

**PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA**

**Thursday, 5 May 2022**

*Parliament met at 2.16 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:** Honourable Colleagues, I welcome you to today’s sitting. Yesterday, I received a call from a few Speakers and councillors of some districts who requested that we “think about them”. I think they were trying to lobby and you know, as usual, we are in the budgeting process. They told me that they will be meeting towards the end of May to approve budgets of their district councils.

Parliament is already considering the budget proposals and we have already received the consolidated budget proposals. The Committee on Public Service and Local Government already presented to the Committee on Budget. Therefore, the question is: whose budgets are local governments presenting to the Ministry of Finance? Whose budgets?

Honourable members, the Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) should be uploading onto the system the budget, which is approved by a district council. *(Applause)* So, it prompted me to call my own district and my Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) told me that they will have a council meeting to approve the budget by the 31st of May. My question was, who approved the budget you uploaded on behalf of Mitooma District? It is like you, colleagues, waking up here and finding the Minister of Finance has already started implementing the budget.

Where does it bring us on the issue of decentralisation? It seems the councillors are now very helpless. They cannot do anything; they do not have any power. Some people are sitting somewhere on computers uploading budgets, especially the development component. I am happy we have former district speakers like Hon. Sanon Bwiire and former Kumi district chairperson, Hon. Christine Apolot, here. This really shocked me.

I want the Minister of Local Government - because what I came to understand is that the Ministry of Local Government does not know anything about how districts are budgeting because the CAOs now submit directly to the Ministry of Finance. The Minister of Local Government does not even know that such and such a district has not yet put in its budget. In the end, colleagues, it is your districts, which are going to fail, especially on the development component.

So, I need the Minister of Local Government to come here and brief us on the budgeting process by the local governments and why they submit budgets without the approval of the district councils.

I also urge you, colleagues, to call your districts and ask them about this: “Have you, as my district council, approved the budget for our district?” so that when the minister brings the statement here, we are all informed and not misled. I need the minister to come back.

This is a very simple matter; I need the minister to come back on Wednesday, next week, and present this statement. *(Members rose\_)* I am still communicating. I need the minister to come back and present a comprehensive statement on the budgeting process, the role of district councils in the budgeting process and whose budget we are processing, as Parliament, purportedly from the various districts. I really want that.

I tried to call the Chairperson of the Committee on Public Service and Local Government last night but I could not get him. Otherwise that information really shocked me. We have to take up this matter seriously. The way we protect our powers of appropriation must be the same way we also protect those of local governments and our councillors. *(Applause)*

The second issue I want to bring up is that yesterday, I received calls from some rice traders who bring their rice via Mutukula – a certain lady was even crying. I called the Minister of State for Trade and I alerted her on the matter. Today, I was coming from another meeting and I found people had already - I think they first went to the Speaker’s office, but they were told I am the one presiding and they came to my office.

The rice traders, importing from Tanzania through the Mutukula border, have informed me that the Minister of Trade issued import permits to brokers who are not rice traders and left the real dealers of rice without permits. Also, I am told there is a company called Rice Agribusiness Development Foundation (RADFO), which has been appointed. It is the only company that clears those who want to import rice via the Mutukula border and it is the one that determines the prices.

I am told today they will charge a kilogramme at Shs 3000, tomorrow Shs 10,000, and the next day, Shs 12,000. Moreover, this rice is tax exempted because URA does not even collect money. These people have imposed taxes. I think a government is running within a Government, in terms of the tax regime and rice trade.

They have given me a petition this afternoon. I want to refer this petition to the Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry, which has been doing a thorough job. I want the committee to go and investigate this matter thoroughly and report back within two weeks because it seems to be a very urgent matter; it seems some people are minting hundreds of millions quietly at the Mutukula border.

Members of Parliament from that side, I do not know why this has never been brought here. Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry, please, I need this handled within two weeks. Clerk, you will pass on the – The petitioners are the Rice Business Sector Association; these, generally, are people who import rice but they are saying only one company is allowed. For one to bring in any rice in Uganda via Mutukula, you need a licence from another company called RADFO.

Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry, I want this handled expeditiously so that we can create a fair trading environment for our people. These are young people going into trade.

Yesterday, Hon. Enos Tumusiime raised the issue of failure by the Uganda Coffee Development Authority to provide seedlings to farmers due to lack of funds. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance is required to come here today because this was not a matter where you need to go and reinvent the wheel. It was just very simple; either there is money or not. I do not see the minister here and so, I do not see the minister here and I do not want to burden you. I am giving you one hour. The minister should be here to explain to us the issue of coffee. Please, if in that one hour he is not there, I will announce the next step. In one hour, the Minister of Finance should be here.

We have some matters of national importance. Hon. Nsereko?

2.26

**MR MUHAMMAD NSEREKO (Independent, Kampala Central Division, Kampala):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Arising out of your communication, I would like to thank you for the commitment you have and that you have undertaken to present views of Ugandans from your Chair.

Mr Speaker, when you talked about budgeting, I remembered that in the previous Parliament, we argued that it is important that we pick up the mantle of discussing every sector of the budget in this House. There is this mentality of committees and then, retreating to subcommittees and before you know it, we own up to a budget in which we did not participate. When questions are put to us, we only wait for the appropriation time of the Bill and it is normally very fast – we are handling Vote per Vote and there is no time to make a comprehensive report and get people to include the views of what you are talking about.

I will give you an example; I am glad you have talked about local governments. You can ask how many of us know what our local governments have presented or what other people’s local governments have presented. This is a centre of cross-lobbying. Someone would be coming here from, let us say, Kanungu, lobbying that they need this road and also need this water. It is so that we sit down and say, “This is the priority there, this is the priority here. Can we sit down and synchronise and split this budget equitably?”

That brings me to this point, Mr Speaker. Silicon Valley Centre of Excellence in Technology has been given 600 students to study for free – with no funding. The letter they have is that there is no money. The whole world is moving towards technological advancement but you give them students to teach and there is no money!

Secondly, they need a centre where they can teach children virtual reality. Like you have all heard, virtual reality glasses are expensive. It is something that the Government should invest in but they are being told that there is no money for the next three years. What has happened is that the investment has been shifted by Amazon and other companies to Kenya. An investment of over $12 billion has been – because they wrote and, I think, said you are very unserious.

Now, we have to go and plead for jobs from our neighbours: can you take on our software engineers that have studied in Uganda? You have the best brains but you have denied them the circumstances and the environment to work in and the jobs have been shifted to another country. You were the first priority -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Nsereko, you are raising a very crucial matter. As presiding officers, we are going to retreat. Indeed, we will reflect on how we can make the budgeting process much better in terms of our role, as Parliament.

**MR NSEREKO:** Mr Speaker, as I wind up, let us sit and follow the national development goals of our country, under the National Planning Authority programme that we have. However, we talk about this and implement something else. We say we want to move this way but we end up moving another way. The world is taking this direction, we are moving towards another direction. How can the two synchronise?

After that, everyone sits and says, in a lump sum, “Parliament does not help us” because people do not hear us engage in debate about appropriation and about taxation feasibly.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

2.31

**MR DICKSONS KATESHUMBWA (NRM, Sheema Municipality, Sheema):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I am responding to your communication, particularly on the issue of the restrictions of importation. We need the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives to understand that one of its mandates is actually to facilitate trade and not to restrict trade.

Since we entered into the East African Community, one of the success stories we have had is the coming into force of the Common Market Protocol. The common market protocol, plus the other laws like the anti-non-tariff barrier law, have come in place to reinforce the need to respect free movement of goods within the East African Community.

However, Mr Speaker, I think what is causing confusion is that we have the External Trade Act (CAP. 88), which is not consistent with the East African Community Customs Management Act. That Act purports to give the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives powers to restrict imports and exports, yet the coming into force of the Common Market Protocol actually made that Act collapse. It has not been repealed and because of that, the ministry is using that Act to illegally curtail trade, in my opinion. You cannot appoint a private company to collect fees and restrict importation. That is undermining revenue collection.

Mr Speaker, we need the trade committee to look into this matter and report to this House. We need to task the ministry responsible to do its mandate of facilitating trade so that our business community can prosper. They have been suffering from the COVID-19 pandemic. We cannot have the trade ministry that is supposed to advocate for non-existence of non-tariff barriers acting to the contrary.

I am very surprised that we have a situation like that. I thank you, Mr Speaker, for referring this matter to the committee. We should be able to get details and debate the matter.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, did you want to say something about that issue? Hon. Ssemujju?

**MR SSEMUJJU**:Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Rule 25 allows us to make short reactions to your communication. Guided by that rule, I am seeking guidance from you. There are urgent matters that are sent to committees of Parliament. Sometimes, they are overtaken by events either because they have been delayed before the committee or they have not been given priority when the Order Paper is being made.

I am a member of the Business Committee. We referred the agreement on coffee – contentious as it was because some of us wanted to debate it that day – to the Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry. The committee, at the beginning of the week, said they were ready with the report. We have not been given an opportunity to debate that report. Now, Mr Speaker, you are making another reference to that committee.

The reason I am seeking guidance from you is whether for some of these matters, that are urgent, you should not allow us to debate them from here and make decisions one way or another. I have the appetite to begin debating the coffee agreement. The chairperson of the committee said it is ready. I do not see it on the Order Paper or even in matters to follow.

Mr Speaker, you are now sending the committee and I am afraid it may also go there and we pile it up with other reports; unless it is given special treatment because it is sent by the Speaker. And before you know it - we are about to conclude a year in Parliament - we will be on and off.

That is the guidance I seek from you, Mr Speaker, whether before they handle that particular reference that you are making, they should not first bring a report here and we conclude the coffee agreement, then they take on the reference you are making.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Ssemujju. Indeed, the committee has finished their work and like I said yesterday, they have submitted the report to the Clerk and the presiding officer. At the risk of repeating myself on what I said yesterday, as a presiding officer, when you send me these documents, we have to first study them. I familiarise myself with the document so that I can be able to moderate the debate. Otherwise, we are going to come here when I do not know much about a document and I just keep picking Members like Hon. Ssemujju, I pick Hon. Rukia or any other person without being able to comprehend; when I am lost. So, I can assure you, the item is coming. We are going to give it space on the Order Paper very soon. Therefore, do not lose your appetite.

Now, I have sent another matter because they have already finished it and have already submitted it. So, they do not have any pending assignments. What is pending on their part is presenting their report on the Floor. However, this is also an urgent matter and we shall ensure that indeed, these matters are given attention. Honourable members, they are coming. Thank you. *(Members rose\_)*

Colleagues, is that matter to do with rice? If it is not to do with trade and rice, I should allow Hon. Bahati, then I will allow you on another issue.

2.38

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (TRADE) (Mr David Bahati):** Thank you, Mr Speaker and thank you, Hon. Kateshumbwa, who was the Commissioner for Customs at URA and is familiar with this situation. It is good you have given this work to the committee. However, I would like to assure the House that the Ministry of Trade is not frustrating trade; it is facilitating it, as opposed to what Hon. Kateshumbwa said.

In 2014, we exempted VAT on local rice producing companies. Fifteen companies went to court and they got an injunction against URA and they were exempted. So, in our opinion, we thought that was actually unfair to other companies. So, we opened up to all companies that wanted to trade in rice and exempted them, as they had exempted the other 15 companies. Now, these companies formed associations and they have been dealing with one another.

The point you have made about the border - about one company collecting fees or taxes - is a creation of the association; it is not our creation, as the Government. Therefore, what we actually did to exempt everybody was to facilitate and be fair to all companies, and that is what we have been doing. So, I just wanted to say that as the committee looks into this matter, the Ministry of Trade took that action to facilitate all people who were willing to trade in rice.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Bahati, why would you force me to be part of the association? Why do I need to first belong to an association to be an importer of rice? So, can we agree that members and non-members of the association be allowed to import rice without non-members first paying to the association?

**MR BAHATI:** Mr Speaker, the letters that we issue are given to companies - and not as members of the association. This association has been a creation of their own as traders and I think I will take the responsibility to look into it and also resolve that because they are part and parcel of our operations.

However, at the moment, for anybody who wants to trade in rice, we have been giving them exemptions, as companies. What they have been doing at the border has been their creation, which we should look into, as the committee looks into that issue. Let us wait for the committee and then we will be able to see how we can resolve it.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, let us agree for now. Members and non-members of the association should be allowed to import rice as the committee does its work *-(Applause)-* because that is what you are saying. There is no law you are basing on that says that you must belong to a certain association to be able to import rice from Tanzania.

**MR BAHATI:** Mr Speaker, we shall follow that and take action immediately.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Since they have agreed to take action, Hon. Nsereko, we are pre-empting the assignment we have given the committee.

**MR NSEREKO:** Mr Speaker, there is a timeline. I will give you an example; the expiry of the current exemption ceases with the end of the financial year. I am meant to believe so, and exemptions are granted annually. I believe that is the right thing. Therefore, I would like you, Mr Speaker, to attach an addendum stating that it begins now and even they are bound at the beginning of the next financial year.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What we can do, since in two weeks’ time we shall get a committee report and there is no single law that says that you must belong to a certain association to import rice - what is so special about rice? Rice is the same as *kawunga*. So, who is really behind this rice?

Therefore, let us open up. We have members of the team that have petitioned me; they are members of the Rice Business Sector Association. Please, stand up for recognition. Just look at these people; how can you tell these people that they must go - they even presented the petition in Luganda - and they allege that they need to be cleared by a certain organisation called RADFO for them to import rice.

Honourable minister, let us agree that with effect from tomorrow, you allow all those traders who want to import rice to bring it. Then, those who would want to bring it through the association, let them bring it to the association; those who do not want to belong to the association, let them be. In fact, people can form over five associations.

We have agreed on that and honourable minister, on Tuesday, please, bring the letter clearing all companies to start importing rice because it needs to be done in a formal letter or communication since you already have communication giving a few priority companies exemption. Now, you need a letter to be laid on the Table showing that you have cleared all the others while the committee does its work. Let us facilitate trade and let us help our young people so that they can do their business.

Colleagues, we are running out of time. (*Hon. Nambeshe rose\_)* We are running out of time. No, that cannot be a procedural matter where you have prepared a long presentation. *(Laughter)*

**THE CHIEF OPPOSITION WHIP (Mr John Baptist Nambeshe):** I would like to salute your take on the petition that was raised by the rice traders and the pain they are going through to fight a monopoly, which is similar to the pain the coffee traders are going through. *(Applause)*

You vividly told the House that you got so many calls. Those of us who come from these coffee-growing areas are receiving numerous calls. For your information, the delay to have this matter expeditiously dispensed with by the House is causing lots of anger, resentment - that backlash. We, the representatives of those people, are at risk. They can occasion, anytime, that outrage on us.

You have talked of this report being tabled in the House soon. Like the Bible says that Jesus is coming soon, that “soon” has taken ages. We would not want to see this “soon” also taking years.

On a matter of procedure, if you look at the front bench, as usual, it is almost empty. There is a matter of urgency; we are reliably informed that there has been a terrorist attack in Somalia –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, you need my permission.

**MR NAMBESHE:** I sought it under Rule 50, Mr Speaker –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, on matters of urgency. You know, as Chief Opposition Whip, you just call. You have an office here; you just need to call my office.

**MR NAMBESHE:** Most obliged, Mr Speaker, but let me conclude it in a second. The Minister of Security ought to be here because we are reliably informed that a terrorist attack on our officers and men in Somalia, perpetrated by the Al-Shabaab, has happened. We would like to know the fatalities - those that were victims of this attack. The minister ought to be here and furnish this House with such urgent information.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Anytime the minister comes, I will give him space.

2.48

**MR ALLAN MAYANJA (NUP, Nakaseke Central County, Nakaseke):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. When you look at Rule 45 on Questions for Oral Answer, sub-rule (4) states, *“A minister shall not take more than two weeks to respond to a question from a Member.”*

(3) *“The response by a Minister to a question asked of him or her shall be sent to the Clerk within five working days and the Clerk shall distribute the response to the Members within five days.”*

Mr Speaker, some of us here avoid bringing matters of national importance on the Floor of Parliament not because we do not have them but to pave way for other serious businesses of Parliament to take place. Instead, we turn them into “Questions for Oral Answer”.

However, to my dismay, the ministers responsible hardly make responses to our questions. For example, on 09 February 2022, I asked four questions on the persistent fire outbreaks in schools and markets to Hon. Maj. Gen. Kahinda Otafiire, the Minister of Internal Affairs, but he has never replied.

Mr Speaker, over this matter, are we procedurally moving on well when some ministers are sleeping on their job, yet people are losing lives and property? Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is a very important issue, honourable member. We are going to ensure that, indeed, we sort it out as the Presiding Officers. Clerk, extract all questions of that nature that are pending and pass them on to the Prime Minister. The ones, which are ready should immediately be put on the Order Paper so that we clear them.

Honourable member, I totally agree with you. We want to reduce on these matters of national importance so that we leave them as urgent matters.

2.50

**MS CECILIA OGWAL (FDC, Woman Representative, Dokolo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Under Rule 25 (2) (e), I would like to make a comment on your communication. The Local Governments Act allows Members of Parliament to also be members of their respective district councils. Therefore, we are supposed to be part and parcel of the district council decisions and debate.

Unfortunately, operationally, most district councils do not inform their Members of Parliament, whenever they are sitting. It is very rare that they do that. In most cases, I keep reminding my own district to let us know, not only for the budget, but for all matters. There are very many things, which are going wrong in our respective districts, that we also hear of either from the media or when there is a crisis highlighted elsewhere.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, I would like to urge you to maybe talk to the line minister, to remind the speakers of the district councils to invite Members of Parliament to be part and parcel of their discussions. They are also members of the roads committee - and that is mandatory.

Secondly, I would like to let you know that I am a member of the Committee on Trade, Industry and Tourism. There are some people alleging that the members of my committee have been bribed. When the Atiak committee report came to the House, it disappeared. Now, the issue of the coffee crisis has come; it has disappeared from the Order Paper and yet, again, it is urgent. They are alleging, “Mrs Ogwal, even you!” *(Laughter)* Mr Speaker, I am urging you to save my neck - I am too old to be bribed.

I would pray that at the earliest opportunity, the report on coffee should be brought to the Floor so that we can put the matter to rest and some of us can also sleep. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable member. I want to protect you, colleagues. The committee on trade has finished its work. The rest of the work of ensuring it goes to the Order Paper is for the presiding officers.

I have pending issues on the Order Paper but I have not heard anyone complaining. What is this interest also? We shall need to know. Colleagues, the power of making the Order Paper - allow us, we are doing everything within the time we have. We are very sensitive to this matter. Otherwise, if we gave you time to – Hon. Kivumbi, no. This matter is closed.

On the matter of local governments, I also urge you to always go and attend. I know that some of us are invited and we do not attend. Some people, when you reach the councils - because we are MPs, we want to be bigger than the councillors and dominate. I urge you to be humble and always attend. *(Hon. Otimgiw rose\_)* Hon. Isaac, you are the last one on this issue.

Hon. Kivumbi, I have requested the minister to come here and respond. I am looking at the time. Today, I am happy and so, I am very lenient because of something else. You had better take advantage. *(Laughter)*

2.54

**MR ISAAC OTIMGIW (NRM, Padyere County, Nebbi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on the same issue of the Order Paper. Last Thursday on the 28th, under item No. 7, we had the issue of a motion, which was going to be brought to this House on the West Nile Tobacco Farmers being included in a compensation project. Due to the time aspect, it was ruled that it will be looked at in the next order of business.

However, in the last sitting of this week, the issue has not been raised again yet it was already on the Order Paper last week, on the 28th. I, therefore, wonder what really is happening. As Members from the West Nile region, we are getting very frustrated with the way we are being handled by the Government and this House. If we have been annexed to Congo -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Isaac, you have made your point. You can resume your seat.

**MR OTIMGIW:** Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: I should apologise for not getting in touch with the petitioners. There is another administrative way we were handling this matter, which we felt would be shorter. For instance, there is the case from Hoima, which was not from this House.

Therefore, a motion to just urge – you are just urging; you can urge me and I refuse to be urged. As presiding officers, there is another route we were taking, which we think would yield better fruits quickly but we should have informed you. Give us a short time to try that route. The moment we feel we are not moving much, then - but we are going to keep you updated, as leaders from West Nile.

2.57

**MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. There are motions that are brought to this House that are quite urgent. Since you are talking about urgent business, when schools were opened in January, we brought here a motion on the reabsorption of the pregnant and breastfeeding girls into school. The term ended and some schools have opened but the motion is still on the Order Paper.

Such motions should be disposed of so that the Ministry of Education and Sports or any other ministries take up the matter and see how to handle it.

The pregnancy was not only in December or during the COVID-19 time; it is still going on and the girl-child is still facing the same challenge. Therefore, I request that, that motion also finds its way before we end this particular session of Parliament and have it concluded so that the ministry can do what it is supposed to do. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Sarah Opendi. Of course, I need to prepare to preside over any matter. However, I remember that the Minister of Education issued a notice to schools to allow these pregnant girls. I am going to crosscheck - we are going to get in touch so that we see which action was taken. If it was not, we shall allow the motion next week on the Order Paper *– (Hon. Sarah Opendi rose\_)* - No, honourable, I have finished; you do not need to respond to me.

On matters of national importance, please, use two minutes. Clerk, kindly, time the two minutes.

2.59

**MR PATRICK ISINGOMA-MWESIGWA (Independent, Hoima East Division, Hoima):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of urgent national importance in connection with the instability in the fuel supply and the pending crisis, which we are likely to experience as a result of the interruption of the fuel supply within this region.

As a result of the fuel shortage in Kenya and the fuel crisis, which has affected that country, the Kenyan Government decided to localise some two huge ships, which were carrying fuel for this region. The names of the ships - if you may allow me to inform the honourable House – are:

1. *MT Campo*, carrying petrol and is loaded with about 133.5 million litres; and
2. *MT Elka Athina* loaded with diesel and has 104.7 million litres.

The Kenyan Government ordered these ships to be localised in the Kenyan market whereas the existing procedure should have only allowed for 60 per cent of this supply for the Kenyan market and the balance to the rest of the region.

As a result of this, Mr Speaker –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What are your prayers?

**MR ISINGOMA-MWESIGWA:** My prayer is for the Ministry of Energy to quickly liaise with the Kenyan Government or the Kenyan authorities to ensure that the amount supposed to be supplied to the rest of the region is released. Otherwise, even our country is likely to be enveloped into new fuel prices, which may lead to escalating prices and yet this is something we have been suffering from in the recent past.

Mr Speaker, the English adage goes – and you are aware of it *–* “A stitch in time, saves nine.” I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. In fact, I saw the letter from the minister in Kenya. They were giving until 6.00 p.m. - I think last Wednesday - for all fuel reserves, which were meant for export, to be gazetted as local fuel. I even had a chat with the minister over it because a certain fuel importer in Kenya talked to me about the same.

Honourable member, thank you, for raising this matter, and the minister should come on Wednesday to update us. She is taking it up and so, we need *–(Hon. Muhammad Nsereko rose\_) –* No, Hon. Nsereko. Please, take your seat. Hon. Nsereko, you are a senior legislator and many people are learning from you. I do not think that is what they should learn from you.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, on Wednesday, the minister should come and update us on the steps being undertaken.

3.03

**MS STELLA ATYANG (NRM, Woman Representative, Moroto):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I rise on a matter of national importance regarding the invasion of the armyworm in my district. It is now four days since I got calls from my constituents regarding the invasion of the armyworm, which is destroying crops in the gardens. If this is not stopped, this will negatively affect the crop harvest in the district.

I would like to call upon the Ministry of Agriculture to intervene in this to stop the destruction that is caused by the armyworm. Otherwise, if it affects the harvest, then, definitely, this will escalate the food shortage in the district, which will result in famine. I beg to submit.

3.05

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (FISHERIES) (Ms Hellen Adoa):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. First of all, allow me to congratulate you. From the time you became Deputy Speaker, I have not had a chance to congratulate you. Congratulations!

We shall bring a paper concerning the issue of the worm but also, the biggest challenge we have had in the Ministry of Agriculture is budget cuts. We are undergoing a hard time and almost half of our budget was given to the Parish Development Model. So, we are struggling and it is this House to support us so as to support the honourable members. I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, on Wednesday, next week, bring the statement.

3.06

**MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi):** Mr Speaker, I rise on a very urgent matter concerning the very bad state of the road running from Kumi to Ngora and, equally, the road from Kumi Town to Kumi Hospital Ongino. The people are gathering for a demonstration.

I rise to bring this to the attention of those concerned in the House that the road is very bad and accidents are happening every minute. Therefore, we need intervention from Government.

Mr Speaker, I have information that money meant for maintenance of roads across the country – worth over Shs 160 billion – has not been released to the Uganda National Roads Authority(UNRA). Therefore, all the framework contracts across the country are suffering. When you go to the districts and find that the roads are not being maintained, it is because money has not been released for paying contractors. So, it is not something for Kumi alone; it is for the entire country.

I, therefore, pray that;

1. Through your Chair, Sir, an instruction comes to Government to quickly release money to that effect.
2. Let them quickly give attention to my road from Kumi to Ngora because the Speaker passes there very often. Where will the Speaker pass when the road is in deplorable state? *(Laughter)* Yes, it is a road that is strategically located: even the Minister of State for Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries uses it. All the Government officers, including Members of Parliament, are not safe. The entire public is waiting for this.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, why are you endangering the life of our Speaker by not maintaining the road? *(Laughter)*

**MR AOGON:** My final prayer is for a proper statement from Government on this. Mr Speaker, I thank you.

3.08

**THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama):** I am sorry about what is happening in that area. However, the Ministry of Works and Transport, together with the Ministry of Finance, will have to come here and tell us and make a follow up on those roads. So, a follow up is going to be made.

Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Rt Hon. Prime Minister, yesterday, Members also raised something to do with UNRA, whereby every day – we were told here by a colleague that we pay about Shs 500 million in interest –[Members: “Over.”]–Okay, over that much.

**MR AOGON:** Mr Speaker, the minister has come. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I have taken long without seeing a minister being given such reception. So, Hon. Kasaija, you are welcome. Let Hon. Bahati brief you as we pick another matter and then you will be able to give us an answer on the two urgent matters – no, there are many matters, which he has to respond to today.

Hon. Rwabushaija’s matter is also related – Hon. Rwabushaija wanted to know about the delayed payment of salaries for teachers.

Honourable colleagues, if you have a matter of national importance, please, come to my office. I have received around 10 chits here. Now, between the others who walk to the office and you who wait to send me a chit when I am seated here - Please, always come to the office. Hon. Mutebi?

3.10

**MR NOAH MUTEBI (NRM, Nakasongola County, Nakasongola):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for according me this opportunity. My issue is similar to what Hon. Aogon has presented: the non-maintenance of our roads, which are supposed to be handled by UNRA, districts, Kampala Capital City Authority and cities.

Mr Speaker, I want to be specific to my constituency. Nakasongola-Bamugolodde Road, which is 60 kilometres – the road, which I use to go to the district headquarters is in a sorry state. You find taxis lining up and people are pushing them and your car also comes and meets them. People rubbish you – they utter serious statements.

There are also a number of roads, as Hon. Aogon has stated: Mwolwe-Lwampanga-Kafu Road (70 kilometres); Bombo-Kalule Road in Luwero District, and; Kapeeka-Butalangu-Ngoma Road. This is a national problem, Mr Speaker.

The Uganda Road Fund is operating a budget of Shs 483.3 billion for the entities, which I have mentioned. The Minister of Finance released Shs 251.69 billion only, which is *– (Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, you know you have two minutes. So, if you go into history, we shall be in trouble. What are your prayers?

**MR MUTEBI:** Mr Speaker, I want to lay on the Table the letter, which was written by the Executive Director, Uganda Road Fund, requesting for the money.

My humble prayer is that the road from Nakasongola to Bamugolodde be handled immediately. Also, the Ministry of Finance should release the money to those entities so that our roads can be handled. Otherwise, Members of Parliament are being rubbished by their electorates.

I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Sarah Najjuma -

**MS NAJJUMA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank Hon. Mutebi for giving way –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am the one who allowed you; he did not give you. You are at my mercy. *(Laughter)*

**MS NAJJUMA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.The information I wanted to give Hon. Mutebi is that he talked of the road from Matugga-Kapeeka to Butalangu. Recently, the President of Mozambique visited Namunkekera Industrial Park and on that day, we also expected the President of Uganda to visit. UNRA panicked and they even worked at night on the stretch from Kapeeka to Naluvule, where the industrial park stops.

Mr Speaker, the road from Matugga to Butalangu is the shortest route to the district headquarters. However, the potholes in that road were filled with murram. We are in the rainy season and the murram has been washed away. All the Nakaseke roads that are under UNRA are in a very sorry state. If you are to travel to Ngoma, using the Luwero-Butalangu-Ngoma Road, it is also becoming impassable – by the way, it is the worst.

So, when heading to Ngoma, you have to pass via Nakasongola, which is far. You cannot use the road from Matugga at night because of potholes.

Mr Speaker, Nakaseke District has been patient enough. I think we need to bring a petition to your office over Nakaseke roads. I think that is when we shall be heard.

Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, on the issues of roads, we have Item No. 4 on the Order Paper – about a motion for a resolution of Parliament urging Government to urgently operationalise the Uganda Road Fund – which we are going to debate.

Honourable minister, I request you not to go. There are two motions. For item No.3 and item No.4, we need you to be here, as the Minister of Finance, to ensure you give responses.

Hon. Zawedde, this question you have sent is not a matter of urgency. This is a question, which you need to give either to the minister for oral answer, or the Prime Minister to answer in the Prime Minister’s question Time. I am, therefore, passing it over to the Prime Minister to ensure it is answered on Thursday. You see, if you prepare yourself well and you want a quick answer, you cannot really get it. It does not help much.

Hon. Silas, I want the minister to answer you, in his response. After Hon. Agnes Kunihira, the minister is coming up to respond to a few issues, starting with the money for coffee seedlings, which was raised yesterday.

3.15

**MS AGNES KUNIHIRA (NRM, Workers’ Representative):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Thank you for finding space for us to raise a motion to bring an amendment on the Anti-Trafficking Act. However, we are still consulting and we, therefore, request that you give us more time. We shall come again. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Okay. Hon. Matia Kasaija, yesterday, Hon. Enos Asiimwe from Kabula, with complementary information from very many Members, told us that we are no longer getting coffee seedlings from UCDA because the Ministry of Finance has refused to give UCDA money for coffee seedlings.

As you know, honourable minister, and as a Member of Parliament, those coffee seedlings are part of the corporate social responsibilities, which we have been doing as Parliament. It enables MPs to mobilise communities to engage in agriculture. The President and you have been proudly talking about the achievements made in the coffee sector in terms of the bags more than tripling.

Now, all of a sudden, all these colleagues - they have nursery bed operators who have seedlings. They are ready but they are saying there is no money and yet we budgeted for that money. We, therefore, need you to tell us when we shall get our coffee seedlings because they said the problem is with finance.

Secondly, on Hon. Silas’ question, I do not know whether we shall handle it under Item No. 4 but could you, quickly, tell us whether you are releasing money for the Road Fund? This is because the MPs are doing badly.

3.18

**THE MINISTER OF FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Mr Matia Kasaija):** Mr Speaker, first of all, let me congratulate you because since we elected you, I have never appeared before you in this august House - *(Interjections)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, order! Let us listen to the minister. You wanted him to give you answers and now you are taking him into other things. Honourable minister, they are not on record.

**MR KASAIJA:** Mr Speaker, on that question – we should not talk about only coffee but tea as well. We should think about tea and coffee *–(Interjections)–* we are talking about coffee and tea because there are nurseries, in which many people have invested their money and these coffee seedlings and tea seedlings are ready for planting this season. It is an urgent matter.

Now, I beg this House – not that I am trying to evade the question – that I return at the earliest opportunity you give me, to give you a comprehensive answer on what we are planning to do. I do not want to give half answers.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, come Tuesday next week.

**MR KASAIJA:** Thank you. Then the roads; Hon. Mutebi and other Members of Parliament have a concern about this because without roads, you do almost nothing. I have just been with the Member of Parliament for Bukanga. He was telling me a story where when they load a truck of *matooke*, they have to first offload part of it so that they can reach the tarmac. That cannot be good business and that does not help farmers to get to earn money and we want them to earn money.

On the roads - we plan to have money in the coming financial year because I do not have the money in the budget now. Again, I will ask your indulgence, Mr Speaker, that I come and give you a detailed schedule of how we are going to tackle the various roads that you have talked about.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, return next week with both statements.

**MR SSEMUJJU:** Mr Speaker, a while ago, you said something had made you happy and you actually invited us to take advantage of that happiness. I do not know how long it will last and yet, there is a matter I had wanted to raise, in taking advantage of that happiness.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, if it is a matter of national importance or urgency –

**MR SSEMUJJU:** No, it is not a matter of national importance. I simply wanted to take advantage of your happiness because you issued an invitation, Mr Speaker, that we should take advantage of it. Since I cannot guarantee that in the next one hour or tomorrow you will still be happy if you would allow me –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Go on, honourable.

**MR SSEMUJJU:** Mr Speaker, I have a problem, which I guess many colleagues share. We use roads in Kololo. I always keep time and I would like to thank you for keeping time. Today, as I was coming to Parliament, I spent a whole hour – there are military trucks that have sealed off those roads and I am told that is where the President is holding his meetings. Roads around Nakasero State House that are KCCA roads are also sealed off because that is where the President stays.

Now that the Prime Minister is here – I am taking advantage – if the State House does not have a big compound, maybe we procure a compound for the President. It is either him or his wife or the son.

I use the banks near Kololo. Sometimes, I go without money for a whole week because there are *– (Interjections) -* I thought I should take advantage of that matter that made you happy to raise this matter so the Prime Minister can help us and we find a compound for the family of the President so they stop parking trucks in the middle of the roads.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, our work as Parliament is very well cut out. We do not have the capacity to assess the security needs and deployments of the President. That is the work for people whom we facilitate to do that work. Whatever they assess – and someone can even say that, “how come when passing via that Parliament Avenue, I cannot be allowed to come and sit next to the pavement, eat my food or even have a nap?” It is because of your security.

So, the security of the President is not something whose deployment can be discussed here but the Prime Minister has taken note of the concern. *(Applause)* You can share with her anytime, if there are any further issues regarding that.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT URGING GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP A DOCUMENTED COMPREHENSIVE TAXATION POLICY

3.26

**MR GYAVIIRA SSEMWANGA (NRM, Buyamba County, Rakai):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise under Rule 56 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament to move a motion for a resolution of Parliament, urging Government to develop a documented comprehensive taxation policy. It reads:

“*WHEREAS Parliament enacted and continues to enact a number of tax laws, and Government has been able to achieve the objectives of taxation through imposition of various tax reforms over the years;*

*AND WHEREAS the tax policy in Uganda has revolved around the creation of a revenue agency, harmonisation of tax rates and has seen an introduction of tax exemptions and incentives;*

*NOTING that Uganda’s main tax policy objective has been to rapidly increase public revenue in Uganda; like other developing countries, Uganda faces tremendous pressure to broaden its tax base, owing to its commitment and the need to finance development goals;*

*FURTHER NOTING that a good tax policy should be based on indicators of equity and fairness, certainty, convenience of payment, effective tax administration, information security, simplicity, neutrality, economic growth and efficiency, transparency and visibility, minimum tax gap, accountability to taxpayers and appropriate Government revenues;*

*CONCERNED that the Domestic Revenue Mobilisation Strategy, developed by the Ministry of Finance in 2020, indicates that there is no documented taxation policy for Uganda, and that Uganda’s tax policy is driven largely by short-term pressures. If there is a need for anything, Government imposes taxes on the available taxpayers;*

*FURTHER CONCERNED that the absence of a documented taxation policy leaves Government with an unfettered discretion on what taxes to levy, when to levy and on whom to levy, which leads to an unfair taxation system.*

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

1. *Government develops and publicises a comprehensive taxation policy document for Uganda, based on principles of good taxation;*
2. *The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development creates a framework to ensure effective implementation of the Domestic Revenue Mobilisation Strategy*.”

I beg to move.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Gyaviira. Is the motion seconded? *(Members rose\_)* Hon. Nyangweso, Hon. Kateshumbwa, Hon. Olanya, Hon. Tebandeke, Hon. Nakut.

Honourable member, use five minutes to speak to your motion because the issues are very clear here. Just speak to your motion.

**MR SSEMWANGA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. As we have heard Members talking about their challenges in their respective constituencies, Government cannot finance them, if we are not collecting enough money.

According to the current Charter of Fiscal Responsibility, Uganda’s tax to GDP ratio is low - at about 13 per cent. This is way below the required one of at least 20 per cent to sustainably support Uganda’s development requirements, as per the third National Development Plan.

The size of domestic revenue is critical in determining the country’s ability to finance its development requirements, without excessively relying on external assistance and borrowing. We need a tax policy, Mr Speaker.

According to the Ministry of Finance, domestic revenue collections slightly increased from Shs 14.5 trillion in Financial Year 2017/2018 to Shs 16.635 trillion in Financial Year 2018/2019; to Shs 17.285 trillion in Financial Year 2019/2020; to Shs 19.83 trillion in Financial Year 2020/2021. It is projected to increase to Shs 21.500 trillion in Financial Year 2021/2022, in nominal terms.

This situation, Mr Speaker, has two implications. One, this revenue collection has consistently fallen below the national targets, as per the National Development Plan. Secondly, when measured in real terms, there has been no or negligible improvement in revenue collection.

For example, NDP II targeted revenue to GDP ratio of about 16 per cent by Financial Year 2019/2020, which was not achieved and NDP III targeted an average of revenue to GDP ratio of 15.39 per cent, after GDP rebasing.

Nonetheless, revenue performance has stagnated around 12 to 13 per cent for the same period, way below the National Development Plan targets. This implies that the nominal improvement in revenue collection has been due to natural growth. Natural growth can be an increase in population, which can increase aggregate demand but it has not been the work of the Ministry of Finance, neither the Uganda Revenue Authority. It is a natural growth, as opposed to a working strategy.

The informal nature of much of our country’s economy - tax avoidance, tax exemption, and Uganda Revenue Authority’s weak capacity - denies Uganda up to 50 per cent of the total revenue that should have been collected to deliver services to our constituencies and to the country - to our people down there in Rakai, in Lwamaggwa, Buyamba etcetera.

Reforms to Reduce Tax Avoidance, Unclear Exemptions, a Narrow Tax Base

Mr Speaker, we need to tap into the semi-formal economic activities. We need to improve the efficiency of the Uganda Revenue Authority because these remain tasks and we need to increase focus on them.

Tax exemptions alone deny the economy about three percentage points of the revenue to GDP ratio. Actually, we would have even achieved the National Development Plan III targets, if we did not have these tax exemptions. Taxation is approached from a reactive approach that prioritises deepening taxes on a few taxpayers to meet revenue targets, as opposed to a sustainable measure that enables expansion of the tax base.

Indeed, more than 50 per cent of this economy does not pay taxes and the result of this has been:

1. Levying of inappropriate taxes like social media tax - you can name them - the proposed housing tax and yet we have a deficit of 2.4 million households, which means that Government levies taxes without putting into consideration the impact of the tax on the welfare of the people we represent;

2. Leaving tax exemptions under the discretion of the minister. The minister is the one to decide whom to exempt, when and how and if the minister misuses his powers, the whole country will suffer.

3. A narrow tax base, which leaves out the majority of taxpayers, burdening a few with multiple taxes.

4. Insensitive taxes whose impact on the economy remains unknown.

5. Lack of streamlined processes to inform research on taxation.

6. Limited accountability on the functionality, efficiency and effectiveness of taxation systems.

Mr Speaker, in my view, and the views above, if we are to save this economy from excessive borrowing, there is need to raise our tax revenue collections to support the national budget and avoid excessive borrowing.

I wish to move a motion urging the Government to develop a comprehensive tax policy and the minister will be required to present the progress during presentation of the budget proposals for Financial Year 2022/2023. I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, you should have updated your motion. We have already received the budget proposals and the Committee on Budget is about to finish. I think they were meant to complete the comprehensive reports from the various sectoral committees yesterday or today.

Let me give three minutes to the seconders because I want other colleagues to also participate and at exactly 4.00 p.m., we shall have Prime Minister's Time.

3.37

**MR DENNIS NYANGWESO (Independent, Samia-Bugwe Central County, Busia):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. This being my maiden opportunity to catch your eye, allow me to congratulate you, on behalf of the people of Samia-Bugwe Central, upon ascending to that office.

I rise to support the motion to urge the Government to develop and document a comprehensive tax policy for this country. Tax policy in this country remains a mystery to very many members of the public, including Members of Parliament. Every financial year, the minister responsible for finance presents to this House tax Bills with amendments, which have been decided upon by a few technocrats in the Ministry of Finance.

Unlike the debt policy in this country, which is a consultative process, the tax policy is developed by a department in the Ministry of Finance. The few technocrats keep imagining how they are going to fund the budget and they come up with a few proposals, which they present to this Parliament. Unfortunately, the amendments have not always been supported by the regulatory impact assessments, which would guide, especially members of the sectoral Committee on Finance and the Committee on Budget. Therefore, decision making becomes a matter of intuition on the side of Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, there are few companies, which have taken advantage of the informal tax policy in this country, depending on how connected they are, to ask and request and benefit from a few exemptions. There are very few Members of Parliament here who can authoritatively talk about how one qualifies for exemptions on a particular business and how these exemptions are given and by who, – *(Interruption)*

**MS KABANDA:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I seek to know from the colleague, who is seconding the motion and the mover, whether this country does not have a tax policy, and what they mean when they say we have an informal tax policy. I seek clarification from them. Don’t we have a tax policy in this country? What do you mean when you say we have been operating on an informal tax policy? Thank you.

**MR NYANGWESO:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The motion is very clear. We are not talking about designing or formulating a tax policy. The motion is to urge the Government to document a comprehensive tax policy for this country. For example, if I come across an investor outside this country and I want them to come and invest, I do not know exactly how they can benefit from the available incentives – and this is to the discretion of the officer who is granting these incentives. (*Interruption*)

**MR SSEMUJJU:** Mr Speaker, I have been listening attentively. I did not want to disrupt my colleagues. The movers of this motion are NRM MPs and they know the policy in this country; that if you have an investor, you go to State House.

Mr Speaker, is he in order to tell Parliament he does not know the policy in this country; that once you have an investor, like the one of Lubowa or coffee, you go to the State House. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Ssemujju, I think that is not a point of order. You are giving a point of information; you were informing the colleague where to go.

Colleagues, I want us to listen attentively. What the Member is saying is that a comprehensive - and comprehensive is a relative word. To the Member, this is not comprehensive and so, he is urging and showing areas that are not comprehensive enough. He is saying, document everything so that each and everything to do with taxation is not a matter of knowing who or going to the State House as you are saying, but clearly defined in a certain document and it should be the only document that can be based on, not negotiation or anything else.

Let us listen to colleagues. I am really happy to find that such a subject - we have new colleagues and very young colleagues – they are the ones bringing it. Even the seniors are learning. Kudos to the new colleagues. Let us allow the young ones to shine. Hon. Nyangweso, please, conclude.

**MR NYANGWESO:** Thank you,Mr Speaker. As I conclude, you realise that the budget estimates for the Financial Year 2022/2023, as laid here by the Minister of Finance, represents Shs 47 trillion, with only Shs 25 trillion, as expected revenue to be collected. This is only 53 per cent of the total budget. You have heard from the mover of this motion that the tax exemptions alone cost this country three percentage points, in terms of tax to GDP. This money can help this country in terms of what Members are crying for. We need roads, hospitals, staff, teachers in schools among others.

This can only be achieved if the country has a very well documented and comprehensive policy. I urge Members to support this motion. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable members, let us not repeat ourselves. We have noted that we would want to increase our tax to GDP ratio. It is now about 13 per cent. If we pushed it to around 21 per cent, honourable minister, we would raise around Shs 9.5 trillion extra, which would save us from the borrowing.

Now, what we would like to know is what the gap in the current tax policy is. Colleagues who are coming to debate, that should be the issue. What is the gap and what can we urge the Government to include to fill the gap in the current policy?

Hon. Kateshumbwa is one of the experts in taxation. Please, guide us.

3.45

**MR DICKSONS KATESHUMBWA (NRM, Sheema Municipality, Sheema):** Mr Speaker, I stand here to support the motion. I would like to say that the first tax legislation in Uganda was in 1919, following the first formal tax – the Hut Tax – that was introduced in 1900. Since then, we have had tax laws but that are not informed by a comprehensive taxation policy.

Colleagues, taxation is the only practical means of raising revenue to finance goods and services that most of us demand. Taxation is not just revenue but a tool for development.

It is, therefore, important that as we legislate – year in and year out – and pass tax Bills, the Government comes up with a taxation policy that is actually customised to our economic structure and future aspirations. This will be able to guide and give a refined approach as we develop our tax policy measures, both here and at the East African Community level, where we are members of the EAC and are implementing the common external tariff under the Common Market Protocol.

Mr Speaker, like my colleague mentioned, our policies and tax laws – sometimes – are bypassed with a lot of inconsistencies in terms of exemptions. In 2017/2018, it was estimated that Uganda lost about Shs 900 billion, which was an equivalent to about 3 per cent of our Budget, in exemptions. Some of these exemptions are discretionary and undermine the efforts of the revenue administration in meeting its target.

Mr Speaker, when you give a target to URA and the next month -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Kateshumbwa, without interrupting you, we have agreed there is a problem. Tell us what needs to be done. That is the major focus now. What are the gaps so that we focus on them? We all agree we want to raise more money and want to be fair in our taxation regime.

**MR KATESHUMBWA:** Mr Speaker, what we want is that all of us, in Government and in Parliament, need to take decisions on tax matters following a policy, not depending on the level of negotiation that someone approaches a certain office. This will help us achieve the principles that we need and also promote investment in this country. I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, it is mainly about fairness. Colleagues, I had opened up to the seconders. Now, for the next 15 minutes, it will be you, colleagues, and we conclude this matter. Let us use two minutes each so that we can accommodate more people.

3.49

**MS ASUMAN BASALIRWA (JEEMA, Bugiri Municipality, Bugiri)**: I would like to thank you, Mr Speaker, and support the motion. A good law is usually preceded by a policy. The concern of the movers of the motion is that we have numerous taxation laws that have no backing of policy. As a result, we have laws that are hanging – they are out there.

Therefore, it is important – as a country, Government and Parliament – to consider that each time we bring a taxation law, it must be backed up by a policy. It is in that spirit, Mr Speaker, that I support this motion. We should not, in future, allow this Parliament to pass any taxation law without a corresponding policy.

I am aware that we have passed laws here that have policies. We did pass the land law sometime back; there is a land policy in this country. I know there are many other laws that are supported by policies. What is so special about taxes?

Finally, Mr Speaker, the reason we even need a policy relates to what Hon. Ssemujju has said – and Hon. Kateshumbwa has mentioned it here. We have, for example, the issue of tax exemptions. We do not have a policy on tax exemptions in this country. You do not know who and how to access an exemption.

Mr Speaker, I would like, on the top of the prayers, to add that the Ministry of Finance comes up with a comprehensive evaluation of the benefits of tax exemptions for the last 10 years and a review of the existing exemptions and whether they are *-(Member timed out.)*

3.51

**MR MAXIMUS OCHAI (NRM, West Budama County North, Tororo):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to make a contribution to the debate on the Floor. However, before I do that, let me use the same opportunity to congratulate you upon your ascension to that office.

That said, I have risen to support the motion. I would like to state that coming up with a document on taxation policy in Uganda is a necessary condition that can help us to enhance our revenue collection. What is more important, which actually should be addressing the critical challenge that the Government is facing, is coming up with a document that provides guidelines in formulation of tax policy in Uganda.

That, precisely, is what our domestic resource mobilisation strategy document is prescribing. That strategy document clearly recognises that our tax policy is well embedded in the respective tax laws and regulations. That actually even follows the international best practices known to all of us.

Therefore, what is important for us is to ensure that we have the guidelines that can enable everybody, who is interested, to participate in the tax policy formulation. We should then ensure that, during the execution of the tax policy, we follow the guidelines that are already in place.

I beg to submit and thank you.

3.53

**MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak)**: Mr Speaker, the need for a comprehensive tax policy cannot be underestimated. It is true – and Members have testified in other fora – that when you are tax-compliant, that is when you get misunderstood until you leave business. That has forced many businesses in Uganda to close in a short time – because there is no comprehensive tax policy.

In the finance committee, where I sit, two days ago, we received a petition from Uganda Tourism Board – on behalf of hotel owners – that they have over 20 taxes to deal with. So, they felt that the taxes were making their business fail to grow. When we have a comprehensive policy, we will have all Ugandans contributing so that the burden is not on a few.

Therefore, I agree with the motion. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Honourable colleagues – I am sorry, but – I am trying to pick colleagues who have not spoken today – when I am picking a colleague, I do not know whether you support it or you do not. I pick you and it is upon you to say – Hon. Gilbert, do you support the motion? *(Laughter)*

Hon. Ssemujju has said I pick only those who support it.

3.54

**Mr gilbert olanya (FDC, Kilak South County, Amuru):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to thank the mover of the motion. This motion is very important. Right now, URA is levying taxes on Ugandans on assumptions. They assume that you have this amount of taxes you are supposed to pay. Ugandans are receiving messages urging them to clear their tax arrears. Sometimes, they tell you, you have millions of shillings you are supposed to pay in taxes. Therefore, this motion is going to help Ugandans to pay exactly what they are supposed to pay.

Secondly, I would like the minister, who is here, to tell Ugandans the criteria for giving tax exemptions. We are ever witnessing big companies, which are supposed to pay taxes to relieve this country, being exempted. Those who have small businesses, URA is after them, now and then, and they will never go without paying taxes. Let the minister be very clear on this issue.

Thirdly, on the issue of tax holidays, let the minister also tell us clearly. Which companies are supposed to benefit from tax holidays? Those who are able to run big businesses are given tax holidays. Ugandan citizens who are toiling day and night are the ones paying taxes.

Therefore, my colleague, this motion is very important and I pray – *(Member timed out.)*

**The Deputy Speaker:** I saw Hon. Nganda being convinced by Hon. Basalirwa that he should support the motion; so you have not given me the results of your discussion.

3.57

**Ms rita atukwasa (Independent, Woman Representative, Mbarara City):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to second the motion. In the first place, I think all our minds are still fresh with the coffee deal - Vinci Pinetti - talk about those you are very familiar with.

I support the motion because if we have a comprehensive tax policy, it will help us to just not evade but deal with such discriminatory tendencies in taxation and incentive waivers so that we may run away from monopolies that are not good in business.

Also, for the benefit of growing our small and medium enterprises, if we do have a comprehensive tax policy, we will be able to nurture and reduce the death span of the SMEs that right now do not live beyond five years.

The issue of promoting gender and equity is very important for businesses. Right now, most the women are cluttered in the informal sector in markets because they fear taxes. If there are comprehensive policies in place, we will be able to mandate - for instance, URA - to do that tax and educate people so that we not only grow businesses but can as well earn more revenue. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I have one who has declared he does not support it; Hon. Ssemujju.

3.59

**Mr geoffrey okello (DP, Nwoya East County, Nwoya):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also rise to second the motion on about three grounds. Ground number one is that as the keyword in the motion “comprehensiveness” is, the tax regime in this country is not comprehensive. That is a gap in itself because it does not tackle the taxable capacity adequately.

We need to tackle taxable capacity because over taxing destroys business. Under taxing leaves money that government could use for other development needs. Also, the tax base in our country is narrow. We need to have more taxpayers paying less taxes instead of a few people paying more taxes.

Secondly, tax is an item of regression. We need to depend on taxes to reduce the consumption of drugs in this country. However, we need also taxes to increase consumption of those items that are produced locally. This tax policy should help us to follow our own economic policy, including that of BUBU.

We have also another gap in our tax policy and regime. There is a need to harmonise the different taxes that are collected by URA and those that are collected by local governments. Just recently, there was – *(Member timed out.)*

4.01

**Mr Ibrahim ssemujju (FDC, Kira Municipal Council, Wakiso):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thought at the beginning that Hon. Matia Kasaija would be activated to say the policy exists, but he is just enjoying himself as he has done before.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Honourable member, what is he enjoying? *(Laughter)*

**Mr ssemujju:** He is enjoying his seat. Mr Speaker, I know the policy exists. If there are gaps, we can address them but I do not agree that since we started processing taxation Bills and budgets, that we have been operating without a policy. It is there.

What the movers and seconders of the motion want to address is a completely different matter. It is a different matter of a super being who sits there, contracts agreements and summons the Hon. Matia Kasaija to summon - sometimes even without reading. I can bring evidence here; one day when an Attorney-General was summoned to State House to sign an agreement he had not read – the late Nyombi - and he signed it. They usually do it.

That is what we need to be dealing with as a country. We should take on the bull by its horns. These exemptions are not done by the Hon. Kasaijas. They are just compliant; so when they tell them, “You exempt,” they exempt. That is why even when they say there is no taxation, he keeps quiet and he knows the policy is there – *(Member timed out)* - Finally, Mr Speaker –

**The Deputy Speaker:** No, Hon. Ssemujju, you do not give yourself time. Colleagues, I suspend this debate. Rule 41 of our Rules of Procedure says that at exactly 4.00 p.m., the Prime Minister should be here presenting - I want to follow the rules. I am just constrained by the rules, which you approved. Let us start with item seven. We shall resume debate after.

statement of government business of the succeeding week

4.08

**The prime minister and leader of government business (Ms Robinah Nabbanja):** Mr Speaker and colleagues, I move under Rule 28 of our Rules of Procedure that requires me as the Leader of Government Business to make a statement in this House regarding the business of the succeeding week. I am, therefore, submitting the following Government Business for the coming week.

Introduction for First Reading of the following Bills:

1. The Animal Feeds Bill, 2021.
2. The Organ Transplant Bill, 2021.

I beg to move.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I think, each week, when you present business, we shall also require you to tell us whether you presented the business for the other week. This is because the business you told us is coming this week did not come. I have the Order Paper; I know and I have been working on the Order Paper. It did not come. Your own motion from the Ministry of Finance did not come; so, I know what I am talking about, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, and it is in good faith.

Ministers, the Prime Minister is not the one running around – this comes from you. When you tell the Prime Minister that you are going to bring this business, please, ensure that you submit it because when she says this, we reserve space on the Order Paper for this business. The moment it does not come, you will find that we are disorganised trying to look for other business to put on the Order Paper. That is very important. Let us ensure that we follow up on this.

**MR SSEMUJJU:** Mr Speaker, you suspended debate on a motion under Rule 41 to allow the Prime Minister to deal with the Prime Minister’s Time, but the Prime Minister has made a statement under rule 28 on the business of the succeeding week.

The procedural issue I am raising is whether the Prime Minister is determining which business to transact because you adjourned - rightly so – since it was 4.00 p.m., under rule 41, for her to deal with the Prime Minister’s Time, but she chose to present a statement on business under rule 28 of the proceeding week.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, the Prime Minister did not choose what to present; I am the one who chose. This is just a one or two-minute item. I am the one who told her to start with item 7 and now, I am calling for another item. All these are items of the Prime Minister and so, she is in order and she is proceeding properly.

PRIME MINISTER’S TIME

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, we have not gazetted our amended rules. We are still operating under the rules we have been having.

4.08

**THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja)**: Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, Hon. Janepher Mbabazi, Woman Member of Parliament of Kagadi District asked me why the Muhorro-Ndaiga Road has not been included in the roads planned for construction during the NDP III period (2020-2025).

My response is that the road is a gravel road in Kagadi District, which is maintained through the Uganda National Roads Authority - Hoima station. The preliminary designs for Muhorro-Bwikara-Ndaiga Road were completed. This road is located in the Western Rift Valley, hence Government requires more money to work on the 25-kilometre stretch than the l04 kilometres worked on from Mubende–Kakumiro-Kibaale-Kagadi. Government is looking for funds to work on that road because it connects Uganda to the DRC on Lake Albert.

Under Phase I, the road from Mubende–Kakumiro–Kibaale-Kagadi is now complete, using Government of Uganda funds by a Chinese Company called CCCC.

Muhorro–Bwikara-Ndaiga Road underwent mechanised maintenance in August 2021. The road is currently in a motorable condition. Government will continue maintaining the road as gravel until we get money to tarmac it.

Hon. Paul Akamba, Member of Parliament for Busiki asked to know about the incomplete bridge between Busiki County and Bunyole West, where the contractor had halted construction and abandoned the site. He requested that Government intervenes as soon as possible to ensure the bridge is completed.

The bridge is on Bulange–Kisiro and Busabi–Buduma, connecting the Districts of Butaleja and Namutumba. The contractor is called Excel Construction Ltd. The project is expected to be completed by July, 2022. Currently, the physical progress of construction stands at 90 per cent. The construction of all the drainage structures, including box and pipe culverts, has been completed. The filling of the swamp with rocks has also been completed.

The construction of the road on top of the filled rock stands at 87 per cent. Government is committed to complete this project to boost productivity in that area.

Hon. Jonathan Odur, Member of Parliament for Erute County South, said that there has been ruthless eviction of people from wetlands in Lira, Teso and Acholi sub-regions, characterised by indiscriminate destruction of crops by the Environmental Police; and the need for grant of grace period by the National Environment Management Authority to those affected to enable the maturity and harvest of their food crops.

My response is that the Ministry of Water and Environment identified l5 critical wetlands across the country based on their basic features, such as sources of water supply, waste water sinks or being wetlands of international importance (Ramsar sites). The critical wetlands where Government is currently undertaking management interventions include; Tochi, Aswa and Okole-Arocha, in Northern Uganda, Remoto, Awoja and Bisina-Opeta lakeshore wetlands in Teso sub-region.

In 2019, Government conducted extensive sensitisation to farmers in the above sub-regions and granted a grace period to enable farmers harvest their crops. However, some farmers continued to plant crops in the wetlands beyond the grace period.

Mr Speaker, you know the eco-benefits that come with wetlands. Government is committed to protect wetlands across the country, including areas of Lira, Teso, Bukedi and Acholi Sub-regions. He wants a comprehensive list by the Ministry of Water and Environment of permissible activities in the various wetlands.

The National Environment Act, 2019, Section 54(11) of the National Environment Act, 2019 provides for traditional uses of wetlands to include:

1. Harvesting of papyrus, medicinal plants, trees and reeds.

b) Fishing using traps, spears and baskets or other methods other than weirs.

c) Collection of water for domestic use and

d) Hunting subject to the provisions of Uganda Wildlife Act.

You will realise that the sixth schedule of the same Act categorises any other activities in wetlands besides the above listed as regulated activities and, therefore, requires application and requisite permission from the relevant lead agencies to be carried out. Mr Speaker, I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Thank you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, there is a question, which was a matter of national importance but I felt it needed you to be here so I told the Member to wait until you come. Hon. Faith Kunihira, you can use a minute. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I saw you following up on that matter.

4.16

**MS FAITH KUNIHIRA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kyenjojo):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you upon taking up that seat.

We are all aware that yesterday, in the early hours of the day, there was a tragic accident that happened between Kyenjojo and Fort Portal which left a number of people dead and others severely injured.

The referral hospital in Kabarole has been overwhelmed by the number of victims in the sense that the surgeons are not able to handle the people that have been injured in the Rwenzori region since most of the cases are surgical. In the entire Rwenzori region, Bundibugyo area has been mainly affected because the bus originated from Bundibugyo.

The issue on ground right now, Mr Speaker, is that Members of Parliament have been involved and are spending right from their pockets to hire ambulances to transfer victims to different hospitals. Frankly, it is overwhelming, and there is no national response to such a big tragedy that some newspapers have referred to as a massacre.

Our prayers are:

1. There should be a national response from the Prime Minister’s Office or relevant offices to be able to follow up with the victims, where they are, because for some victims, where both a mother and child are involved, there is no help; people have their hands cut off. Up to this morning, we still had victims laying without proper medical care. There should be a national team that responds to this accident issue.
2. Financial support be given to the bereaved families and those that are also injured because they are in a state of need.
3. In future, the nation does plan to have things like air ambulances because these accidents are happening every now and then. The Government should respond to these kinds of accidents at national level and not leave them for referral hospitals at local level, where they cannot handle. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Colleagues, I felt this was really an issue, which needed the Rt Hon. Prime Minister to be the one to handle.

**MS NABBANJA:** Mr Speaker, this is really a matter of national importance like you have stated. I want to inform the country that we got this sad news and I want to thank my honourable colleague for bringing this matter here.

The Minister of Health has been notified together with Mulago National Referral Hospital and some of the victims are going to be transferred to Mulago National Referral Hospital for further management. Of course, I see that we really need air ambulances like she has stated and this Parliament has got powers to budget.

I want to inform you that we have always been using the army helicopters to evacuate such cases and I believe the Ministry of Health will be supported by this House to get air ambulances in the near future. I am also going to use my powers, as the Prime Minister, to see that we provide support to the victims. Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I request that you link up with Hon. Faith Kunihira, who has been coordinating and helping our people. Leader of the Opposition?

4.20

**THE CHIEF OPPOSITION WHIP (Mr John Baptist Nambeshe):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. In my right to reply, I will commence with the road. The Prime Minister made a response to that question on the road, which moves from Mubende-Kakumiro-Muhororo-Ndaiga. It is in the Rift Valley, which means it is in a hard-to-reach, complicated terrain and therefore it requires urgent attention because the citizens that are living there must be leading a very deplorable life.

In your submission, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you said the Government is still looking for money, when in the budget for the Financial Year 2022/2023, we have an allocation of Shs 80 billion and this is a road connecting Mubende-Ndaiga-Kakumiro to DRC. The Shs 80 billion, I am talking about, is earmarked for constructing roads in the DRC. So, where is the Government's priority, Rt Hon. Prime Minister? Do you love the citizens of Congo more than those of Uganda? They say, “Are you a Ugandan, so to speak?”

The second one, which was raised by Hon. Paul Akamba about the bridge, which I also know - that bridge between Busiki and Bunyole West is on my way to Bududa and it is terrible. According to the complaint, which is the right complaint from the populace, this contractor has mysteriously disappeared. In your response, I expected you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, to use your powers and office to prevail over the contractor to avail himself on site. He has disappeared yet the project is to be completed in July, and July is not very far from now.

The other question was from Hon. Jonathan Odur –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, you do not have to respond to each and every question.

**MR NAMBESHE**: I am making a comment on each of them. Thank you. I am protected by the rules, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No. Rule 41(9) gives you a right of comment or reply but it does not determine the time. You should be general. You cannot say I will go on each and every matter.

**MR NAMBESHE**: Most obliged. I will not challenge your ruling but let me conclude. The ruthless eviction, I do not know whether I am touching where it hurts most, but this is very important and it was raised by the Member of Parliament for Erute County South.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you unequivocally stated that there has been an aggressive sensitisation of occupants of these wetlands. If indeed, it was done way back in 2019 and the Government is committed to protecting wetlands, the nearest places should be here in central – in Namanve – so that the rest would model the way from here. However, if it is lopsided and only targeting those that are in the north or in the east, then many questions will be raised.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, on these recent victims of the road carnage – this is a matter of urgent public importance. I must salute the Prime Minister for the pledge she has made about the ambulance, but it is only in Uganda where the Government has few ambulances compared to funeral cars.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Nambeshe, the Leader of the Opposition. Honourable colleagues, since the Prime Minister’s Time is Government time – and we have some responses that are very urgent – allow me to call out item number nine so that these responses are given using that remaining time. We still have about 25-30 minutes. Let us use it.

RESPONSE BY MINISTERS TO URGENT QUESTIONS

(A)(I) ON THE HIKING OF FEES FOR RENEWAL OF NATIONAL IDENTITY (ID) CARDS FROM SHS 50,000 TO SHS 500,000

4.27

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is in regard to the question raised by Hon. Paulson Luttamaguzi, the MP Nakaseke County, on the hiking of fees for renewal of national identity cards from Shs 50,000 to Shs 500,000.

The National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) was established by the Registration of Persons Act, 2015, with the key mandate of creating, managing, maintaining and operating a secure, credible and accurate national identification register.

Towards this end, the objective of credibility and accuracy expressed in Section 64 of the Act obliges the organisation to continuously update the information contained in the register or cancel the registration of a person under Section 70(1)(b), where the registration is based on inaccurate or incomplete information.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs appeared before the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs during the presentation of the ministerial policy statement for the Financial Year 2022/2023. During this session, NIRA, which is under the ministry, made a suggestion for an increment of application fees for citizens who seek to change dates of birth, where the error was made by the card-bearer.

The background of this proposal is premised on the surge in applications ranging between 1,000 and 5,000 a month, with 85 per cent of these applicants requesting for the adjustment to match the 25 – 38 age bracket.

Furthermore, the 73 per cent statistic of birth occurring in health facilities has only improved in the last 10 years. Other contributing factors on limited accurate information on birth for such requests can be attributed to past instability, migration and natural disasters and the current 24 per cent birth registration rate in the country.

Therefore, where the information on birth is scanty, substantiating the request to change dates of birth with the information recorded at birth is difficult.

It was, therefore, hoped that such an increment would probably act as a deterrent for people who may seek to change information on the register, relating to date of birth, for dubious reasons.

We have even had reported cases of public servants seeking to change their dates of birth in order to defer their retirement. Such changes put into question the credibility of Uganda’s national identification register and could result in other countries subjecting Ugandans to further verification measures to ascertain the accuracy of the information about their ages.

The other measures within the law to curb such vices include prosecution, fines and imprisonment.

In addition, NIRA proposed to strengthen registration of births in health facilities to register babies within the first nine month window so as to capture the event of birth as close as possible to when it occurred. The measure is expected to address future requests.

It should be noted that NIRA corrects errors that could have been occasioned by an enrolment officer free of charge and there is no proposal to change that. Currently, to change information regarding the date of birth, one is required to present the following:

1. A statutory declaration registered with URSB to cancel the declaration they made and signed at registration.

b) Historical documentary evidence, e.g., academic documents, a birth notification record and baptism records that support the application.

c) An application fee of Shs 50,000 prescribed in the NIRA regulations. This fee caters for the reprint of the national identity card and applies only to errors not occasioned by NIRA. It should be mentioned that the first national identity card is issued free of charge.

d) Sworn affidavits of parents – if they are alive – or any person present at birth of the applicant. This is optional.

When NIRA receives this information, it is reviewed and the organisation may contact other entities that might have additional documentary evidence.

The applicant might also be subjected to an investigation to ascertain facts in the application and the organisation reserves the right to reject an application, where they are not satisfied with evidence or where contradicting information from a credible source, for example, a health facility, is obtained.

It should be noted that NIRA has the duty to verify and authenticate information relating to registration and identification of persons to ensure the accuracy of such information. This process is time-consuming and costly.

The revision of fees was proposed for only changes relating to correction of dates of birth and not other changes as was misreported in the media. This proposal is still subject to consideration by Government and all the stakeholders, including this honourable House and, therefore, has not been approved and effected.

No fees are charged for a notification of change of particulars that does not require the issuance of a new identification card or alien’s identification card.

Mr Speaker, I hope this explanation provides sufficient clarification on the matter. I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Is there another statement? *(Members rose\_)* No, I will only allow the Member who raised the issue. Since he is not here, let us go to the next statement.

Colleagues, you are the ones who said these statements are pending. I want them cleared and we go back to our business. *(Members rose\_)* No, this is a matter which is not yet concluded. Let us allow them to do their work, as the Executive. We are here. Honourable minister, present the next statement.

4.32

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi):** Mr Speaker, this is a statement in response to an issue raised on the Floor of this House on the alleged torture of a one Marinos Alexandria, otherwise also known as Esther. This is a matter already in the public domain and was levelled against the department of the military to which the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs spokesperson responded to.

In my statement, I will largely borrow from that response.

The lady mentioned above appeared in a televised feature recently, where she alleged that she had been abducted and tortured by the so-called Chieftaincy of Military Intelligence (CMI) officers, whom she identified as Ali Hassan and Erias Ssengooba. No incontrovertible evidence was provided by the complainant that CMI was involved in the torture or detention.

The Ministry of Defence spokesperson stated that they verified the grave allegations and responded as follows:

1. That they categorically deny the claim that the UPDF/CMI was involved in this torture or detention. Marinos Alexandria is not known to CMI and has never been held in their detention at any one time.
2. The two individuals she mentioned who allegedly tortured her are not members of the UPDF. Ali Hassan and Erias Ssengooba seem to be people known to her. Erias Ssengooba, in particular, is also reportedly a neighbour to Marinos Alexandria, otherwise also known as Esther. Ali Hassan was involved in reporting her to Kinawataka Police Station in 2020 when she was reportedly suspected of possession of military stores. This was premised on reports that the Local Defence Unit deserter whom she knew had abandoned some military stores, which were in her possession. However, nothing incriminating against her was found and she was reportedly subsequently released, according to the statement.
3. For the period Marinos Alexandria claims she was under detention, phone printouts taken also indicate that she was at her place of aboard and continued to make numerous telephone conversations, like any other person exercising her freedom, further corroborating the assertion that indeed, she was never held, nor tortured, as claimed.

Honourable members, this is the official perspective as given by the Ministry of Defence spokesperson, in response to the allegations. I do not have any reason to contest it. The allegations made were grave, albeit still unproven. Equally, the explanation given in response is credible.

Since the persons she claims are culpable and are identifiable, she can seek redress against them through the courts of law by instituting action against them.

I beg to submit, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member who raised the matter, is the response sufficient?

4.36

**MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. There was an allegation made against the security forces. The minister has responded that these are not security officers and that, we cannot deny.

However, Mr Speaker, what was also brought to my attention was that this lady went to Kinawataka Police to report these people because she knew who they were and the police refused to take her statement. I do not know what the Minister of Internal Affairs is saying about that. Is it in order really for the police to refuse to register a case when somebody goes to report?

Secondly, Mr Speaker, because there were many people encouraging this lady to go - I think I heard even the police spokesperson saying that let her go to Jinja Road Police Station. I do not know whether the minister has interested himself, as the line minister responsible for the security of civilians in this country, in getting to this lady, because once somebody is tortured to that extent –

Mr Speaker, if you saw the photographs, it is so traumatising, for her own security. I remember speaking to one of the ladies and I asked her whether she had gone back to her home because it was likely that she could be harmed. They said no, she is actually out of her home and somebody had offered to give her shelter for some time, as they pursue this matter.

So, I want to find out from the honourable minister whether you, as a person, have interested yourself in this matter because the Attorney-General, who was here and gave us comfort, said he was going to liaise with you so that you get to the bottom of this case.

Also, the DPP indicated that she was taking up this matter because it was of grave nature. So, we want to know whether, beyond the statement from the UPDF spokesperson - which I found inappropriate because I expected them to investigate, not only to come and say that these are not UPDF officers. No! That is not enough.

Nobody should torture another person in this country. Whether you are a security officer or a civilian connected to some security people, you should not torture anybody. So, Mr Speaker, I beg to submit.

**GEN. MUHOOZI:** Indeed, Mr Speaker, the AG contacted the police leadership and I pledge to follow up to see what action was taken in regard to the honourable member’s concern.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Colleagues, on such matters, beyond bringing such an alleged victim here, you can help him or her to report to the Uganda Human Rights Commission, where they can do thorough investigations and even award compensation because sometimes, we debate here and in the end we make recommendations, yet we are not able to even go deeper in terms of investigations. So, let this matter -

I would really urge the colleague who knows her - she has other avenues. If they refuse to file her case at police, the Uganda Human Rights Commission has more – no, as alleged. You see, this is your word against someone else’s word and here, you cannot conclude it, honourable member. Unless you want to take sides and say, “I am going with this side”. However, indeed, I saw those pictures; they were really traumatising. So, Hon. Sarah Opendi, please.

Honourable minister, there is an issue in regard to the IDs, which Hon. Luttamaguzi passed on to the honourable member from Wakiso to ensure she follows up on this.

4.41

**MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Before he leaves, let us also be explained to as a nation. Through you, Mr Speaker, the honourable minister should realise that for all of us Ugandans who received national IDs at the start of the process, our national IDs are going to expire on 2 December 2024.

We need a comprehensive programme. What is the country going to do at that time, given that all – it is a very big number, Mr Speaker, and Shs 50,000 is really a lot of money for many Ugandans out there.

So, can we please know what the plan is, as far as all of us renewing is concerned? Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, shall we cease being Ugandans because – Colleagues, this is a very important issue. You know you may present your ID somewhere for a loan; someone says you will cease being a Ugandan. *(Laughter)*

**GEN. MUHOOZI:** Indeed, Mr Speaker, the IDs we bear now are supposed to be renewed en masse in 2024 and towards that end, a concept note has been developed by the National Information Technology Authority on how that process will be held. However, I think for purposes of the country, indeed, it is true, honourable members, that the country needs to be briefed about how this will happen.

I think we should do so soon enough through my boss, the Prime Minister and Parliament –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** When do you want to bring a statement?

**GEN. MUHOOZI:** Maybe, even next week, we can present it.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** So, next week on Thursday, we shall give you space on the Order Paper.

**GEN. MUHOOZI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, you had – the Minister of Education is not here? So, let us go back, colleagues, to our motion. It was a direct motion, urging for a comprehensive tax policy and we still have other motions, where I know you also want to contribute in terms of debate.

So, Leader of the Opposition, make your comments, the Minister of Finance responds and I put the question.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT URGING GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP A DOCUMENTED COMPREHENSIVE TAXATION POLICY

*(Debate continues…)*

4.43

**THE CHIEF OPPOSITION WHIP (Mr John Baptist Nambeshe):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. This motion for a resolution, urging Government to develop a documented taxation policy, is a good one and would go a long way to anchor the interventions of Government to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of tax measures in our country.

And while it is in order to develop a documented taxation policy, there is a serious general weakness on the part of Government. This Government probably has a serious challenge in implementing documents that are developed now like this one. For instance, we have a Domestic Revenue Mobilisation Strategy, which is gathering dust. It is a very good strategy, well documented but not implemented.

Another document is a National Strategy for Private Sector Development; the other one is Accountability Sector Strategic Investment Plan. All these, if one were to go through them, are very good and important strategic taxation plans but they are never implemented.

My take would be that the focus for this taxation policy should be on developing interventions of improving tax administration on ratios. What we see is that URA emphasises mainly on taxpayers filing ratios rather than collection ratios. Because if the allocation from the National Budget to URA, to go and collect taxes, is about Shs 500 million, and say the target is to collect Shs 22 billion; the question should be, how much, in one shilling, do you meet the target with one shilling if the target is Shs 100? Is Government spending more on facilitating collection of taxes?

It seems URA emphasises on how many taxpayers are on the register? How many are filing returns rather than meeting the target? Because internationally, there has to be targets, but our tax authority hardly focuses on the collection ratios; but they spend or concentrate more on filing ratios. This should change.

Mr Speaker, there has to be also an undertaking, on post-legislative scrutiny for each taxation law, to determine the impact, for instance, on the provision of such a tax on the citizenry. We had a tax called “Mobile Money tax”; it was very unpopular. Why? Because at that time, even when mobile money digital financial transactions had gained prominence amongst even the poorest of the poor - the youth. When this tax was introduced, that prominence crumbled and actually, there were very few that remained on the digital platform of mobile money.

Therefore, there has to be legislative scrutiny, subject to this tax scrutiny - a post-legislative scrutiny - to know the impact and how it has impacted on the citizenry; is it meeting or contributing to the realisation of their aspirations and particularly in sharing the national cake?

As I conclude with an undertaking and publishing of regulatory impact assessment. I know Hon. Kateshumbwa should know this. This highlights a kind of cost-benefit analysis. It helps to determine the costs and the benefits that will accrue as the effect of that tax. This will help to address the gap of determining the provisions of the proposed taxes and the projected burden to the taxpayer. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Leader of the Opposition.

4.49

**THE MINISTER OF FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Mr Matia Kasaija)**: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish to thank and congratulate the mover of this motion; it has energised me. You know, money is never enough. Parliament, Defence, Agriculture want more resources and so forth.

Therefore, I am very elated and very happy that we are addressing this question of tax revenues. And I encourage you to help and show me what I should do in order to enhance our tax collection. So, on this tax and the policy and strategy - actually we should be speaking about the two; the tax policy *–(Interjection)-* now somebody is asking me for the coffee *-(Laughter)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Matia Kasaija, if anyone is not on the record of Parliament, please do not respond.

**MR MATIA KASAIJA:** And I do not have, Mr Speaker, to say he is out of order. Okay, so *–(Interruption)*

**MS JANEPHER MBABAZI:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable Minister, take your seat.

**MS JANEPHER MBABAZI:** Mr Speaker, I am wondering whether we are proceeding well because, previously, you suspended debate; we had issues in as far as filling the gaps in the motion that was presented to us is concerned and as you hear the minister is asking us to advise him, but he did not give us the chance. I am wondering if we are proceeding well? Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, this entire motion, if you check on the Order Paper, was given 30 minutes; I have given it over an hour. In fact, I did not even proceed well by going beyond the allocated time. Okay? So I cannot add any more time because we have other business on the Order Paper. And I know that you are equally interested in other business.

The minister is still available and in my ruling at the end of my guidance, you will hear what I will say that will allow you more debate on the same matter. So, we are proceeding very well.

**MR MATIA KASAIJA:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Debate should not end only in Parliament; it can continue. I can get advice from you - not necessarily on the Floor of Parliament; you can write, you can guide and we will definitely follow what you have guided us on.

I seem to have heard somebody saying “collection targets”; yes, we must have collection targets. Because it is the amount of resources that we call the “envelope”. My staff prefers to call it an “envelope”, but what we are talking about is the amount of money that we realise in any given financial year in order to meet the demands of the state or the people to get services.

Therefore, my conclusion is to express my thanks. Thank you very much on this but the debate, in my view, should continue and anybody who has got a very useful point to help me to increase revenue, I would welcome him or her with open hands. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. Colleagues, you have seen from the debate. We need the minister to undertake a comprehensive evaluation of the economic benefits of the tax exemptions granted by Government in the last 10 years, so that we are informed as the House.

People are talking of A,B,C,D; it is very important but also, you could see Members want us to have a review of the existing tax exemptions and establish their necessity. Are they still necessary? Do we still need to dangle that much, as a country or we have reached a certain take off stage whereby we are competitive enough? We do not need to first give away each and everything we have for someone to come here and invest.

Colleagues, with the debate that we have had and considering the other matters, which we have, I now put the question that the motion for a resolution of Parliament urging Government to develop a documented comprehensive taxation policy be adopted.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

*Motion adopted.*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, as per rule 220 of our Rules of Procedure, I will need an action taken report on this motion in the next three months. You bring it on the Floor and we debate it. Once they bring it, we shall be able to debate it here; see the steps taken and then we can add others since the minister has said we need to contribute together as Ugandans to get a very clear comprehensive taxation policy.

**MR KASAIJA:** Most obliged, Mr Speaker.

**MR NANDALA-MAFABI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. This motion has come but in our laws, it is well stipulated that the ministry will come up with economic or taxation policies. Even in public finance - I cannot remember the section very well.

Therefore, what is this you are raising? Is it procedurally right that we are urging the minister to bring something, yet the law is there, for the minister, to bring this? We are giving him even three months and yet it is mandated that before every budget comes, that should be the first item to be put in place.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, in fact, we have a taxation policy but Members were arguing saying it is not comprehensive. “Comprehensive” is a relative word. That is why I loved the response of the minister when he said, “You will also guide me; you will also contribute. Otherwise, what I have might be comprehensive to me but not to you.”

Therefore, we are just contributing to this. We have had an extensive debate over it and already voted on it. We really cannot go back so we are proceeding very well.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT URGING GOVERNMENT TO URGENTLY OPERATIONALISE THE ROAD FUND

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The whole of this will take us around 30 minutes so honourable member, try to summarise. Then, the rest of the motion will be captured on the *Hansard*.

4.56

**MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is a motion for a resolution of this House to urge the Government to operationalise the Road Fund:

*“WHEREAS the Uganda Road Fund was established by the Uganda Road Fund Act, 2008 to operate as a second generation Fund with the objective of financing the routine and periodic maintenance of public roads in Uganda, ensuring that public roads are maintained at all times and advising the minister on preparation and effective implementation of an annual road maintenance programme;*

*AND WHEREAS Section 21 of the Act provides for finances of the Uganda Road Fund, to include road user charges, fines under the Traffic and Road Safety Act, monies appropriated by the Parliament for purposes of the Fund and revenue or assets received by the Fund in the performance of its functions, donations, grants to the Fund from Government;*

*AWARE* that *Parliament has, on several occasions, recommended that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should develop regulations for the operationalization of the Uganda Road Fund as a second generation Fund to enable the Uganda Road Fund access funding as stipulated in Section 21 of the Act to meet its road maintenance needs;*

*FURTHER AWARE that Uganda Revenue Authority, in the exercise of its revenue collection mandate, collects monies that constitutes finances for the Road Fund yet such monies are remitted to the Consolidated Fund;*

*CONCERNED that Uganda Road Fund has continued to draw its resources from the Consolidated Fund contrary to the Uganda Road Fund Act, Section 21(3), which requires that road user charges are remitted directly to the Fund on a monthly basis hence undermining the purpose for which the Uganda Road Fund was established;*

*FURTHER CONCERNED that the failure by the minister to operationalise the Uganda Road Fund has continuously constrained its capacity to guarantee timely, reliable and adequate funding of road maintenance programmes contributing to increased road accidents;*

*NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by Parliament that:*

1. *The Minister responsible for Finance should operationalise the Road Fund in accordance with Section 49 of the Act by the end of the Financial Year 2021/2022.*
2. *The Minister responsible for Finance should ensure that funds collected by the Uganda Revenue Authority as road user charges are remitted directly to the Fund, as stipulated in Section 21(3) of the Act.*
3. *The minister presents to Parliament the regulations made under Section 49 of the Act by June 2022.”*

I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Is the motion seconded? It is seconded by Hon. Nathan Byanyima, Hon. Rita, Hon. Noah Wanzala and many other colleagues. Honourable member, would you love to speak to your motion? Procedure?

**MR SAMUEL OPIO:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise under rule 58 and 78 of our Rules of Procedure on the amendment to the motion. This motion is urging the Government to urgently operationalise the Road Fund. It states that the Government has been in contravention of the roads Act by drawing the resources of the Uganda Road Fund from the Consolidated Fund instead of the Road Fund. This is a matter of legality. It is not an optional matter but an obligation. Therefore, we cannot urge the Government.

Mr Speaker, in your communication, you directed that the Minister of Finance reports here within one hour and he reported in less than an hour. You did not urge him. What I am saying is: I want to propose that instead of urging the Government, this motion should direct the Government to operationalise this Fund by the end of the financial year. *(Applause)* This is a matter of legality not optional.

We have had issues with roads. You can see Prime Minister's Time is about roads, urgent matters are about roads. I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable member. This is a very good proposal but it would be in contravention of Article 93 of the Constitution because it has a direct charge on the Consolidated Fund. We are constrained by the Constitution. We would have loved to use a tougher language but you are saying they draw money from the Consolidated Fund. Article 93 of the Constitution will not allow you to have such a motion on the Floor so we are moving well. Hon. Sarah, speak to your motion.

**MS OPENDI:** Mr Speaker, the Road Fund Act was enacted by this Parliament. It is now 14 years since this Act has been in place. Section 49 obligates the Minister responsible for Finance, working with the minister responsible for roads, to issue a statutory instrument operationalising this Act.

It is unfortunate that time and again Members rise up to raise issues regarding their roads or broken bridges. The problem would actually be solved, if we had this Road Fund in place.

Over the years, the Ministry of Finance has been releasing funds; sometimes 25 per cent and sometimes 30. If I look at the Financial Year 2021/2022, out of the 506 budgeted for, only Shs 258 billion was actually released, translating into 51 per cent of that budget.

This financial year, as we speak, the budget is for Shs 487.9 billion, but the actual release is Shs 251 billion only, resulting in a shortfall of Shs 231 billion. Therefore, there is no way Uganda National Roads Authority, together with the Ministry of Works and Transport, can actually maintain our roads.

Uganda Road Fund needs Shs 1.4 trillion, of which Shs 690 billion is for UNRA and the balance is for the districts, municipalities and cities. As a result of this, we have seen Members – we have just heard about the road accidents in different parts of the country. The potholes are partially responsible for these road accidents.

We also have the rains in place now, with emergencies that require interventions. UNRA cannot respond to these emergencies. Equally, our districts cannot handle some of these emergencies that they would actually do because some of them have the equipment. This is all because of the lack of funding.

Mr Speaker, the money is actually collected, but all the collections – from the road user fees and all the other fees – go to the Consolidated Fund, yet this money, as per the Act, would be going directly to the Fund, which should have been created by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Unfortunately, this has not been done to date.

I would like to move, in accordance with this motion, that since this matter has been there for 14 years – even attempts to have these regulations prepared have not yielded much. People are moving back and forth in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, showing clearly that there is no goodwill in having this Fund in place.

I would like to request that if we want UNRA to have funds in order to ensure sustainability of our roads in this country and ensuring that our roads are safe for every Ugandan to use, we need to have the Fund in place.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the minister operationalises this particular Fund before the close of June and ensures that we have the regulations placed before this House before the close of this financial year *– (Interruption)*

**MS AISHA KABANDA:** Thank you, honourable colleague, for giving way. Whereas I support the motion, may I know from you whether UNRA would be self-sustaining on the road user fees? The only road I know, where people are paying fees, is the Kampala-Entebbe Expressway and your motion is being dependent on the user fees. You are saying the road user fees should go into the Uganda Road Fund. Would the road infrastructure, for that matter, be self-sustaining if the road user fees go into the Uganda Road Fund?

**MS OPENDI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. My motion talks about monies appropriated by Parliament for purposes of the Fund and revenues received by the Fund in the performance of its function. We have fees but that is not the only road toll. We have fuel levy that is supposed to go - If you read Section 21 of the Uganda Road Fund Act, it is very clear on the fuel levy. Even all the other road traffic fines are supposed to go directly into the Fund. It is not only the road toll.

Currently, URA collects over a trillion shillings, of which Uganda Road Fund actually needs Shs 1.4 trillion. If it got the Shs 1.4 trillion or even more, we would not be raising all these matters of national importance here because the money would actually be available to work on the roads.

However, because of lack of that money, Members come here to raise this so that the Minister of Works and Transport or the Prime Minister can look for the money to work on their roads. The money would be sufficient but the problem is that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development releases just a percentage – 25 per cent in the previous years, 51 per cent last year and now it is just around 50 per cent. This is where the challenge is. The money is actually there but it is used for other purposes –*(Member rose\_)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, you do not access a microphone before seeking permission. Hon. Sarah Opendi, you can take your seat because we need to harmonise this position very clearly.

I was sharing with Hon. Kwizera here – we have a conflict in the law. Honourable minister, you need to go back, sit with the Attorney-General and see a way of streamlining our laws.

The Uganda Road Fund Act was passed in 2008 but then you have the Public Finance Management Act (PMFA), which was passed in 2015. Under Section 30, PFMA consolidated all funds, apart from the Petroleum Fund. What I was sharing with Hon. Kwizera here is that Article 153 of the Constitution says these other funds must be protected – you cannot consolidate the funds.

Article 153 (1) establishes the Consolidated Fund. Article 153 (2) says:

*“(2) The revenues or other monies referred to in clause (1) of this article shall not include the revenues or other monies -*

1. *that are payable by or under an Act of Parliament, into some other fund established for a specific purpose.”*

If this was established for the purpose of the Uganda Road Fund, now, the Constitution will take precedence in such a matter.

Therefore, to remove this confusion - because the minister for finance has been moving under Section 30 of the Public Finance Management Act yet we have Article 153 of the Constitution.

Honourable minister, do you want to say anything; on some of these matters, I want all of us to move in tandem. The seconders are going to speak – Hon. Nathan Byanyima is going to come as a seconder. I want the minister to speak.

5.12

**THE MINISTER OF FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Mr Matia Kasaija):** Thank you. Mr Speaker, these are matters of law and we have an institution that helps us in legal matters.

Therefore, in brief, I would like to say that give me a chance to refer this matter to the Attorney-General so that we can streamline what is wrong and we come up with a policy, which is also backed by the law.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable colleagues, allow me to defer this matter to Thursday next week. I know why I am doing this. Let us defer this matter to Thursday next week so that the minister *–* I am not concluding the matter. I am not putting any question. Okay – Hon. Byanyima, you can give information.

**MR BYANYIMA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was the chairperson of the committee when this Bill came. We benchmarked and went all over. If you look at Tanzania and Kenya, we almost have the same laws but this particular Act was never wanted by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Even the officer from Soroti, if I can remember very well, who managed to help us with the information because the paper to Cabinet had been taken and they withdrew. Nobody wanted it. An officer from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development said that the Road Fund would only come up upon his grave.

The story I am talking about is the spirit in which the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has looked at this. But for this minister, I have no problem. I was recently a board member of the Road Fund. I sat with him and we found just Shs 100 on fuel, not tampering with excise duty on fuel, it was coming to Shs 1.2 trillion. Just give Road Fund Shs 800 billion and you will see this country changing.

Today, Tanzania and Kenya are ahead of us but Namibia is the best because that money is ring-fenced specifically for road maintenance. *(Applause)* There are people who have been giving testimonies that I came back to Parliament because of the money that used to come to my subcounty. Every Member of Parliament belongs to a committee of the Road Fund at the district level, but the money that goes there is very little now and it cannot cause an impact.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Byanyima, you are now debating and submitting. What I have said is very simple: this is a factual matter, Okay? Please allow me to give my guidance on this matter.

The minister has been proceeding under a different law. If you read Section 30 of the Public Finance Management Act, it consolidates all these funds apart from the Uganda Petroleum Fund, but there is a Constitution. The minister is not saying that the motion is bad and I am not saying we conclude on the motion. What I am saying is simple: minister, go and write to the Attorney-General on this matter and ensure you get guidance on the operationalisation of Article 153 and on Thursday, I will have it on the Order Paper. Otherwise, when you are debating a matter, where a minister is saying, “I am uncomfortable with the law and I am confused” then he cannot even be guided very well.

His hands are tied. So, I want us to move in tandem. Now, if on Thursday, the minister comes with a letter from the Attorney- General saying, “Please operationalise these funds”, then we would have achieved our target. And what we are trying to achieve is a certain target.

So, I rule that way. Let us not waste time on this. On Thursday, I need this item on the Order Paper so that the minister can report on what the Attorney-General has guided and you lay the letter on the Table. If the Attorney-General has not guided by then, then we shall resume the debate on the matter and submit.

I have already ruled and there being no other item, I adjourn the House to Tuesday at 2.00 p.m.

*(The House rose at 5.17 p.m. and adjourned until Tuesday, 10 May 2022 at 2.00 p.m.)*