before the Health Assembly at which it is proposed for consideration.”

I will share this open letter with the Attorney-General and, maybe, they look at it as Cabinet. My prayer is that you request for a postponement of this vote because we cannot, as a country, go into this vote without consulting this august House. The issues that we are going to vote on concern every Ugandan.

Thank you. Maybe I can read it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, you cannot go into that. This has to do with the pandemic regulations from WHO – leaving some

countries in the state of COVID-19 or there are other pandemics coming. You know how these pandemics were handled and the WHO failed to come out to clarify some of the countries saying “No, we no longer have COVID-19”. You can see what we are still going through. They have very important and impactful effects on the population. You saw what happened with our children during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Member’s major concern was that there are important issues being decided on quietly there, without consulting the Attorney-General. There are international fora where we send our colleagues and they are stuck. You ask foreign affairs, but sometimes they are also not consulted on these issues.

Therefore, I request the Attorney-General to link up with Hon. Lucy Akello to ensure that, indeed, this issue is followed up to the latter. Next item.

**BILLS
FIRST READING**

**THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL
ORGANISATIONS (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2024**

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Internal Affairs or the Government Chief Whip?

2.54

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Non-Government Organisations (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. The Bill is accompanied by the Certificate of Financial Implications.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. The Bill is referred to the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs to be processed within 45 days, as provided for under Rule 129 of the Rules of Procedure.

**BILLS
FIRST READING**

**THE WAREHOUSE RECEIPT SYSTEM
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2024**

THE DUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

2.55

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Warehouse Receipt System (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. The Bill is accompanied by the Certificate of Financial Implications.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. The Bill is referred to the Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry to be processed, as provided for under Rule 129 of the Rules Procedure.

**BILLS
FIRST READING**

**THE CHILDREN (AMENDMENT) BILL,
2024**

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister for gender?

2.56

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (YOUTH AND CHILDREN AFFAIRS) (Mr Balaam Barugahara): Mr Speaker, in accordance with Rule 128 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament of Uganda, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Children (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, in accordance with Section 76 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015, as amended, and Rule 118 of Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Uganda, I beg to lay on the Table, the Certificate of Financial Implications for the Children (Amendment) Bill, 2024.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Just for record purposes, Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), 2015. *(Applause)* Order! Honourable colleagues, the Bill is referred to the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development to be processed within the confines of Rule 129 of our Rules of Procedure.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS
(CONTROL) (AMENDMENT) BILL,
2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries-

2.58

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that “The Agricultural Chemicals (Control) (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. It is accompanied by the Certificate of Financial Implication in fulfilment of Section 76 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The Bill is referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to be processed within Rule 129 of our Rules of Procedure - *(Hon. Okiror rose_)*

Honourable colleague, the rule is simple; never access a microphone before getting my permission -*(Hon. Okiror rose_)* Again, you are accessing the second time! *(Laughter)*

I thought I had threatened you enough. What is your procedural matter? I have seen you no longer fear threats.

MR OKIROR: Mr Speaker, my sincere apologies. Our most recent minister took us through the procedure of moving and laying, but I have seen our senior minister moving without

laying the Bills. I thought he would adopt the correct approach, which we applauded of the new minister.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Clerk, Proceed.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL
ADVISORY SERVICES
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries-

3.00

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The National Agriculture Advisory Services (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. The Bill is accompanied by the Certificate of Financial Implication in fulfilment of the requirements under Section 76 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The Bill stands referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to be processed within the confines of Rule 129 of our Rules of Procedure.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE DAIRY INDUSTRY (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No minister-

3.00

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Dairy Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. The Bill is accompanied by the Certificate of Financial Implication.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Bill stands referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries for processing.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE COTTON DEVELOPMENT
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No minister-

3.01

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Cotton Development (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. It is accompanied by the Certificate of Financial Implication.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The Bill stands referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries for processing in line with Rule 129 of our Rules of Procedure. Next.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE NATIONAL COFFEE (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Procedure, Hon. Kimosho?

MR ATWIJUKIRE: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. Last time, when these Bills were tabled, they had defective certificates of financial implications. In the same manner, they were tabled and we reversed them. We are doing exactly the same. Wouldn't it be procedurally right that you check and confirm to the House so that we do not have a third phase? That would be a three-time retake and at the university, they would expel you. Wouldn't it be procedurally right that you examine them and confirm to this House that we are not headed for another retake? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, you have reminded me of law school. They would put ‘RT’ on a retake. We had a guy who went on adding a ‘K’ for some people. When we asked, he wrote below “Retook” – this one retook a retake. Therefore, we can end up with a “Retook”.

Unfortunately, the rules do not allow us at the Plenary level to scrutinise and process documents. That is the work of the committee. Even if we are to have so many retakes, they will be there. At the Plenary level, especially on the first reading, we cannot.

Secondly, we mainly wanted these Bills broken down so we could have a primary – especially for amendment Bills, where we are finding problems. Now, for each sector, they are planning to rationalise and bring a Bill for each entity. That is very important and each has its own Certificate of Financial Implications. Therefore, we are proceeding well.

3.04

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. With your indulgence for the avoidance of doubt, the certificate we have attached covers the objectives of the Bill, what the Bill is expected to achieve in terms of outputs, the funding and budgetary implications, the cost implications, the savings and the impact on the economy.

Mr Speaker, in this regard, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The National Coffee (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The Bill is referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to be processed in line with Rule 129 of our Rules of Procedure.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE NON-PERFORMING ASSETS
RECOVERY TRUST ACT (REPEAL)
BILL, 2024

3.06

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr Amos Lugoloobi): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Non-Performing Assets Recovery Trust Act (Repeal) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. It is accompanied by the Certificate of Financial Implication as provided for under the Public Finance Management Act, 2015. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The Bill is referred to the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development to be processed as per Rule 129 of our Rules of Procedure.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE FREE ZONES (AMENDMENT) BILL,
2024

3.06

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Free Zones (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the first time. The Bill is accompanied by a Certificate of Financial Implications.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Bill referred to the Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry to be processed as provided for under Rule 129 of the Rules of Procedure.

BILLS
FIRST READING

THE HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS
FINANCING (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2024

3.07

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Higher Education Institutions Financing (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read the first time. This Bill is accompanied by the Certificate of Financial Implications.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Bill referred to the Committee on Education and Sports to be processed in line with Rule 129 of the Rules of Procedure. Next item.

LAYING OF PAPERS

(I) THE INSPECTORATE OF
GOVERNMENT BI-ANNUAL
PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE
PERIOD JULY TO DECEMBER 2023

3.08

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the Bi-annual Performance Report to Parliament under the Inspectorate of Government. The report is for the period from July to December 2023. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. The report is referred to the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs for consideration and reporting back.

(II) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS ON FIELD VISITS TO BUSIA, MALABA, KATUNA, BUSANZA, KYANIKA AND BUNAGANA BORDER POINTS TO ESTABLISH THE STATUS OF BORDER OPERATIONS AND ASSESS COOPERATION CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY INTEGRATION PROCESS

3.09

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (Ms Noeline Kisembo): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the report of the Committee on East African Community Affairs on the field visits to Busia, Malaba, Katuna, Busanza, Kyanika and Bunagana border points. The visits sought to establish the status of the border operations and assess the cooperation contributions to the East African Community Affairs integration process. Mr Speaker, I beg to lay.

Together with the report, I beg to lay a file containing the minutes of the committee for the discussions through which we processed the report. I beg to lay.

Mr Speaker, I seek your indulgence, if it pleases you that you give me five minutes to highlight some of the recommendations made by the committee on this field.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member that is what you are required to do under the rules.

MS KISEMBO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, the report is uploaded. I will just highlight some of the recommendations made on different aspects. I turn to page six.

5.0 Findings, observations, and recommendations

On the status of border operations in facilitating trade, movement of goods, persons, services and the overall benefits created by

regional integration in cross-border trade, the observations of the committee can be read, but the committee recommends that:

There is an urgent need to enhance public awareness and sensitisation of Ugandans about the benefits of East African community integration. It is hoped that participation in the East African Community Affairs (EACA), especially through trade, will improve. As the region embarks on a series of consultations and negotiations for political confederation, there is a need for a massive awareness campaign about the benefits of regional integration. This is more important at grassroots where communities are ignorant about the EAC. The Ministry of East African Community Affairs should step up the sensitisation campaign.

For purposes of enhancing, deepening and widening the integration in the region, Kiswahili language should be popularised as a way of integrating and unifying communities.

Mr Speaker, the committee also recommends that Government should adopt a broader approach to integration beyond trade. Partner states should identify common grounds for different national ideologies, value systems and cultures to promote integration.

There should be a mechanism to address traders' issues at the national level. The Ministry of East African Community Affairs and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives are called upon to establish a mechanism to handle grievances arising out of regional trade, especially at our border points.

i. Finally, on this aspect, there is a general call on the Government to address illegal trade practices like abuse of customs procedures and dumping of goods, both of which remain unchecked in the country.

5.2 Overseeing the progress made along the border posts with neighbouring member states regarding implementation of the Customs Union and Common Market Protocol

The committee recommends that the Ministry of East African Community Affairs, through the Council of Ministers should fast-track the harmonisation of travel documentation to ensure uniformity.

- (i) Assessing the infrastructure in regard to facilitating border trade and cooperation contribution to the East African Community integration process

The committee recommends that due to the unique nature of work at the border posts, Government should improve the conditions of work through the provision of adequate allowances for meals, housing and transport, medical cover, among other benefits. This will help to improve the staff welfare that we found inadequate.

- (ii) On the inadequate infrastructure

The committee recommends that a multi-year costed infrastructural project for borders and office accommodation at all border service delivery points should be developed and implemented in a phased manner to check the issue of infrastructure.

- (iii) On limited coverage of ICT-enabled platform and use at our border points

The committee recommends that a comprehensive costed strategy should be adopted for full border automation with all travel documents controlled with a single e-immigration system, support services and enforcement of immigration law.

- (iv) On porous borders

The committee recommends that emphasis should be put on strengthening border operations for national security. The country has gazetted border posts which must be always fully manned in addition to monitoring, inspecting and surveillance operations on illegal entry routes. This also requires improvement on the fleet expansion to enable operations and maintenance at the border. Otherwise, it is a big problem on most of the borders.

- (v) On political instability

The committee recommends that security should be enhanced because there are reported cases of harassment across the border and within. Efforts should be made to devise means of combating human trafficking that takes place through the borders.

- (vi) Uganda's agricultural commodities are being denied entry into partner states, this is a big problem and it has been discussed here.

The committee recommends that Government provides agricultural officers with equipped laboratories that can issue agricultural export certificates in all major border posts as provided for under Articles 7 and 8 of the East African Community Protocol on sanitary and phytosanitary measures. The issue is on implementation.

- (vii) The committee further recommends that Government provides funding to enable the Ministry of East African Community Affairs (MEACA) to coordinate, sensitise and guide farmers, traders and other agencies on quality standards of Uganda's exports to enable market access and limit non-tariff barriers to trade.

- (viii) On the harmonisation of EAC policies, the committee has recommended that Government should engage other EAC partner states to ensure full harmonisation of policies to enable effective implementation of the customs union.

Thank you, for the opportunity you have given me to highlight a few of the issues, I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, why are you standing up? Yes, please read Rule 34. This is a field report, rule 34 requires the Chairperson to present a report and a brief summary, lays it on the Table and the Speaker shall appoint a date or time. Now you have started appointing it yourselves. *(Laughter)*

Anyway, since the next item on policy statement reports is from the same committee and on the same topic, I am of the view that we receive the report and then we have a debate that consumes all these issues into one. Okay? Thank you.

It means that I have appointed after the next 20 as the time to debate this field report.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EAST
AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS ON
THE MINISTERIAL POLICY STATEMENT
AND BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR
FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Madam Chairperson, 20 minutes is enough for you?

3.19

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (Ms Noeline Kisembo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for yet another opportunity. I raise to present a report of the Committee on East African Community Affairs on the Ministerial Policy Statement for the Financial Year 2024/2025 for the Ministry of East African Community Affairs. Before I present the report, I beg to lay a copy of the report, a file containing minutes and other documents that the committee used to process the report.

I seek your indulgence and since the report is uploaded I will give highlights and mainly the recommendations of the committee.

On page four, the introduction, the Committee of East African Community Affairs in accordance with Article 155(4) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Section 12 of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), 2015 and Rule 149(1) and Rule 189 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament of Uganda is mandated, among others, to examine and comment on policy matters affecting ministries and departments under their purview.

To critically examine Government recurrent and capital budget estimates and make recommendations on them for general debate

in the House. I will not go through the scope and methodology.

On page five, the background: The Ministry of East African Community Affairs was established in 2007 by Article 8(3)(a) of the EAC Treaty, as amended, which enjoins partner states to establish ministries responsible for EAC affairs.

The mission of the Ministry of East African Community Affairs is to ensure that East Africans participate in and benefit from the East African community integration and to have a prosperous people in a secured federated East Africa.

The rest of the narrative is to give highlight on the four pillars on which the EAC stands, that is the customs union, the common market, the monetary union and the political federation that has now moved on to a political confederation and the progress made thereto. I will not go into details of that.

I beg that we move to page eight where we find item number five, MEACA's budget projections for the Financial Year 2024/2025. Table one on page eight elaborates the figures.

From the table above, the budget for MEACA is expected to decline from Shs 38.361 billion in the Financial Year 2023/2024 to Shs 37.995 billion in the Financial Year 2024/2025, mainly on account of a decline in wages from Shs 1.285 billion in the Financial Year 2023/2024 to Shs 0.965 billion in the Financial Year 2024/2025 and non-wage from Shs 36.861 billion to Shs 36.815 billion respectively. The development budget is expected to remain the same.

The variation in the budget projections from Shs 38.36 billion at the National Budget Framework Paper to Shs 37.995 billion at the time of the Ministerial Policy Statement was on account of a reduction in the wage budget by Shs 0.366 billion following the staff audit report from the Auditor-General.

The allocated budget for wage for the Financial Year 2024/2025 is to cater only for the staff in point. On number six MEACA's budget for the

Financial Year 2024/2025 by programme, that is; in compliance with the programme approach to budgeting. It can be read.

On page 10, the releases by the programme and sub-programme can also be read. On item number eight, compliance with NDPIII can also be read, but we have highlighted where MEACA contributes to the programmes MEACA subscribes to under the programme-based budgeting approach.

On page 11, number nine compliance with gender and equity requirements. The Ministry of East African Community Affairs as you will realise on page 12 scored 61 per cent. The committee noted a decline from the previous performance as observed on table three, page 12.

Number 10, key activities for MEACA for the Financial Year 2024/2025. This highlights the key activities that are expected to be undertaken by the Ministry of East African Community Affairs and they can be read. I will not go into details.

That takes us to page 14, number 11, MEACA's half-year budget performance for the Financial Year 2023/2024 as it can be observed from Table four – this is an explanation of the table. Of the Shs 38.361 billion approved budget for Financial Year 2023/24, revised to Shs 39.374 billion, Shs 30.75 billion was released by half-year. This reflects 80.2 per cent of the release, while Shs 29.061 billion was spent, reflecting an absorption of 94.5 per cent.

It should be noted that of the Shs 30.75 billion released, Shs 21.5 billion, which is 55 per cent of the money released, was funding for Uganda's contributions to the East African Community (EAC) organs and institutions. EAC statutory contribution funds are meant to be disbursed by the close of the second quarter and this explains the bigger budget release by the half-year.

Mr Speaker, on page 15, under item number 12, we have key achievements for the Ministry of East African Community Affairs, for the

half-year performance for the Financial Year 2023/24. I beg your indulgence, Mr Speaker, that I do not go through this, but Members can peruse it.

That takes me to page 20, under item number 13: budget execution challenges.

- (i) The committee was informed that some of the challenges include delayed recruitment process and changes in systems from an integrated personnel and payroll system to human capital management. This has led to the under-absorption of the wage fund.
- (ii) Failure by old pension beneficiaries to present life certificates, which has led to under-absorption of pension funds since such cases are deleted from the payroll.
- (iii) Delays in the procurement processes, resulting in failure to absorb development funds.
- (iv) Under release of funds, especially development funds. For example, in quarter two, only 50 per cent was released, leading to a failure to implement various core interventions.
- (v) Late release of funds, especially in quarter one.
- (vi) Inadequate resources to implement the mandate of the ministry, which includes; undertaking effective public awareness on EAC programmes, opportunities, market requirements, qualities and standards enforcement, among others.

14.0 Key unfunded and underfunded priorities of the ministry

14.1 Unfunded priorities

At the 21st EAC Summit, a directive was pronounced that Kiswahili be adopted as an official language. The Ministry of East African Community Affairs was directed to coordinate and promote Kiswahili as an official language, which requires Shs 3.25 billion.

Despite the recommendation to provide funds for this unfunded item, the figure has remained the same. Nothing has been provided for that Kiswahili popularisation.

14.2 Underfunded priorities

Mr Speaker, Table 7 lists the underfunded priorities of the ministry. These include sensitisation and public awareness on EAC integration, EAC mandatory meetings and statutory meetings, coordinating regional and national efforts towards the drafting of the EAC political confederation constitution, facilitation of the political leadership, and the verification/validation of pensioners.

All these underfunded items total to a sum of Shs 6.613 billion. The total sum of both unfunded and underfunded priorities of the Ministry of East African Community Affairs is Shs 9.863 billion.

Let me briefly go through the committee's observations and recommendations before I conclude the presentation.

15.1 Integration of Kiswahili language in Uganda

Efforts have been made to integrate Kiswahili language in Uganda. For example, the Judiciary and the Cabinet are conducting Kiswahili training sessions. Parliament is yet to begin, but is in the process. In addition, strategic partnerships with the training institutions have been done. However, in the Financial Year 2024/25, the activity remains unfunded with a funding requirement of Shs 3.25 billion.

The committee recommends that Shs 3.25 billion be provided to the ministry to enable it fast-track the 21st EAC Summit directive to implement the activities under Kiswahili integration.

15.2 Payment of EAC gratuity and pension for former employees of the defunct EAC

The committee was informed that the ministry continues to get numerous claims from former employees of the defunct EAC, complaining that they were not paid, while others claim they were paid less. In order to enable the ministry to verify the claims of the former employees and pay all outstanding arrears accordingly, a

massive verification and validation exercise is required across the country.

In the Financial Year 2023/2024, there were no funds provided for pension payments. The committee was informed that the ministry will not make any request for pension payment until the verification has been finalised.

On 30 November 2023, a total of 1,027 pension files, having claims received from the Ministry of Public Service, was submitted by the Ministry of East African Community Affairs to the internal auditor-general for verification and advice. The outcome of the audit exercise will guide on the way forward regarding the processing of payments.

The verification exercise requires Shs 1.842 billion to ensure the verification and validation of pensioners at district level. However, only Shs 100 million was provided, leaving a funding gap of Shs 1.742 billion.

The committee reiterates its earlier position, that additional Shs 1.742 billion be provided to ensure completion of verification exercise at district level.

15.3 Sensitisation and awareness of the EAC integration agenda

This, I already highlighted, even in the report that I have just presented: there is not enough adequate sensitisation at the moment.

The committee recommends that - Mr Speaker, I beg your indulgence: there is a typo here. The figure under this recommendation is not Shs 1.4 billion, but Shs 1.027 billion, and I beg that the records capture this.

The committee recommends that this amount be provided in the Financial Year 2024/25 to facilitate the Ministry of East African Community Affairs, to effectively carry out public sensitisation and awareness of EAC integration for the benefit of all Ugandans.

The committee further recommends that the Ministry of East African Community Affairs

should change its approach of sensitisation and expand to other stakeholders. For example, farmers who export products including maize, eggs and others within the region, need to be sensitised about the required standards to ensure compliance. Therefore, apart from cross-border sensitisation at border posts, we need to go into the interior.

15.4 EAC mandatory statutory meetings

The Ministry of East African Community Affairs has on a number of incidents failed to participate in key regional meetings due to lack of funding. Attending of regional meetings, participating in bilateral engagements, joint permanent commissions, and trade negotiations are key for Uganda to benefit from the EAC integration. The lack of sufficient funds greatly affects Uganda's position in the negotiation agenda.

The committee recommends that the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development avails Shs 1.8 billion to facilitate MEACA to participate in key regional, mandatory and statutory meetings and ministerial engagements to be able to defend the country's position on various matters.

Coordinating regional and national efforts towards the drafting of the political confederation constitution:

The 17th Summit adopted the political confederation as a transitional model to the EAC Political Confederation. A secretariat has been established at MEACA to coordinate the agenda. However, the planned activities for enhancing EAC Political Confederation Constitution drafting at both national and regional levels are underfunded due to limited resources. Only Shs 0.036 billion of the required Shs 0.480 billion required was provided, leaving a funding gap of Shs 0.444 billion.

The committee recommends that the funding gap of Shs 0.444 billion be availed to enable the ministry to coordinate regional and national efforts towards the drafting of the EAC political confederation, which will later translate into a political federation.

15.6 Facilitation of political leaders

The Minister of the East African Community Affairs who is also the First Deputy Prime Minister has responsibilities both at national and international levels. In order, to undertake all engagements, Shs 3.5 billion is required of which, only Shs 1.9 billion has been provided, leaving a funding gap of Shs 1.6 billion.

The committee recommends that Shs 1.6 billion be provided to facilitate the political leadership activities in the ministry.

15.7 Operationalisation of the EAC protocol on peace and security

The committee noted that much as the protocol on peace and security emphasises the promotion of peace, security, and stability within the Community and good neighbourliness among the partner states, the region still experiences insecurity, which undermines the integration effort. Economic integration, which encompasses the free movement of people, goods and services within the region, can only succeed if peace is established throughout the region.

The committee recommends that the EAC Council of Ministers and the EAC Summit should work hard to ensure full operationalisation of the Protocol on Peace and Security since the country still experiences insecurity among the neighbouring partner states.

15.8 Operationalisation of Customs Union and Common Market Protocol

Although the legal framework allows businesses to establish and operate in partner states, remove all existing non-tariff barriers to trade and not impose any new ones, there are still some trade barriers, which create obstacles to traders, especially the non-tariff barriers. Traders from Uganda encounter numerous non-tariff barriers ranging from bureaucratic procedures, licensing requirements and harmonised fees for goods destined to member partner states within the region.

The committee recommends that MEACA should coordinate the full implementation of the Customs Union and Common Market Protocols on all EAC border posts and ensure that all non-tariff barriers are dealt with to ease regional trade.

Operations at One-Stop Border Posts (OSBP):

The committee observed that whereas OSBPs were introduced to ease the movement of persons, goods and services on border posts within the region, passengers complained of long queues on some border posts because of low staffing levels, especially on the Ugandan side which inconveniences passengers and defeats the purpose for which OSBPs were put in place.

The committee recommends that the relevant ministries, departments and agencies should ensure full staffing, especially at border posts in order to ease the movement of goods and services.

Conclusion

The committee strongly recommends that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development provides funds for the unfunded and underfunded priorities of the Ministry of East African Community Affairs, totalling Shs 9.863 billion to enable MEACA to carry out activities that spearhead and strengthen regional integration.

Proposed budget estimates for the Financial Year 2024/2025

The committee recommends that Parliament adopts this report and approves the budget estimates as follows, for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

Vote 021: Ministry of East African Community Affairs

Expenditure items and the proposed budget –
Recurrent expenditure – Shs 37,780,000,000,
of which -

Wage - Shs 965,000,000;

Non-wage - Shs 36,815,000,000;

Government of Uganda development expenditure -Shs 215,000,000;

The total budget – Shs 37,995,000,000.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Chairperson. Honourable Chairperson, in your recommendations, you are saying we should add more funds to the committee and all that, then in the conclusion, you have provided a table with specific figures which you are complaining about. Yet, they are the ones you said we should provide without adding anything.

Honourable chairperson, it might appear like a procedure, but that procedure is - because it is a contradiction. Here, you are complaining; you are saying we revise, but in the conclusion on the table of supply -

Honourable colleagues, I think we should not focus so much on that table of supply because the Committee on Budget will handle that. Otherwise, we will need to adjust, if we adopt this one. I do not know if there is a standard form provided or one would say it is a practice. Otherwise, let it not mislead you from discussing what you are supposed to discuss and give recommendations that you are supposed to give.

Honourable colleagues, we have two items that we are going to discuss at once. As you have seen, they are closely related. They feed into each other. Item 4(ii) feeds into item 5 (i). The debate starts now. Honourable minister, do you want to make any comments with regard to the field report or should we wait so you can sum up at the end?

I will start with, Hon. Prof. Mushemeza, Hon. Silas, Hon. Okeyoh, Dr Opio, Member for Madi-Okollo, Member for UPC - honourable colleagues, I am going to give you a chance. Let us be quick so that we give others a chance. The shadow minister will come in, then we conclude with –

3.46

PROF. ELIJAH MUSHEMEZA (Independent, Sheema County South, Sheema):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the Chairperson of the Committee on East African Community Affairs for both presentations.

On the field report, I was attracted by two recommendations, and I intend to make a nexus between these two recommendations and the report on the policy statement.

One recommendation was that we need to promote awareness of the integration process and then promote Kiswahili as a language. When you scan the Government documents for the last ten years, you will find these two recommendations. Some time back, I was part of a Government committee that was entrusted with the responsibility of analysing the first tracking of the political federation.

Similar recommendations also came out. Now, when you look at the policy statement, you find that addressing these challenges is an unfunded priority and I would like the honourable minister to comment because she is a historical and has been involved in these matters. I would have expected, for example, the chairperson to highlight budget allocations to respond to these challenges and then make proposals as she was trying to say, how much more money you need to address these challenges.

To find within the ceiling there is no allocation to address these historical challenges is very absurd. On the issue –(Member timed out)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Switch on and conclude, honourable.

PROF. MUSHEMEZA: I agree this is very fundamental, but certain things do not require money. Sometimes when you reach the immigration point and you are going to Kenya or Tanzania, they ask you, “How many days are you going to stay in Kenya?” It is an embarrassment, and this can be addressed at the level of the Council of Ministers. Why should an East African be asked how many days he will stay in a particular country? Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Silas, Hon. Okeyoh, then Hon. Afidra.

3.49

MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate the committee and the minister. If there is a ministry that is not being funded fully, this is one of them and I think Parliament now needs to act. We need to realise that it is important that we fund the Ministry of East African Community Affairs. The matters which have been raised here cannot be handled without money.

The first issue is the issue of sensitisation, and public awareness. I have a complaint; even when we go for parliamentary games, you find that Members go there and watch themselves. The public is not involved. I noticed it in Arusha, Juba, Kigali, Kampala and we are about to see it either in Mombasa, Nairobi or somewhere else.

Mr Speaker, it is this Government of ours that should be budgeting for money to support Parliament so that when we go there for the games, let the public join and that will make it easier for the people to get to know what is happening around East Africa. I see that as a point, much as Members are not nodding for me. (Laughter)

In East Africa, there is a country which I have not been to and that is Congo. I have not gone to Kinshasa. For anybody to tell me to prepare a visa to go there, I feel so bad, but now that they are coming to East Africa, and they ask you to bring your national ID, that is what people want to see.

When you make it easy for people, they enjoy it. Then they say, “We want to be a part of that” and I can tell you, at one point, all of Africa will want to join –(Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable. The problem is that he started enjoying it and you went beyond.

MR AOGON: I apologise because I am related to the forum on East African Affairs and you know that is my House as well.

Mr Speaker, a budget of less than Shs 40 billion is a small budget. Why don't we close our eyes and give these people the money that they need? They clear the pensions; the political leaders can have their meetings and let us enable things to move. We have failed to open the Kampala-Jinja Expressway, which should be carrying vehicles from Nairobi to Kampala and back. The passengers are stuck. Accidents are happening every day. What are we doing?

Mr Speaker, it is my humble prayer that this House, for the first time, makes East Africa a priority. Integration is not for leisure; it is for our good. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Okeyoh –

3.52

MR PETER OKEYOH (NRM, Bukooli Island County, Namayingo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson for the report.

Mr Speaker, the issue of Kiswahili as an official language is very paramount and I think if it is one of the unfunded priorities, then we are being unfair. Kiswahili is the only language that unifies Africa and I would urge this House that let us take the first step when we are looking at our Rules of Procedure and have Kiswahili as one of the languages that we can use in the House. I think that will be a good gesture to the entire country that Parliament is championing the use of Swahili.

Secondly, when it comes to our education system, Kiswahili is not one of the compulsory languages. Why do we preach water and take wine? Let us lead by example. Let us prioritise Swahili, as one of the languages in our schools and this will help to cement the East African community.

Mr Speaker, I come from the border district of Namayingo, where we have Kenya in the east and Tanzania in the west, but even in business,

you find that our people, actually, like the report indicates, Uganda is always given a raw deal when it comes to business. You find that our goods cannot easily access our sister countries, and their goods have a field day in our country.

I think we should look at this critically and help the Ministry of East African Community Affairs. I am very grateful to the minister. She has tried her best to make sure that Uganda is always given a fair deal, and it is upon this House that –*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Afidra.

3.54

MR RONALD AFIDRA (NRM, Lower Madi County, Madi-Okollo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for giving us a good report.

I want to address my mind to the porous border points, which came out from the first report, aware that we are really thinking about integration. What does not get into my mind is, as Parliament, if we are talking of integration, and that East Africans are together, why should there be a recommendation called porous border? It means we are yet to be integrated.

From their report, they have visited border points like Busia, Katuna, Malaba, and Bunagana. When I tried to look through the report of these different border points visited by the committee, the border points from Elegu up to Lia Custom, the entire West Nile was not visited. Not to say that there were not enough resources, but aware that South Sudan has become part of the East African community; that is about a population of 11 million and we are talking about DRC Congo where we trade so much with them, a population of more than 100 million. We do know that they visited Bunagana.

However, West Nile is one of the regions experiencing the border points and this is where there are the highest revenue leakages in cases between the two or three countries, even including DR Congo.

That said, I have two recommendations through you, Mr Speaker.

1. The recommendations put forward by the committee should include the entire country and areas where they did not visit, particularly West Nile.
2. We know that one-stop border points have been established. In Mpondwe and Katuna, construction is ongoing, while Elegu was completed sometime back.

Through you, Mr Speaker, I would like to urge that a one-stop border point be established, if not at Lia in Adumi, in Koboko where the three countries meet. Or at least in Vurra. We will be able to reduce incidences of porous trade between these three or four countries. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Afidra. Let me pick Hon. Naome Kibaaju, Hon. Boniface Okot, Hon. Mourine Osoru and Hon. Nayebele.

3.57

MS NAOME KIBAAJU (NRM, Sheema County North, Sheema): Mr Speaker, I take this opportunity to thank our dear former Speaker, Rt Hon. Kadaga, for the good job she is doing in the Community. *(Applause)*

On the issue of Kiswahili, as the Parliament of Uganda, where we do not normally use Kiswahili, we should lead the way this time by having—*(Interjections)*—many of us do not speak Kiswahili. We would like—*(Interjections)*—they are now disturbing me.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, you are protected, please.

MS KIBAAJU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. There are two types of Kiswahili, if I may say. There is one spoken on the east coast and inside Kenya. There is one spoken in Tanzania. As we start learning Kiswahili, where should we lay emphasis?

As leaders here, if we intend to start using Kiswahili in our Parliament, we need classes.

I understand that there are some taking place at the NRM Secretariat, but that is a very congested place and not conducive for learning. I wish we could have it here in one of our rooms at Parliament. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

4.00

MR BONIFACE OKOT (NRM, Youth Representative, Northern): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also join the rest of my colleagues to appreciate the report of the committee. However, I have two concerns.

The first concern is on sensitisation and public awareness on the East African Community integration agenda. I support the recommendation of the committee to avail Shs 1.4 billion for the next financial year to facilitate the ministry in carrying out public sensitisation and awareness on the integration agenda.

However, I am very concerned about the deliberate involvement of youth in the integration agenda. You will notice that 75 per cent of our population in the East African Community is below the age of 30. I believe that an integration agenda without the participation and sensitisation of the youth is in vain.

I need clarity from the minister on whether there are plans to have platforms to integrate the youth meaningfully in this integration agenda.

The second issue is on compliance and harmonisation of domestic laws to conform to the community laws, directives and decisions.

I have had interactions with Ugandan students in Kenya and Tanzania. As opposed to an agreement by the Inter-University Council of East Africa that we should have a harmonised fees structure, we still find situations where some Ugandan students claim that they are paying much higher tuition—*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Okot, please do not allocate yourself time. Request and then we see whether we still have enough

to give you. [Hon. Boniface Okot: I request] Conclude that point alone.

MR BONIFACE OKOT: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for being youth-friendly. *(Laughter)*

My concern is that there is a need for us to ensure compliance to the general law that East African students pay the same fee as local students in different countries. I kindly request a comment as well from our minister in that regard. Thank you.

4.03

MS MOURINE OSORU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson for that wonderful report however; I have a few concerns on behalf of the business community here in Uganda.

I would like to understand why some of the business people who are importers like us find challenges, especially at these one-stop-border points. When we are doing clearance, they normally tell us that the network is down.

That one now goes to the Uganda Revenue Authority; what do they mean by “network is down”? What is that network because when we are doing clearance, there is a duration of time that the shipment companies give you to use their containers and once you delay they charge you?

Secondly, Lia Customs Border Point is located in Arua City and it is one of the border posts that you have always abandoned. Lia Customs collects a lot of revenue, but the status of Adumi Road is embarrassing, yet some of these goods go beyond DR Congo, and others go to Koboko. What is the status of our roads in Uganda?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS OSORU: Mr Speaker, one minute, thank you. West Nile has so much that is coming from DR Congo and South Sudan, especially produce and timber. However, in most cases, there are tendencies of corruption in –*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, Hon. Osoru.

MS OSORU: I would like to request that the Government considers establishing infrastructure along those border points and to consider Lia a one-stop-border point in West Nile, thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. That is also close to what Hon. Afidra has raised.

4.05

MS SYLVIA NAYEBALE (NRM, Woman Representative, Gomba): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson and the able minister, for the good Ministerial Policy Statement.

I would like to support the ministry, especially on their recommendation on Kiswahili, which has been supported by most Members - on the Shs 3.2 billion.

Mr Speaker, among the achievements of the ministry, it participated in the harmonisation of the standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the inspection of maize, beans and rice to facilitate intra-trade and they were adopted, which is a good thing.

I believe and request the ministry not to end at the harmonisation of SOPs, but also to look at the harmonisation of tax regimes to avoid the smuggling of goods from the neighbouring countries. It has been a policy for goods to be smuggled from the neighbouring countries to Uganda because of the different tax regimes that make goods in Uganda a little more expensive than they are in the neighbouring countries.

Goods such as beans, rice, cement and even cigarettes are smuggled, at times. I would request the “able” minister that as they harmonise, they also look at the tax regimes, especially to support our local traders. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Komol?

4.07

MR PHILIPHS LOKWANG (NRM, Napore West County, Karenga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My name is Philips Lokwang Ilukol, not Komol.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sorry.

MR PHILIPHS LOKWANG: I have two issues. I attended the East African Legislative Assembly debate where one of our representatives brought up an issue where Ugandans, as they were entering Tanzania, were returned for lack of documents yet we are saying even the identity card can allow them to move. In such a scenario, what is the real understanding of integration if it is not free movement?

Secondly, I appreciate the team for having gone all over the border points. My concern is about the Karamoja Subregion, which borders almost three countries. I have an entry to South Sudan, which has heavy trucks doing business, but there is nothing called a border point. It is free entry, free exit.

When you go to Ik land, there is also free entry and exit; business is going on. Even when you come to Amudat and the like - I request the Ministry of East African Affairs to go to these areas and put these border points in order to have a check on free entry and exit. Thank you. Information -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for Madi-Okollo? Honourable colleague, you cannot conclude and then say "information". A point of information is to help you in your own submission. Since you have already concluded, you cannot accept the information.

4.09

MS JOANNE ANIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Madi-Okollo): Thank you, Mr Speaker and I thank the committee for the good report. I address myself to the underfunded priority of sensitisation and public awareness.

We have the legacy of the founding fathers of the East African Community and it is that our parents could speak Kiswahili. The business language in Uganda was actually Kiswahili in the early 80s and 90s. However, as time has gone on, this is no longer the case.

You find a good number of the population in northern Uganda speaking Kiswahili, but these are people who are 45 years and above. Therefore, there really needs to be a sensitisation of the fact that we are East Africans. Many people know that we are Ugandans, but the fact that we are East Africans is not common knowledge to the people in our communities.

I belong to the forum on East African Community Affairs in Parliament here – I am actually the new chairperson. One of the issues that we are dealing with is creating a critical mass of Members of Parliament in the Ugandan Parliament and in the other parliaments in East Africa who can champion the political and economic agenda of the East African Community.

I affirm that this Parliament should join hands and help to fund the priority of sensitisation and public awareness.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Dr Opio?

4.11

DR SAMUEL OPIO (Independent, Kole North County, Kole): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the report. Notably, the report is raising the unfunded priority for the payment of the former employees of the East African Community.

Mr Speaker, it is now 45 years down the road and some are still waiting for their payment. Some have never been paid, while others have been underpaid. These are senior citizens who worked in high levels as economists and accountants. Even in the book of *My Life's Journey* by the First Lady, she indicated that she was also an employee of the East African Community, under the East Africa Airways. However, up to now, payment has not been made.

Mr Speaker, payment delayed is payment denied. The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, there is a difference between a human being and being human. I appeal that the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, as a human being, be human and provide resources for payment of these people. Otherwise, the senior citizens are saying that whereas you are talking of “East African integration”, they are seeing it as “senior citizens’ disintegration”.

To our Deputy Prime Minister, thank you for championing this. You have talked about the East African Community Mediation Agreement Bill. It is now almost six months and that Bill has not yet come to Parliament. I appeal to you that this Bill is tabled soonest so that these senior citizens – some have died while others are crippled and disabled.

I also ask you, Mr Speaker, to intervene. Last time we pleaded with you on the Shs 1 billion for roads and you appealed to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and they provided for it. I appeal, again, to you that we consider our senior citizens this time. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Margaret Lamwaka?

4.13

MS MARGARET LAMWAKA (Independent, Chua East County, Kitgum): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I would also like to thank the chairperson of the committee. I have two issues to raise and one of them is on the porous borders.

Rt Deputy Prime Minister, when you were the Speaker of Parliament in the Ninth Parliament and 10th Parliament, Parliament created six border points in Uganda and Okuti Border Market in Kitgum was one of them. Kitgum District Local Government gave one square kilometre of land to the Government of Uganda to build the border market, but up to date, there is nothing on the ground. We keep on asking on the Floor and are still waiting.

However, Mr Speaker, the porous borders in Kitgum – between Uganda and South Sudan – is one of the places where we are experiencing a lot of insecurity. Every now and then, South Sudanese come and commit a lot of atrocities such as animal raiding in Uganda.

How I wish this Parliament could provide funds as it is clearly stated here that the minister’s office is underfunded such that we would really create some – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, conclude.

MS MARGARET LAMWAKA: As I conclude, Mr Speaker, we need to fund this such that all these other happenings - the retirement package and border markets – can be worked on. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for Rukiga?

4.15

MR ROLAND NDYOMUGYENYI (Independent, Rukiga County, Rukiga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the good report, but also have two comments to make.

Number one, this Parliament discussed a motion about paying the former East African employees and we passed the resolutions. These were forwarded to the relevant ministries. It would be prudent that we get an update from the responsible ministries on how far they went with implementing those resolutions passed by this Parliament.

Secondly, the East African integration, to me, is a big challenge and it is in vain. We are losing people, especially in South Sudan. Over the weekend, we saw pictures and videos of our people. One was a Ugandan and another a Kenyan, killed by a mob in South Sudan.

Mr Speaker, for people who come from Uganda and other countries intending to work in Tanzania, getting a work permit in Tanzania is very complicated yet, the people from Tanzania can come here to Uganda and get work permits

very easily. As policymakers, we need to look into these matters to understand whether we are too lenient on these people. Otherwise, they have continued to mistreat our people.

The traders are in fear. I was incensed recently why maize prices in Uganda sometimes go as low as Shs 200. The Kenyan traders come and buy maize and hoard it in Kisumu and tell the Kenyan Government not to allow any more maize to enter Kenya until they have –
(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Mpindi.

4.17

MR MPINDI BUMALI (Independent, PWD Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mine is in line with Section 9(6) of the Public Finance Management Act 2015, where the minister is required to present a Certificate of Gender and Equity response to the groups under that provision which includes persons with disability.

I heard from the presentation of the Chairperson of the East African Community Affairs Committee that they managed to achieve 60 per cent of the requirement of gender equity compliance. What is happening is that there are groups mentioned under that, but most of these ministers get the certificate when they have reached 50 or 60 per cent, leaving out other groups, especially persons with disability.

On many occasions, their issues are not addressed and the gender certificate is issued on the premise that they have maybe addressed issues of the youth, women, and men, leaving out issues of persons with disabilities. I do not know what we are going to do to see –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, to be specific with this policy statement, are issues of people with disabilities not addressed? I do not want us to be general. You find a ministry has addressed them and others have not. The chairperson will clarify.

MR MPINDI: Mr Speaker, what I am trying to say is that most of the ministries have not

addressed them, but even when they are addressed, it is very little and cannot address our concerns. So, I want the chairperson to clarify whether in the certificate that they presented, issues of disability were addressed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I think this is a general question for all entities. Chairperson, later when you are responding, analyse the certificate so we can look at this sector. I am still on this side. Hon. Kayondo, I am now on the Opposition side. We shall have our brand new Member, Hon. Sarah Aguti from Dokolo.

4.20

MR FRED KAYONDO (DP, Mukono County South, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Before I proceed, allow me to commend the Minister of East African Community Affairs for having made this ministry a ministry. Prior, this ministry appeared to be a parastatal, but today, I thank you, Rt Hon. Kadaga, for having elevated this ministry so that now it is considered a ministry among ministries.

Mr Speaker, it is the same way; you have elevated the position of Deputy Speakership and have put it at a level where it was not before. I commend you for that, Mr Speaker. I loved it so much –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I hope you will not ask for more time. (*Laughter*)

MR KAYONDO: I liked the point about porous borders. Emphasis has mainly been on the mainland porous borders and the borders of the lake are not attended to and they are being exploited. Ugandans share Lake Victoria with other countries and those borders are not attended to. Emphasis is put on the mainland borders and a lot is going on.

Mr Speaker, there is a lot of theft on the lakes. The fishing gears and engines are being stolen and Ugandans are being killed and when these people are chased, they go to the neighbouring countries, simply because there is no emphasis on those borders. To add insult to injury, there is a lot of illegal fishing which is being done

on the side of Uganda; poison fishing. Our neighbours are using poisons in our waters simply because we are neglecting these borders.

It is my humble request to Hon. Kadaga, with your ability, is to please put emphasis on these borders we have on the lakes. Thank you very much, I submit.

4.23

MS SARAH AGUTI (UPC, Woman Representative, Dokolo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson and the committee for this wonderful report they have given us. I want to put –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Procedure? Hon. Dan, it is a maiden speech. Let us conclude. I will allow you after her. No, that was a greeting, honourable. Today is her maiden speech.

MS AGUTI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to talk about the integration of Kiswahili in Uganda. This is very important because we have businessmen that do business across borders and if this is introduced in schools - If somebody drops out, they can do business since they know Kiswahili. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kimosho, do you have a procedural matter?

MR ATWIJUKIRE: Mr Speaker, the procedure did not concern her, if that was the reason for rumbling - Members. My concern is that –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, Members do not rumble here.

MR ATWIJUKIRE: I withdraw.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR ATWIJUKIRE: My concern is that the issue we are discussing concerns the East African countries and that naturally brings in diplomatic concerns. Isn't it procedurally right that when we are discussing some of the issues, we are mindful of the accusations

that we put to the neighbouring countries and states and the motives that we impute? While we are advocating for integration, it can come out more negatively than where we are. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kimosho, that is absolutely right. Honourable colleagues, we have to be very cautious and we usually warn on issues that have an impact on the image of our neighbours. The minister will clarify most of these issues, but let us be mindful of the language we use.

I am on the Opposition now - I usually calculate the numbers in my head for people who have spoken. Let me now pick Hon. Santa and then Hon. Gilbert Olanya.

4.26

MS SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join my colleagues in thanking the committee chairperson and her members for this very good report. We have a very committed and dedicated minister in the sector of East Africa. I would like to plead with this House to support the ministry so that her level of dedication does not go in vain.

Mr Speaker, we normally participate in the East African sports. Even when we are having our meetings, there are two languages used; Kiswahili and English. My question to you, Mr Speaker, as the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Commission is, when is Parliament of Uganda beginning to learn Kiswahili? This is one form of awareness. The Judiciary and the Executive have already started. How I wish we could also start immediately so that in our next meeting, those of us who do not know Kiswahili will be comfortable.

Secondly, the underfunded priorities are about Shs 9.8 million. Can the Budget Committee help us give the Ministry of East African Community Affairs this money? After all, we are talking about integration. Who are we integrating for if we cannot create awareness and learn Kiswahili?

On the education system, honourable minister, do we have a harmonised education system for the East African countries? If not, what is the way forward?

Finally, harmonisation of travel documents. There was a time we had a meeting, again in South Sudan. Some of us were very comfortable – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I borrowed 20 minutes from the Prime Minister because you know it is supposed to be Prime Minister’s time; I negotiated with her. You also know that on Thursday, we have issues to do with your areas. That is why I want us to move quickly so that we go to Prime Minister’s Time and you are also able to raise your issues. Hon. Gilbert Olanya?

4.28

MR GILBERT OLANYA (FDC, Kilak South County, Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to appreciate the committee. Madam Chairperson, on page 23, you recommended that Shs 1.742 billion be allocated for the verification exercise of the former workers of East Africa. I thought the committee was recommending that this money should be allocated for the payment of former workers of East Africa.

Mr Speaker, I recall when I was sitting on this committee that verification was done. The committee travelled with staff from East Africa. I remember we went to Soroti and Mbale. We called all those people who were working with the East African Community. Verification was already done, but the committee is still recommending that Shs 1.74 billion be allocated for verification exercise. Let the chairperson clarify on this money.

Secondly, Government is in the process of teaching Kiswahili in all schools in this country, but we are lacking teachers for Kiswahili. I pray to the minister in charge of East Africa, the Rt Hon. Rebecca Kadaga, that we should allocate money and train teachers to handle Kiswahili relations in all the schools across the board. Otherwise, thank you very much.

4.30

MS GORRETH NAMUGGA (NUP, Mawogoola County South, Ssembabule): Thank you, Mr Speaker and the committee chairperson for the adequate information.

As a former minister for ICT, I would like to interest colleagues on the issue of limited coverage – *(Interjections)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The record is, “the former shadow minister.”

MS NAMUGGA: Mr Speaker, I thought that the fact that I came from this side, Members would know where I belong.

The limited coverage of information and communications technology was in the report of the Malaba-Busia visit. We must invest money in ICT. These systems that do not communicate are a waste of Government resources. Money was invested, but systems do not speak to each other.

Therefore, I request that in this budget for the Financial Year 2024/2025, money should be allocated to ensure that these systems are put to good use.

Mr Speaker, when it comes to Uganda’s agricultural commodities being denied access to markets in other East African countries, I want to draw the attention of honourable colleagues to Pillar 1 of the Parish Development Model that calls for production, storage, processing and marketing. This pillar should be allocated money because this is where the whole challenge begins. The quality of the products that we take to other countries should be looked into by implementation of Pillar 1 of the model.

When it comes to the ministerial policy statement, I suggest that when it comes to statutory obligations, this should take the first call on every budget. We should not come here to talk about issues of pension and gratuity. Hon. Musasizi, you are aware that under the National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, you must provide adequate

resources to these institutions. This ministry is very productive. We are looking for markets and we should allocate it adequate –(Member timed out.)

4.32

MR MUWADA NKUNYINGI (NUP, Kyadondo County East, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Speaking as a shadow Minister of Foreign Affairs, I am privy to conflicting realities and I would like to learn from the Minister of the East African Community Affairs.

One, we are talking about supporting integration. Right now, Ugandans cannot access Tanzania, specifically, without a passport, whereas the spirit of integration would allow us to use national IDs. To worsen the situation, you communicated in the media that there is a visa waiver between Uganda and DRC. As we speak, traders are complaining, including nationals of Uganda. They require a visa and you must apply prior. You even pay \$100 for a short visa and more, whereas Uganda waived the visa requirements for DRC citizens. Where are we? Now that we are considering a policy statement for your ministry, what is the plan to harmonise that?

Lastly, two years ago, an ambassador was appointed by Uganda to DRC. Up to date, the ambassador has not presented credentials. Diplomatically, an ambassador cannot commence operations in a host country without being received and presenting credentials. I want to learn; what has the Ministry of East African Community Affairs done?

Also, I would like to learn from the Prime Minister; what has Government done to harmonise this? We do not have a fully accredited ambassador –(Member timed out.)

4.34

THE SHADOW MINISTER OF THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (Ms Lucy Akello): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to thank the committee chairperson for the good report. I also want to report that I was able to present my alternative.

I am going to re-echo some of the issues that have been talked about here, but most of all, I would like to thank the Minister of East African Community Affairs for doing her best, even with the limited resources.

Honourable colleagues, I would like to draw to your attention that this sector is only asking - What has been allocated to it is 0.1 per cent and whatsoever the chairperson is asking for is not too much. It is pocket change to some of the sectors. So, I implore that we support this sector wholly, if we are to go for integration.

Secondly, on Kiswahili which I also talked about during the alternative policy statement, we can explore other options. For example, can we talk with the National Curriculum Development Centre to ensure that Kiswahili is taught to our little ones? It is very difficult for me, who is an adult now, to learn Kiswahili properly, but my little child who is five years old can easily learn and adapt.

We also need to change the mind-set. Mr Speaker, you will appreciate the fact that perhaps the low -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, honourable, conclude.

MS LUCY AKELLO: Perhaps the reason why Kiswahili is not much appreciated in Uganda is the mind-set and the attitude towards it because it was associated with terrible things and maybe, we need to change the narrative that it is for the good of East Africa.

About infrastructure, we need to do more as a country. When I undertook a personal pilgrimage to Kibeho, I used a bus and because it is a one-stop border, it is very hectic when it comes to the Ugandan side, all through. The queues are very long and the staff at the immigration are few. The handling and attitude is sometimes not the best. We have invested a lot and we can do better than this.

When it came to the road, while we were driving from the other side, it was so smooth, but when we got to the Ugandan side, oh my

God. To make matters worse, I was the only Member of Parliament in that bus and everyone was looking at me and asking, what are you doing here? Much as it is a one-stop border point, we must ensure that our side of Uganda is also okay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Tinkasiimire?

4.38

MR BARNABAS TINKASIIMIRE (NRM, Buyaga West County, Kagadi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join my colleagues to thank the chairperson for the good report and the minister for the good job she is doing. I only want to raise an issue that she picked when she was still the Speaker of this House.

You are talking about the free movement of goods and services. We have colleagues who are doing the Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC) in Rwanda, but when they return to this country, they are never admitted to the Bar until they exhaust all options and return to the Law Development Centre (LDC). I am one of the people who holds two Bar courses. I could not be enrolled to the Bar of Uganda until I went to LDC here.

I would like to find out from the honourable minister how far she has gone in making sure that this matter is properly handled because we have parents who cannot afford to have their children undertake a Bar course in Rwanda and then return here and do another Bar course. As a person who has perused the laws, the excuses the law council gives are not tenable.

My last submission; we admit goods in East Africa. I am interested in those which come from outside. At what point are we admitting these substandard goods like Chinese products? I do not know whether it is a copy 10 or a copy what -

For instance; they bring here clothing which cannot even last for two months, shoes that they put on for a day and they are broken and they say that it is because of the money that we are paying for it. I do not think that East

Africans are bargaining for this. We would be interested, as a Community, in being protected against these kind of products. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. LOP -

4.41

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Two quick issues; I also join colleagues in appreciating the committee for processing this. We did sign the East African Common Market Protocol, 2009 and it came into operation in 2010. The idea behind this was to ease movement of labour, services and goods, but it is still a challenge. I know Rt Hon. Kadaga has been pushing and our urge to her is to keep pushing because it is still a challenge. Many of our goods cannot make it to some of these markets.

Ugandans cannot work when they go to some of these countries. They say, you have got to get a permit; this document and the other, and yet we have this protocol in place. We urge the minister to push harder so that these other countries can adhere to this protocol.

Finally, towards the end of last year, I was in Kenya with some members of the Committee on Commissions, Statutory Authorities, and State Enterprises (COSASE) and we met the Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly. We had an interaction about numerous things and one of the issues we asked about was the funding that is contributed by the countries.

It is alarming that there are only about two or three countries that are faithfully paying their dues and Uganda is one of those. That is a good thing. However, the other countries are not meeting their end of the bargain meaning, it is Uganda and one or two other countries shouldering the burden, which is not sustainable.

We interacted with staff at the Community and they were telling us the challenges they grapple up with regarding projects, programmes and

many other engagements they have got to undertake that cannot run because there is no money. The little money that Uganda and one or two other countries contribute is not sufficient. If these other countries have chosen to be part of this Community, let them meet their end of the bargain. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have a procedural matter here - Hon. Kabanda, you can wait.

MS KAAYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to inquire if our representatives to the East African community were mobilised. It does not look good because some of the recommendations would be forwarded to their Parliament. In case there is any other opportunity for us to share our issues, they should be heavily mobilised to be present.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, Rt Hon. Kadaga will explain whether they are in session, but the good thing is the minister is here. Others are not members of this House, they would only be in this Chamber.

4.44

MR DAVID KABANDA (NRM, Kasambya County, Mubende): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Ugandan Ambassador to Kenya, the late Hajji Galiwango, passed away on the 16th January 2023. A year has passed without an ambassador to Kenya. I would like to inform the Rt Hon. Prime Minister and Rt Hon. Kadaga to bring this to the attention of the Head of State because it is not a good gesture towards our neighbours. If we are promoting the East African spirit yet you cannot respect your neighbours, I do not think they take this in good spirit.

Additionally, Uganda and Kenya cooperate a lot in terms of trade. Recently, you heard that our eggs, milk and maize were stopped from going into Kenya. Therefore, we do not have a focal point person to represent Uganda at that level. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Kabanda, that is an important point. It is not only

the ambassador, but we do not also have a substantive deputy ambassador there. Even when you reach – In other countries, when I reach, I feel the embassy, but here you do not feel it. People are murmuring or whispering. The good thing is that Hon. Kabanda has requested the Prime Minister and the Minister for East African Community Affairs to bring it to the attention of the President. Hon. Peter Ogwang?

4.46

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS) (Mr Peter Ogwang): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to, first of all, thank the senior Minister for East African Community Affairs, Rt Hon. Rebecca Kadaga. I would like to answer the following questions.

The first is the question of teaching our children Kiswahili in schools. I would like to confirm that with effect from the next financial year, if the Budget is approved, we have an allocation of Shs 94 billion to facilitate the recruitment of Kiswahili teachers in all the Government-aided schools –(Interjection)- Pease, you are the ones with the powers to approve the Budget; that is for Parliament. That is what we have planned, as the Ministry of Education and Sports. That is the information I wanted to give this august House. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister for East African Community Affairs?

4.48

THE FIRST DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (Ms Rebecca Kadaga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee chairperson and the members for a good report. I largely agree with what they have presented. I would like to thank the members for their inquiries, support, observations and recommendations. I have 34 issues to answer and I will start with the political federation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Right honourable minister, you do not have to go through all of them.

MS KADAGA: Okay. The political federation is something that we desire. However, we have met – I do not know whether to call it resistance, but – lethargy because ever since the programme started for consultations, only Uganda, Kenya and Burundi have carried out national consultations. The United Republic of Tanzania has not consulted and neither has Rwanda. They have made appointments and cancelled them. South Sudan is quiet and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is completely quiet.

Therefore, it is something that we are pushing and I would like to request that when you meet members from those countries, please, tell them to ask their Heads of State to ensure that consultations on the political federation take place as soon as possible.

On immigration, I have been embarrassed myself. There was a time I drove from Arusha to Nairobi. Of course, I had my blue passport. The Tanzania side said they had no problem, but on the Kenyan side, they asked me where I was going and I said, “To Nairobi.” I was asked why I was going to Nairobi and I said I was going for a meeting. Then they asked, “With whom?” I answered, “With my counterpart.” Then they asked, “How long will you be there?” I said: “You man, I am the Minister for East African Community Affairs, why are you asking me how long I am going to be in Nairobi?” *(Laughter)*

So, although we are at the top level, we still have a lot of work to do to inculcate it in the staff and the other cadres. It is an area where we need to do some work.

On public participation at the games, I think we shall have to market the games a bit more and inform the population so that they are able to attend and be part of what we are doing.

On the issue of Kiswahili, Mr Speaker, I am very disappointed with this Parliament. I have been here on three occasions and I have informed you that we developed the training materials for Parliament over five years ago. They are here and include the Rules of Procedure and even the prayers; everything is here.

Last week, I was supposed to officiate at the forum – I do not know who the chairperson of the forum is. MP for Madi-Okollo? They invited me to attend the forum and then they cancelled the meeting. So, I do not know. However, the materials are all here and it is up to you. I am happy that the Cabinet and the Judiciary are taking lessons.

The National Resistance Movement (NRM) Secretariat is training 300 people who will graduate in July and it is open to all, whether you are NRM, DP, FDC or UPC. There is training every Wednesday and Saturday at the NRM headquarters and it is free.

On education, Hon. Ogwang has partially answered. I would like to say that we do not have shortage of Kiswahili teachers. There are over 2,000 Kiswahili teachers in this country. Hon. Peace Mutuuzo is one of them. Yes. So, we do not have a shortage of Kiswahili teachers; all we need is to deploy them. *(Interjection)* Gender? No, this one is new. *(Laughter)*

On the National Kiswahili Council, we are supposed to have in place the National Kiswahili Council – I do not know whether the law is here – to help us in propagating Kiswahili. However, we plan that in a short time, we should have five examinable subjects: English, Mathematics, Science, SST and Kiswahili at the Primary Level so that we have generations that speak Kiswahili from the beginning.

Hon. Afidra and Hon. Osoru, concerning the borders in Arua, I am going to Elegu on the 9th of this month. However, I have been to Mpondwe, Malaba, Busia and Katuna. I am proposing the opening of two border posts in Mulwanda and Buteba to decongest Busia, but I will make sure that I visit all these. I have taken note of Lia, which you say is a very active border, but has not been gazetted.

Hon. Kibaaju, thank you for the compliments. Again, I am saying the materials are here in this building. If you want more, my officers are here.

Hon. Boniface – are the youth involved? Yes, the youth are involved. I have addressed the students at UCU, Makerere University and there is a group of young people called the *Ligi Ya Vijana Ya EAC* who have been going around the region to discuss integration among themselves. There is a beginning, but if you can give me the necessary resources, we shall do more.

I think I have answered Hon. Osoru.

Hon. Nayebale, harmonising the tax regime is something we do all the time, but there is a constant set of fluctuation because things change every day. However, we are working on it.

I am disappointed that the United Republic of Tanzania has been very slow in – (*Break in recording*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: ICT, I do not know why the microphone is on and off.

MS KADAGA: They still insist on passports. In the last one year, I have tried to organise a meeting with the immigration chiefs of both Uganda and Tanzania. It has not yet taken place, but I am still working on it.

On Karamoja, I have noted that there are no border posts there. I will take an interest in that.

Hon. Okia, yes, the other generation used to speak Kiswahili. We are going to pick up on that and make sure that we bridge that gap.

Schools – no, we have talked about the schools.

On pensions, we are still working on the pensions.

On the East African Community Mediation Agreement Bill, I must express my disappointment and frustration. I am not a bureaucratic person and I am very frustrated with the bureaucracy I have found in governments. If you knew how difficult it has been to produce one Bill. Today, they tell

you, check with Arusha or they ask, where is the original copy of the Bill. It took me about three months to get the original copy signed by our three Presidents; President Daniel Moi, President Julius Nyerere and President Kaguta Museveni. I had to look for it in Arusha, you can imagine. It was not in the ministry. The person who worked on the Bill in 1991 left the ministry and I do not know where the one who worked on the one for 2007 is.

After getting the Bill and presenting it to the Attorney-General, they said, oh, you see, you need the Certificate of Financial Implications. When we got that, they said, you need a regulatory impact assessment. I asked, what is this? All this is happening, but it is my intention to ensure that this law is done as quickly as possible.

Hon. Ndyomugenyi talked about the killings in Sudan. Mr Speaker, we are working to put together some joint permanent commission to ensure that we address these issues. They are very unfortunate.

The one for Hon. Mpindi was for the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development so the minister will answer that.

Hon. Kayondo, I have taken note of the issue of the maritime borders. I had written to the Ministry of Works and Transport to implement the regulations of the East African Community water transport. I hope he is working on it.

Hon. Aguti, I think I have answered your question.

Hon. Santa, the materials are here in this Parliament.

Hon. Gilbert Olanya, as I said, we have no shortage of Kiswahili teachers; there are over 2,000 in this country. We just need to deploy them.

Hon. Namugga, we have taken note of the issues of the OSBPs and the need for ICT at the OSBPs. We shall work on it.

Hon. Nkunyingi, we waived the visa for Democratic Republic of Congo. When I received information that they are not reciprocating, I gave them an ultimatum that if they do not comply, on our side, we are going to restate. I hope that they can work on that issue.

Concerning the ambassador in the DRC, it is very interesting. I led a delegation in September to the DRC and one of the things we talked about with the government there was why they have not given an agreement to our ambassador. They were non-committal, but the interesting thing is that, that ambassador is a personal friend of the President. They meet and he does our work without being official. That is what I find very interesting. They work together, despite the absence of the former agreement.

I talked about the same issue with Mr Mbusa Nyamwisi and the then Prime Minister. As I said, they were non-committal. It is up to them to – Of course, before going to Congo, I told the President I was going to a country where my ambassador has not been accredited. I asked, “Why don’t you withdraw him?” He said, “No, no. They work together so, leave that issue.” That is where we are.

Hon. Lucy Akello, the curriculum is there, we are working on it.

Hon. Tinkasiimire, the harmonisation of education standards is still an issue. Even here in Uganda, there are areas where we are not exactly compliant. It is work in progress and we are working on it. I know it is frustrating, but we are working on it.

On why there are no checks at the borders, this is something for the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives. For Uganda National Bureau of Standards, I do not think they have enough inspectors, but they can answer that question.

The Leader of the Opposition raised a concern on the Common Market mobility. Most countries are really protecting their staff and

jobs. It is something we will continue pushing and we shall do it.

On funding of the Community – I went to the Community with the view that those who are not compliant should be punished. However, I found myself in the minority as my friends are reluctant to introduce sanctions. What made it worse is that when we met the heads of state and told them that we impose sanctions, they rejected saying we should not embarrass a fellow head of state. We are stuck because Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania contribute. Rwanda generally does, but DRC has never contributed. South Sudan contributed once. I do not know whether Somalia is going to contribute, but that is where we are.

On the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), I want you to look at Article 65 of the Treaty which requires that what is debated here on the EAC should be taken back to the East African Community for them to have their comments and what they debate there has been laid here. I have, however, not had any comments from this House. I have laid documents here on three occasions, but I have not had any comment. The other Members cannot come here, but I am here.

Hon. Kabanda raised something regarding Nairobi. When we were going to have the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), one of the things I raised in the Cabinet was that we needed somebody very strong in Nairobi and that we needed to have an ambassador in place. It is a matter of which the Government is aware, and I hope it can be handled very soon.

Hon. Ogwang, I think has supported our work.

Honourable members, thank you very much. I am very happy to be here today. Thank you for your remarks. Please support my ministry and give us more money. *(Applause)* Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Rt Hon. Kadaga. Honourable colleagues, we have handled item 4(ii) and 5(i) consecutively so I will put two questions.

I put the question that the report of the Committee on East African Community Affairs on field visits to Busia, Malaba, Katuna, Busanza, Kyanika and Bunagana border points to establish the status of the border operations and assess the cooperation contributions to the East African Community Affairs integration process be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of the East African Community Affairs, I think we can have an action-taken report on these recommendations within three months. That gives you enough time.

Honourable members, I now put the question that the report of the sectoral Committee on East African Community Affairs on the ministerial policy statement and budget estimates for the Financial Year 2024/2025 be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable chairperson, honourable minister and Members. The report's approved recommendations are referred to the Committee on Budget for reconciliation, harmonisation and consolidation. Thank you.

MS NOELINE KISEMBO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank honourable colleagues who have contributed to the debate. You have enriched the report.

I also want to thank the Minister of East African Community Affairs for ably responding to most of the issues. I just had one clarification I needed to make to Hon -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chairperson, this is a concluded matter. The report is already adopted.

MS NOELINE KISEMBO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Much obliged.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

STATEMENT BY THE RT HON. PRIME MINISTER ON GOVERNMENT BUSINESS FOR THE SUCCEEDING WEEK, 9TH TO 11TH APRIL 2024, PURSUANT TO RULE 28 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister –

5.03

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, this is a statement of the business for the succeeding week. We shall present:

1. A statement by the Minister of Internal Affairs on the relocation of the Luzira group of prisons to pave way for development of an international conference and five-star hotel.
2. A statement by the Minister of Health on the nation-wide vaccination against yellow fever and on the outbreak of the Red Eyes Disease.
3. A presentation will be made by both the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives and the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development on the use of the e-receipt system introduced by Uganda Revenue Authority.
4. A statement will be presented by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development on the forthcoming national census.

I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, for giving us business for next week. We shall try our level best to accommodate it.

Next week, our major focus will be on policy statements, but since you have brought the business, we shall ensure we consolidate what is extremely urgent. Next item -

PRIME MINISTER'S TIME

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, thank you for lending me part of your time; we agreed that we start a bit late. Over to you, Prime Minister.

5.06

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I also feel like thanking Parliament for the support you have given me as an individual and as a Prime Minister that enabled the Head of State to reappoint me. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Congratulations, once again. I congratulated the rest, but I had not yet congratulated you specifically.

MS NABBANJA: Yes, this is my maiden speech as a new Prime Minister recently reappointed. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, Hon. Abdulhu Byakatonda, the Workers' Representative, raised a matter in regard to the redeployment of the following officers of the former Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation. I will read the names and their former posts since the presentations are being put up.

1. James Kasigwa – Director, Science Technology Innovation (STI) Regulations
2. David Okurut – Commissioner STI, Skills Development
3. Arthur Makara – Commissioner STI, Advancement and Outreach *(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, remember rule 41. There is no interruption in Prime Minister's time.

MS NABBANJA: This is a maiden presentation. *(Laughter)*

1. Arthur Makara – Commissioner, Science Technology Innovation Advancement and Outreach
2. Patrick Joram Mugisa – Commissioner, Innovation and Intellectual Property Management

3. Mwebembezi – Commissioner, Physical, Chemical and Social Sciences
4. Kenti Obaro – Senior Science Officer
5. Godfrey Mugabe – Principal Science Officer
6. Susan Namyalo Nakayegga – Science Officer
7. Bruno Mugisa – Science Officer.

The prayers of the honourable member are, what are the reasons for the delayed redeployment of the officers above and how will their salary arrears be paid?

My response is that following consultations between the Ministry of Public Service, the Office of the Head of the Public Service, the Secretary to Cabinet, the State House, the Office of the President, the Public Service Commission, the Education Service Commission and other ministries, the following is the current status regarding the above-named officers:

1. James Kasigwa: The recommendation to appoint the officer as the Commissioner, Rural Electrification under the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development was not accepted by the Public Service Commission because he lacked the minimum qualifications for the job. His case has been referred to State House for retirement on abolition of the office. The officer's salary arrears up to December 2023 have been paid under State House.
2. David Okurut: The officer was appointed as a Commissioner, Wetlands Management under the Ministry of Water and Environment. His salary arrears will be processed under the same ministry.
3. Arthur Makara: The officer has been submitted to the Education Service Commission for appointment as a Principal Lecturer at Bukalasa Agricultural College under the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. His salary arrears will be processed under the same ministry.
4. Leodinus Mwebembezi: The recommendation to appoint the officer

as a Commissioner for International and Trans-Boundary Water Affairs under the Ministry of Water and Environment was not accepted by the Public Service Commission because he lacked the minimum qualifications for the job. His case was referred to State House for submission for retirement on abolition of his office. His salary arrears up to December have been paid by State House.

5. Patrick Joram Mugisa: The Ministry of Public Service has cleared the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives to appoint the officer as Commissioner, Business Development and Quality Assurance. The officer's salary arrears up to December were paid by State House.
6. Godfrey Mugabe: The officer is being considered for an interview scheduled this month as a Senior Settlement Officer under the Office of the Prime Minister. His salary arrears up to December were paid by State House.
7. Susan Namyalo Nakayegga: The Ministry of Public Service has cleared the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives to appoint the officer as a Senior Technology Research, Innovation and Processing Officer. These officer's salary arrears will be processed by the same ministry.
8. Kenti Obaro: The recommendation to appoint the officer as the Energy Officer under Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development was not accepted by the Public Service Commission. The officer has since been appointed as a Senior Inspector of Schools under the Ministry of Education and Sports. His salary arrears will be processed under the Ministry of Education and Sports.
9. Bruno Mugisa: The officer was appointed as Energy Officer, Nuclear under the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development. His salary arrears will be processed under the same ministry.

Mr Speaker, question number two came from Hon. Patience Ankunda, Kanungu District. She raised a matter concerning the *ex gratia* for the newly created town council councillors' pay and start-up capital for the new town councils. There is also a matter concerning some subcounties and town councils in Kanungu that have no health centre IIIs when it is a requirement in service delivery to the people.

Her prayers were: can these newly created town councils be provided with the necessary support they need to be able to perform their duties? The other question is, can I update the House on the Government plan to address the issue of the subcounties and town councils in Kanungu without health facilities at Level 3?

Mr Speaker, Kanungu District Local Government received funds for *ex gratia* totalling Shs 323,442,238 this financial year, which was less by Shs 27,937,762. Therefore, the district was not able to pay *ex gratia* to councillors from the newly created town councils of Nyakabungo, Nyamirama, Rutenga, Buhoma, Kanyantoro, and the subcounties of Kihanda, Kyesero, Bugongi, Kihembe and Kayungwe.

Kanungu District Local Government notified the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the Ministry of Local Government has already engaged the ministry for finance to secure additional funding to address the challenge in Kanungu and the other affected districts across the country.

Concerning the start-up fund in Kanungu, the town councils of Kambuga, Nyamirama, Rutenga, Buhoma, Kanyantoro and the subcounties of Bugongi and Rugyeyo received the start-up funds from the Ministry of Local Government. The remaining subcounties across the country will also be considered.

Concerning the establishment of health facilities in every subcounty and town council, Kanungu District comprises 27 lower local governments, of which nine subcounties and two town councils do not have health centre IIIs.

The district local government is working with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to secure resources required to establish the health centre IIIs in those 11 lower local governments in Kanungu District.

The third question came from Hon. Robert Migadde Ndugwa, Buvuma Islands County, Buvuma District. He says that outgrowers of palm oil in Buvuma are starting to harvest in August. However, as we speak, the investor, that is BIDCO, suspended construction of the mill, pending the government availing substantial land where a lot of it has not yet been compensated. What arrangement does the government have to ensure that people do not get stuck with their palm?

My response is that in 2003, the Government of Uganda entered into an agreement with BIDCO to establish an oil extraction mill for every 3,000 hectares of crop established within a radius of 30 kilometres. As at the end of December 2023, 3,876 hectares have been planted. Ideally, the planted acreage qualifies the investor to establish a plant. The investor has already earmarked and acquired 12 hectares to establish the extraction mill.

In addition, the equipment required is already imported and on site. The investor has committed to complete the construction, installation and commissioning of the plant before the first harvest, in the year 2025. Government will continue to work with the investor to ensure that this obligation is met.

The fourth question came from Hon. James Baba, MP, Koboko County. In 2020, Uganda Coffee Development Authority (UCDA) procured coffee seedlings from verified coffee nursery operators throughout the country.

To date, these nursery operators have not been paid any money for the coffee seedlings they supplied. The situation is disheartening to the farmers from northern Uganda who had shown a lot of interest to begin seriously growing coffee as a perennial crop, but cannot get coffee seedlings because the suppliers have not been paid.

Could the Government respond to the plight of the coffee nursery operators who supplied seedlings and have not been paid? Will the coffee nursery bed operators be paid for the millions of coffee seedlings they supplied under UCDA?

This is my response. The government acknowledges that coffee nursery operators from West Nile and other parts of the country supplied coffee seedlings after the Cabinet directed that the mature certified coffee seedlings be supplied to farmers in the Financial Year 2022/23 and that payment would be made once resources are available.

As you may recall, honourable colleagues, the Government carried out verification of the coffee seedlings supplied and based on this verification report, the Government proposed that in the coming Financial Year 2024/25, Shs 20 billion out of the Shs 49.8 billion will be provided and a balance of Shs 29.8 billion will be paid in the succeeding financial year.

Hon. Derrick Orone, Gogonyo County, Pallisa District asked, when will the Government put labour attachés or liaison officers in Saudi Arabia where we have a high number of our Ugandan girls who get problems and the embassy cannot accommodate the problems?

My response is that the Government has already deployed two labour attachés to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Two External Security Organisation (ESO) officers were seconded by the ministry to take on the roles of labour attachés and have already reported to the mission in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The ministry is in the process of working out the modalities of funding the labour attachés to commence work.

His prayer number two was; when will other countries like Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE and Kuwait sign bilateral agreements with Uganda for export of labour from Uganda? This is because the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has been promising this for two years, but nothing is happening, according to Hon. Derrick Orone.

Mr Speaker, my response is that for Qatar, the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding, that is a Bilateral labour agreement between the State of Qatar and the Republic of Uganda, was concluded this week.

It is a new development; that was on 1st April 2024, by the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development and her counterpart in Qatar. Issues of common interests on labour and employment were equally discussed.

For Oman, the ministry has already commenced bilateral negotiations with the Sultanate of Oman. The ministry had requested for a ministerial visit in March 2024, but the Government of the Sultanate of Oman deferred the visit due to the period of Ramadan.

The bilateral labour agreement with the United Arab Emirates was signed in 2019, followed by a number of other bilateral meetings chaired by myself in 2022. However, it is not yet operational. This is because the Government of United Arab Emirates has not yet finalised domestic formalities required to give the bilateral labour agreement effect. The Ministries of Gender, Labour and Social Development and Foreign Affairs are following up the matter with the Government of United Arab Emirates to operationalise the bilateral agreement.

For Bahrain and Kuwait, the Government has submitted bilateral negotiation proposals through our respective missions to the Governments of Bahrain and Kuwait, but we are yet to receive feedback. The Ministries of Gender, Labour and Social Development and Foreign Affairs are closely following up this matter. Please, note that we have limited control over other sovereign governments.

Question number six came from Hon. George Bhoka Didi, MP, Obongi County, Obongi District. He said there is a recurrent delay in the recruitment and placement of staff in ministries, departments and agencies as well as local governments partly due to the requirements of clearance of recruitment by the Ministry of Public Service and the Public Service Commission.

His question is: why does the Public Service Commission and the Ministry of Public Service demand for recruitment clearance after approval of budgets that include wage budgets by Parliament and local governments?

Mr Speaker, my response is that the Ministry of Public Service, in accordance with Section 7(1)(a) of the Public Service Act, 2008, has authority for the overall management and administration of the public service, including formulation and review of policies relating to structures, management systems and the terms and conditions of service.

The Ministry of Public Service, under Section 7(1)(b) of the Public Service Act, is charged with the responsibility of receiving and considering, on behalf of the Government, proposals for remuneration and benefits of persons whose emoluments are payable directly from the Consolidated Fund or out of funds appropriated by this Parliament.

Clearance to recruit is, therefore, issued by the Ministry of Public Service under the following circumstances:

1. Where there is no approved and funded recruitment plan. This is to ensure that no employee is recruited without confirming availability of wage, as it used to be. Unfortunately, there have been recruitments by a number of ministries, departments and agencies and local governments without clearance and confirmation of availability of wage, as evidenced by unending requests for supplementary wage over the past years.
2. Clearance to recruit assures the Ministry of Public Service of availability of positions on the approved structure. Where some Votes have recruited without clearance, most of the recruited employees do not have positions on the approved structures. Such employees have failed to access the payroll and, where they have accessed the payroll, they are given positions different from the post of employment.

3. Clearance to recruit is meant to ensure compliance with the sector-specific manpower requirements. This explains the reason for allocating wage to local governments according to payroll categories, for example, primary healthcare (conditional), agricultural extension (conditional), primary education (conditional), secondary education (conditional), local government (unconditional), decentralised tertiary (conditional) and urban (unconditional).

Mr Speaker, where clearance has not been issued, most local governments have mischarged and recruited non-core staff. This explains the reasons for over 70 percent unfilled positions of heads of departments in local governments.

The government resolved that no clearance to recruit is required from the Ministry of Public Service where the recruitment is on a replacement basis since the wage is available and the position is already on the approved structure, provided the position fell vacant in the same financial year.

The other circumstances where clearance is required from the Public Service Commission, Education Service Commission, and Health Service Commission is where a ministry, department or local government intends to vary the requirement for a job as detailed in the job description and the person's specifications.

The current practices by ministries, departments and agencies and local governments, as evidenced by recruitment without wage and availability of positions on the approved structure, leads to unending supplementary requests and this must stop.

The government is addressing the above problem by integrating the programme budgeting system, as you already know, to human capital management system and the Integrated Financial Management System (IFMIS). This integrated system ensures that no recruitment can be initiated without a manpower plan or existence of a structure and a budget.

Question number 7, and this is the last question, is from Hon. Dan Atwijukire Kimosho, MP, Kazo. He said that there is rampant illegal use of sirens by unauthorised categories of persons, including many drivers claiming right of way on roads, which affects the smooth flow of traffic. His prayer is: can the government update on the matter?

My response, Mr Speaker, is to brief you on the road safety situation in Uganda as well as the interventions already undertaken and those planned to be undertaken. It is true that Uganda's road safety situation has some challenges ranging from drunk-driving, over speeding, overloading, obstructions while driving, unregulated boda boda's and driving along unauthorised lanes, among others.

I wish to clarify as follows, Mr Speaker.

1. Lead cars.

The main purpose of lead cars is to allow a specific category of leaders and other specifically designated vehicles to arrive at particular venues for duty on schedule. This flexibility is, however, not a status symbol.

Due to terrorist acts in the recent past, there arose a need for "follow-up cars" with security details for vulnerable top officials. "Follow-up cars" are necessary for security purposes. However, they should not interfere with regular traffic flow.

2. Main colours used universally and the status of emergency vehicles in Uganda

In Uganda, colours are not regulated to inform exactly which institution they belong to. However, the main colours include:

Red: These are associated with dangerous emergency situations and are used on police vehicles, fire trucks and ambulances. These can also use forward-facing red lights in combination with blue or white lights.

Blue: Blue lights are associated with a calming effect and are widely used together with red

lights by police vehicles and law enforcement personnel.

Amber: Amber lights are commonly used on tow trucks and wreckers, construction vehicles, public works and escort vehicles. They are also used by police vehicles to direct roadway traffic.

Green: Green lights can be used by paramedics and first responders. In some countries, they are used by internal security and private firms.

Purple: Purple sometimes is used for funeral processions. Purple lights can be used in conjunction with hazard lights and are usually used by the head of procession.

Yellow: In Uganda, these are only preserved for the President's motorcade.

Comparative analysis of the position of the law - the right of way.

Uganda's road experience depicts a form of impunity, especially during the rush hours. Motorists with sirens, roof lights and lead lights force other users off the road in order to beat the traffic jams.

The Traffic and Road Safety (Amendment) Act of 2020, Section 63 specifies "authorised emergency vehicles" as those for purposes of police, fire brigade, ambulance, military motor vehicles, and those of the armed forces or any other vehicles designated by a minister in consultation with the chief licensing officer by statutory order.

The Traffic and Road Safety (Rules of the Road), Regulations 2004, subregulation 5(2) provides that, "*The driver of a car of the President, the Vice President, Chief Justice, Speaker and Deputy Speaker of Parliament, the Prime Minister; or a police vehicle or other emergency vehicle, or a vehicle in a state motorcade is allowed, in case of emergency or in other cases as prescribed, to deviate from the regulations.*"

Unauthorised lead cars with sirens

Currently, our roads, are filled with several motorists who have mounted sirens with different colours as well as lead cars. These are:

- a. Funeral vehicles: Much as they play a role in giving decent transportation of the dead, this service is not an emergency warranting right of way.
- b. Bullion vans: Banks and microfinance institutions have bullion vans transporting money. Most times, these violate the laws and inconvenience other road users.
- c. Government vehicles: Several institutions/ individuals using government vehicles continuously abuse traffic rules using lead cars.
- d. Traditional leaders: Sometimes these move with vehicles with sirens and mounted with guards to clear the way.
- e. Private vehicles: Many private vehicles install all kinds of sirens and roof lights on private cars, inconveniencing other road users, forcing the public to ignore emergency vehicles even in real emergency situations.
- f. Ministers: Following terrorism and assassination attempts, some ministers, Members of Parliament and other VIPs were assigned cars as escort cars. However, sometimes, these have been abused as lead cars instead of being used for providing security while on the move.

Proposed recommendations to address the problem

- i. Enforcement of the traffic laws and regulations. Whereas the Traffic and Road Safety Act of 1998 has attendant regulations aiding its enforcement, the Road Act, 2019, which addresses various aspects of road safety, does not have any regulations. We are going to work hard together with the relevant ministries to ensure that these are in place.
- ii. I, therefore, take this opportunity to direct the Ministry of Works and Transport and the Ministry of Internal Affairs to control

and ensure compliance by Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government on siren use to ensure that conformity with the dictates of the law is upheld. Breaches should attract prompt sanctions to act as a deterrent.

- iii. I also take this opportunity, Mr Speaker, to direct the Ministry of Works and Transport to ensure increased public education and awareness on road safety in order to influence road user behaviour, risks, hazards, road use and general road discipline.
- iv. Support is requested from you, honourable members, to the government to invest in Intelligence Transport Monitoring System (ITMS) for automatic number plate recognition and identification of traffic offenders. This will also significantly address abuses by errant road users in a prompter way like other countries have done.
- v. For the record, this matter is also the concern of the government and Cabinet. I want to assure you that we are formulating a paper for discussion and adoption to address the matter in a more effective and comprehensive way, following a directive from the President.

We shall also come here and brief Parliament. Mr Speaker, I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister. Questions for Oral Answer? I will start with Hon. Norah Bigirwa, Hon. Fred Opolot, Hon. Maurice Kibalya, Hon. Tom Aza, Hon. Solomon Chelangat, Hon. Abdu Adidwa, Hon. Betty Naluyima and Hon. Kayemba-Ssolo in that order.

5.44

MS NORAH BIGIRWA (NRM, Woman Representative, Buliisa): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to raise this issue that requires urgent attention from the Government. This is a matter of national importance –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, shoot right away; it is one minute.

MS BIGIRWA: Mr Speaker, Buliisa District has continually suffered the invasion of elephants and this has been going on for quite some time. On the night of 24 March 2024, there was an invasion in Kichooke, Buliisa Subcounty and one Katulinde lost her life. The late Katulinde was 22 years old and left behind a two-year-old girl. She was laid to rest on 28 March 2024.

This is not the first time we have had this problem. In the last two years, we have lost five people to elephants and one to crocodiles. Our prayers are that:

1. The Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities ensures that the process of procurement of composite poles meant for the first phase of the 20-kilometre stretch of electric fence is implemented by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA);
2. The Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities should ensure that UWA speeds up the construction of the electric fence, a project whose funding was already received from the World Bank. This project is meant to cover the area of Murchison Falls in the areas of Buliisa, Nwoya and Kiryandongo. However, the speed at which –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister? Honourable colleagues, you have one minute during this time and you have been following the practice. Shoot right away so that I can accommodate many of you.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, like she has already told you, it is true that a number of people have been attacked and they lost their lives.

First, regarding the recent incident of the woman who left behind a two-year-old baby, a report has not yet gone to the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities. I request the Member to put it in writing so that her relatives are compensated.

Secondly, the work to install the electric fence from Mubaku up to River Waiga is in progress; a few kilometres have been covered. That electric fence is 20 kilometres and costs Shs 1.2 billion. After she reported the death of the lady, I was informed that work will be completed in three months.

I will make sure that I fast-track this, Mr Speaker. I also request that she updates my office with information on the other lady so that the families are also compensated.

Mr Speaker, I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, in this session we do not have prayers; we do it in the form of questions. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when will you compensate these people so that our *Hansard* captures it properly. Hon. Fred Opolot?

5.48

MR FRED OPOLOT (NRM, Pingire County, Serere): Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity. I wish to bring to the attention of the House the status of the Serere Corner-Kidetok-Pingire-Labori-Mulondo and Mugarama Landing Site Road, which is the artery of Pingire County.

The recent rains and subsequent floods have rendered this Uganda National Roads Authority road impossible, especially at Okolonga, Opunoi and Mulondo, causing significant disruptions to local agricultural activities and blocking access to at least seven landing sites, since traffic has been gravely affected.

Therefore, I request the Prime Minister, through the Ministry of Works and Transport, to initiate emergency repairs to make the road safe and accessible for all users.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I request that the Member either brings it as a written question during Prime Minister's Time so that I can give a better answer or he comes to my office on Tuesday so that I cause a meeting

with the ministry concerned and we come up with a way forward.

MR FRED OPOLOT: Thank you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will continue urging ministers to be here to support the Prime Minister. Honourable colleagues here, encourage your colleagues. The Prime Minister gets random questions. Each ministry shows us which minister will be here on Thursday. The Prime Minister cannot know everything; she is not a computer.

Honourable ministers, urge your colleagues to come and support the Prime Minister. She tries her level best, but sometimes we over-stretch her. (*Applause*) I appreciate those who are here, but I hope ministers put in more effort. Hon. Kibalya?

5.50

MR HENRY MAURICE KIBALYA (NRM, Bugabula County South, Kamuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have two issues. Firstly, last week on Wednesday, a heavy downpour destroyed many houses in Butende. Many families are homeless now and crops were destroyed. Mr Speaker, we need the Prime Minister to come to the rescue of these families in Butende Parish, Kamuli District.

Secondly, on the night of Easter Sunday, a group of young men came and invaded Namwendwa Town Council. They injured 11 youths who were returning from watching a football match. Up to now, they are in hospital nursing injuries. The gang had machetes, *pangas* and others. The village is now in disarray. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we need your intervention.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, end your submissions well. "Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when are you intervening?" You are going to force me to find a day and broadcast a session of the British Parliament during Prime Minister's Time. You cannot end your submission without a question. This is the Prime Minister's question time. Please, I beg you.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, in every district, we have disaster committees which usually write to the Office of the Prime Minister. That is where we pick issues from to address. I request Hon. Kibalya to use the Chief Administrative Officer to write to the Permanent Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister; we shall then handle the issue.

Regarding the other attackers, I request the Member to give me the details so that the Ministry of Internal Affairs can handle the matter. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Tom Aza?

5.52

MR TOM AZA (NRM, West Moyo County, Moyo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Hon. Norbert Mao, handed over tractors for West Nile, Lango and Acholi regions to teams led by MPs at Namalere National Agricultural Mechanised Referral Centre.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, most of these tractors do not have ploughs. I would like to know from you when the tractors will be given ploughs. The rain season has begun and farmers will want to start ploughing their land. Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the Government procured tractors which are supposed to have accessories; ploughs and planters.

However, the money we paid the supplier did not have those other accessories. They are supposed to be provided later in this financial year.

Mr Speaker, it was not the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs who procured the tractors; it was the Government. He just represented the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal, Industry, and Fisheries in giving out the tractors.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Alinga Solomon.

5.54

MR SOLOMON CHELANGAT (NRM, Toho County, Bukwo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Ministry of Education and Sports, under the Uganda Secondary Education Expansion Project (USEEP) program, identified Riwo Secondary School to be constructed in 2022.

However, as a Government policy, they want a title. However, we have been following the title in the Mbale regional land office, but the only reason that they give is that they do not have a printer. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when will these printers be procured for Mbale regional land office so that we can acquire the titles? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, if the Mbale office does not have a printer, those titles can be printed from Kampala and now that the Member of Parliament is here, he can go to the Uganda Land Commission and they print that title.

However, I have taken note of the concern of the Member. We shall make sure that the printers are supplied to the regional office of the Ministry of Lands and Urban Development in Mbale.

5.55

MR JOSEPH KOLUO (Independent, Toroma County, Katakwi): Thank you Mr Speaker. Madam Prime Minister, on the 9th of March, in many villages in Magoro Subcounty, that is Okorio and Kamenu, a storm destroyed 432 houses and 170 chickens were killed *-(Laughter)-* and three people were injured.

The District Disaster Management Committee presented a report to your office, which I also endorsed, but up to now, nothing has been given to support our people. Madam Prime Minister, when can assistance reach my people?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the people of Toroma had a disaster; they need support.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I have taken note of the Member's concern, and since he has said the Katakwi District Disaster Committee already wrote, the Vice President also talked about it; we are going to handle it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Abdu Adidwa.

5.57

MR ABDU ADIDWA (Independent, Bukooli South County, Namayingo): Mr Speaker, on the 2nd of this month, a fire outbreak occurred at Goodwill Nursery and Primary School, the same story was at the Sibirisy Primary School in Lumino, yesterday, it was also in Busia at Victory Primary School, last month and in Kayunga just in one month. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, how are you handling this issue? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, fire has continued to destroy their schools in Bukooli South County.

5.58

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS) (Mr Peter Ogwang): Mr Speaker, apologies for; I was being engaged by the Member from Bukwo on a matter of one of the schools in Bukwo.

As far as we are concerned, as the Ministry of Education and Sports, it is true that we continue to face a lot of challenges of fire outbreaks in most of the schools.

Our inspectorate department in the ministry is also picking it up to check on how some of the schools are operating.

If you look at some of the schools, that are catching fire, most of them are privately owned, and that tells you that there is a mind of some of the private owners to fill up the numbers into the areas in terms of the dormitories, which congests these specific schools.

We are also trying to beef up the inspection of those schools by the district inspectors to

give us routine reports, but for now, I want to call upon colleagues; it is our responsibility to sensitise the public on how to manage issues of fire in our respective schools and where we come from. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Minister, interest yourself because when Hon. Adidwa came to me reporting four fire outbreaks in one month in an area - interest yourself in Bukooli South County. Thank you. Yes, Hon. Betty Naluyima.

6.00

MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. In January, when this House was presented with this letter from the Executive Director of the Uganda Road Fund, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development informed us that from the releases that were meant for local governments for Uganda Road Fund, at least something would be released in February.

However, up to date, several local governments, including Wakiso, have not received any funding for local governments for maintaining roads yet many of them have roads that are in dire situations.

Madam Prime Minister, when will local governments receive road funds for quarters 2, 3 and 4? If operationalisation of the Uganda Road Fund is not possible, can we have at least a percentage - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development already released Shs 500 million for road maintenance. This was out of the Shs 1 billion and the Shs 500 million has been released to all local governments. Uganda Road Fund at first released Shs 10 million depending on how much that district used to receive.

Either way, I have picked interest and I give her reports if she is the chairperson of the roads

committee because Wakiso used to receive over Shs 1 billion; we had a meeting the other time with the Ministry of Works and Transport.

I would like to implore all other colleagues to interest themselves in the money we send to the districts. Some districts are rehabilitating new roads, and working on old roads yet our agreement here in the House and the Cabinet, the President directed that this money be used to maintain the already existing feeder roads. However, I will get in touch with Hon. Naluyima. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: I also want to -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, for the gaps in the answers - we are going to be discussing sectoral ministerial policy statements where they will be showing details in terms of performance. However, the Prime Minister has become specific that we shall add on next week when we are handling them.

MS NABBANJA: Uganda Road Fund has started sending money and I believe they will send more this quarter.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Kayemba-Ssolo.

6.03

MR GEOFFREY KAYEMBA-SOLO (NUP, Bukomansimbi South County, Bukomansimbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, in the recent police recruitment process, the recruiters came to Bukomansimbi and many of our people participated in the recruitment process for the police service.

However, the names that were shortlisted; I can read them for you. We have Acham Rosemary, Alum Rebecca, Nantongo Rashida, Odyatta Abraham, Ssekyewa Tonny, and Wekomba Caleb. We only know one person who is from Bukomansimbi.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, how do you advise us on the people from other places taking the space that would have been for the people of Bukomansimbi?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, Uganda is a country for everybody. *(Applause)* You may find Acan in Bukomansimbi or Kakumiro; you never know. However, we shall investigate this and make sure that I inform the colleague.

6.04

MR MARTIN MUZAALÉ (NRM, Buzaaya County, Kamuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I have been reading and analysing information on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, on issues to do with the monetary fund. In 2013, the East African Community came together and signed a protocol on a monetary union and they gave themselves 10 years to come up with a common currency or a single currency.

The reason I am bringing this today is because I was reading an article today where the IMF and World Bank were proposing to repeal taxes, especially on the income of Parliament and security organs. How far has this gone?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I have an expert when it comes to money matters.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister for finance? I think, to save time, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you can always make a sign.

6.06

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was with Hon. Muzaale from Buzaaya in the BCOM class of 2005 at Makerere University. I am sure, and even at that time, we were taught that the tax policy of the Government of Uganda cannot be managed by IMF or World Bank. I am wondering: under what circumstances does IMF propose the tax laws on our behalf?

That aside, the East African Monetary Union is an idea, which is in progress and we are all looking forward to the realisation of the idea to the point where we will have a common currency as an East African Community.

6.07

MR DENES SEKABIRA (NUP, Katikamu County North, Luweero): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The road from Kasiso to Mazi is impassable to motorists yet it connects Luweero to Nakasongola. When can you come and help? The people cannot connect between the two districts?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the Member has not been clear on whether this is a national road –(Interjection)- is it a Uganda National Road Authority (UNRA) road? I will definitely cause a meeting between the UNRA people and I will also call you to our office so that we can see how to fast-track the maintenance of that road.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, please, do not harass me with signs or chits. (Laughter) Why are you harassing me? I am a human being; I also get diverted. Just stand and leave the rest to me. I am picking people who started with me – and I know them. I saw all of you coming in; so, I know the time you came.

6.09

MR ISAAC KATENYA (Independent, Bulambuli County, Bulambuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have two small issues. The President, while in Kapchorwa on 9 October 2022 promised Mbale Region a university. However, up to now, we do not know whether Cabinet has taken any steps towards approving the setup of a university and whether they have approved some money towards its set up so that we can be in position to have the university.

The second issue is about compensation in Bulambuli. During that very meeting, the President requested us to write to the office of the Attorney-General, but up to now, we have not got a response. What is the issue?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please!

MR KATENYA: I am very sorry.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You cannot commit a sin and start being sorry – when you knew it. (Laughter)

For the second question, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you do not have to answer because we were discussing issues of war compensation for the country and we found out that you had given instructions to the Attorney-General to handle Acholi, Lango and Teso.

We received complaints from other Members from Buganda, Bukedi, Busoga, Ankole, Bunyoro, Sebei and all other areas. Rt Hon. Nakadama was in here and she said we should give the Office of the Prime Minister three weeks so that they can discuss this matter in Cabinet and guide.

So, let us go with the one of the university – is there disorder in the House? (Hon. Atwijukire rose_) You do not need to. The honourable colleague has understood. He will take action. Sometimes it is not good to go on record. Yes, Hon. Ogwang?

6.11

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS) (Mr Peter Ogwang): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Through the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I thank the colleague for asking that question in line with the university, which was pledged by the President to the people of Bugisu –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, do the necessary, please. I do not need to mention your name because I do not want it on the *Hansard*. Please! It is not about pockets; our rules do not tell us about what is in the pockets.

MR OGWANG: Mr Speaker, I know – and we know – as the Ministry of Education and Sports that there was a pledge of a university for the Elgon Subregion. I want to inform the honourable colleague that, as a ministry, we

prioritise fulfilling these pledges as per the directive of H.E. the President.

However, as of now, I want to confirm that the Ministry of Education and Sports does not have the resource envelope for the purposes of fulfilling this pledge.

Mr Speaker, it is important that we, Members of Parliament and the country at large, begin to look at this issue critically.

As the Minister of Education and Sports –
(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We usually have one minute for answering.

MR OGWANG: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wanted to give this information. It is very important that we put in resources to the existing universities to have all that is required for them, for the purpose of us giving our children the best education before we begin to get out there and open up space for other public universities. Otherwise, as of now, the directive is there, but we do not have money. Once we get it, we will be able to fulfil that directive. I thank you.

6.13

MR RAUBENARINAITWE (Independent, Isingiro West County, Isingiro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. On 13 December 2023, this Parliament authorised the pre-financing of Masaka-Mutukula Road and some roads in Masaka, in addition to Kafunjo-Kikagati Road, which joins Uganda to Tanzania and Rwanda.

On 20th March, the Prime Minister flagged off the construction of Mutukula Road. When are you flagging off the construction of Kikagati-Kafunjo Road? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: A big party is awaiting you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, to flag off the road construction.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, CICO Company is pre-financing the road from Masaka to Mutukula and Masaka-Villa

Maria. That is being done because we already commissioned and the contractor has already mobilised the machinery; he is on site. For the road from Kikagati-Kafunjo up to Rakai, we are still looking for money. Thank you.

6.15

MR FRANCIS KAZINI (Independent, Buhaguzi County, Kikuube): Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is now three years since the people of Bukinda were evicted by authorities of Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. Up to now, there is no solution. I, therefore, request that Government allocates them land anywhere as long as there is land.

I also request Hon. Barugahara to come and visit the site since there are very many children that are not going to school; they fall under his docket. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon, Prime Minister, I think these are requests not questions. However, since the Prime Minister is from that side –

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the Office of the Prime Minister is aware of this issue. There are members of the community who refused the land they were allocated in the other area. Some of them have been camping at the RDC's office. Recently, they even came and camped at my home in Kakumiro and we convinced them to go back. The President and Government are aware. We are handling the matter. For the school going children, the minister for children is here.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: They have only requested him to go and visit.

MS NABBANJA: Hon. Barugahara, they want you to go and visit Bukinda.

6.17

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (YOUTH AND CHILDREN AFFAIRS) (Mr Balaam Barugahara): Most obliged, my boss, the Prime Minister. Mr Speaker, I will visit

the affected and mentioned places within the coming week and revert to Parliament. *(Applause)*

6.17

MS LAURA KANUSHU (NRM, PWD Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. One of the grants provided by Government to local governments is for community rehabilitation centres for assessment of rehabilitation needs for persons with disabilities, that is, wheelchairs, speech therapy, crutches etcetera.

I would like to know, from the Prime Minister, who is buying and distributing these assistive devices? We are on the ground, people are not receiving them yet it has become the job of MPs to buy wheelchairs and crutches for persons with disabilities. This means they cannot even access the government programmes because they are stuck in one place. I thank you.

MS NABBANJA: I look at her question as a multi-sectoral; the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, the Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Health and of course, the Prime Minister who is charged with the responsibility. Since it is multi-sectoral, I will cause a meeting and fast-track what she is talking about. Thank you.

6.19

MR GEOFFREY MUTIWA (NRM, Bunyole West County, Butaleja): Thank you, Mr Speaker. In 1996, His Excellency the President of Uganda promised the people of Butaleja to tarmac the road, which starts from Namutumba through Butaleja to Lwangoli. The President has been promising this after every five years. It is even in the National Development Plan III.

My question to the Rt Hon. Prime Minister is: the people of Butaleja have been waiting for this road for the last 26 years so, when will the actual work of tarmacking it start? Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, during the Cabinet meeting of 18th March this year, the President mentioned that exact road as a priority for the Government. In fact, he also mentioned the road from Myanzi- to Kasanda

and Bukuya, up to Kiboga as a priority road, according to him. Another one is in the North.

Therefore, we are fast-tracking those three roads as a directive from the President. The only issue is availability of funds. The moment funds are available; it is a priority road.

6.20

MR JAMES OLOBO (NRM, Kioga North County, Amolatar): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My issue has not been raised in this House for the last 23 years. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, this Parliament has been creating counties. As we talk now, there are about 207 counties, which have been created, but do not have headquarters. They do not have *boma* grounds to host functions making some of us who are representing these counties vulnerable. Amolatar District, for example, was this year asked to host Women's Day and that will be in my constituency, Kioga North, on Monday *—(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, Hon. "Dubai" was our best player for basketball in Kigali because of that, I am allowing him to conclude.

MR OLOBO: Thank you. On Monday, we are going to displace the students from a school. My question is: when are we going to have money, at least Shs 2 billion per constituency, to buy land and build the headquarters for the county?

Two, and this is just a reminder: we lost the Speaker of this Parliament, Rt Hon. Oulanyah, some years back. It took us time to get another Speaker. We all agreed at Kololo that we were going to amend the law. Up to now, nobody is thinking about this. I do not know whether people are fearing death. I thought I should remind this House about this. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the Minister of Local Government is here. Let me talk about the succession plan for the Speaker.

The President *–(Interjections)* - do not talk about those things *–(Laughter)*– the one of the President is very clear.

Mr Speaker, I believe this must be in the Administration of Parliament Act, which we have to amend. The commission and all of us Members of Parliament –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is in the Constitution, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Then we have to amend the Constitution. Mr Speaker, this was a big issue for the country and us as members of Parliament because imagine a situation where we have to look for a Speaker before the other one is buried *–(Member rose_)* - Let me allow her, then I will come back.

MS BUSINGYE: Mr Speaker, we started giving start-up funds, but we realised it could not sustain all the sub-counties. We have now included Shs 97 billion in this budget to cater for the construction of headquarters, including the districts that mothered the cities. So, just pass the budget, and we shall be there.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, we have procedures for buying land and I want the Member to know that in case they have identified land, there are procedures. The Chief Government Valuer values the land - you cannot just come here and say Shs 2 billion, then buy land in every consistency; it is not possible.

Mr Speaker, we can also look for donations. People can donate land, like you, “Mr Dubai”. You are a rich man; you can donate land.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for Lyantonde, Hon. Maximus Ochai, then the Member for Koboko.

6.25

MS PAULINE KYAKA (NRM, Woman Representative, Lyantonde): Thank you, Mr Speaker. In the third quarter release,

Lyantonde District received additional funding for agricultural extension grants and primary health care to the tune of Shs 1.05 billion.

Having made a fresh wage analysis, there is a projected surplus of Shs 351 million. Considering the number of verified staff, is it possible to recruit primary school teachers since our teacher-pupil ratio is 1:73 against the recommended ratio of 1:53?

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, is it possible? I heard you talk about it in your response to some of the questions - we have gone to the Ministry of Public Service, and they are not giving us a response. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, I refer my colleague to answers I gave earlier that the Ministry of Public Service can give you clearance to recruit the teachers since you already have the wage, as simple as that.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon Maximus Ochai.

6.26

MR MAXIMUS OCHAI (NRM, West Budama County North, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I beg for your attention.

MR OCHAI: Mr Speaker, I am not going to inquire about the status of the feasibility study for the upgrade of Tororo-Nagongera-Busolwe Road, and I am not also going to inquire about the need to upgrade Tororo Municipality to a city, because I will meet Rt Hon. Prime Minister next week in her office.

However, Mr Speaker, allow me to pose a question on electricity because I see the honourable minister around. West Budama North constituency is almost 90 per cent in total darkness; there is no electricity there.

Last year, technical staff from the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development visited us and conducted a Geographic information system (GIS) survey. I have been trying to follow up on the status of electrifying at least the public facilities such as health centre IIIs, schools –(Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, honourable minister?

6.28

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (Ms Ruth Nankabirwa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. We launched the electricity scale-up project and I would like to invite the honourable member to my office, tomorrow so that I can pluck out the status of his constituency. Every constituency has connections, which we laid on the Table some time back. But I cannot tell you the details of which connections we are going to make. Please come to the office. I will give you engineer Abdon, I gave you his number, so that you can get the status of the connections that we are going to do in your constituency.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Koboko, then Hoima City.

6.29

MS SHARIFAH TABAN (NRM, Woman Representative, Koboko): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, in April 2022, the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) halted the transit of fuel through the Oraba-Kaya Border in Koboko District as a measure to tackle the rampant smuggling of fuel through the border.

However, this measure has not been helpful as we still have fuel in the municipality and Koboko town. My question is, when will the Oraba-Kaya Border reopen for fuel transportation? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister for finance?

6.30

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

(Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Fuel smuggling in the West Nile area has indeed been a problem; that is true. When I visited Koboko with the colleague who is raising the question, the same matter came up. We agreed on some practical steps. I am going to check on the implementation and inform the Member.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Dr Ruyonga, Hoima City.

6.30

DR JOSEPH RUYONGA (NRM, Hoima West Division, Hoima City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Part of my question has been answered, about rural electrification. We are training and tutoring the youth, but some of the tools they are using, like the tailoring and welding machines, require power.

Secondly, some people paid the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) and they were promised to be connected as far as 2018/2019. They have their certificates and receipts. I am asking the honourable minister, for those connections which are meant for - I hope Hoima is there - are they going to be given priority? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, honourable minister?

MS NANKABIRWA: Mr Speaker, we had 300,000 applications when we took over REA, and those are going to be our priority. Actually, we have started connecting them. To ease my work, I will request the honourable member to give me the list of the applications so that I can confirm that they have been considered.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Member for Rukungiri.

6.32

MS MIDIUS NATUKUNDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Rukungiri): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question is about the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) road; the highway from Rukungiri to Ntungamo. It is full of potholes, especially at Kiborogota, as you heard from Kebisoni. Every week, at least, we lose a life. Today, a pregnant woman has been buried because of that pothole at Kiborogota. The same applies to Kisizi, Kebisoni at Minera Bridge - it is also very poor. My question is, when will this road be worked on very well? I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you could add on Mbarara-Ishaka Road.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, the Cabinet prioritised maintenance of the already existing roads. We prioritised these because it is of no use for us to continue making new roads when the ones that we already have are deteriorating, including the road from Rukungiri to Ntungamo, where I was on Tuesday, then this road to Jinja, and many other roads that already exist. The President brought an engineer to the Cabinet - there is a technology where even when the road is just starting to deteriorate, you just put a new layer the way is done in other developed countries.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, the honourable member for Oyam.

6.34

DR EUNICE APIO (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam): Thank you, Mr Speaker. In the last six months, I have interacted with countless women and girls, including those in sports who heavily rely on the tampon. It is a menstrual product used by a cross-section of women and girls, but it has been missing on shelves across the country in pharmacies and supermarkets and we are wondering what has happened to the supply chain.

Would your office clarify if there is a ban on this product and whether we will get any relief as the women and girls of this country? thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: The question is a bit technical. I will liaise with the Ministry of Health, National Medical Stores and the National Drug Authority to find out exactly what happened.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Walyomu.

6.35

MR MOSES WALYOMU (Independent, Kagoma County, Jinja): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Kampala-Jinja Expressway is one of the busy roads in this country, but immediately after the bridge, in between Njeru, the potholes are turning into dams. When you come to Mabira, there are no longer potholes, but dams.

In addition, we have another road from Kimaka to Mbulamuti, which is now impassable. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, what is the Government's plan and how prepared is the Government to manage the floods that are likely to come or affect the country?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

MS NABBANJA: I expected that question which is why I stated in my earlier answer that Jinja Road is one of the priority areas where we are going to put another layer. It is called an overlay.

The member should be informed that Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) together with the Ministry of Works and Transport have started maintaining that road, until all those potholes are done with, then they will look at other roads across the country. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us hear from Hon. Kamuntu and then the honourable member from Kwania.

6.36

MR MOSES KAMUNTU (Independent, Rubanda County West, Rubanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question to the Prime

Minister is: The President gave her a directive to stop the eviction of people from the wetlands in Kigezi. However, to date, people are being chased away and their crops destroyed. We would like to know the way forward because all of us in Kigezi survive on the wetlands. If we are evicted, it is a disaster for the country.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, Uganda is gifted by nature. There are several swamps. But recently, because our people have interfered with the ecosystem that is why you saw what was happening in the country - global warming in Uganda. Honourable member, go and inform your people that where Uganda is and following the pattern of change in the environment, we need to be a little more serious.

Inform your people to vacate the wetlands. As a leader, swallow the bitter pill and tell them to leave the wetlands.

The President, the other day told us that we can co-exist by using the wetlands basically for only one activity and that is fishing. So, the people will be evicted, I am telling you.

6.38

MS KENNY AUMA (UPC, Woman Representative, Kwanja): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This Parliament appropriated money for the procurement of road equipment for the newly created districts. Kwanja being one of the new districts does not have any road equipment.

As the district roads committee, we are forced to use the money meant for road rehabilitation and road maintenance to hire equipment from other institutions. When will this road equipment be supplied to the newly created districts? Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: I have good information for the Member. The machines have started coming in and very soon we shall call you to receive them.

6.39

MR BENARD SEKYANZI (NRM, Budyabo County, Nakasongola): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the people of

Kasozi in Kasozi Parish, Nakitoma Subcounty, my constituency Budyabo, are being attacked by hippopotamuses every day; it is a routine. The Ministry of Tourism and the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) are aware, but nothing has been done. When are you going there to bulldoze them so that my people are saved? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: When are you going to bulldoze the hippos –(Laughter)– Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

MS NABBANJA: I would like to inform the Member that we need to use the offices that we have. Together with you, we are going to Nakasongola tomorrow, we have even informed UWA because I already had that report so we look for a solution together.

Do you remember the Shs 5 billion that was going to buy cups, tarpaulins and plastic plates, which the people complained that I reverted?

We are commissioning health facilities. Tomorrow we are going to be in Lwampanga Health Centre III. We are commissioning another facility - we constructed Moone using the same money, another facility in Nabweyo in Amolatar.

We are constructing a hospital using the same money that our people used to buy tarpaulins, plates and these substandard bed nets. We consolidated that money and that is why those facilities are being constructed. We shall handle the hippos together tomorrow while there.

6.42

MR SOWEDI KITANYWA (NRM, Busongora County North, Kasese): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Senior Four students for this year will be sitting exams under the new curriculum later this year. Unfortunately, the ministry is not yet clear on what those students who did not pass senior four last years, but would like to repeat and those who were not able to sit senior four examinations have to do. Can the Prime Minister give light on how those students who failed to register or would like to repeat will be handled this year?

6.42

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS)

(Mr Peter Ogwang): I would like to put it categorically clear that the Ministry of Education and Sports advised those who did not perform well to repeat. We issued a circular to all Chief Administrative Officers, District Education Officers and Head teachers where those children sat, specifically those in the Government-Aided schools and even private schools to allow those students to repeat; we were very clear.

On the question of the new curriculum, we have been handling that matter and they will sit exams as per the timetable of Ugandan National Examination Board. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Mpenduzi, followed by Hon. Tebandeke.

6.43

MR MAPENDUZI OJARA (Independent, Bardege-Layibi Division, Gulu City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, about five months ago, I raised a matter in this House where requested you to update Ugandans on the progress of the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund IV (NUSAF IV). You promised to provide the updates. Unfortunately, it has taken several months. I would like to ask you that it would be fair to update the country on when the implementation of NUSAF IV will start. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, NUSAF IV is a World Bank-funded project. World Bank, these days, is dragging their feet because of what you know. However, the President has had several engagements. The former minister for northern Uganda as well as the ministry for finance have also been to Washington.

Although they are dragging their feet, we know that eventually – because it is not only Uganda that is doing this – I saw Ghana the other day and maybe all African countries. The World Bank needs us as we need them.

I request the Member to be a little patient. The ministry for finance is equally constrained, but we are trying to fast-track it.

6.45

MR CHARLES TEBANDEKE (NUP, Bbaale County, Kayunga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, in December 2022, you promised to launch the Nakasongola-Kayunga-Jiira Bridge. However, to date, it is not yet completed and the contractor left the site. What is the work plan for that site? Elevation and tarmacking of the same road –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is the name of the bridge, again?

MR TEBANDEKE: Bbaale-Kayunga-Nakasongola-Jiira Bridge. It is on Sezibwa. It is a connection between Bbaale and Nakasongola, towards Hon. Noah's area. There is also the issue of the tarmacking of the entire road connecting to Kayunga District.

Secondly, honourable minister for the youth, congratulations, but what plan do you have for the rural unemployed youth? If any, when are you – *(Member timed out.)*

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I have been to that bridge twice. It connects Kayunga to Nakasongola. It is almost complete – it is 99 per cent complete. We only need a few patches here and there. The contractor left the site and the ministry is using its engineers to complete the remaining work.

I believe that in two or three months, we shall have gone through. It is only that the ministry for finance, this time round, did not provide enough money, but they are saying they are going to give them money. This morning, I met Hon. Katumba Wamala; he had come for the same. We had a meeting with the ministries for finance and works on a number of bridges in the country, where work has stalled, not only Sezibwa. The ministry for finance has promised.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. On the question to the minister for youth, we shall

handle – because it is a policy kind of question. We shall handle it when we are handling the ministerial policy statements. The committee always analyses whether there is such a plan. I had picked Hon. Katabaazi.

6.47

MR FRANCIS KATABAAZI (NUP, Kalungu East County, Kalungu): Thank you Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I would like to bring it to your attention that the President, in 1996, promised to tarmac the road from Kifampa to Villa Maria. It is a very pivotal road. Right now, the bridge was washed away – it is part of Katonga; it was washed away at the same time. Right now, there is no connection yet it is a very pivotal road, which would have saved us the burden of going to Ssembabule, when Katonga Bridge was closed.

I would like to know when that pledge - he had said that if we voted for him in 1996, he would do it. We voted for him. He was voted in, again. However, up to now – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, we do not, as the Government, attach your voting patterns to development. Otherwise, other areas that do not vote NRM would not receive any support. We depend on the needs of the people, as NRM. *(Applause)*

I was in Kalungu and I know what he is talking about. In a few months, that bridge is going to be worked on so that we can connect those people from that area to the main road.

Two, I already told you that the road from Masaka to Villa Maria is one of those roads that we commissioned recently and it is going to be re-tarmacked. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for Nakawa and then Hon. Kabanda.

6.50

MR RONALD BALIMWEZO (NUP, Nakawa Division East, Kampala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, this

Parliament, a few years ago, recommended an ex-gratia of Shs 17.5 million for every member of the former sitting tenants of Nakawa-Naguru Estate. What is the progress?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I request that the Member puts that in writing so that I can get an accurate answer.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay. On Thursday, it will be included among the answered questions. Let us have Hon. Kabanda, followed by Hon. Mujungu and the Member for Buhweju.

6.51

MR DAVID KABANDA (NRM, Kasambya County, Mubende): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, Lusalira-Nkongge Road is an oil road, and I understand the Government compensated people for the construction to begin. The contract was given to Madam Pinetti – of course I will not go into the details.

However, Mr Speaker, I am in trouble - together with my colleague, the Woman MP – because as we are nearing elections, the construction has not begun and people have come back to construct on the road reserves. Towards the elections, I do not know what the Government is going to do because when you demolish their buildings, they will be coming to us, politicians to save them.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Rt Hon. Prime Minister.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, that road has been given to a Portuguese company called Tecnovia. It is about to start work. They are currently mobilising and I believe that, in the near future, they will start work because they are currently mobilising.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Mujungu?

6.53

MR THEMBO MUJUNGU (NRM, Busongora County South, Kasese): Mr Speaker, thank you very much –

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I request that the local government, the RDC and you, honourable member do not allow people to construct in the road reserve because the company is about to start work.

MR MUJUNGU: Mr Speaker, thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, about a month ago, a moving island and hyacinth blocked Kazinga Channel, which we share with Rubirizi. It has hindered fishing and tourist business, inconveniencing the traders and the community. It is now a month and there is no action. We do not know why.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the Government bought land in Kasese in Muhokya Town Council for the resettlement of people in the camp who have lived in the displaced people's camp for four years. We are thankful that you give them some support, but when are we resettling them?

MS NABBANJA: We talked about the Kazinga Channel and the hyacinth that has destroyed that swamp. The Ministry of Water and Environment and the Ministry of Works and Transport are in touch, especially the technical people. They have already brought in a report, but that requires a lot of money, which money we are yet to get. That is why we have delayed.

Then, the land that the Prime Minister's Office bought – that is the same money. Remember we were buying cups like I told you. We managed to buy that land –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I was with you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, while I was the Government Chief whip.

MS NABBANJA: We managed to buy that land for those people, but we got a challenge because the family members failed to agree on who should be given the money.

Recently, they agreed – there was that petition to the IGG. That happened before I even left that office. We now have the green light. We are going to come and parcel the land and give it to the people.

It is the same money we used to buy land for those people who were settling in that swamp in Kayunga. The Office of the Prime Minister is doing a lot for the community, I am telling you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for Buhweju.

6.57

MS OLIVER KOYEKYENGA (NRM, Woman Representative, Buhweju): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I am very happy that tomorrow you are going to open a health centre. I would like to appreciate the Government for the many health centre IIIs they have built.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, are you aware that we are doing badly when it comes to medical personnel? We are actually doing very badly because when you go to health centres, there is no medicine.

Last week, I was in Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital where I had a patient. There was no doctor to attend the patient for the whole week. We have been buying medicine out of the hospital. I would like to – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, maybe you could visit –

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, one, Mbarara is a regional referral hospital and those have specialised medical officers. Secondly, the amount of drugs that are given to regional referral hospitals is a bit higher than the one that we put in district hospitals.

It is true we have constructed a number of health facilities in our subcounties and town councils, but some of them do not have the required medical personnel. I would, however, like to assure Parliament that the President directed, despite the fact that we have the other audit, we allowed the medical personnel to be recruited.

The challenge we have had, I know it is everywhere across the country, even in my district, the district service commissions

are corrupt. In fact, yesterday, we had an interaction with the Ministry of Public Service, together with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the Attorney-General; we are looking for a way of maybe amending the law, that is constitutional, so that members apply to the service commissions and be recruited, then be sent to the districts, so that they are a bit independent.

Some of the challenges we have are that some of the leaders in the districts are waiting for their daughters and sons to get the required qualifications. It is a thorn in our flesh. I am being sincere to you. We are not going to recentralise. The members of the district service commission will come –(Interjection)– this is Prime Minister's Time. The law does not allow you to even raise a point of clarification. Please accept. (Laughter) Let me conclude.

Honourable colleagues, this is a thorn in our flesh. All districts have issues with the district service commissions. In order to cure that, I will request that you allow and we come up with a law to amend the Constitution so that the recruitment into the service commissions is a responsibility of the Public Service Commission. These people will apply normally, we select from those who will have applied and we call it a day. Otherwise, it is too much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Phyllis Chemutai?

7.00

MS PHYLLIS CHEMUTAI (NRM, Woman Representative, Kapchorwa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My concern is something, which we talked about while in Kyankwanzi last year. I raised an issue on the high prices of agricultural inputs; I raised it to the President. He answered by saying that he was going to give us subsidy. Of course, I requested a subsidy on the inputs, but he said he was going to give us a subsidy on fertilizers as well.

He also added that Uganda is going to produce its own fertilizers. This would make it possible for farmers to get fertilizer at low prices.

I would, therefore, like to ask the Prime Minister when we are getting this subside on fertilizer.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the Government does not have the capacity to subsidise on fertilizers. However, last year, the President directed me, together with my colleagues here, the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development, the Minister of Science and Technology and Minister of Local Government to revitalise the fertiliser factory that had closed in Tororo.

I would like to give an update as follows: So far, the fertiliser factory, Dongsong is now functional. Before it closed, it was employing more than 1,000 people. It used to supply fertilisers, but it was still struggling economically.

Honourable members, let me talk about the tea prices and the tea fertilisers. Government, working with that factory, is going to use the agriculture credit fund that is in Bank of Uganda, so that this factory accesses that money to produce these fertilisers at a subsidised price, and the formulation of these ingredients.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, together with the technical people in that ministry, and the Osukuru Phosphate Factory, are going to help us, so that they produce fertilisers for Uganda at a subsidised price. However, farmers will be buying their own fertilisers. It is not going to be the Government to buy fertilisers for farmers, nor will the Government get money to subsidise farmers.

7.03

MR BENJAMIN KAMUKAMA (NRM, Ruhaama East County, Ntungamo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Government has done well by allocating Shs 1 billion per municipality to improve on the road network. However, the same Government has created over 300 town councils in this country, which we have not allocated money to work on the roads. Isn't it high time that we allocated Shs 300 million per

town council, which makes Shs 100 billion to work on the roads in the town councils? Thank you.

MS VICTORIA BUSINGE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. These town councils were created at different times and so, coding did not occur at the same time. In the current budget, they are catered for, so they will get their independent funds for their roads. Thank you.

7.05

MR BONIFACE OKOT (NRM, Youth Representative, Northern): Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the Government, through the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries has a programme to support small-scale irrigation farmers with irrigation equipment acquisition by cost-sharing.

I am in receipt of complaints from many farmers, especially those from Northern Uganda and Lango in particular, that the terms and the costs of equipment acquisition are highly prohibitive. What are the plans of the Government to ensure that the irrigation equipment is affordable and also accessible to these farmers?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, at least I have had an opportunity to visit farmers in a number of districts across the country with these irrigation schemes. The Government provides 75 per cent subsidy on irrigation schemes, and the farmers pay 25 per cent in a phased manner. Therefore, I do not know what the Member means?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Wanda followed by the Kibaale MP. It seems most of you are getting interested because you see me – what I was trying to do – there are Members who have been here all day. We are about to finish, but I wanted at least each one to get a chance to speak, affirmative action. However, there are Members entering the House and immediately standing up yet I have the Leader of the Opposition to conclude. Let us see if we can accommodate five more Members.

7.07

MR RICHARD WANDA (NRM, Bungokho Central County, Mbale): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when Bugisu Subregion experienced massive flooding, you promised support for the reconstruction or rehabilitation of the roads, of Shs 200 billion. That message was given to us through your representative during one of the fundraisings. When will this fund be availed because the roads are in bad shape?

MS NABBANJA: I request the Member to tell me who the representative was. This is because what I know is that we, together with you Members of Parliament, agreed that in order to rehabilitate the roads and maintain them, each district was given Shs 1 billion. Then the ministry, for Uganda National Roads Authority roads, or those trunk roads, was also given support. We gave emergency funding. Maybe they heard the emergency funding which we proposed to give the Ministry of Works and Transport, to work on the bridges that were washed away by floods in Mbale, Kigezi, Kasese, and other areas in the country. Remember the districts of Pakwach - I remember that place, and Hoima, Kafu River, and many others.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, the Shs 200 billion we talked about in the Cabinet was for the Ministry of Works and Transport for the entire country, and not for Mbale.

7.09

MS NOELINE KISEMBO (NRM, Woman Representative, Kibaale): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, last month in Kibaale District, one primary school called Nyamugura Primary School lost its roof to a storm. The parents are not allowed to contribute towards the renovation of the school, because the policy does not allow parents to contribute funds.

We have had such situations in the district, and the school administrators get stranded. The district has no funds to rehabilitate the school. In such a situation –(Member timed out.)

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the district of Kibaale has been supported with iron sheets. Remember the other ones that came and found themselves in the compound of somebody? *(Laughter)* The Office of the Prime Minister will definitely support the honourable member. I request that the Chief Administrative Officer under the Bunyoro ministry - honourable members, let me also set the record straight. We did not buy new iron sheets for Karamoja, but we have distributed all the iron sheets to Karamoja. There was mismanagement of records. We have the ministry for Bunyoro. The iron sheets that were taken to Bunyoro should come from the ministry for Bunyoro affairs.

We agreed that we should support institutions like schools and churches, in case there is a storm. Madam honourable member from Kibaale, I know Nyamuhunguza. I was the Member of Parliament for that area, and we shall support you, not only Kibaale, but all other colleagues.

7.11

MR JOHN BOSCO NGOYA (NRM, Bokora County, Napak): Thank you, Mr Speaker. For 15 years or so, there has been an influx of migrants into Napak District, particularly in the subcounties of Apeitolim, Poron, and Nabwal. These migrants come from the neighbouring districts.

In September 2022, we had an engagement with the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Hon. Judith Nabakooba. She promised that there would be the opening of the boundaries of Napak and its neighbouring districts. It has been one and a half years, and nothing has happened, Madam Prime Minister.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister? Let Hon. Peter Ogwang help.

MR PETER OGWANG: First of all, I will give information as a neighbour. The boundaries between Katakwi and Napak were opened by the then Minister of State for Karamoja Affairs, who is none other than the First Lady. Maybe the question is, which I also want to confirm, that Hon. Tom Butime visited

the locus in the locus on the areas the colleague is talking about.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I would like to request you to ask the district local government to get to the records, maps and inform the honourable colleague because I am giving information. I was there and the boundaries were opened by the Minister of State for Karamoja Affairs and that fact you can also cross check it with your office, which is within your mandate. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kyooma, Hon. Osoru, then Hon. Lokwang

7.13

MR XAVIER KYOOMA (NRM, Ibanda County North, Ibanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, because of the heavy rains, there developed a very big and deep valley in Ibanda town, Ibanda municipality. Letters were written to your office and whenever it rains, properties, houses, people - so far, seven known people and animals have died. When will you work on this situation?

MS NABBANJA: I do not have an answer for that question, but I would just direct the Minister of Works to go on ground and assess the situation and we see how to help the people of Ibanda Municipality.

7.14

MS MOURINE OSORU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, allow me to inform this House that on the 3rd of February, the women of Arua City and the other women who are transacting business in silverfish were stopped by UPDF officers in Kiyindi landing site in Buikwe.

Knowing that most of these women obtain monies from SACCOs, Parish development Model and "Emyooga", how are they going to be helped because they do not understand why they were stopped and would like government to explain since most of them have loans to repay. Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: Your Excellency -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, for promoting me. *(Laughter)*

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, as you can see, I have been answering questions for two and a half hours or so; I am a bit tired. And I chaired like 11 meetings from morning, up to the time I came here. The *'Majegere'* in me is getting tired.

However, the issue of silverfish on our lakes, commonly known as *'Mukene'*, and our women of which most of them are vulnerable, is an issue of concern.

The President was informed about the issue in the Cabinet and the Minister in charge of fisheries was given recommendations. I request that you allow me to direct the minister in charge of fisheries to come and give an update.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, inform her to bring it up when we are discussing the ministerial policy statements.

7.16

MR PHILIPHS LOKWANG (NRM, Napore West County, Karenga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries promised to take enough tractors to Karamoja from Office of the Prime Minister. They even generated a list from my community, but up to now, the rains have started, but the tractors have not gone. What is the plan, Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, Karamoja Subregion agreed to put together all the tractors, and in number, they have ten tractors centered at Nabuin, he knows because they operate from one district to another.

However, we also agreed that we shall buy more tractors using the Karamoja sub-sector budget, so that they have more because their land is arable. He was in that meeting when we agreed that we operate these tractors in a pool project.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Akampulira Prossy, Hon. Muhumuza, Hon. Kibaaju. I am finishing this side then come this side - no, the Member wanted me to have a written question. I want her to say it because that is how we operate.

7.18

MS PROSSY AKAMPURIRA (NRM, Woman Representative, Rubanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have decided to go to the Office of the Prime Minister and I present it to her, so that we can sort it from there. Thank you very much.

7.18

MR DAVID MUHUMUZA (NRM, Mwenge County North, Kyenjojo): Thank you, Speaker. Mwenge North Constituency has 11 sub-counties, but out of the 11, only 4 have power. The six of them do not have even a single pole. I want the Prime Minister to help us expedite the process of having power in the Mwenge North. Our neighbours like Kabarole were surveyed, but for us, we do not have anything.

Secondly, the same Mwenge North constituency has no Health Center IV and not even an ambulance for the constituency. We are completely stuck and cut off. Thank you.

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, the constituency where Hon. Muhumuza comes from, will definitely get an ambulance, but after upgrading the Health Centre III to Health Centre IV.

He came to Kakumiro and I have been to his constituency too, we involved the Ministry of Health. They are going to upgrade one of the Health Center IIIs in his constituency, so that they have an area where they can - because the maternal mortality rate in his constituency is high and so we need a theater.

His constituency is one of the priority areas where we are going to upgrade the Health Center III to health center IV. As for power, now that the Minister in charge is here, I request that you allow her answer that question.

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (Ms Ruth Nankabirwa): Mr Speaker, I am already handling Hon. Muhumuza's concern because I called Eng. Joan Mutibwa, the Head of Rural Electrification to go and survey the areas that we are going to connect. So, Hon. Muhumuza is waiting for the answer from Joan Mutibwa.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us hear from Hon. Kibaaju, Hon. Tinkasiimire, the Hon. Namugga.

7.21

MS NAOME KIBAAJU (NRM, Sheema County North, Sheema): Thank you, Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I hope Hon. Namugga did not ask a question last time - we are concluding, honourable colleagues.

MS KIBAAJU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Is the Rt Hon. Prime Minister aware that in one of the main roads leading into and out of the city, called Acacia Avenue, has got a hotel, which is built right in the middle of the road, called Four Points by Sheraton.

This morning, I witnessed a nasty incident, the hotel does not have a walkway because it was built in the middle of the road. Two people were bypassing each other and one of them fell where vehicles were passing. I do not know who allowed the owner of this land to build this major hotel in the middle of one of the leading roads in our city.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the planning aspect of buildings concerns most of us. Kampala is like a big slum. A friend of mine asked me: "Beyond Kololo and Nakasero, which are also gone, tell me any place in Kampala, which one can say is organised?" For example, you have houses of one or two levels, you plant in trees - you just build here and next someone builds a church, next is a disco, next is a petrol station. *(Laughter)*

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, it is the desire of every Ugandan to have an organised city. Let me take this opportunity to direct the Minister for Kampala Affairs to go and stop the construction on the road and also to - *(Interjection)*- is the hotel already there?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: And, the Government is already giving it business. *(Laughter)*

MS NABBANJA: The way she spoke, I thought there was still construction going on.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, it is a planning issue, generally. I think you need to engage our planners; it is a long-term issue.

MS NABBANJA: Much obliged.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Tinkasiimire.

7.24

MR BARNABAS TINKASIIMIRE (NRM, Buyaga West County, Kagadi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, Muhoro-Ndaiga Road has been outstanding yet it was considered in the early days of Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), as a security road for tarmacking. Around 2009, the President considered it in almost every State-of-the-Nation Address. In 2020, they did a feasibility study and there are already marks there.

However, in this financial year, it is not appearing in the Ministry of Works and Transport's ministerial policy statement. Recently, a person was knocked by those who were demonstrating.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, on record, when is this road going to be tarmacked?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

MR TINKASIIMIRE: The other issue -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, Hon. Tinkasiimire. Last time you switched on the microphone without requesting and I remained silent. It is a tradition –(*Laughter*)– and we have one minute for the questions.

MS NABBANJA: Muhoro-Bwikara-Kyaterekera-Ndaiga is one of those roads that were earmarked for tarmacking in 2016. That road is in our National Development Plan III. In fact, it was supposed to be tarmacked together with the road from Mubende to Kakumiro and Kagadi.

However, this was not possible because it is an escarpment – this is the answer they gave me; remember I am part of you. The soils in that area are so porous in a sense that we need a lot of technology. So, the ministry gives that as an excuse, but by all standards – (*Break in recording*) - connects us to our neighbours, the Democratic Republic of Congo and, so, we need to look for money, though they say it is a lot. They talk in terms of trillions of shillings.

They say it is very expensive because it is an escarpment - on the Western Rift Valley; it is not an easy road. They say that the cost of the road from Mubende, Kakumiro to Kagadi - yet those are only 31 kilometres – is four times the money that we use to construct 109 kilometres.

It is an expensive road to construct and that is why the ministry has been fearing to start on it. Whenever they do feasibility studies, they realise it is too expensive. That is the only answer I can give.

However, that does not mean that, that area should be denied – (*Break in recording*)– Mr Speaker, we shall continue to engage.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Namugga and then Hon. Olanya.

7.27

MS GORRETH NAMUGGA (NUP, Mawogola County South, Ssembabule): Mr Speaker, I thank Parliament for allocating us money for the construction and upgrade of a health centre III in Matete. However, work has

been delayed. It is supposed to be executed by the UPDF Engineering Brigade, but we are told that the engineering brigade is overwhelmed. This is the fourth quarter and we are worried that funds might be returned. We need to have the project implemented in time.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the tarmacking of the Kyabakuza-Matete Road - this road was promised to us by the President in 1996. You, therefore, need to give us an answer. When are you giving us tarmac on the road from Kyabakuza to Matete?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

MS NABBANJA: The money to construct Matete Health Centre III will not be returned. We shall use the Ministry of Defence and Veterans Affairs and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and commit that money such that UPDF Engineering Brigade can come on site. Tomorrow, we are commissioning these facilities with the engineering brigade because they are the ones that did them.

It is cost-effective to use the UPDF Engineering Brigade. You never know, even the district may have the balance of some of the money like when they did for us that work. Other contractors wanted Shs 11 billion, but they did it for only Shs 54 billion. What we need to do is to commit the money so that it is not returned, but the engineering brigade will do the work and you will appreciate it.

For the road, I need to engage the Ministry of Works and Transport, together with her. I will call her.

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

MR OLANYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, His Excellency the President issued an executive order stopping massive tree cutting and stopped the *Balaalo* from wandering with their animals in northern Uganda.

As I speak now, there is continuous tree cutting in Acholi Subregion and the army officers, the security personnel, are the ones escorting the charcoal dealers. The Balaalo are being protected by the soldiers, in this case; the UPDF.

I would like to find out the plan from you, Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, for helping the President in enforcing these executive orders.

I beg to move.

MS NABBANJA: The implementation of the executive order is in my office. Mr Speaker, the eviction of the Balaalo was halted - he knows - because of the Foot and Mouth Disease. Otherwise, there are those who had left the area. The fear was that we may transmit the foot and mouth disease to other parts of the country, since we had identified a few areas in northern Uganda with this particular disease.

Tree cutting is an issue of enforcement. I promise to coordinate the relevant ministries so that this is stopped. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Leader of the Opposition?

7.31

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Mr Speaker, I have one quick follow-up issue among the questions that were written to the Prime Minister. This one was raised by Hon. James Baba, regarding millions of coffee seedlings that were supplied to the Government, through Uganda Coffee Development Authority (UCDA) in 2020. *(Interjection)* The question that was submitted to you, here, indicates 2020. It was by the honourable member who is a former minister.

The total amount is Shs 49.8 billion. Four years down the road, according to this record, the Government is saying that, in the next financial year, they are only going to pay less than half, which is Shs 20 billion.

Yesterday, we had a similar discussion on tea nursery beds. The difference there is that for

the tea nursery bed operators, the Government told them, "Venture into this field and we shall take care of you." These ones actually supplied the Government, but four years down the road, it is saying, "In the next financial year, we shall pay half."

Mr Speaker, these people keep reaching out to us as parliamentarians in various ways. Many of them got loans to be able to supply the Government; their businesses have crumbled and their lives shattered.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we should up this amount because these are many years down the road. These people supplied the Government already. Why does it not want to pay its dues? These are Ugandan business persons whom we are crumbling, as though deliberately.

It would be good to get commitment from the Government that this money will be upped, so that these people are taken care of. It has been many years, yet they already supplied them. Why don't we pay them?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you can help us with that.

MS NABBANJA: Let me shed more light, Mr Speaker. I would like to inform the Leader of the Opposition that this debt came in last year when we stopped the purchase of seedlings by Operation Wealth Creation and put all the money for the Parish Development Model in one basket. Because of that gap, we all agreed that the tree seedling nursery operators were not prepared. It came from Parliament, remember?

We then agreed last year, together with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and Cabinet, that since these people already had outgrown seedlings, let them supply them. The Member may have missed this when he was writing. It was not 2020, but 2022/2023, like I have submitted.

Mr Speaker, it is here where we agreed on staggered payments; where we would pay these people in a phased manner. We have allocated Shs 20 billion for the coming year; we shall

then also allocate Shs 29 billion the other year in a staggered manner, like we agreed. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I would like to thank you, but in a special way, I thank the Rt Hon. Prime Minister –(Applause)- who has given us enough time to answer many questions.

Next week, we shall be extremely busy with the ministerial policy statements. I will discuss with her the moment she gives me her time, so that we concentrate on Government business on the budget. We might not be able to do Prime Minister's Time. That is why I wanted us to pick out these issues which have been pending over time.

Honourable colleagues, I would like to thank you for your patience. Ensure that you work with your committees and conclude the reports. We have some which are ready and so Clerk, upload them, so that MPs can look through them over the weekend.

House adjourned to Tuesday at 2.00 p.m.

(The House rose at 7.36 p.m. and adjourned until Tuesday, 9 April 2024 at 2.00 p.m.)