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THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

THE HANSARD

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Monday, 25th November 2024

The House met at 2.30 p.m.

[The Speaker (Hon. Moses Wetang'ula) in the Chair]

PRAYERS

QUORUM

Hon. Speaker: Hon. Members, there is no quorum in the House. Serjeant-at-Arms, ring the Quorum Bell.

(The Quorum Bell was rung)

Order, Hon. Members. We now have quorum to transact business. Clerk-at-the-Table, proceed. I have a Message from a constitutional commission.

MESSAGE

NOMINATION OF MR ABDI MOHAMUD FOR APPOINTMENT
AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF EACC

Hon. Speaker: Hon. Members, pursuant to the provisions of Section 16(1) of the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission Act, Cap 7H, as read together with Section 5(1) of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary) Approval Act, Cap 7F, I wish to report to the House that I have received a Message from the Chairperson of the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission asking the House to approve a person for appointment as the Secretary/Chief Executive Officer of the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC).

In the Message, the Chairperson conveys that pursuant to the provisions of Section 16 of the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission Act, Cap 7H, and following a competitive recruitment process, the Commission has recommended Mr Abdi Ahmed Mohamud, MBS, for appointment to the position of Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission. The Chairperson, therefore, seeks approval of the nomination by the House.

Standing Order 45 requires that upon receipt of notification of nomination for appointments, such nomination shall stand committed to the relevant departmental committee of the House for consideration. In this regard, I hereby refer the request, together with the report of the EACC on the recruitment of the Secretary and CEO, and the nominee's testimonials to the Departmental Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs for consideration.

Section 8 of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, 2011, requires the committee to which such nomination is referred to consider the matter and table a report in the House within twenty-eight (28) days. However, noting the need to expeditiously conclude the approval hearings and given the Calendar of the House, I direct the Committee to immediately commence the approval process, notify the nominee and the general public of the time and place for holding the approval hearings, and thereafter, upon conclusion, table its report on or

before Tuesday, 3rd December 2024 to enable the House to consider the matter within the statutory timelines.

I thank you. Next Order.

PAPERS

Hon. Speaker: Leader of the Majority Party.

Hon. Naomi Waqo (Marsabit County, UDA): Hon. Speaker, I beg to lay the following Papers on the Table:

1. The Address by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Kenya, delivered in Parliament on Thursday, 21st November 2024.
2. The 11th Annual Report on the Measures Taken and Progress Achieved in the Realisation of National Values and Principles of Governance.
3. The 11th Annual Report on the Progress Made in Fulfilling the International Obligations of the Republic of Kenya.
4. The Annual Report to Parliament on the State of National Security for the period 1st September 2024 to 31st August 2024.
5. Reports of the Auditor-General and Financial Statements for the years ended 30th June 2021, 30th June 2022 and 30th June 2023, and the certificates therein in respect of:
 - (a) Asumbi Girls High School.
 - (b) St. Mary Lwak Girls High School.
 - (c) Hola Boys Secondary School.
 - (d) Chianda High School.
 - (e) NEP Girls High School.
 - (f) Moi Girls Secondary School – Mandera.
 - (g) Chavakali High School.
 - (h) St. Clare Ebukuya Secondary School.

Thank you, Hon. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker: The Chairperson of the Departmental Committee on Energy.

Hon. Vincent Musau (Mwala, UDA): Hon. Speaker, I beg to lay the following Paper on the Table:

Report of the Departmental Committee on Energy on the inquiry into the matter of the reduction of electricity costs in the country.

Hon. Speaker: Are you done?

Hon. Vincent Musau (Mwala, UDA): Yes, I am done, Hon. Speaker. This is not an election petition...

*(Hon. Vincent Musau, Hon. (Dr) Robert Pukose, and
Hon. Nimrod Mbai carried papers to the Table)*

Hon. Speaker: Are those two your assistants? Hon. Nimrod and Hon. (Dr) Pukose are playing assistants. Thank you.

The Chairperson for the Budget and Appropriations Committee. Hon. Ndindi Nyoro is not in the House. Next Order.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

ADOPTION OF REPORT ON INQUIRY INTO REDUCTION
OF ELECTRICITY COSTS IN THE COUNTRY

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Hon. Vincent Musau (Mwala, UDA): Hon. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following Motion:

THAT, this House adopts the Report of the Departmental Committee on Energy on the inquiry into the matter of the reduction of electricity costs in the country, laid on the Table of the House on Monday, 25th November 2024, and approves the lifting of the moratorium on the signing of new power purchase agreements (PPAs) subject to the following conditions:

THAT, all intermittent sources of energy projects, that is, wind and solar, being on-boarded to the grid be fitted with energy storage solutions as a mitigation measure to their intermittency as well as to maintain the system's equilibrium between supply and demand for electricity by strategically discharging storage assets during times of peak demand and charging them during times of low demand;

THAT, the Ministry immediately stops power purchase agreement amendments that occur midway through the life cycle of the Independent Power Producers, similar to the case of OrPower 4 Inc, and all subsequent PPA amendments/variations are to be subjected to the National Assembly for approval;

THAT, the power generation indicative tariffs both in the Feed-in-Tariff and auctions system before gazettment and all power purchase agreements be subjected to approval and ratification by the National Assembly. This will also apply to projects still in the pipeline and those not yet operationalised before the imposition of the moratorium. In the transition phase before the formation and operationalisation of the IPP office, EPRA will undertake this role as it is currently prescribed in law and is to submit the updated competitive indicative tariffs to guide the process of on-boarding of power producers for concurrence with the National Assembly before gazettment within two (2) months upon passage of the report;

THAT, all new power generation plant Power Purchase Agreements to be on-boarded to the grid are denominated in Kenyan Shillings. The Committee shall initiate an amendment to the Energy Act, Cap 314, to effect this recommendation;

THAT, the Ministry and EPRA implement competitive procurement of energy projects under an auction scheme modelled similar to South Africa's Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme in order to ensure that energy is procured competitively and in line with the gazetted indicative tariffs and the least cost power development plan to ensure price discovery by selecting only the least expensive power producer that meets the detailed technical and financial evaluation requirements after the bid rounds, failure to which the auction will be deemed unresponsive. Further, the Ministry in conjunction with EPRA to draft and table an approved renewable energy auctions policy that outlines the transition from the Feed-in-Tariff for advanced projects which must also be in line with the gazetted indicative tariffs, and operationalises the auction system for consideration by the National Assembly within six months after the adoption of the report; and,

THAT, within six months upon adoption of this report, the Business Registration Services (BRS) submits to the National Assembly a report containing a list of the owners, beneficial owners, shareholders and directors of each entity operating as an independent power producer in Kenya in accordance with Section 93A of the Company Act, 2015. Subsequently, all new power purchase

agreements will only be entered into with a power generation entity that has fully disclosed and registered full beneficial ownership in compliance with the Act.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you. Let us go back to Order No.5. The Chairperson of the Budget and Appropriation Committee.

PAPER

Hon. Ndindi Nyoro (Kiharu, UDA): Thank you very much, Hon. Speaker.

I beg to lay the following Paper on the Table:

Report of the Mediation Committee on the Division of Revenue (Amendment) Bill (National Assembly Bill No.38 of 2024)

Hon. Speaker: Thank you. Next Order.

NOTICE OF MOTION

APPROVAL OF THE MEDIATED VERSION OF THE DIVISION OF REVENUE
(AMENDMENT) BILL (NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BILL NO.38 OF 2024)

Hon. Speaker: Hon. Ndindi, proceed to give Notice of Motion under Order No.6

Hon. Ndindi Nyoro (Kiharu, UDA): Hon. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following Motion:

THAT, pursuant to the provisions of Article 113(2) of the Constitution and Standing Order 150(3), this House adopts the Report of the Mediation Committee on the Division of Revenue (Amendment) Bill (National Assembly Bill No.38 of 2024), laid on the Table of the House on Monday, 25th November 2024, and approves the mediated version of the Division of Revenue (Amendment) Bill (National Assembly Bill No.38 of 2024).

Hon. Speaker: Next Order.

QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

Hon. Speaker: We will start with Statements. Hon. Umulkher Harun, you may proceed.

REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS

DELAY OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Hon. Umulkher Harun (Nominated, ODM): Thank you, Hon. Speaker. Pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 44(2)(c), I rise to request for a Statement from the Chairperson of the Departmental Committee on Social Protection regarding the delay of the National Youth Council (NYC) elections.

The NYC is a corporate body established through the National Youth Council Act Cap.132 and primarily acts as the official voice of the youth in Kenya. It is mandated to advocate for opportunities for the youth to associate, to be represented and to participate in the political, social, economic and other spheres of life. In addition, Legal Notice No.183 of 2021 provides the legal framework of youth as members of the NYC. The Act requires the election to be held every three years. Despite the regulations, NYC has failed to conduct elections since 2012 thereby denying the youth their right to representation and participation in national development and governance.

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It is against this background that I request for a Statement from the Chairperson of the Departmental Committee on Social Protection on the following:

1. The reasons for failure by the NYC to hold elections since 2012 contrary to the provisions of the National Youth Council Act Cap. 132 and Legal Notice No.183 of 2021.
2. The steps being taken to immediately conduct elections of certain council members especially whose offices have been vacant for very long.
3. Measures being implemented to ensure that the youth have their rightful voice within the Council and are enabled to enjoy their fair representation and participation in the country's political and socio-economic affairs.
4. A list containing the names of youths elected and appointed to the Council in accordance with the provision of Section 5(1) of the National Youth Council Act, including any representatives from the female gender, youth with disability and persons nominated by the National Youth Congress.

Thank you, Hon. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker: Are you not contradicting yourself? You are asking about the delayed elections and at the same time for the names of those who have been elected.

Hon. Umulkher Harun (Nominated, ODM): Hon. Speaker, an appointment was made last week.

Hon. Speaker: Hon. Alice Ng'ang'a, this request is directed to your Committee.

Hon. Alice Ng'ang'a (Thika Town, UDA): I can give a response by Wednesday next week.

Hon. Speaker: Okay. Next is the Deputy Speaker.

CHALLENGES FACING THE CEREAL GROWERS IN KENYA

Hon. Gladys Boss (Uasin Gishu County, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Speaker. Pursuant to Standing Order 44(2)(c), I rise to request for a Statement from the Chairperson of the Departmental Committee on Agriculture and Livestock regarding the pressing challenges facing the cereal sub-sector, particularly the wheat growing areas in Narok, Laikipia, Nakuru, Meru and Uasin Gishu counties. To an extent, this also affects the maize growing areas.

The cereal sub-sector is currently facing significant challenges that threaten food security and farmers' livelihoods. On 2nd July 2024, the Agriculture and Food Authority (AFA) announced the annual agreed minimum price for the purchase of local wheat by millers in accordance with the local wheat purchase programme. Despite this, the millers have shown persistent non-compliance with the agreed purchase terms and only prices as low as Ksh4,500 per 90 Kg bag, against the AFA advisory of a minimum of Ksh5,300 and Ksh5,200 for grades 1 and 2 respectively. This agreement was reached with the Cereal Growers Association (CGA) and the Cereal Millers Association (CMA) brokered by AFA.

This situation disadvantages the farmers and is further complicated by the absence of a transparent grading system where the small-scale farmers lack the capacity for independent quality testing and face unilateral decisions from millers who often refuse to share their test results.

Additionally, the sector faces the challenge of the Quelea bird infestation that has devastated crops in Narok, Nakuru and parts of Laikipia counties resulting in approximately 25 per cent loss of the projected harvest.

Hon. Speaker, the maize sector faces equally pressing challenges, particularly regarding market access and quality control. Despite the Government's efforts to support production through subsidised fertiliser, farmers are struggling to compete with low-quality grain importers from the neighbouring region. There are also inadequate surveillance and

enforcement mechanisms leading to market disruptions and potential health risks to consumers. Furthermore, poor infrastructure for grain-handling including underutilised mobile dryers at the Government purchase centres are due to lack of supporting services. Most farmers are required to take their crops to a specific place to have it dried when many of them cannot afford the transportation.

Finally, with regard to the commercialisation of Government land to allow the increase of production of cereals in Kenya, there is lack of clear guidelines for accessing these parcels of land. The current practice is for farmers to lease the land annually. Annual arrangements do not work for farmers because they lack the incentive to invest and sustain soil regenerative processes. The situation calls for urgent attention to establishing long-term leasing arrangements that would promote sustainable farming practices.

It is against this background that I request for a Statement from the Chairperson of the Departmental Committee on Agriculture and Livestock addressing the following:

1. Measures being taken to ensure miller compliance with the local wheat purchase programme and enforcement of the agreed minimum cost.
2. The steps being taken to address the quality assurance grading and testing challenges.
3. Position from the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development on ensuring that no importation is allowed by any miller until they have bought a quota of the local production.
4. The immediate and long-term strategies to control the Quelea bird infestation in the wheat-growing regions.
5. The status of the research and development initiatives for improved wheat varieties and measures to expedite their release and the actions being taken to strengthen enforcement capabilities by the Kenya Bureau of Standards and the AFA in controlling low-quality grain imports.
6. The Government's comprehensive plan to establish a fair pricing mechanism for locally produced grain including strategies for enhancing post-harvest management and securing best prices for locally produced grains in order to allow them to compete with the imported ones.
7. The specific plans and timelines for implementing guidelines for the land commercialisation initiative, particularly regarding access to arable land.
8. Measures being considered to revise the land leasing policies to promote long-land-leasing arrangements from 10 to 15 years, aimed at encouraging sustainable farm practices and due investment.
9. A status report on the duty remissions.

In 2022, the Government of Kenya forfeited Ksh1.8 billion per month on duty remissions to imported wheat. However, it has not been accounted for on whether this has benefited the farmers or promoted them. Are they going to reinstate the 35 per cent duty on imported grain?

Thank you, Hon. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Hon. Mutunga, when can you bring a Statement? Hon. DK, what is it?

Hon. David Kiplagat (Soy, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Speaker. I want to support what the Deputy Speaker has raised on the agony wheat farmers are going through, especially in the North Rift. Wheat production in Kenya has been going down because AFA, which is mandated to protect local production, no longer protects local production, but supports importers. Farmers end up selling wheat for less than Ksh5,000 per bag, nearly equivalent to the cost of maize production per acreage. The cost of maize production per acreage is higher. Farmers are making a lot of losses. It is very important that what the Deputy Speaker has raised is taken into

consideration by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development to make sure that wheat farmers are protected and get value for their produce.

Hon. Speaker: Hon. Mutunga, can you manage to bring the Statement next week?

Hon. (Dr) John Mutunga Kanyuithia (Tigania West, UDA): It is possible to get the answers next week, Hon. Speaker. I believe they are all available.

Hon. Speaker: Thursday morning?

Hon. (Dr) John Mutunga Kanyuithia (Tigania West, UDA): Yes, Thursday morning.

Hon. Speaker: Thursday morning, so be it.

Let us move on to response to Statements. Hon. Mutunga, respond to a request for Statement by Hon. Dorice Donya. Is she in the House? She is not in the House. Response to her request is stayed. You can have it on the Order Paper on Wednesday afternoon.

Hon. Brighton Yegon. Is he in the House? Hon. Mutunga, both are not here. I direct the Statements to come on Wednesday morning.

Hon. (Dr) John Mutunga Kanyuithia (Tigania West, UDA): That will happen, Hon. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker: Next Order.

BILL

First Reading

THE COMPUTER MISUSE AND CYBERCRIMES (AMENDMENT) BILL (National Assembly Bill No.41 of 2024)

(The Bill was read a First Time and referred to the relevant committee)

Hon. Speaker: Hold on Leader of the Majority Party for a minute. Before we execute the Motion, allow me to acknowledge, in the Speaker's Gallery, Mzee Wamboka Khaoya, the father of the Member for Bumula, Hon. Jack Wamboka Wanami, accompanied by two people. He is visiting the House to have a first-hand view on what his son does and where he does it. On behalf of the House and on my own behalf, *Mzee karibu sana kwa Jumba hili la Bunge na ujisikie uko nyumbani.*

(Applause)

Leader of the Majority Party, proceed.

MOTION

DEBATE ON THE ANNUAL PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT

Hon. Kimani Ichung'wah (Kikuyu, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Speaker. Allow me to welcome Mzee Wamboka Wanami, the father of the Member for Bumula. I thank him for taking his time to come and see what his son is doing. It is, indeed, a great honour for a father, who is 90 years old, to come and witness first-hand what his son is doing in the House in service not just to the people of Bumula, but to the nation. We must take this opportunity to thank Mzee Wamboka Wanami for having brought forth a courageous young man in the name of

Jack Wamboka, who is not only serving the people of Bumula, but doing a great service to the nation of Kenya.

Many times, Members of Parliament are referred to by people as “*Mpigs*”. It takes courageous men and women to ignore all the noise and support their Members of Parliament and their sons and daughters. That is why I take great exception to thank Mzee Wamboka for having the fortitude to not only support his son in private, but also in public as he has done. Congratulations to Mzee.

Hon. Speaker, I beg to move the following Motion:

THAT, pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 24(6), the thanks of this House be recorded for the exposition of public policy contained in the Address of his Excellency the President delivered in Parliament on Thursday, 21st November 2024 and, further, that this House notes the following reports submitted by His Excellency the President, in fulfilment of the provisions of Articles 132(1)(c) and 240(7) of the Constitution, laid on the Table of the House on Monday, 25th November 2024—

1. The 11th Annual Report on the measures taken and progress achieved in the realisation of national values and principles of governance.

(Loud consultations)

Hon. Speaker, protect me from the loud noise by the Member for Tigania West, who is also the Chair of the Departmental Committee on Agriculture and Livestock, and the Chairman of the Budget and Appropriations Committee, Hon. Ndindi Nyoro, Hon. Pauline Lenguris and Hon. Rebecca Tonkei. Their consultations are too loud.

Hon. Speaker: Those *kamukunjis* are out of order.

Hon. Kimani Ichung'wah (Kikuyu, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Speaker.

2. The 11th Annual Report on the progress made in fulfilling international obligations of the Republic of Kenya.
3. The Annual Report to Parliament on the State of National Security.

In fulfilment of the provisions of Articles 132(1)(c) and 240(7) of the Constitution, the President of the Republic of Kenya, last week on Thursday delivered his State of the Nation Address for the year 2024. It is important for Members to note that Article 247 speaks to the functions and responsibilities of the National Security Council (NSC). The Council is mandated, to once every year, report to the National Assembly on the state of the security of the nation. That is what the President was doing in fulfilment of that Article. He was reporting on behalf of the NSC on the state of our security as a country.

Under Article 132(1)(c) of the Constitution, the President is required to report, once every year, in an address to the nation, on all the measures taken and the progress achieved in the realisation of the national values referred to in Article 10 and subsequently publish the report in the *Gazette*. That has already been done. The President is also required to submit to the National Assembly the progress made in fulfilling international obligations of the republic. He submitted all those reports and they are, therefore, before the House for debate.

It is important to remind ourselves of the national values that we expect the President to report on their realisation. As stipulated in our Constitution, the national values are:

1. Patriotism, national unity, sharing and evolution of power, the rule of law, democracy and the participation of the people.
2. Human dignity, equity, social justice, inclusiveness, equality, human rights, non-discrimination and protection of the marginalised.
3. Good governance, integrity, transparency and accountability.
4. Sustainable development.

The question that begs is: When we listened to the President, did he speak to some of these issues? Did he speak to issues that guarantee sustainable development in our country? Did he speak about good governance? Did he speak about integrity, transparency and accountability, even amidst the challenge that he threw to the House on the enactment of the Conflict of Interest Bill? For the record, let me state that it is true that the National Assembly adopted and passed the Conflict of Interest Bill earlier this year, and it was transmitted to the Senate. The Senate enacted a number of amendments, many of which the Departmental Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs has considered and substantially disagreed with. The amendments seek to dilute the Bill. We have, therefore, formed a Mediation Committee.

It is on record that when the first meeting of the Mediation Committee was called, not a single Senator was present. I take this opportunity to ask the Senators to be available for the mediation process. If there is a House that is conflicted in the Conflict of Interest Bill, it is not this House. It is the House that diluted the Bill. It is also the House that has been unavailable for the mediation process. I believe Hon. Murugara is ready. We have had discussions with the Leader of the Majority Party in the Senate. I also had a discussion with Hon. Murugara yesterday to expedite the mediation process and reach out to the Chair of the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights in the Senate, so that Senators on the Mediation Committee are available. The President did not just mention in passing if there is any conflict of interest in passing the Conflict of Interest Bill. We should expedite and pass it because it is critical in the fight against corruption. If we expect the President to speak about good governance, integrity, transparency, accountability and sustainable development in the Government, we must act on this Bill. We cannot have sustainable development without acting on conflict of interest.

More fundamentally is the directive the President issued from the Floor of this House. I hope officials of the National Treasury were listening to the President on the question of e-procurement. We cannot have transparency in the procurement process if we do not digitise the processes. The President said that we have faltered on the actualisation of e-procurement. That faltering is not in the last 10 years. Since the Kibaki regime, we have always spoken about e-procurement. I am glad the President directed that by the end of the first quarter of 2025, the National Treasury must ensure that e-procurement becomes a reality. It is possible to have e-procurement if we are to deal with accountability and transparency in the procurement of goods and services in the Government. The root cause of corruption across the two levels of Government revolves around two major issues, namely, conflict of interest and procurement issues. If we enact the Conflict of Interest Bill and actualise e-procurement processes in both levels of the Government, corruption will be a matter of the past.

Hon. Speaker, by speaking to the issues of sustainable development, the President went at length to enumerate the gains that his administration has achieved in the last two years. There is an appreciation of the Kenyan Shilling against the United States of American Dollars from a high of Ksh162 to a low of Ksh129. Secondly, in managing our inflation, for the first time in 17 years—this is data from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and our development partners—the inflation rate has fallen to almost 2.7 per cent from a high of nearly 9.6 per cent. The rate of inflation drives the high cost of living. In speaking to the issues that Kenyans have spoken very loudly about - like the cost of living and rate of inflation by deliberate investments in production but not consumption - this administration has been able to bring down the rate of inflation. It is largely driven by our foreign exchange rates and the cost of fuel around the world.

(Hon. Robert Mbui and Hon. Vincent Musau consulted loudly)

Hon. Speaker: Order, Hon. Mbui and Hon. Kawayu. You may be required to carry out that animated discussion elsewhere. You are making it difficult for even the Hon. Speaker to follow the proceedings.

Hon. Kimani Ichung'wah (Kikuyu, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Speaker. I was also very distracted because when they converse in the Kamba language, I only hear *nesa nesa*. Thank you for protecting me.

(Laughter)

By containing inflation, we have—in a significant way—managed to contain the high cost of living. I know we are not yet there. However, the message from the President is that we are getting there. With the fall of the dollar against the Kenya Shilling, we have saved in our debt servicing cost. You can imagine that for every dollar we borrowed, we saved almost Ksh33, which is significant to Kenyans. It is money that we can deploy in development activities across the nation.

In speaking to the realisation of the national values and principles of governance, the President spoke in detail about the investments in the affordable housing programme and employment of 56,000 teachers in only two years. He stated that by the time he took over office, we had a shortage of 110,000 teachers. That tells you we have only employed 50 per cent of the required teachers. He also enumerated the gains we have made in the education sector in trying to stabilise the shaky industry we had when he took over two years ago. We had a new Competency Based Curriculum (CBC). We were not sure where we would host our CBC students in Junior Secondary School (JSS). All Kenyans know these young ones are hosted in our primary schools.

Massive investment has been made in the education sector. Close to 11,000 classrooms were built within a year to ensure that our JSS children have classrooms across the nation. I must commend the collaboration that Members of Parliament have given the Ministry of Education through the National Government Constituencies Development Fund (NG-CDF). They have made it a reality that across our country, children transitioning from Grade 8 to Grade 9 in January have classrooms and laboratories to help them cater for their education. The President indicated that in January 2025, a further 20,000 teachers will be hired, bringing the total to 76,000 teachers to bridge the deficit of 110,000 teachers

In the health sector, the President enumerated the transition that we have made. He thanked the House for the enactment of the Social Health Insurance Fund (SHIF) and the other laws that this House and the Senate passed that have enabled this country to transition from the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) to SHIF or Taifa Care as it has been christened. As the President indicated, the Taifa Care Programme is designed to expand healthcare access to all citizens, and not just the privileged few. NHIF largely catered for the privileged few who were employed with salaries. However, Taifa Care caters for those not privileged to be employed and those working in the informal sector. More importantly, it caters for the vulnerable populations of unemployed people and the elderly who benefit from the Cash Transfer Programme and are now automatically being on-boarded, upon registration into the SHIF.

People have demonised this programme largely out of disinformation and misinformation being propagated out there without realising the huge benefits. I am very happy today because Kenyans across the nation are now posting their testimonials of the benefits they have accrued on social media. Mothers who deliver in hospitals are getting both prenatal and postnatal care under SHIF. People who suffer from chronic illnesses—under the Emergency, Chronic and Critical Illness Fund—access dialysis. Those who suffer from cancer access chemotherapy care under Taifa Care enjoy the benefits of this Fund without waiting. Kenyans

did not know that there was a waiting period under the NHIF. You could not be on-boarded upon paying, and your bills would not be sorted out in hospitals until after six months. Under Taifa Care, the moment you register and then go to the means testing instrument and pay your premiums, you are immediately on-boarded, and you can begin enjoying medical care services.

The same goes to those suffering from chronic illnesses. This SHIF, under Taifa Care, is not only transformative for this country but it is also a programme that will benefit the most vulnerable people in society in a big way. I have heard people asking the President what happened to the people he was speaking about during the campaigns. Hon. Speaker and I accompanied the President across the nation. We told people that we would uplift those at the bottom of the economic pyramid to the top. Part of that uplifting of *mama mboga* and the *boda boda* rider is to make them enjoy the same level of medical care and insurance cover that a Member of Parliament, governor and President enjoy in this country. When they are sick or have an accident, they will enjoy the same level of care as a Member of Parliament. Members of Parliament who were paying Ksh1,700 under NHIF are now paying close to Ksh27,000. This money will take care of many of our constituents who wait for us over the weekends to beg for fundraisers to take care of their bills.

I look forward, in the coming days, to a time when no Member of Parliament will fear going to their village homes because of the many people queuing around their homes and offices waiting for fundraising for their hospital bills because they will be taken care of by Taifa Care. Indeed, it cares about our nation. It is about caring for the vulnerable in our nation who are at the bottom of the economic pyramid. Let us take advantage of the long recess to on board as many of our constituents as possible to the (SHIF) or Taifa Care Programme so that they may continue to enjoy these gains.

In expounding on the national values, the President alluded to the Affordable Housing Programme, which also incorporates an element of social housing and market or commercial rate housing. The 4,888 affordable housing units across the country that were recently launched are not just stimulating the construction and manufacturing industry but also creating millions of jobs across the country in the manufacturing sector for those who are in the steel, cement and timber production industries. It is also directly employing architects, engineers, lawyers who are doing conveyancing, *fundis* and handymen who are working on the sites, and also *mama* and *baba mbogas* who are supplying food in the construction sites.

Members of Parliament who have these projects in their constituencies can testify to the transformation that the Affordable Housing Programme has brought to the neighbourhoods where these programmes are. Markets, whether middle-level, large, or the Economic Stimulus Programme (ESP) that are being built across the country are in a big way transforming neighbourhoods, changing the landscape of our towns and shopping centres, and, more importantly, addressing the question of unemployment by providing employment opportunities to millions of our youth.

It is not to say we are there yet; we are moving on. That is why the President alluded to the overseas opportunities and across our borders, that close to 105,000 Kenyans have now secured employment and millions have also been empowered by the Hustler Fund to become employers and self-employed.

In safeguarding our national values, encouraging patriotism, the rule of law, democracy, and participation of the people, I am glad that His Excellency the President never shied away from speaking about the issues raised by Kenyans. I was happy when I heard him say that there is a difference between an arrest and an abduction because Kenyans have now been tuned by the culture of misinformation and disinformation. Even when I am arrested, my supporters just need to post on social media that the Member of Parliament for Kikuyu has been abducted.

I am happy that the President was very clear in creating that dichotomy between what legitimate arrests are and what abductions are and what government agencies ought to be doing,

should be doing and must do about abductions. Abductions are not necessarily from Government agencies. We have seen, and I spoke here last week about the example of the criminal element arrested by the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) - and I thank them for the swift action - where young women were abducted from Eastleigh, tortured and murdered. The same character then abducted and killed another lady in Kilimani.

I have heard even some of us out there speak about these things. We are very quick to condemn but slow to thank DCI when they act swiftly to ensure that criminals who either maim, hurt, or even murder —whether it is the killing of women or other people, including men — are arrested. When DCI officers apprehend these criminals, we must thank them. However, we must also condemn any manner of abduction, and all Government agencies must act in accordance with our Constitution and statutes and ensure that we are all safe. I am glad that the President spoke at length on these issues.

In the agricultural sector, the backbone of our economy, inflation has dropped from 9.6 per cent to 2.7 per cent, the first in 17 years, because it was only before the post-election violence in 2005 to 2007 that we had this kind of inflation. We would not have been able to achieve this had this administration not been deliberate in the massive investment that it has put in, and the President has been speaking about it on subsidised fertiliser. It is out of this subsidised fertiliser that we said we shall no longer subsidise consumption but production, and the results are there to be seen. We are not just talking about low inflation at 2.7 per cent, down from 9.6 per cent, but also about increased production that is bringing down the cost of food prices, and therefore, bringing the inflation rate down.

I listened to the President speak about the sugar industry last week, saying that 17 sugar factories in this country are up and running for the first time. Four new factories are under construction, not just to process sugar because the sugarcane is there but also because we have encouraged our farmers to get back to sugarcane production.

Hon. Wangwe, the sponsor of the Sugar Bill, will tell you that some years back, farmers in Western Kenya and the sugar belt areas of our country were moving away from sugarcane to other food crops because they were frustrated. Today, sugar farmers are returning to sugarcane farming because it is now paying, and we can now produce adequate sugar for our country. More importantly, we are now not only producing sugar as a raw material for those 17 Class IV factories but also creating employment not just for farmers in the production cycle but also in the manufacturing cycle. Factories are now roaring back to life, providing millions of young people with job opportunities. We are also saving on our foreign exchange. Only last year, we imported hundreds of thousands of metric tonnes of sugar into this country, exporting our dollars to other countries like Mexico and Brazil. However, for the first time this year, we are not importing even a kilogramme of sugar.

These are things that we must shout about and be proud of, that when we spoke about the import substitution policy, people thought it was just stories we were talking about. It is now a reality that we are not importing sugar. If anything, we can now export sugar to Sudan. I know people who are now trying to export our sugar to Sudan. However, we must also caution the Ministry concerned to ensure we do not export all our sugar and are left without enough for our local consumption.

We must be proud that it is not just sugarcane but also maize. Only a year ago, we had to import maize, but we now do not have to import a single grain of it. We have enough being produced. In fact, the fallacy is that now the farmers say that the prices have gone too low at the expense of consumers, who would be complaining if the prices were high. We now have adequate food and ensure food security in our country; food prices and inflation are down, and the shilling is strong. Our nation's economy is getting stronger by the day. In conclusion, I have heard many people admonish Members of Parliament because they gave a standing ovation to the President when he directed the termination of the Adani contracts. In fact, I took time to go

through the clips to see what they said. They were defending the issue of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) as an alternative way of implementing our capital projects. That has not changed. When the President appeared here, he indicated that he had received information from friendly partner states. That is the reason why he terminated the Adani deals. This is not to mean that we do not need a new Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) or that millions of Kenyans with no access to power do not need it. This is not to mean...

Hon. Speaker: You beg to move?

Hon. Kimani Ichung'wah (Kikuyu, UDA): Yes, Hon. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker: Conclude that statement.

Hon. Kimani Ichung'wah (Kikuyu, UDA): In conclusion, this does not mean that without Adani, we do not get the massive investment we need at JKIA or the energy and road sectors. As the President said, our nation's economy is resilient. I look forward to the President and his administration ensuring they get an alternative PPP to ensure that JKIA, Moi International Airport and Eldoret International Airport are redone, and that the Kenya Electricity Transmission Company Limited (KETRACO) can transmit the idle power that is generated. We have invested hundreds of billions in energy generation but cannot evacuate it. This is because we lack capital resources. We need to evacuate that power to our villages so that our people can get jobs by establishing manufacturing industries. Those who can work online can do so because they have access to power.

I encourage the President and the Kenya Kwanza Government to move with speed and challenge the naysayers. If you do not like Adani, bring Ambani, Turkish, Chinese or Americans. Bring anyone with capital to invest in this country. I hope those who have been admonishing PPPs will give us alternative solutions for better investors.

Hon. Speaker, with that, I beg to move. I request all of us to debate. There is nothing to support but just to note. As we debate, we do so with decorum and be forthright to Kenyans that PPPs are the new way to actualise capital investments. On a Friday, for those who go to the western part of our country, driving from Nairobi to Nakuru or Malaba takes you inordinately long.

Going to Nakuru is a journey that should take one-and-a-half hours. Today, it takes close to four-and-a-half hours. I look forward to the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure getting a PPP arrangement to ensure that the Rironi-Mau Summit Road all the way to Malaba... If possible, trucks should use a toll road from Nairobi or Mombasa all the way to Malaba to open up our borders for regional trade, deepen and tighten... Hon. Speaker, as you told us last week...

Hon. Speaker: And widen.

(Laughter)

Hon. Kimani Ichung'wah (Kikuyu, UDA): Thank you. Widen, deepen and tighten our regional integration. Regional trade will not be a reality if we do not adopt PPPs as the new way of capitalising or financing capital-intensive projects. This is to avoid overtaxing Kenyans. The alternative is to tax them but Kenyans have spoken. I am glad the President told those of us in leadership that listening is a full-time occupation. He not only demonstrated to Kenyans that he is focused, but also listens to them. He acts not out of political expediency but in the country's best interest, with a long-term view of where we ought to be and how to get there.

Hon. Speaker, with those many remarks, I beg to move. I request the Leader of the Minority Party, my good friend, Hon. Junet Mohamed, to second the Motion.

Hon. Speaker: Good friend, you have 20 minutes to second.

Hon. Junet Mohamed (Suna East, ODM): Thank you, Hon. Speaker. I stand to second the Motion on the debate of the President's Speech during the State of the Nation Address. The

Leader of the Majority Party has eloquently spoken about his Speech. If you are a President and have the Leader of the Majority Party on your side then 50 per cent of your problems are solved. Hon. Speaker, when you become the President, ensure that the Leader of the Majority Party is on your side.

On Thursday, 21st November 2024, Parliament held a Joint Sitting of both Houses, and the President made the State of the Nation Address. That was pursuant to Article 132(1)(c), which states:

- “(1) The President shall –
- (c) once every year –
- i. report, in an address to the nation, on all the measures taken and the progress achieved in the realisation of the national values, referred to in Article 10;
 - ii. publish in the Gazette the details of the measures and progress under paragraph (i); and
 - iii. submit a report for debate to the National Assembly on the progress made in fulfilling the national obligations of the Republic.”

We were all present here, and this was a very important occasion for the country. These are some of the benefits that the new Constitution has given to Kenya.

Hon. Speaker, you are a veteran Member of this House. You remember in the old days, the President used to open Parliament and address issues that he wished without talking about what Kenyans were expecting. I mean, Members of Parliament are holding the President accountable. It is mandatory for him to address the nation annually because it is a constitutional requirement. It is not a choice. His only choice is to agree with you on the date he will come here. He has to come here annually.

Next year, God willing, I am sure he will appear in this House to address the country. We must be alive to the fact that this year's state of the nation address came against the backdrop of certain unique happenings. You will remember that in June, we had demonstrations - the so-called Generation Z demonstrations - the formation of the broad-based Government and the historic impeachment of the former Deputy President. These historical issues have happened in our country in the last six months. So, the President came to address the nation under the backdrop of those issues.

One thing I picked from the President's Address is the cancellation of the Adani contracts. Kenyans had raised issues about this contract. It is rare for the Leader of the Minority Party to applaud the President. However, I want to applaud him on this occasion because it was timely. He did the right thing by reading the mood of the country and making bold decisions that Kenyans were happy with. Having said that, the cancellation of the Adani contract does not end the problems in the airports. I am a regular traveller at the JKIA, and I do not believe we have an airport. There is no difference between Jomo Kenyatta International Airport and the Migori City Bus Park, where people board their buses and the *matatus*. You drive into that airport and do not know where to start or end.

I regularly visit the airport, and I experience problems too. What of a visitor who does not know anything concerning the airport, knows no one, does not know where to park their or where to be dropped? The roofs are even leaking.

Hon. Speaker: It is because you go there when it is raining.

Hon. Junet Mohamed (Suna East, ODM): Hon Speaker, I am praying to God that I do not appear there at a time like now when we are experiencing some rain because it gets worse. I am telling those Kenyans who gave their strong views on the Adani issues to now provide opinions on how they want us to transform the airport. It cannot be one-way traffic. If they say the Adani thing is bad, they should give us alternative ideas and views on improving our airport.

That is the first place visitors interact with this country. You land at the airport and do not know whether you landed at Kisumu International Airport or a bus park. Wilson Airport is better of late because it is smaller and the traffic is smaller. Things are bad at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, and you cannot tell me the Government is supposed to fix everything. Yes, they have to do their work; they can fix what they can, but look at the standards and what is happening globally. Look at how the PPP has transformed many countries. If you go to Turkey, there is a completely new airport, bigger than Migori City, built through a Public-Private Partnership. We want to be the hub of this region. Look at what is happening in Ethiopia, yet our minds are fixated on issues that we think are against us; we only think of who is doing this and that.

I may not vote for Adani, but I want to say on the Floor of this House that for those of us who are against him, let us now give alternatives on how we can improve our airport. We cannot be saying Adani was bad without giving any alternative.

Hon. Speaker, I want to give a very good example. The Expressway we are enjoying today came through PPP. How would we be accessing our airport if we had not contracted them? Today, unlike before, you can take less than ten minutes to get to the airport. We must ask ourselves the hard questions. We cannot do politics at the expense of killing the country. The Nairobi Expressway is a good example of a PPP project. It might have been done expensively, but it serves the purpose it was meant for.

Kenyans who can afford to pay for the service of the Expressway would ask how they can access it from whichever point they are in, be it from the Southern Bypass or Thika Super Highway. This is because it has made life easy. That is what PPP does; it makes lives better.

Leader of the Majority Party, I hope and pray that transparency will be adhered to in the subsequent decision that is going to be made concerning this issue. We need to get the next PPP; this time, we want Kenyans to be taken on board. We want Kenyans to be carried on board through transparency and accountability.

Hon. Speaker, the second issue I noted in the Speech is SHIF and SHA. It is a brilliant and good idea for us to transform the health sector of this country because Universal Health Care has been in all our manifestos. It is a constitutional right that every Kenyan must get. However, the ideas and laws passed here are very good because they underpin universal health care. The way it has been rolled out is not right because many Kenyans are not aware of the transfer from the NHIF to SHA.

Hon. Speaker, when the IEBC conducts mass voter registration, it does a lot of campaigns in the media, print media, and radio. You will hear it asking people, “*Je, umejiandikisha?*” However, we have not heard anyone talk about SHIF or SHA. We need to do a serious campaign so that Kenyans can know that a new programme called SHA is taking over the NHIF programmes. On that front, we can do better. Kenyans need to be made aware of the benefits of SHA. I was one of the Members who participated in making these laws. If they are correctly implemented, they will solve many problems concerning our healthcare. We, however, need more awareness so that more Kenyans can get an opportunity to learn that there is a new programme taking effect in the country.

Hon. Speaker, the President raised an issue concerning the Conflict of Interest Bill. If you read the Bill, you will think that the people who published it did so to deal with Members of Parliament. It is like the Bill was meant to target the Members of Parliament and no other Kenyans like those holding offices like the cabinet, principal secretaries, and parastatal heads. It was purely about Members of Parliament. The thing must be put into a broader perspective. Everyone holding an office must be part and parcel of that Conflict of Interest Bill. Members of Parliament are not the only ones doing business in Kenya. We have many Kenyans in high offices. So, if you target a certain segment of the Kenyan leadership, it has to revolt. That is why the Senate made 20 amendments to the Bill and is now in the Mediation Committee.

Hon. Speaker, we need to look at the whole issue holistically because it looks like it was meant to target some people who are politically exposed, like the Members of Parliament. No one holds an office that has been created politically. The Executive is a politically created office, it holds people who are politically exposed. They must agree with the Conflict of Interest Bill. We are, therefore, going to look into the Bill and ensure that all Kenyans who hold different positions, starting from the sub-chiefs, chiefs, Members of County Assembly (MCAs), to county officers, Members of Parliament all the way to the Executive are part of this Conflict of Interest Bill. If we are going to drain the swamp, let us do it properly. We should not only target the Members of Parliament. Some Members are peasants; they do not even own businesses. Hon. Kimani Ichung'wah, for example, is running butcheries; therefore, when you only target them, you would be doing so with ulterior motives. I do not know where that Bill came from, which is why it has not gone through. We should look at the Bill holistically so that everyone is covered under it and we finish the issue of conflict of interest once and for all.

Hon. Speaker, the other issue that I took note of in the President's Speech is gender-based violence. It is very sad that our women are being killed by the people they trust whom they stay with, like what happened in Eastleigh the other day. A lady, her daughter and niece were killed at the same time for unknown reasons. Other women have been killed elsewhere in apartments and Air Bed and Breakfast (air-bnb's). Others were killed in the quarry area. This is a matter that requires the full attention by law enforcement department. Women cannot live in fear in this country. They must live with freedom and do whatever they want, with their safety assured. I, therefore, want this matter, as has been raised by the President, to be addressed properly by the police, DCI and everyone who is concerned so that our women can feel safe. If a woman is not safe, a man cannot be safe. The safety of men is intertwined with the safety of women. The President raised that serious matter. Even though the President stretched it a bit, and I felt that it was a bit unfair to men, that is beside the point because femicide must be dealt with.

The President raised the issue of demonstrations. He said that he supports and acknowledges that Article 37 of the Constitution allows people to picket and demonstrate peaceably. It is important to note that the national security organs must be very careful about how they deal with demonstrators because we do not want to lose lives during demonstrations, which have been allowed by the Constitution, as long as they are peaceful. People should not forget that demonstrations are important. Those who currently do not feel good about demonstrations might need them tomorrow, and those currently demonstrating might not need to do so tomorrow. That is how it goes. The Leader of the Majority Party might not need demonstrations at this point in time, but at a certain time *hapo mbele*, he might be the one leading the demonstrations in the country. We have to get a balance between those who want to demonstrate and those who do not. Otherwise, demonstrations are important to all politicians. I am not predicting anything, but I agree with the President that demonstrations must be peaceful and must not destroy people's properties. We must not curtail people's freedoms of assembly and association.

This country is a constitutional democracy. We are guided by our Constitution. When Kenyans give their views in the form of public participation, we have to take into consideration what they are saying because that is what they want us to do. Kenyans must also be enlightened through civic education. There is a serious conflict between what the Government and the Executive is supposed to do, what Parliament is supposed to do, and what Kenyans think should be done. Kenyans must know that they have also delegated their sovereign power to Parliament and the Executive through elections. They must have trust and faith in what those institutions are doing. A country can fail. A country can go bananas if the citizens lose faith in the institutions that have been established in the Constitution. We must always remind Kenyans

that it is important to have faith in our institutions. Lack of faith in institutions results in anarchy. For that reason, corruption and non-adherence to the Constitution must be addressed in a manner that can restore the public's faith.

Currently, there are many issues in the Judiciary. Kenyans are losing trust and faith in it because some of the decisions that are emanating from there are not necessarily constitutional. Yesterday, I came across a judge who issued a court order in Mombasa while another judge in Kwale issued a contrary order on the same issue. Those counties are next to each other. I was shocked. One judge issued that order four days earlier than the other. I am sure that the other one knew what had happened. I am not running a country, but a country cannot be run in that manner. Kenyans should not be forced to lose faith in the institutions that they created in the Constitution. Parliament has passed many Bills. It is one of the institutions that conducts public participation extensively compared to the other two arms of Government. We can do better.

I was in Parliament last year when the President gave his State of the Nation Address. This year's Address was far more promising and satisfying than any other. I hope and pray that things get better because a lot has been achieved economically. After the broad-based Government was formed, things are changing for the better and Kenyans have a lot of faith and hope. The shilling has been stabilised, and inflation has come down. We are praying and hoping that the interest rates will come down in a short time. They have shown signs of coming down. God has blessed us with rain. If our people engage in good farming, this country will flourish.

We must give our people hope. We must live on hope. There is nothing to support, as the Leader of the Majority Party said. Therefore, I take note of what the President said. As the Minority Party, we are watching. We will raise our voices where we see a wrong, and we will support where it is right.

Thank you very much, Hon. Speaker.

(Applause)

Hon. Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Junet.

(Question proposed)

Hon. Malulu Injendi.

Hon. Malulu Injendi (Malava, ANC): Thank you, Hon. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker: All Members speaking thereafter, you have five minutes each, so compose your views and say them in five minutes.

Hon. Malulu Injendi (Malava, ANC): Hon. Speaker, I also rise to applaud the Speech by His Excellency the President during his State of the Nation Address, which focused on key issues that are affecting Kenyans.

Listening to the President gave me hope and I believe that if Kenyans listened to him, he sowed seeds of hope in them. I know that most Kenyans could be undergoing some difficult moments because of the various issues that are affecting them like the SHA. Nonetheless, what the President said in his Speech was very promising. He focused on the issues that we see happening and taking root in our country.

I know that Kenya is very rich in agricultural production. Kenya is very rich in terms of labour. The President focused on the revival of agricultural production. I come from western Kenya and we have been suffering a lot. Most of the people in western Kenya are very poor. The poverty arises from the fact that most of us focus on production of maize, which is not selling well, and production of sugarcane, whose prices had gone as low as Ksh2,800 per tonne because most factories had collapsed. When the President visited the Western region which is

rich in production of cane, he gave us hope by telling us that there is a possibility of reviving those factories. After he became President, he revived 17 factories. He has signed the Sugar Act into law. The Constitution of Kenya 2010 killed the Sugar Act leading to a lot of confusion in the sugar production. Most farmers did not have any control and many factories went down. Additionally, because of the collapse of the Sugar Act, there was a massive importation of sugar into the country causing most farmers to suffer, particularly in western Kenya. Currently, I can assure our people in western Kenya that the future is very good. The price has now risen from Ksh2,800 per tonne to Ksh5,000, which is promising for us Kenyans.

I recall that during my schooling days, we relied on selling milk to the Kenya Cooperative Creameries (KCC), but this collapsed in the 1990s. I want to assure Kenyans and the people who produce milk, particularly in western Kenya, that the President's focus on the revival of the new KCC as highlighted in his Speech is giving us hope. For example, in Malava, the county government had put up a factory for milk production, but we were getting some headwinds. With the revival of KCC and the kind of massive investment being made, we are assured of the delivery of coolers in the country, including to our plant in Malava. This will ensure that the milk we produce is absorbed and Kenyans, including those in Malava, will lead a better life.

We know that some regions in this country have become rich because of one commodity called coffee. Most of us in western Kenya have been focusing heavily on maize and sugar production, yet we have remained poor and wondered why. We learned that coffee is another good cash crop that can do well in western Kenya, and through the President's efforts, much is happening on the ground. Most of the farmers are happy to take up production of coffee, and with this positive attitude, I believe this country will move to richness, much like other countries that have become rich.

Finally, I appeal to Kenyans who seem to be so hopeless with Taifa Care: our business is to register. I can give an example to Kenyans and the people of Malava. There is a particular mother to a friend of mine named Livingstone Muhati in South Kabras who had registered for SHA. When the mother went to the Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH) in Eldoret, she incurred a bill of Ksh491,000. This was settled by SHA. So, my people of Malava, let us register, as this plea is all over, and we will live a better life. We will stop selling our land, cows and property because of ailments.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Malulu. Hon. Members, please note that the Chairmen of the Departmental Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations and the Departmental Committee on Administration and Internal Affairs, will have 10 minutes each when they speak. All other Members will have five minutes each.

(Hon. (Dr) Robert Pukose spoke off the record)

Chairman of the Departmental Committee on Health is not covered. It is a Motion you passed yourselves. Hon. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Gladys Boss (Uasin Gishu County, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker: Even the Deputy Speaker has five minutes.

(Laughter)

Hon. Gladys Boss (Uasin Gishu County, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Speaker. Even as I participate in debating the President's State of the Nation Address, I want to direct my attention to the unpatriotic media houses in this country, particularly the Nation Media Group, which recently attempted to analyse this statement wrongly. I want to ask them: has the shilling

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strengthened from Ksh162 to the dollar to Ksh129 today? Yes or no? Let us look at the cost of living. Has inflation dropped from 9.6 to 2.7? Every Kenyan knows the price of *unga* has gone down, the price of kerosene has gone down, and the price of electricity has gone down. Those media houses should tell us where they are getting their statistics and what the source of their information is.

Also, I dare them, those unpatriotic Kenyans and the unpatriotic media houses: has 6.5 million bags of fertiliser been distributed to the registered farmers? Yes or no? We know for a fact that farmers have received it. I dare them to tell us where they think the fertiliser was not given. Also, towards food security, today they can use their investigative journalists to go to the stores and find that we have 47 million bags of maize, 8.8 million bags of beans and 10.4 million bags of wheat in our reserves. I dare them to dispute this, and we want them to go and film them from the stores rather than speak from their studios. I also dare them: do they dispute the fact that KCC received Ksh3 billion to modernise? Do they dispute the fact that today farmers are being paid Ksh50 per litre of milk? I am a farmer, and that is the amount I am receiving. I dare those media houses to tell us if they have any milk to sell and how much they sell it to KCC. I dare them to dispute the fact that KCC is now processing 220,000 litres of milk a day, up from 100,000 litres. I dare them to dispute the fact that the sex semen is now going for Ksh2,900. Those of us who are dairy farmers were buying it for Ksh9,000 before.

I want those media houses to again tell us whether or not 56,000 teachers have been hired. They know they have, and that list is available at the Teacher Service Commission (TSC). They should stop peddling lies and misinforming Kenyans about the State of the Nation Address. Again, regarding the funding model, they can confirm that students are now getting up to 95 per cent funding of their school fees. Again, they can get the statistics from the Higher Education Fund and the Higher Education Loans Board. They cannot be making up stories from their screens.

On healthcare, we know that they are telling Kenyans that they are being charged a lot for the SHIF. However, they are not telling Kenyans that those on a higher pay are the ones who are paying, so that the vulnerable and needy can access healthcare, unlike before. I also dare those who said that the NHIF debts have not been settled. Ksh3.7 billion was disbursed, and earlier, another Ksh5 billion was settled.

On the Hustler Fund, again, this is available information, Ksh60 billion has already benefited over 24 million Kenyans. Therefore, as we look at the President's State of the Nation Address, it is important that we call out those unpatriotic Kenyans and unpatriotic media houses that are selling negative, toxic narratives...

Hon. Speaker: Give the Deputy Speaker one more minute.

Hon. Gladys Boss (Uasin Gishu County, UDA): And selling a story of doom and hopelessness to Kenyans. Kenya is strong. As we saw in the last State of the Nation Address, Kenya is going places and is destined for greatness. I know that, one day, those peddlers of doom will be shamed.

Lastly, for the first time in the State of the Nation Address by a sitting President, the issue of gender-based violence was given prominence. For that, we, the women of Kenya, are very grateful to the President. Now, it has received the highest attention. But even as we say this, I appeal to Kenyans that preventing femicide and gender-based violence requires each of us to be vigilant. On femicide, we need to talk to our children and tell them not to put themselves in vulnerable situations. We must also teach our sons to respect women so that we can be part of prevention rather than going after these people after they have committed the crime.

With that, Hon. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity.

Hon. Speaker: Let us have Hon. Samuel Atandi. Hon. Malulu Injendi, disengage from the screen. Hon. Injendi, log out. You have just spoken and you are still on top of the screen. Is it you or the Clerks-at-the-Table to do it?

Hon. Samuel Atandi (Alego Usonga, ODM): Thank you for giving me the opportunity to make my submissions on the State of the Nation Address by the Head of State. I agree with the President on some areas but disagree with him on certain areas.

I agree with the President on the performance of the economy. Indeed, we have seen the shilling strengthening against major currencies. As a consequence, the cost of imported goods has dropped. We now have cheaper petroleum products and a stable economy. The President has done well on that account.

On the police and disappearance of Kenyans, this House needs to investigate why we do not have an independent police commission. The Constitution says that police service is independent. It should not be under the direction of anybody, not even the President. However, Kenyans have in most cases had to look up to the President when cases of citizen disappearances arise. In my opinion, that is a failure on our part as Members of Parliament and the House. It is time we understood that and told the police that they are independent. They need to investigate these cases of abductions on their own and give us reports. This will ensure that we have a stable and secure country.

I disagree with the President on the cancellation of one of the Adani contracts. Hon. Speaker, you were in my constituency over the weekend. You saw for yourself that we do not have stable electricity in my region. Electricity transmission lines are dead. Now that the Adani Solutions Energy Limited was set to fix this problem, Kenyans are raising questions about some of these projects. There was no need for the President to cancel them, especially the one on electricity transmission lines. The damage we suffer as people from the lake is enormous. Our youth cannot engage in activities like welding because there is no power. I really disagree with the President on that one.

I would like to tell Kenyans that the former President, Uhuru Kenyatta, constructed the expressway singlehandedly. He never did any tender anywhere. Some people complained about it and some even went to court. However, Kenyans today are happy about the expressway. Everybody is using it. They are not even questioning how it was done. We need to go ahead and do some of these projects because they cannot wait any longer. The amount of losses we, as a people from the Nyanza region, incur because of weak supply of electricity is something which we cannot tolerate further.

Sometimes the President needs to be courageous especially on that Adani contract on power transmission lines. I fault the President for cancelling that contract. It should have been allowed to go on because we need those services to serve our people. I have spoken about abductions.

[The Speaker (Hon. Moses Wetang'ula) left the Chair]

[The Deputy Speaker (Hon. Gladys Boss) took the Chair]

Hon. Deputy Speaker, I also wish to speak on SHA.

This health insurance cover is working and I can give my own experience. I enrolled somebody into the programme just two weeks ago. They were admitted in a private hospital. I was given a bill of about Ksh300,000. I was told to only pay half and that SHA would pay the rest. I was amazed. I got these services within less than a week. I urge Kenyans, especially my constituents, that enrolling into this programme is the first thing we need to do. Once enrolled, you become a member who can get these services. Most Kenyans are complaining about SHA yet they are not even registered.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, with those few remarks, I thank you for the opportunity.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: The Member for Tinderet, Hon. Melly.

Hon. Julius Melly (Tinderet, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Deputy Speaker.

I rise to speak on the State of the Nation address by His Excellency the President. This is a constitutional requirement the Constitution of Kenya 2010 requires of every President. On 21st of this month, the President came to the House and reported on three areas. One was the progress we have made on realising our national values. Two was the principles of governance. Three, the progress made in fulfilling our international obligations. The address by the President was very timely. It went on to explain how this country has made tremendous progress, especially on matters of national development.

I would specifically like to talk about what is going on in this republic. One of the issues that came out very clearly is agriculture and satisfactory food production. I come from a region where we grow sugarcane, tea and coffee. It is the first time this country has had sufficient sugar production. This time the President has addressed issues facing sugarcane farmers through his policies. More importantly are production and fertiliser. The sugar mills are also now running across the country, especially public mills. One of the only things we need to do is pay workers' arrears. I talk especially on behalf of the farmers in Chemelil and Muhoroni where there are high farmers' arrears. I also speak for the remaining few farmers who have not been paid their arrears, especially for cane deliveries.

Universal health coverage is the other issue that touched us, especially SHA and SHIF. This will revolutionise healthcare. A nation's people carry out their activities well when properly treated and receive necessary medical care. We will manage to pay medical bills for the chronically ill and those with high medical bills through SHA. It will also stop these Members of Parliament from attending medical fundraisers or even being asked to pay for inpatients, especially in private facilities.

I also laud the President especially for cancelling the Adani deal which the public had raised a number of issues. The deal might have been good. However, it was not procured clearly. Public participation was not clear. On this, the President listened to the public. He went on to explain that he listened to the people of Kenya as much as there might have been no serious issues on the Adani deals. Kenyans did not want them. In his address, the President showed that he is a listening leader. We should emulate him.

Education is the other issue the President talked about. For the first time in this country, the education sector got a boost of 56,000 teachers. We had a shortage of 116,000 teachers. This administration employed 56,000 teachers at a go which is a remarkable achievement. We laud the Government for that.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Member for Belgut.

Hon. Nelson Koech (Belgut, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Deputy Speaker. Let me also add my voice on the State of the Nation Address by the President. Under Article 132 of our Constitution, when the President addresses the nation, he is obligated to give the progress we have made in realising our national values and principles of governance. He also submits a report to Hon. Members on the progress made in fulfilling our international obligations. I will dwell on that issue today.

International obligations are fundamental to our nation's ability to secure stability, foster global cooperation and regulate matters of importance. I will speak on global cooperation and secure stability. Hon. Members will recall that when I came to seek permission to send our officers to Haiti, there was a lot of contest from this House. This is because part of Kenya's foreign policy is security. There was a lot of contestation because of that. As the President mentioned, we are an extremely happy nation today. Having deployed our officers to Haiti, a section of the places that had gangs and their leaders have been completely subdued. As a

country, we can report today that there is relative peace in Haiti, particularly in Port-au-Prince which is the capital city. That is part of our obligation.

Like the President mentioned, there are mediations and negotiations for different warring groups in Sudan and Southern Sudan. There have been concerted efforts by the Head of State and several actors to see that there is peace within our region. This stamps Kenya's place as an anchor of security within the region.

On the ratification of treaties in our Constitution— particularly on Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Africa's Agenda of 2063 and our engagement internationally— the President reported that we, as a country, are proud to host several United Nations (UN) bodies in this country. We have the UN Office in Nairobi (UNON), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and UN-Habitat. This makes Kenya and our capital City, Nairobi, a hub of multilateral diplomacy.

On the issue of diplomacy, Kenya continues to have its footprints globally. Today, Kenya hosts 109 embassies and high commissions in Nairobi, alongside 60 UN agencies and 78 international organisations. Hosting all of them is no mean feat. Remember the President mentioned that outside Washington, Kenya hosts a large part of the United Nations bodies in the country which really stamps our authority in diplomacy.

Regarding tackling of climate change, last year, during the 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28), Kenya championed ambitious energy transition goals which cemented our role further. As a global climate leader, Kenya has aligned these commitments with initiatives such as 200,000 affordable housing units annually under the UN-Habitat. While we have made significant and several treaties that await ratification, we have too many that still await ratification like the Convention on Cluster Munitions which seeks to eliminate harm caused by weapons. Kenya is also in the process of ratifying the International Convention for Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance which is extremely important.

You recall that during the demonstrations by the Generation Z, a lot of accusations were made about the disappearances of people, who either had participated in the demonstrations or perceived to have led the demonstrations. Going forward, the President mentioned that it will not be business as usual. As legislators, we await to ratify this very important International Convention for Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

The other very important legislative policy is extrajudicial killings. Between the years 2021 and 2022, there were too many reported cases of extrajudicial killings in Kenya. It has become a concern in the country. The ratification of International Convention for Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance will bring to book all the people who either perpetrate or are actively involved in disappearance of people. That was part of what the President mentioned last week on Thursday. As we reflect on the President's speech, we recognise Kenya's international obligations are not abstract. They are deeply intertwined with the national interest. They support the economy, protect citizens and enhance our global standing, as we move forward. It is imperative that we remain steadfast.

It is also imperative to address the treatment of asylum seekers. Kenya hosts in excess of 760 million refugees. It is considered as a safe haven for people who flee from conflict and persecutions in their countries. However, there are two disturbing cases that have come to my attention, which we must reflect on. In October 2024, Kenya deported four Turkish refugees back to their country after accepting an extradition request from Ankara. Again, in November 2024, a Ugandan opposition leader was reportedly taken from Nairobi and later apprehended in Uganda facing charges, that included possession of illegal firearms. The President mentioned that action should be taken on people who come to Kenya illegally. There is a procedure of extraditing individuals who are believed to have committed crimes in their countries or perceived to intend to commit crimes. As the Chairman of the Departmental Committee on

Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations, it flies on the face of the statement by the President and the several actors who sent back Dr Besigye.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, as a Committee, we will be inviting the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs to shed more light on exactly what happened. We want to have Kenya as a country where people who are fleeing persecution are received. People should not be apprehended in a way that contravenes the international laws and treaties that we have signed with other countries. Even though the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs has distanced itself from this incident, such incidents are regrettable. This House must endeavour to ensure justice for the victims and ensure Kenya remains consistent with its commitments to protecting asylum seekers and upholding the rule of law. This incident...

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Complete your sentence.

Hon. Nelson Koech (Belgut, UDA): Have I utilised my 10 minutes?

(The Clerk-at-the-Table nodded)

Oh, that was quick. These incidents remind us of the delicate balance we must maintain between regional diplomacy, security considerations, and our obligation to protect the rights of refugees and asylum seekers as per international law. Kenya must reaffirm its commitment to ensure that such cases are handled with the most respectable legal frameworks and human dignity.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, I thank you.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Tongoyo.

Hon. Gabriel Tongoyo (Narok West, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Deputy Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to equally contribute and add my voice to the presidential address to the nation on Thursday.

It is true that the President addressed the nation in fulfilment of a constitutional mandate according to Articles 132(1)(c), and 240 of the Constitution of Kenya. He addressed the country on three thematic areas: the progress achieved in realisation of the national values and principles of governance; the progress made in fulfilment of international obligations, which we have continuously and proudly been doing as a country; and, more importantly, of course to me, the state of the security of our country. This is too much. I cannot address the majority of them because of the limitation of time of 10 minutes.

Before I concentrate on the subject of national security, I was here last time when the President gave the same address. I want to commend the President and his leadership of Kenya Kwanza because, as a country, we have really made tremendous progress in addressing very pertinent issues that affect our country, especially the issue of food security. The President demonstrated how he has managed to bring down food prices and social commodities, facilitated by fertiliser subsidies which has given us a bumper harvest.

The President also managed to talk about pertinent issues, including new university funding model which is student-centred. This will enable even the poorest in our society to access education because the Government has taken a bigger burden of the tuition fees.

There is also the issue of Taifa Care. This is a game-changer. It will ensure that our most vulnerable in our society access the best of medicare without financial constraints.

Let me address the issue of national security. The report reflected multidimensional challenges Kenya faces in the realm of security while also highlighting the achievement and strategies employed by the Kenya Kwanza Government, under His Excellency the President, to safeguard our country. The aim here is to make the country a better place that is more peaceful for all of us to live in. There are several approaches which include modernisation. For the last two years, we have pumped money to the tune of Ksh14 billion to continuously equip

our security officers so that they can handle with effectiveness the challenges of security. That includes the continuous improvement of their welfare.

Just recently when we were doing our Supplementary Budget I, there was an increment of a minimum of Ksh4,000 in salaries for police officers in the lowest cadre. We are continuously improving their welfare and boosting their morale for them to discharge their mandate and duty to make this country a safer place for all of us, not forgetting that we are continuously doing training and human improvement. The President managed to demonstrate that one so much.

The report underscores the profound influence of the global and regional security dynamics on Kenya and on the international front. Conflicts such as Russia-Ukraine war, the Israel-Hamas conflict, and the tension in the eastern China have created ripple effects felt even within our borders. The disruption of the global trade, the increase in energy prices, and the fragmentation of international relations have introduced new pressures in our economy and security system.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, closer home, instability in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes Region remains a significant challenge that Kenya continues to grapple with. The consequences of regional conflict include the spill-over of arms, proliferation of small arms and weapons, the presence of militia, and displacement of persons. Kenya remains committed to regional peace through active participation in peace support operations such as those in Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Southern Sudan, and Central African Republic. Our forces, some of whom are in Haiti, continue to be the biggest players and advocates of peace both locally, regionally, and on the international stage.

The President mentioned several issues in the reports that were tabled in this House. I want also to mention that when the Kenya Kwanza took over, the President committed to eradicate and reduce significantly the issue of cattle rustling and banditry in the troubled areas of North Rift, especially Kerio Valley. The report that was tabled enumerated the very tremendous progress that Kenya Kwanza Government has made in taming banditry and cattle rustling in the said region. Of course, Members of Parliament in those affected regions can attest to that fact. There has been relative peace and people are able to continuously go about their businesses. The schools have been rebuilt.

As a Committee, we were very privileged to visit those areas and we can confirm that there is relative peace there. Kenya Kwanza Government is definitely committed to continuously ensuring there is peace and stability in those regions. The modernisation aspects that I had mentioned earlier are going to help those people in a bigger way. With Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicles (MRAPs) and Armoured Police Carriers (APCs), peacekeeping has been very successful.

It is also good to mention, and I want to put more emphasis on this, that in the President's speech and the reports that were tabled in this House, there is a big concern among Kenyans that there is an increase in cases of kidnappings, killings, femicide, abduction, and forced disappearance of Kenyans. They have been emerging as a growing concern, motivated mainly by ransom demands and at times linked to human trafficking. These crimes have targeted not just Kenyans but also foreign nationals. Enhanced collaboration between law enforcement organs, mobile service providers, and improved investigation including freezing suspects' bank accounts has helped disrupt this criminal network.

The work of the police and our security officers is not an easy one. At times, it is very easy for Kenyans to point fingers and condemn them when some things are probably not going the right way. However, it is also good to appreciate that there is a big good job being done by the same officers even if it is not reported openly.

As the Chair of the Departmental Committee on Administration and Internal Affairs, I can confirm that what our officers are doing in North Rift, North Eastern, Mandera, Wajir, and

Garissa to make sure that this country is secure and safe is commendable. Recently – the Leader of Majority Party had mentioned – there was a case of the murder of a taxi driver from Mombasa, Victoria Mumbua Muloki; the abduction and murder of the lady from Eastleigh, Amina Dahabo Daud Mseba; and the killing of Wells Fargo Human Resource Manager, Willis Ayieko. Our security officers responded on time and managed to bring the culprits to book. That was a commendable job that was done by our officers. That is not to say that there is nothing to be done; there is still a lot to be done. That is the reason the Kenya Kwanza Government is continuously training, equipping, and increasing their skills ...

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Give him a minute.

Hon. Gabriel Tongoyo (Narok West, UDA): You know, this topic is wide. I cannot say it all. However, it is also good to appreciate that there is a very clear distinction between abduction and arrest. Our Constitution and laws are very clear. When a suspect commits a crime, the law says that they should be presented before a court of law within 24 hours and if the security agencies need more time to continue with their investigations, they should seek leave from the courts. That is the spirit. That is what our laws say and that is what was said clearly by the President. So, the issue of abduction and kidnapping is not allowed in our laws. That is the spirit of our Constitution and that is what it says and it should remain so.

Lastly, national security is the bedrock of our development and sovereignty. The President's Report reflects our resilience and safety as a nation in the face of evolving threats. While we celebrate the achievements in the Presidential Report, we must acknowledge the work that remains undone that needs to be done. As this House debates this Report, let us commit to supporting the security sector through robust legislation, oversight and resource allocation.

I support.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: The nominated Member, Hon. Dorothy Ikiara.

(Hon. Mbui spoke off the record)

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Mbui, you will get a chance. You were not here when the leadership started contributing. I will give you a chance.

Hon. Dorothy Muthoni (Nominated, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Deputy Speaker. I want to add my voice to this debate as I applaud the speech by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Kenya, *Daktari* William Samoe Ruto. In all the things that the President pronounced himself on, he collectively reflected on a more accountable, inclusive, and economically stable country. This country has people with reservations on what is going on. It was clear from His Excellency that a number of things are moving on smoothly.

On the economic stability of this country, His Excellency highlighted that inflation has dropped from 9.6 per cent to 2 per cent. If you go to our shops today, that is evident. The prices of common commodities that we use on a daily basis like *unga* are now affordable. Therefore, this is a clear reflection that inflation has been contained.

On the Adani deal, this is something that was being canvassed by almost everyone. The deal never worked very well as had been anticipated by the country. There is no way we can stop supporting projects that improve our development. The face-lift of our airports is long overdue. If you go to other countries, for example, Singapore – we say we were at par with them during Independence – when you arrive at its main airport, you realise that everything runs seamlessly. Therefore, I want to encourage improvement of the existing facilities. I urge the President's advisors to do due diligence before coming up with the next investor who will take care of our airports. We want our airport to be a nerve centre that will serve East Africa and the entire Africa the way we get proper services from other countries.

I want to go straight to education, especially concerning the CBC. The President pronounced himself on the CBC programme that was initiated way back in 2017. The improvement therein has enabled us to be where we are today. There is improvement of structures, enrolment of more students in our schools, and employment of teachers. Today we have 46,000 teachers who have been employed on permanent and pensionable terms.

In the interest of time, let me rush to femicide. The killing of women and girls should come to a stop. The death penalty needs to be actioned. If you take a life, you should lose your life. This is the only equaliser that will make people know that life is precious. I support the President's speech.

Thank you.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: The Member for Thika Town, Hon. Alice Ng'ang'a.

Hon. Alice Ng'ang'a (Thika Town, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Deputy Speaker. I rise to also put a word on the President's Address that was delivered last week. I was very happy when the President talked about femicide and the measures that need to be taken. He also had a meeting with Members of this House and promised that he will set aside Ksh100 million to fight this menace that is getting out of hand. Women need to be respected. We are mothers, sisters, and daughters of the gentlemen seated in this House and those out there. We all know that when you give a woman a seed, she gives you a baby. If you give her a house, she gives you a home. If you give her groceries, she gives you a meal. If you give her a smile, she gives you a beautiful heart. Her work is to multiply and enlarge what she is given.

I do not understand what is happening in our nation such that they are killing very precious women. These murderers are not choosing a certain age group. They are killing young girls, middle-aged and older women. We are asking our men to love us. God is love so they should love the women of this nation. Please, stop killing us. You cannot survive without a mother, sister, or daughter. If you cannot kill your own mother, sister, or daughter then, stop killing other people's mothers and daughters.

His Excellency the President stated that he will look into this issue. I was very happy and impressed because, at least, women will be safe. As we speak, they are unsafe. This has taken a very long time. We saw the latest murder which happened last week. Today morning, we saw a gentleman being arrested in a police station. I wonder whether he just walked in because he avoided being arrested over the weekend. He was taken to court, where he was released on bail. We should not take murder lightly. Life is very important so we should stop these killings. My Committee will look into this issue. When that money is released, it should go to the grassroots. Also, the community and churches need to come on board to protect our young girls and women.

The President also spoke about the JSS classrooms for Grade 9. I believe by the time schools are re-opened in January, the classrooms will be ready to accommodate students so that learning can move on very smoothly without interruption. I also want to thank the Government because this year it hired 56,000 teachers. The President promised in January 2025 that the Government will hire 20,000 teachers so that Grade 9 students are taken care of.

I am also very happy with Taifa Care. Every day, in our constituencies we give out money for healthcare. As from next week, in my constituency, I will go on a campaign trail to register as many people as possible on Taifa Care because I know it is working. Our people are not aware that as long as you are registered, this is a very good model. It is paying hospital bills and medication. So, I want to tell all Hon. Members to go back home...

Hon. Deputy Speaker: You have a minute to finish.

Hon. Alice Ng'ang'a (Thika Town, UDA): Thank you very much, Hon. Deputy Speaker. We should encourage as many people as possible to register so as to avoid the huge bills they were accruing before. In my constituency, I have heard very many testimonies from

people who have registered on Taifa Care. I am asking all Hon. Members to go back home and encourage people to register.

I do not want to forget that our farmers are happy with the Cherry Fund because Ksh1.5 billion for coffee farmers has been released. We are not importing sugar anymore. We are able to sustain ourselves because farmers have been given fertiliser and production is really good.

Thank you, Hon. Deputy Speaker. *Ahsante*.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Next is Hon. Robert Mbui. Those who have already spoken should remove their cards. The Member for Malaba and Hon. Atandi have spoken. Please, pull out your cards.

Hon. Robert Mbui (Kathiani, WDM): Thank you, Hon. Deputy Speaker. There is a technical hitch with the system. I rise to add my voice and not to praise the Address by His Excellency the President. I hesitate to paint a rosy picture because the public is unhappy. Numbers do not lie. When we talk about the economy, we cannot tell the public we are doing so well when people cannot meet their basic needs. Under the current regime taxes have increased, so there is less spending power. Despite that, there is very little development going on in this country.

We heard that Kenya's exchange rate dropped. Before this regime came into power, the exchange rate was 1USD at Ksh123 but now it is Ksh129. How is that a drop? When this regime came into power, they pushed it up to 1USD at Ksh160. So, when they sorted out the mess they had created, they said it had dropped. It is not a drop, especially when we compare this regime with the previous one.

We were told that inflation is at a low of 2.7 percent. This is a simple calculation that we need to understand. Inflation is about the price of goods and services. When people have no money to spend, you cannot raise prices. This is because prices are set by the law of demand and supply. If there is no money to spend, there is no demand. Therefore, prices cannot go up and so inflation improves. I do not think our economy is doing well.

On education, the University Funding Model has failed Kenyans. Our children do not know whether they will do examinations at the end of the year. This is because many of them have not received their money. The lecturers were on strike and I am happy that was sorted out. When the Cabinet Secretary for Education came to the House, he talked about 100 per cent transition next year. He told us that they are putting up 16,000 classes. Then on Saturday, he was talking about 18,000 classes. I started wondering what to believe: what he said in the House on Wednesday, or what he said in a public *baraza* on Saturday. These are two different figures. The reality is that there are more schools than the number of classes being put up. They are not even talking about the JSS laboratories and workshops for science and technical subjects.

On the issue of housing, His Excellency the President told us that there are very many houses ready for purchase by Kenyans. These houses are built on public land using taxpayers' money. So, why is the Government selling them? Why not have people ballot then give the lucky ones? This is like building a road using taxpayers' money and then putting up a toll and charging. For the houses that have been built, let Kenyans ballot. You cannot sell something built with our money. If it is my money, it becomes my house.

The President's Address also mentioned something about our national values and principles of good governance. First, is Article 10(2)(a) of the Constitution regarding democracy and the rule of law. Government agencies have been weaponised against Kenyans. I want to give an example of former President Uhuru Kenyatta. His own son was harassed for being in possession of firearms which he had been given in a legal manner. We have weaponised the security systems. Under Article 37 of our Constitution, the youth came to Parliament to give their opinion. The young man who was shot outside Parliament was from my constituency. Tens of young people... The future of this country has been killed using Government bullets. How was that a good State of the Nation Address? On the rule of law, this

regime has failed. On the matter of participation of the people, we ignored the voices of the people in the Finance Bills of 2023 and 2024 and now we are also ignoring the voice of the church. Hon. Deputy Speaker, as a result of that, there will be consequences. Article 10(2)(b) ...

(The timer went off)

(Hon. Robert Mbui spoke off record)

I am not begging; other people are being given enough chance to contribute. Every single speaker before me was given an opportunity, except me. If you do not want me in the House, tell me. There are other things that I can do.

(The timer went off)

(Hon. Robert Mbui spoke off record)

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Mbui, you could have requested an extra minute to articulate your issues. You do not have to shout.

(Hon. Robert Mbui spoke off record)

Hon. Robert Mbui (Kathiani, WDM): I do not want to speak.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Mbui, just like every other Member has been doing, you only need to request for an extra minute to finish your contribution.

(Hon. Robert Mbui spoke off record)

In this case, you did not.

(Hon. Robert Mbui spoke off record)

Hon. Robert Mbui (Kathiani, WDM): Hon. Deputy Speaker, I request that you confirm from the *Hansard* records.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Pukose.

Hon (Dr) Robert Pukose (Endebess, UDA): Thank you for allowing me to contribute to the State of the nation Address by His Excellency the President.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, just to respond to some of the allegations made by my colleague, Hon. Mbui, I want to remind him that he was part of the team that was demonstrating with *sufurias* on their heads claiming that the price for *unga* was very high. As we speak, the price of *unga* has come down. When we came into Government, the price of *unga* was Ksh260. Today, two kilograms of *unga* go for Ksh120 or even Ksh100. The price of fertilizer was Ksh7,000 per 50 kilograms. It came down to Ksh3,500, and as we speak, it is Ksh2,500. This has made the cost of food to go down, and is part of the contributory factor to the inflation coming down to 2.7 per cent. Figures do not lie. We are talking about what is happening. Today, no one is complaining about the price of *unga*. President Uhuru's Government started the CBC which the Kenya Kwanza Government under President Ruto, has also done a lot on. He has ensured that CBC works by building more classrooms. This is to ensure that all our learners are able to learn in a decent and more comfortable environment.

This House passed the four Health Bills: the SHIF Act, the Digital Health Act, the Primary Health Care Act, and the Facilities Improvement Financing Act. The challenges that we face in implementing the UHC are waning down. They are gradually being addressed by our Taifa Care officers, and this will ensure that Kenyans receive better healthcare.

I saw an article where the Governor for Wajir was praising the SHA. He said that SHA enabled someone to be operated on, and his hip was replaced in Wajir. We have had instances where people are praising SHA. It is an indication that the system is working. Last week on Wednesday, I tabled a list that was presented by the Permanent Secretary for Health, Mr Harry Kimutai, that shows that in every constituency in all the counties, an officer from SHA and an officer from digital health agencies have been allocated responsibilities to make sure that every Kenyan is registered. I urge the Members to, please, go through the list which is in the Table Office. Kindly take time to know the person responsible for your constituency, and coordinate with them. We have also provided their mobile numbers. This is so that you can coordinate with them and have your constituents register for these services. You do not register when you are already in the hospital. It is easier for you to register before you get sick so that when you go to the hospital, you can easily access these services. The services at Level II and Level III hospitals are accessible to every Kenyan while the services at Level IV, V and VI hospitals are accessible to those who are paid up members – those who have made their statutory contributions.

(The Deputy Speaker (Hon. Gladys Boss) left the Chair)

(The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim) took the Chair)

With those few remarks, Hon. Temporary Speaker, I support the President's Address. I hope that the issues he raised will be implemented by both the House and the Executive. I am really looking forward to that happening.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): The Member for Jomvu, Hon. Bady.

Hon. Bady Twalib (Jomvu, ODM): Asante sana, Mheshimiwa Spika wa Muda kwa kunipatia hii fursa ili nichangie Hotuba ya Mheshimiwa Rais. Ninampongeza Rais pia ninamwunga mkono kwa yale aliyoyasema. Mombasa tunasema aliitoa hiyo Hotuba kichwa kikavu, yaani, bila kusoma mahali. Kwa hivyo, alijua kile alichosema.

Aligusia mambo kadha wa kadha ikiwemo mambo ya usalama. Hatuwezi tukafanya mambo ya maendeleo bila usalama. Vile vile, ninamwunga mkono haswa kwa sababu nilichukua hatamu ya uongozi Lamu tukiwa tunahudumiwa na Kituo cha Polisi cha Changamwe. Hiki kituo kilisimamia Jomvu na Changamwe. Jambo hili lina umuhimu sana na hii leo, tumelitia maanani sana katika wadi ninazoziwakilisha. Kwa sasa, kila wadi iko na kituo cha polisi kinachoisimamia.

Mheshimiwa Rais alizungumzia mambo ya huduma ya matibabu. Ninawasihi watu wa maeneo yetu, haswa Jomvu, waendeleo na usajili wa mambo ya huduma ya matibabu kwa sababu tunataka watu wetu wapate huduma vile Rais Ruto alivyosema.

Alizungumzia pia mfumo wa elimu na tunaona mambo yanaendelea kuwa mazuri. Sisi kama viongozi wa Pwani tumekuwa na mkutano naye Rais pale Ikulu ya Nairobi na amezungumzia mambo ya elimu. Kuna umuhimu wa kuongeza waalimu vile alivyosema ili tusaide watoto wetu wapate elimu. Hakuna siasa inayokosa maneno; watu wanapiga maneno sana. Leo hii, tumeona nyumba nyingi zimejengwa kule Buxton na sehemu nyingine. Katika lugha ya Kiingereza, tunaita nyumba hizo *affordable housing*. Watu wameanza kufaidika. Yule ambaye hataki kufaidika akae kando na awache wale ambao wanataka kufaidika.

Makao ni jambo muhimu katika maisha ya binadamu. Nilipokwenda Homa Bay wakati fulani, nilisimama na Mheshimiwa Bensuda aliyekariri sana kuhusu kuhakikisha kuwa watu

wake wanaishi vizuri kule Homa Bay. Alitaka watu wake waishi vizuri kabisa. Jambo hilo laoana na mawazo ya Mheshimiwa Bensuda na yale ambayo Mheshimiwa Rais William Samoei Ruto aliyasema.

Ninakushukuru, Mhe. Naibu Spika wa Muda, kwa kunipatia fursa hii ya kuchangia Hotuba ya Rais. La zaidi, Rais alinifurahisha alipoitupilia mbali ile kandarasi ya Adani ya viwanja vya ndege na *Kenya Electricity Transmission Company Limited (KETRACO)*. Mheshimiwa Rais alijizatiti, kujiweka kifua mbele na kusimama wima ili achukue hatua ngumu ya kusikiza sauti za Wakenya.

Kwa hayo, ninamshukuru Mhe. Naibu Spika wa Muda, Farah Maalim, ambaye ni kiongozi na *mentor* wetu tunayemheshimu, kwa kunipatia...

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Hon. Members, you will bear with me. There seems to be a small challenge with the system. Some of you came early and yet, the system keeps on...

(Loud consultations)

Order! When the Chair is talking, just listen. I am being guided by those of you who came early, and you will all get an opportunity to speak. I will start with Hon. Rindikiri, followed by Madam Bensuda. I will then come to... Order! Proceed.

Hon. Mugambi Rindikiri (Buuri, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Temporary Speaker. That machine needs to be looked at.

I stand to comment on the State of the Nation Address by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Kenya. His Excellency the President demonstrated leadership. A good leader always listens and tries to give solutions. I want to thank His Excellency the President for accepting that there are issues affecting Kenyans. A good leader will not wish away those issues. He will listen and try to give solutions.

His Excellency the President understands that he campaigned on the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA). I want to thank him because he has lived up to that promise. There have been many disruptions in the country in the last two years but despite those challenges, His Excellency the President understands the issues that affect Kenyans. The President has shown commitment to offering solutions in various sectors of our economy.

The President understands that there are issues affecting the higher education funding model. The President also understands that the education sector requires adequate infrastructure. The President understands that JSS require teachers. The President understands that there is a transition from the old education system to a new one. The President has never shied away from showing his commitment to the education sector. The President has directed all of us, including the Executive and those in administration, to tell Kenyans what he is doing.

The President made promises regarding better health in the country. We are all part and parcel of the SHA and the SHIF. What has happened is not the President's fault. A problem in the implementation of the new health system cannot be construed to mean that the entire system is failing.

One constituency that needs to speak about the success of this Government is the county governments. It seems like the county governments have run away from commenting about and appreciating what the national Government is doing. I challenge the county governments to pick up from where the President has left and start telling Kenyans what the national Government is doing.

The President spoke about food security. We want to thank the Almighty God because we have had adequate rainfall in the last two years.

Let us not forget that the President addressed the issues affecting our youth. The President has been trying to establish information communication technology (ICT) hubs. Let

us not forget the foreign job opportunities that the President has been trying to secure for our youth. Let us not forget the role that the President has played in terms of improving local manufacturing. All those efforts are geared towards creating employment for our youth.

The President understands that our economy was nearly collapsing. He has not refused, but has accepted that fact. He has been trying to create solutions regarding the financial management of this country. His Excellency the President has fully addressed the effects and consequences of foreign debt, and how to clear it. The President understands that there are pending bills. The President also understands that there is corruption. The President understands that we need to boost revenue collection. All those issues were contained in his Speech.

A leader gives hope. I want to thank the President because he gave Kenyans hope. Other people run away in times of crisis. I thank the President because he always gives hope to our people. When he says that we shall do something, that does not mean that he has broken the promise. He is giving Kenyans hope because that is the responsibility of any leader. I want to thank the President because he is taking this country...

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Hon. Bensuda, followed by Hon. Makali Mulu. Order, Hon. Members. You are all equally very important. Nobody is more important than the other. I am considering all those factors. I know that there was a problem with the system, but I will make sure that I accommodate you all.

Proceed, Hon. Bensuda.

Hon. Atieno Bensuda (Homa Bay County, ODM): Thank you very much, Hon. Temporary Speaker, for giving me this opportunity.

I rise to contribute to the President's State of the Nation Address. I analysed the presentation and for the first time, it was precise, with a clear introduction, a body and a conclusion. Submission was done before this House. I accept that. Saying, planning and implementation are different things. The President is on the path of listening, which is critical for a leader.

I acknowledge that he said that he will work speedily to ensure that the two-thirds gender rule is implemented during his tenure. I will contribute on the two-thirds gender rule on behalf of the 47 Women Representatives of this nation. We have a hard working Principal Secretary for the State Department for Gender and Affirmative Action. Because the President has chosen the path of listening, in the event that he reshuffles his Cabinet, Madam Principal Secretary Anne should remain in her position. I am disappointed that the Ministry of Public Service, Gender and Affirmative Action is the only Ministry without a Cabinet Secretary. I know that the President is listening and very soon, a woman Cabinet Secretary will be nominated. That is the only Ministry being run by a Principal Secretary and a Cabinet Secretary. We need action on that.

The two-thirds gender rule takes care of women's interests. The President has chosen the path of listening in this financial cycle. He promised the 47 Women Representatives an additional Ksh1 billion, which was allocated. He promised us sanitary towels and we received an allocation of Ksh940 million in the last financial year towards that. The President listened to the Women Representatives this year. We are told that there are pending bills and that there is no clear framework for the provision of sanitary pads. We know and appreciate that the President listened and removed the oversight of sanitary towels from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Public Service, Gender and Affirmative Action. The students will soon open school, and we want to receive our sanitary towels. So, I know that in the two-thirds gender rule, taking care of the women's interests, His Excellency the President listened to me.

On the issue of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), His Excellency the President said that he is very keen and appreciated the caucus that visited State House. I happen not to have been among them, but I know that they went there categorically to voice the concerns of women. On

that very day, over the news, I saw the President pledge Ksh100 million. I believe that money is a good start, but not adequate, and neither is it meant for certain regions. However, he should consider ensuring that all 47 Women Representatives and the desks of gender-based violence, whether they are at the police stations or the headquarters, are supported. We want clear engagement on this. We are calling upon His Excellency the President to ensure this happens.

In his Speech, I also noted that the President is keen on Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). I want to say that for SMEs, digitalisation is a key component of developing and advancing our nation. However, His Excellency the President, we would like to say that the digital borrowing of Women Enterprise Fund (WEF) and youth economic empowerment funds are not making meaningful growth, so let the ordinary method that was being used remain. I know this House can legislate and bestow it under the women representatives because they are the ones who take the course on affirmative action.

His Excellency the President also acknowledged the issue of education. As a teacher, I cannot fail to acknowledge his concerns. I highly acknowledge his concern that universities in this country have come to their knees. I do not know how long it will take this country to restore them so that the quality of education is not compromised. Twice, we have seen the lecturers go on strike in the same year - an embarrassing situation. I want to believe that his concern for ensuring adequate funding for the universities will be addressed, so that we never see lecturers on the streets and that the collective bargaining agreements are adhered to.

I am also concerned about the Competency-Based Curriculum...

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): You have half a minute.

Hon. Atieno Bensuda (Homa Bay County, ODM): Half a minute?

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Proceed.

Hon. Atieno Bensuda (Homa Bay County, ODM): I am concerned that grades 9, 8, and 7 are bestowed at the primary level. Unfortunately, Form 1 classrooms will go to waste. This is a concern that the Ministry of Education should look into since policy agreements are there.

We need meaningful engagement. There is a monster at the Teachers Service Commission. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at the 'Teachers Suffering Centre', if I may call it, is never in the office, and never listens to people. I wonder when she will have meaningful engagements, especially since teachers are suffering from lack of promotions. We want Ms. Nancy Macharia, categorically, to stop leaving her personal assistant to handle matters when we go there. We want meaningful engagement across all sectors. Some offices engage meaningfully with the Legislature for purposes of service delivery. However, we have realised that some offices have *askaris* as managers who deny you access to those offices. The President called for meaningful engagement, including with the county government.

Hon. (Dr) Makali Mulu (Kitui Central, WDM): Thank you very much, Hon. Temporary Speaker. I also want to add my voice to the President's Speech. First of all, I appreciate the fact that His Excellency the President admitted that the country is not where he promised Kenyans it would be, but it is also not where we started. This means he has realised some achievements. I confirm to the country that the pace of achieving those achievements is very slow, and Kenyans wish that it could improve.

Hon. Temporary Speaker, I want to comment on the issue of national values and principles of governance. I have read through the President's Speech and would like to highlight a few issues. The issue of inclusivity as a national value is an area that needs improvement. We cannot have a country where public appointments are skewed towards some regions. That cannot be fair for the country.

The second issue is equity. We will continue saying it. The issue of equity in this country is wanting. This morning, I was looking at the Kenya Gazette on the issue of approved administrative units by the Cabinet Secretary for Interior and National Administration, and I

was surprised. Some areas that really demand and require these additional units are not getting them while areas that hardly require them are getting them. We cannot have a country where some areas are favoured and others are being left behind. So, the issue of equity automatically requires some improvement.

The matter of human rights is another governance issue which the country is not achieving the expected standards. We have seen the human rights of Kenyans being abused. When we talk about abductions or people being shot, these are the issues that this country needs to address. The President made attempts in his Address, but I believe there is room for improvement. Kenyans would want progress in these areas.

Hon. Temporary Speaker, regarding corruption, it is good that there was an admission that we need to face this ‘animal’ called corruption head-on. The issue of Adani Energy Solutions was very encouraging. It was very good to hear His Excellency the President mention cancellation of the contracts with Adani Energy Solutions. However, it has also been reported that Adani is involved in the Social Health Authority (SHA). How I wish that the involvement of Adani in SHA could also be discontinued.

Let me comment briefly on the economy. Economic issues are not simple. There are basic principles of economics, and when things happen, we expect other things to happen. I want to give you an example. It was reported that interest rates are going down. Under normal circumstances, when interest rates decrease, we expect credit to the private sector to increase. However, you will be surprised to see that, if you look at the figures that have been recorded, the statistics show otherwise, which means we need to question this reduction in interest rates.

Another issue is inflation. I think Hon. Mbui spoke well on this. I hear many of my colleagues talking about inflation coming down. If you look at the range Kenya is targeting, it is between 5% and 2.5%, which means we are within the range. However, it is surprising that despite inflation coming down, Kenyans are still complaining about the cost of living. From an economist's perspective, prices are coming down because we have suppressed demand. People have no money to buy, and since demand surpasses supply, then prices come down. These are basic principles of economics, and you cannot change them. So, even if inflation comes down, we need to look at what is happening out there.

Lastly, I would like to comment on the foreign exchange rate, from Ksh169 to Ksh129. Those are the statistics, but we need to ask ourselves whether we are controlling this, or it is being controlled. We know we are under a flexible foreign exchange regime, but I suspect that these are not entirely the result of market forces. Even as we pride ourselves on having 4.8 months of reserves, I ask myself: are these dollars generated through exporting, or are they coming from the loans we have received from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank? These are the hard questions, Hon. Temporary Speaker. Unless they are answered, we will be having what we call “optics”.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Hon. Wangwe, proceed.

Hon. Emmanuel Wangwe (Navakholo, ODM): Thank you, Hon. Temporary Speaker. Allow me also to join my colleagues in noting the Speech of His Excellency the President.

First and foremost, I thank Kenyans for passing the 2010 Constitution and giving us Article 132(1)(c), which particularly empowers Members of Parliament to witness and also comment on the President's Speech.

Hon. Temporary Speaker, previously, it would have been very difficult for any Kenyan to talk about the President's Speech. However, through the Constitution, we are now able to talk about it, give it the critique it deserves, and make it constitutional. Allow me to appreciate the President for the first time, for talking about the shilling and responding to it in his Speech. The shilling is a measure of an economy that enables people to trade. Looking at the shift of the shilling from Ksh162 to Ksh129, and also looking at what Hon. Mbui referred to as the old regime at Ksh123, it means the current regime is working and was able to respond accordingly

to a shilling that was rising. We do not give gratitude to the past but the present. It is in order to applaud the President. He is doing something for the Kenyan Shilling. That is why we have it at that position.

On inflation, many economists have put it that it is in doubt. They want to look at the figures responding from different positions. However, also Kenyans have a right to look at what is happening today. There is shift in food supplies. At what price are we acquiring food? We must appreciate the President on this. The inflation quoted here is responding to the actual cost of food on shelves. A *gorogoro* of maize used to go for Ksh200 or Ksh180 in my constituency. It is going for Ksh100 shillings. That automatically means anyone who has Ksh100 can acquire that meal at that time. Kenya should give those who have a different view on the economics of inflation another time to look at the model on how to compute inflation. The economics should also face practical appearance rather than theory.

Allow me to commend the President on foreign exchange reserves. It is not a mean achievement to have a 4.8 months reserve. Should we be blocked from importation, God forbid, it means our country can survive with our forex reserves for the next 4.8 months. That means Kenya is not just a small economy. We are an economy on the rise and move. We will definitely know where we are when we look at our brothers in the neighbourhood of the East African region and measure ourselves against them. Without mentioning friendly nations, this is a good position that gives Kenya a headway in running any foreign trade.

I applaud the President on his comment and actions in the sugar sector. The Leader of the Majority Party mentioned the sugar law that has just come into force. The President mentioned 17 factories and the production of 84,000 metric tonnes against our consumption of 40,000 metric tonnes. That means we can stock about 44,000 metric tonnes every month. We can carry that forward in the event factories undergo maintenance.

I thank the President for appointing Hon. (Eng.) Gumbo as the Chairman of the Kenya Sugar Board under the new law. Everyone in this House knows him. He is a strong person who has been the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee in this House. He is a man who can lead this organisation to the next front. As the Sponsor of the Bill and now law, I am proud that the President appointed the right man to take the industry to the next level. Hon. Gumbo is a no-nonsense person. He will take the sugar sector head on. He is capable of handling any challenge.

I only caution millers to stock and have enough reserves, especially during factory maintenance. We do not want to see a situation where, when it approaches factory maintenance, factories turn to farmers and pretend they cannot sell so that they gag the Sugar Board to make more importations. We do not want to see that, now that we are producing enough good sugar.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): The Member for Kwanza followed by the Member for Imenti Central then the Member from Narok, Hon. Pareyio.

(Hon. Francis Sigei gestured at the Temporary Speaker)

The Temporary Speaker has many ways. Member for Sotik, just relax. You will all get an opportunity.

Hon. Ferdinand Wanyonyi (Kwanza, FORD-K): Thank you. I take this opportunity, personally and on behalf of the people I represent, to applaud the President for such an Address to the nation through this House. I followed the Address to the letter. I want to tell Kenyans and my people at home that the President is up to the task. He talked about the many things mentioned by my colleagues, particularly bringing down the cost of living. We know that the prices of sugar and flour were very high but he managed to bring them down. He has gone ahead and told us that he is going out of the country to get employment opportunities for our youth. That is true. Most of the youth we have are getting some employment opportunities both

in the Middle East and even Europe because we do not have those opportunities here. Again, that is encouraging because two of my neighbours in my area got those opportunities. That is good.

We had the very high exchange rate. Such an exchange rate means even the prices of importing fuel have gone down. Fuel prices were very high. He took over from that economy. The exchange rate is very stable and fuel prices are down because of the opportunities he has made.

We have deployed our youth to Haiti in the last two years. Those are not *wazee kama mimi*. The youth have gone to Haiti. Through reports of what is happening, I can assure you the world now respects this country. With the Americans, we are taking part in bringing harmony to Haiti.

Last and not least, I also want to mention agriculture. In addition to what I am doing here, I am a farmer. My colleagues have mentioned sugar. The President has stabilised the price of sugar. He told us the 17 factories that were almost collapsing have now been revived. I take this opportunity to thank him and ask him to continue helping us have some of these sugar factories revived. Those are job opportunities for our boys, girls and the entire Kenya. I am told there will be programmes to export sugar. We have been importing sugar. We will now be able to export sugar particularly to areas like South Sudan and even Ethiopia. His Excellency is doing pretty well with that programme. He should continue doing that.

The other thing is the revival of the KCC that had a problem with the New Kenya Cooperative Creameries (NKCC). He has a plan to import milk coolers. I can tell you that I am a beneficiary of the same. We will now have enough milk to export to the Middle East. Milk to the Middle East comes from Uganda instead of getting it from our country as it used to be. The revival of the KCC is another thing he mentioned. I say *heko* to him. I hope he continues that way. We will by all means support him to get some of these things implemented to the letter.

I support his State of the Nation Address. It was very right. I want him to come back and tell us more.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Where is the Member of Parliament for Imenti Central? He is not in the House. Under the circumstances, I will call the MP for Lari to contribute. The MP for Kinangop will be next, followed by the MP for Sotik and others. Order, Hon. Mburu. Did I say that you will be followed by Hon. Pareyio? Hon. Pareyio will be after you. Proceed.

Hon. Kahangara Mburu (Lari, UDA): Thank you for allowing me to comment on the State of the Nation Address that happened on Thursday last week.

From the beginning when he took over Government, the President explained to Kenyans that we came in at a time without money. We had very many debts and there was a ballooning wage bill. There was no money for development. Our debt as a country had hit about Ksh11 trillion and repayment was due.

The President understood that and explained it. He is a listening President. Kenyans have been complaining that there is no money and that they do not have money in their pockets. They have been wondering whether we have a listening Government or even whether the leadership understands the kind of problems that they are going through.

The President explained that he has listened to Kenyans. He knows Kenyans have had very difficult moments but he has had to follow the right path to ensure that, as we move into the future, the country is going to be stable economically where people can earn a living and have money in their pockets in order to support their families. The President said that we would no longer subsidise consumption but production. By subsidising consumption, we were simply giving money to millers, who are very few, while Kenyans were suffering on this other end. When this Government came into power, we realised that even the money for subsidies had

not been paid. The money for *unga* and fuel had not been paid. It is this Government that has borne the problem of paying the debts that were left behind.

So, the President subsidised fertiliser and this enabled Kenyans to go to their farms and as a result, we have been able to put food on the table. We can say without fear that, indeed, the cost of living is going down. Remember a packet of *unga* was going for Ksh200. It has now gone down to between Ksh100 to Ksh120. The cost of fuel and cooking oil was also very high. Today, cooking oil has come down almost three times. That means that the steps that were taken by the Government, as the President explained, have borne fruits and Kenyans are looking to a better future.

On the issue of health, we had NHIF. Under NHIF, we had a clinic in Nairobi that was claimed to have done more surgeries than Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH). That means that the money that was being contributed by Kenyans into NHIF was actually being stolen. The Government is now trying to streamline the same and ensure that Kenyans are able to get affordable healthcare. That means that we do not have to go to Harambees again looking for money to pay for hospital bills because when everybody is incorporated in SHA, it means that we are going to have enough money to pay the bills. So, I encourage Kenyans and the people of Lari Constituency, who I represent, that we are going to go around ensuring that we are all registered so that we no longer have to do Harambees. We are going to have hospital bills paid by the Government.

On the issue of education, the Government has employed 46,000 teachers and other 20,000 to be employed as interns. We have confirmed the JSS teachers and we are going to bring in more interns. This means that school fees is going to go down and parents' burden will be lessened.

We have also seen exportation of labour. We have 800,000 Kenyans entering the job market and yet we do not have the jobs. So, for the President to have gone out to look for opportunities means that he is listening and cares about Kenyans especially the youth.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Hon. Agnes Pareyio.

Hon. Agnes Mantaine (Narok North, JP) Asante sana Mhe Spika wa Muda kwa kunipa nafasi hii ilinichangie Hotuba ya Mhe Rais katika Bunge hili. Nilisikiliza hiyo Hotuba kwa makini sana. Ningependa kumshukuru Rais kwa vile alizungumza na vile alivyoonyesha kwa makini alichokua akizungumzia.

Ningependa kuanza na masuala ya elimu. Hakuna wakati ambao tumeweza kuajiri walimu wengi kama vile tumeajiri. Tumeajiri waalimu 46,000, na tutaajiri wengine 20,000. Hii si kusema kwamba wametosha, lakini ni kuonyesha nia yake kwa elimu ni nzuri. Ninampongeza kwa jambo hilo.

Tulikuwa na shida nyingi kwa JSS. Sasa tumeona madarasa yameanza kujengwa. Pia, tukishapata waalimu na madarasa, basi tutakuwa na mwelekeo na tutaendelea kujua vile tutakavyoendelea.

Rais pia alizungumzia suala la usalama. Tunaona Serikali yetu inajitolea kuhakikisha kuna usalama. Lakini kidogo sisi akina mama tunahofia maisha yetu. Hii ni kwa sababu kila mara tunasikia mama, msichana ama nyanya ameuawa. Hatujawahi kupata kiini cha mauaji hayo. Inatuweka huzuni na hofu. Ninawashukuru viongozi wamama ambao walienda ikulu naye Rais akawaahidi atatoa Ksh100 milioni kuhakikisha usalama wa wamama uwepo.

Kwa upande wa chakula, mwaka uliopita, kulikuwa na kilio kikubwa sana kuhusu bei ya chakula, lakini Rais akatuelezea kwamba hatatupa chakula *directly*. Aliweza kuteremusha bei ya *fertiliser* na sasa kila mtu ana chakula kwake. Sasa tunaelekea kununua unga kwa Ksh100 kwa pakiti. Hofu yangu ni kwamba kuna barabara za Kenya Rural Roads Authority (KeRRA) ambazo hatujasikia zikizungumziwa kikamilifu. Hizi barabara zinatuhusu sisi Wabunge wa maeneo ya bunge. Barabara hizi ndizo zinatumika kupitisha chakula tukipeleka soko. Wakulima wakikosa barabara za kutumia kupeleka chakula sokoni, watakua na shida na

hata hawataona faida ya kilimo chao. Hata kusomesha watoto wao itakuwa ni shida. Kwa hivyo, ninaomba Serikali ihakikishe tumepata pesa kwa maeneo yetu ya bunge ili tuhakikishe barabara zinazotengenezwa na KeRRA ziwe nzuri ili watu waweze kusafirisha chakula chao.

Kwa suala la uongozi wa hii nchi, hauwezi toshelesha kila mtu kisiasa. Kutakuwa tu na kelele. Ninampa heko Rais kwa kusimama kidete na kuzungumzia *agenda* yake vizuri na kuelezea kwa sababu ni lazima watu wataongea. Lakini ningependa kuomba Serikali ihakikishe wamama wana amani. Pia, ihakikishe barabara zimetengenezwa ili zitumike kuwapeleka wagonjwa hospitali. Pia, ninashukuru kwa sababu tutapata maafisa wa kuwasajili watu kwa SHIF. Tutaenda kuhakikisha wananchi wamejisajili ili waweze kupata matibabu na huduma. Hakuna namna tunaweza kusema hawatajisajili.

Hon. Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Give her a minute; it is not that often that the Member for Narok North has an opportunity. Proceed.

Hon. Agnes Mantaine (Narok North, JP): Asante sana. Ninasema ni lazima tuhakikishe watu wetu wamejisajili ili waweze kupata huduma. Ninajua wengine wananicheka kwa sababu Kiswahili si chetu lakini tunajaribu kukizungumza.

Asante sana.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): I had given opportunity to the Member for Kinangop then, Hon. Emaase, followed by the Member for Sotik, Hon. Ng'elechei. You will all have chance. Do not worry.

(Loud consultations)

Order, Hon. Members. Let us continue.

Hon. Kwenya Thuku (Kinangop, JP): Thank you, Hon. Temporary Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I acknowledge the Member who has just spoken, Hon. Pareyio. It is called Taifa Care. It got a new name for ease of reference.

In a very special way, I commend the President for the speech that he made in this House last week, as enshrined in the Constitution. I appreciate Kenyans because of their ability to bounce back. Over the weekend, I learned a new term called *bouncebackability* – the ability to bounce back from a crisis, failure and pain. We have gone through difficult times but from the President's Address, we got a new lease of hope as to where we are going.

The President tried to address issues that had not been addressed by his predecessors, especially Article 43 of the Constitution on economic and social rights. Many Presidents have attempted to achieve UHC but they have not made it. When they got difficulties in implementation, they abandoned the course. The President has been very consistent on this initiative, leading to the introduction of Taifa Care that seeks to solve the many problems that we have in this country as far as medical bills are concerned. Even as we talk about paying bills, there is another issue that this House should address in terms of healthcare. We should ask ourselves whether people are getting medical care that is commensurate to the bills being paid.

The President also attempted to answer the question of adequacy of housing as enshrined in Article 43 of the Constitution. The former regime tried but it faced some difficulties and abandoned the course. It was actually one of the Big 4 Agenda of the previous regime. The President has attempted to implement the programme despite the noise we witnessed during the anti-Finance Bill of 2024 protests. We are now at some place. I congratulate the President for taking the bull by its horns, so to speak.

The other issue under the same Article 43 is food security. Many leaders have attempted but have not got it right. Giving subsidies to consumption will never solve any problem. Once we start subsidising inputs for agricultural production, we will, in a big way, solve some of the problems we have been facing in terms of hunger and importation of food that has had a toll

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on foreign exchange, causing our shilling to weaken against all major currencies. Today, we witness a strengthening of our shilling not because there are any miracles performed but because we subsidised food production to ease importation. The demand curve is now in favour of the shilling because we are not importing as much. The demand for foreign currency has gone down.

If any government gets it right on education, food security and health, then that is a progressive government. Last year, we were uncertain as to what we would do with the Grade 9 students. Today that issue has been addressed. Parents and ourselves are now resting easy. As leaders, we are also parents. We are sure of the transition to Grade 9 and what is going to happen in the future. We have classrooms and some are still under construction. In my constituency, I can attest to that fact.

Milk production has increased to about 220,000 litres per annum. The level is still low compared to production in other countries. I compare our country with a country like Qatar, which is a desert. In a single farm with 25,000 livestock, Qatar is able to produce 400,000 litres of milk in a day. As a country, we have a long way to go even as we sustain production and give this guaranteed minimum return on milk.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): You have one minute, Member for Kinangop.

Hon. Kwenya Thuku (Kinangop, JP): Thank you, Hon. Temporary Speaker, for your magnanimity.

If we can maintain the guaranteed minimum return on milk so that our farmers sell their produce at Ksh50 per litre, we will be empowering the people we have been talking about—mama mboga and the farmers of Kinangop, Nyandarua and across the country—by making sure that they get adequate return from their labour.

I thank the President and tell him to soldier on because there are better days ahead of us.

Thank you, Hon. Temporary Speaker.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Next is Hon. Mary Emaase, who will be followed by Hon. Ng'elechei.

Hon. Mary Emaase (Teso South, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Temporary Speaker, for giving me an opportunity to contribute. I join my colleagues in commending the President on his State of the Nation Address. It was a very powerful speech. He demonstrated to Kenyans that he listens. He disappointed the naysayers who keep on saying that he does not listen. A case in point is the termination of the Adani contracts. The president's pronouncement to cancel Adani's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) and Kenya Electricity Transmission Company Limited (KETRACO) deals demonstrates that he, indeed, listens. His decision to cancel those two deals was taken very well by Kenyans because it was a good thing.

Secondly, I will dwell on SHIF or Taifa Care. The President clarified a number of enigmatic issues, SHIF being one of them. He did so in a very simple manner but comprehensive way. I believe he did even better than the technocrats in the sector. Many Kenyans understood Taifa Care from the President's explanation. We want Kenyans to register with Taifa Care and benefit from it because it is intended to benefit the most vulnerable in society, unlike the defunct NHIF that benefited only the working class who could afford to pay for its services. Taifa Care targets the lowest class of our society, which comprises the most vulnerable people in the country. The President said that once you register, you begin to receive services and benefits. You do not have to wait like in the case of NHIF, where you would have to wait for six months before you start benefiting. There is no waiting period with SHIF.

Secondly, Taifa Care provides more comprehensive coverage. It provides for surgeries. I testify that I tried it. I had a case in my constituency. I registered a patient and, immediately, took him to hospital. He was admitted and underwent surgery. He had a broken arm. The SHIF

took care of the bills. What we paid was negligible. I appeal to Hon. Members to have tents set up for SHIF registration at all their events. Let us have SHIF registration taking place at our constituency offices so that our constituents can register and benefit from SHIF because this Fund will help them.

I also commend the President on the achievements he enumerated within the education sector. I do not want to overemphasize on employment of teachers because colleagues have already talked about it. Through the new university funding model, we keep saying that there should be value for money. I have noticed that I had been giving bursaries to students who did not complete even a semester in campus. They either dropped out or deferred their studies to look for hustles to be able to continue. However, under the new university funding model, the Government pays 90 per cent of the school fees for the most vulnerable students in the society. Therefore, there is guaranteed completion and value for money. The little balances that remain unpaid can be cleared by the National Government-Constituency Development Fund (NG-CDF).

The Kenya Kwanza Administration has established the Open University of Kenya. You can now study and get your university degree in the comfort of your house.

There is a lot on food security. The President decided to subsidize production as opposed to consumption. I want to disagree with my colleague, Hon. Makali, who said that the cost of living has come down because people do not have the purchasing power. No! It is because we have increased production. The Government provided subsidized fertilisers. In every homestead, you will now find food. That is what has brought down the cost of living, and more the cost of foodstuffs. I commend the President and urge him to continue implementing the Kenya Kwanza agenda for Kenyans to have a sustainable future.

Hon. Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Alright, sit down. Let us hear Hon. Ng'elechei. She will be followed by the Member for Sotik and, thereafter, the Member for Webuye East will take the Floor.

Hon. Caroline Ng'elechei (Elgeyo Marakwet County, Independent): Thank you very much, Hon. Temporary Speaker, for giving me this opportunity.

I was very delighted when the President said that he is a listening President. There is nothing as important as having somebody who is able to listen. Ironically, some members of the public castigated Members of Parliament for applauding the President when he said that he was cancelling the Adani deals on JKIA and KETRACO. We were so elated because we realized that our President listens. When members of the public are agitated, or when they complain about something, he listens.

He also said he knows that there are times when there is discussion as to whether leaders understand that there is a problem in the country. That tells you that he is also aware of what members of the public are going through, and what is affecting this country. I am very sure that he is somebody who understands things. He was able to confess that he really understands what is going on in the country, and he is able to find solution. I appreciate that we have a leader who listens and understands, and he is able to make well-informed decisions. Our President has chosen the road that is less travelled because it is unpopular.

There are some things that he could have chosen not to go into. Since Independence, successive presidents chose normal presidency, avoiding dealing with complicated or complex issues. We have had the NHIF for a very long time even though it had not been serving the members of public very well. However, previous regimes feared touching it. The previous university education funding model is another example. It has taken a very bold and courageous step for the President to decide and change the university education funding model. We are now beginning to see fruits because it means that we will have equity in our society. Students from less fortunate families will not be graded the same way as students from families that are a little bit better off in life.

I applaud the President for realizing that in our society, we are not equal. We are different. Individual people have been blessed differently. It is very unfortunate that a Member of Parliament like myself and my neighbour, who may not have had enough resources to be able to educate and feed his children, was required to pay the same amount of fees at the university. However, the new model, having put different categories of students in different bands, every Kenyan student is now able to access university education. There was a crisis in this country. Many people did not realize that most of the public universities were in ICU financially. They were dying. I am an alumnus of Moi University. As we speak, I am very sad because I do not know whether it will sink or float. How will I tell the story to my grandchildren in future of the university that I went to? It will be very shameful to say that I went to a defunct or dead university. I want to believe that the new university education funding model will be able to revive our dying public universities and give chance to the less fortunate members of our society. I am sure that Hon. Members of Parliament, as well as members of the society, will be happy because there will be fewer Harambee meetings to attend to make sure that all the university students continue with their education.

I was very happy with the President's Speech because he spoke about fertiliser subsidy. I come from Elgeyo Marakwet County, which is an agricultural region. Due to the fertiliser subsidy and the good weather that God has blessed us with, farmers got a bumper harvest. As Hon. Members may be aware, Uganda has closed her borders, and the Government is not allowing exportation of maize to Kenya. This is because their country was not blessed with as much rainfall as our country was in the last season. This has cushioned Kenyans from food shortage this year. I advise the governors to ensure delivery of fertilisers to interior places in their counties. An example is Chesoi in Elgeyo Marakwet County...

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Please, add her half a minute.

Hon. Caroline Ng'elechei (Elgeyo Marakwet, Independent): Thank you, Hon. Temporary Speaker. I wish the Governor of Elgeyo Marakwet County could deliver fertilisers to the interior areas of the county. This is because farmers incur high transport costs and end up using a lot of money transporting fertilisers from the designated depots to their farms. I appreciate the revival of sugar factories because my brothers and sisters in western Kenya will have employment opportunities. We will have a lot of sugar, which we will sell to earn foreign exchange.

Lastly, I appreciate the employment of additional teachers. They should not be sent to private schools but to village public primary schools. That is where students whose parents cannot afford the high fees charged by private schools go to study. They have been suffering because they lack enough teachers. I want to appreciate the President for noticing this...

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Next is the Member for Webuye East. He will be followed by the Member for Sotik, the Member for Ruiru, and Hon. Kagombe in that order. Member for Emurua Dikirr you will be in the next group, just relax.

Hon. Martin Wanyonyi (Webuye East, FORD-K): Thank you very much, Hon. Temporary Speaker. Allow me to also appreciate the President for performing his duties under Article 132 of the Constitution, of reporting to the nation on matters of critical centrality to the Republic of Kenya.

Hon. Temporary Speaker, I laud him for being sensitive and demonstrating that he is a listening President by cancelling the Adani JKIA deal. The people of Kenya had pronounced themselves clearly that it was not a good deal. The cancellation is a demonstration that he is sensitive and responsive to the desires of the people of Kenya. I only want to ask that in future, we should ensure that we always do due diligence before entering into contracts that can put us into problems and shame, like the Adani deals.

Kenyans have, under Article 43 of the Constitution, given successive governments the responsibility of ensuring that they provided affordable housing and quality healthcare. The

previous regime failed to provide these amenities. I am happy that through SHA, we are now offering universal healthcare. I thank the President because the Government has gone out of its way to provide funds to SHA to settle debts to privately-owned, faith-based and public health facilities. The debts have been outstanding for the last 10 years. My only prayer is that the county governments will do their part. The national Government is doing well in terms of providing the software. The county governments must provide the hardware. By 'providing the hardware' I mean taking the responsibility of building Levels I, II, III, IV and V Hospitals as stipulated in the Fourth Schedule of the County Government Act, 2012. The county governments must also do their part in supporting the national Government by providing the healthcare infrastructure and medicines as stipulated in the Constitution. We cannot effectively provide Kenyans with affordable healthcare without the county government playing their part.

I thank His Excellency because of the issue he raised concerning education. I know that he is doing everything he can to ensure that reforms are done in the education sector. My only prayer is that we must also go out of our ways to ensure that we prepare the country and the Ministry well as we roll out Grade Nine in 2025.

Hon. Temporary Speaker, I finally thank the President because of the steps he is taking to reform the sugarcane sector. There are many factories that are now alive and working. A factory like Nzoia Sugar Company Limited is having problems because of many pending court cases. The Judiciary must also be pragmatic enough to ensure that some of these cases do not stall for so long and disrupt the process of reforms laid out for the sugar sector.

Hon. Temporary Speaker, the President was clear that the country is on the right track. We have done so much but much is yet to be done. The many promises that we made, the...

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Give him half a minute to conclude his remarks.

Hon. Martin Wanyonyi (Webuye East, FORD-K): Hon. Temporary Speaker, in conclusion, the President was clear that the country is on the right track. So much has been done and much is yet to be done, especially on the many promises that we made to the people of Kenya in terms of completion of stalled projects like roads and many other things. I want to assure the President that he has our support. We must also go out of our way to ensure that we fulfil the promises that we made to our people.

Thank you, Hon. Temporary Speaker.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Member for Sotik, you may have the Floor. He will be followed by the Members for Ruiru and Gatundu in that order.

Hon. Members, we will have another session starting at 6.45 p.m. I have taken note of all the Members who are here. You will have the first opportunity to contribute on this matter during that session.

Hon. Francis Sigei (Sotik, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Temporary Speaker for giving me an opportunity to address this House on the matter at hand – the State of the Nation Address by the President, which is enshrined in the Constitution. His speech was very clear, well balanced and pragmatic. I was attentive from the beginning to the end, and I was impressed by his tone.

First, he said that the state of the nation depends on individuals, and that it is a collective responsibility of all Kenyans. Secondly, he said that listening is a full-time occupation of leadership in carrying the people forward.

Hon. Temporary Speaker, that is a very strong indication that the President was giving us hope. He reminded us where we have come from, where we are and where we are going. He was very clear. I want to mention a number of areas which have come to my mind.

First, is the issue of the CBC education system. In Sotik, where I come from, we have a problem of unemployed teachers. It was reassuring for me to hear the President tell us that while we have employed 56,000 teachers, we will employ 20,000 more next year. I am asking

the TSC to ensure that as it employs new teachers, it should consider those who graduated from college in 2009. We have very many such cases in Sotik. I would like the TSC to give those teachers priority.

I also want to talk about Taifa Care, the new Universal Health System. I applaud the President. In Sotik, all the chiefs and everyone else is now working on SHA. I am very sure that we will achieve what we want. All of us must work on this issue.

I would also like to mention the issue of food security. I come from an area where agriculture and livestock are the mainstays of the economy. I thank the President for addressing the issue of production by giving us subsidised fertilisers. Food is now plenty everywhere. The only worry we currently have is about the prices of maize, which we have produced in large quantities. We are, therefore, asking the President to make sure that we stabilise the prices.

Another issue is that of the New KCC. The current price of milk per litre in Sotik is Ksh50. We want it to go to Ksh55. I want to ask the Government to upgrade the New KCC plant in Sotik. Sotik is a municipality and, therefore, the New KCC plant should be upgraded to ensure that we have better salaries for the workers as the plant processes more milk daily.

On cancellation of the Adani deals, I applaud the President. It was a good move. I support him. The JKIA should be upgraded to better standards because we need a better airport.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Member for Ruiru.

Hon. Simon King'ara (Ruiru, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Temporary Speaker, for giving me an opportunity to contribute to the Speech by the Head of State.

I start by appreciating the Speech because it instilled hope in Kenyans. The quality that human beings require the most to live is hope.

Secondly, I was inspired by the President noting that there is need to listen. He walked the talk. It is through him listening to Kenyans that the Adani deals are now out of our way. If he was not a listening president, those deals would still be in our way.

It is through education that we can uplift our economy and our well-being. When the Kenya Kwanza Coalition came to power, the first thing it did was to employ 56,000 teachers. To instil hope in Kenyans, the President reminded us that the Government will employ another 20,000 teachers to improve the standards of education. That is the hope that we need in this country.

Kenya is a developing country, and we have industries coming up. The President gave a lot of weight to Technical and Vocation Education Training (TVET) institutions. Our industries cannot work if we do not build the capacity of TVET institutions. There is a government policy of facilitating one TVET college in every constituency. The President mentioned the new budget and said that TVETs in all the constituencies will be facilitated to produce good teams that can work both within and outside the country. It is good to note that Kenya is sending many young people abroad. The President mentioned several bilateral labour migration agreements through which we can have good engagements with other countries, enabling Kenyans to improve their standards of living as well as the welfare of their people through overseas remittances. He also mentioned about improving the rate of remittances from those working outside the country.

Health is a crucial sector we cannot gamble with. The President spoke about the new universal healthcare scheme, which we must adhere to in order to improve our health, especially for those who are unemployed. My advice to fellow Kenyans is that they should register first. They can comment on the scheme once they have registered. Those who have not registered should not talk about it because one cannot benefit from the scheme without being registered. The registration strategy is in place for people to register, and then other things will follow.

The President also talked about Information and Communication Technology (ICT). We are in the world of ICT, and the Government is committed to establishing ICT hubs. In

Ruiru, we have two ICT hubs. Last Tuesday, about 150 candidates graduated, and they can now work for companies based abroad while they are still in Kenya.

We should also commend the President because he mentioned Gender-Based Violence, which is a critical issue. If this issue is not looked into, it may destabilise the country. Since the President talked about it, and we continue to support him on the same; I believe we will live well in this country. I know many things will be said but if they are not acted on, it will be an exercise in futility. Therefore, let us concentrate and stick to what we were told - work on those issues, and all will be well for Kenyans.

Thank you, Hon. Temporary Speaker.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Member for Gatundu South.

Hon. GG Kagombe (Gatundu South, UDA): Thank you, Hon. Temporary Speaker, for giving me an opportunity to contribute to the debate on last Thursday's State of the Nation Address by the President.

He talked about fertiliser subsidy. He took a very bold step in walking the less walked path of choosing to subsidise production rather than consumption. In 2022, we imported sugar worth US\$269 million, which is about Ksh40 billion. We also imported maize worth Ksh24 billion. This money has now returned to the country and is in the pockets of Kenyans. The deficit in the balance of payment from 2003 has consistently risen from US\$0.89 billion to a whopping US\$10.55 billion in 2022. It is only in 2023 that the deficit in the balance of payment went down to almost US\$1 billion. After petroleum, the biggest contributors have been sugar, fertiliser and maize. It is shameful that we pride ourselves on maize being our staple food, yet we still import it from other countries. However, this administration made the bold move of stopping importation of maize. Right now, we have 47 million 90-kilogramme bags of maize in our stores. We would have maize worth Ksh117 billion if we took a bag at Ksh2,500. We would be importing that value under the current dollar rate if we did not have the maize. That would be the amount of money we would be contributing as deficit to the balance of payment.

The President talked about housing. There is an untold story about housing. About 14 per cent of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP) goes to taxes and the Government. Kenyans are not able to put food on the table because the cost of housing in this country is so high. The government is trying to dissuade private investors from going into building houses because the cost of housing in this country is very high. Housing is lucrative. Therefore, everybody with Ksh100 million in the bank will build a flat and end up employing only two people—a caretaker and a watchman. That money should instead have gone into production.

I was having lunch with a gentleman yesterday. He told me that he has sold his flat and started production business in Kiserian. He is now employing 75 people with the same Ksh100 million he had put up a flat in Kinoo with. Private money is taken to production when the nation takes over housing people. We should stop making housing lucrative so that the Government takes it and then private money goes to production. That is how we are going to create employment. The Government cannot employ all people. The private sector creates employment. You make the private sector employ people by creating fiscal policies that entertain and encourage people to put their money in what can create employment.

We have been doing housing with tailor-made fashions for everything. I want my unique styles of windows and doors when doing a house in South B. However, production in this system becomes easy because we will be using the same doors, hinges, windows *et cetera*. That makes production easy. This is the trend in all developed countries. Housing is a function of government.

I can see that my time is about to lapse. Please add me one minute.

Regarding the education funding model issue that has been vilified, it is a shame. You and I are people of means. Our children go to the same university with people from families that cannot even afford to place a meal on the table. These are called to the same university and

treated the same. Persons at the lowest are asked to pay the same amount of money with those of means.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): You have half a minute left.

Hon. GG Kagombe (Gatundu South, UDA): Listening to the tone of the President, he is one who has now seen the need to listen. He said that we must listen to the people. We are listening to them. However, we also need to be very careful so that we do not vilify every project the Government comes up with. In the end, we the people vilifying this on social and mainstream media need to know that we are also in this country. The success of this country is the success of Kenyans.

I submit and support the Speech made by the President. Thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Hon. Members, we are going to have another session shortly after this one lapses. I have taken note of the fact that there are many MPs who have been sitting here all afternoon. Examples are the MPs for Turkana Central, Ikolomani and Migori. Others are Hon. Kiragu, Hon. Zamzam, Hon. Ruweida, Hon. Manduku, Hon. Beatrice Elachi, Hon. Mawathe, Hon. Mishi Mboko, among a few others. Of course, Hon. Shinali is there. The Chair will make sure that you get the earliest opportunity to contribute when we resume from the brief break. All of you will get opportunity because the same person is likely going to be on the Chair.

ADJOURNMENT

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Farah Maalim): Hon. Members, the time now is 6.35 p.m. The House will adjourn and resume at 6.45 p.m. We have slightly over ten minutes to refresh and come back for another session.

The House rose at 6.35 p.m.

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