

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL REPORT

Wednesday, 8th June, 2005

The House met at 9.00 a.m.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

PRAYERS

QUESTIONS BY PRIVATE NOTICE

COMPLETION OF KAGAENE -KIGUCHWA/KIGUCHWA-ATHI ROADS

Mr. Munya: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to ask the Minister for Roads and Public Works the following Question by Private Notice.

(a) Is the Minister aware that the construction of Kagaene-Kiguchwa and Kiguchwa-Athi roads, which was being undertaken by Access and Transnational Construction companies respectively, has stopped?

(b) Is he further aware that the European Union, which has been funding the construction of these roads, has withdrawn funding due to the delay by the contractors in completing the construction work within schedule?

(c) What urgent measures is the Minister going to take to ensure that these roads that are half-way complete are completed before the work already done is reversed by the on-going rains?

The Assistant Minister for Roads and Public Works (Eng. Toro): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to reply.

(a) I am aware that the construction of Kagaene-Kiguchwa and Kiguchwa-Athi roads, which was being undertaken by Access and Transnational Construction companies respectively, stopped on 31st December, 2004.

(b) I am aware that the financing agreement between the European Union and the Kenya Government for the implementation of the two projects expired on 31st December, 2004.

(c) My Ministry is taking stock of the value of the remaining works. Completion of the road would then be executed using the fuel levy funds. However, my Ministry intends to take action against the two contractors for breach of contractual obligations.

Mr. Munya: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I kept reminding the Ministry that these contractors were not doing anything on the ground. I even asked a Question on the Floor of this House. What was holding the hands of the Minister to take action when the contractors were still on site? Why has the Ministry's evaluation taken so long? The works stopped in December. We are now close to five months after the works stopped. When will the valuation exercise end?

Eng. Toro: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I agree with the hon. Member that he complained to us about the progress of this work. But because we were aware that the agreement between the European Union and the Kenya Government was coming to an end in December, 2004, we tried to push the contractors to finish the work by December. This is because there was no time to terminate their contract and then engage other contractors in time for the work to be finished by December. So,

it is

unfortunate that this happened. We are trying to allocate money from the fuel levy fund because the European Union will not give us the money for the remaining works. However, we will be able to finish the works. We have one contractor who finished the works and we are happy with his performance. For the other two, we will decide what to do when we receive the money to finish the other bit of the work that remained.

Mr. K. Kilonzo: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Assistant Minister admits that the donors have pulled out from these roads and he will use money from the fuel levy funds to finish the construction. Could he tell this House how much he will set aside for this purpose and within what period? This is because Ministers have been known to come here and say they will allocate money to finish projects, but they do not do it.

Eng. Toro: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Kiguchwa-Athi Road is about 40 per cent complete at the moment. The contract money was almost about Kshs21 million. So, the work remaining is slightly in excess of Kshs10 million. We are looking for Kshs10 million in the next financial year. We will make a decision whether this contractor will go ahead with that work, or we engage another contractor. Similarly, for the section between Kiguchwa and Kagaene, Access Construction Company had done 50 per cent of the work as at December. The contract money was about Kshs30 million. This means there is about Kshs15 million worth of work that is remaining. This is the money we will provide in the next financial year through the fuel levy funds. Also, for this section, we will decide whether to get another contractor or get the previous contractor to continue.

Mr. Munya: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, whereas I thank the Assistant Minister for the answer, could he admit that the Ministry's bad habit of coming to look for the facts when the damage is already done has not stopped? Could he give a definite date when that money will be provided, so that we can be sure the roads will be completed? The current rains are already destroying the works.

Eng. Toro: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we are addressing our bad habits. I can assure the hon. Member that we are putting more emphasis on project management, because this is where we have had a problem. Our resident and project engineers had relaxed the rules. Where they should have terminated contractors who were under-performing, they relaxed the rules and let them go on. One of the issues that we are addressing about proper project management is payment. We are paying contractors promptly when they give their certificates, so that no contractor has an excuse for non-performance.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Next Question by the Member of Parliament for Subukia Constituency!

Is Mr. Wamwere not here?

An hon. Member: Yes!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It is very unusual for Mr. Wamwere to be absent. Something must be wrong. But at any rate, I will drop the Question!

IRREGULAR SALE OF LAND

(Mr. Wamwere) kumuuliza Waziri wa Ardhi na Nyumba:-

(a) Je, Waziri anaweza kueleza ni kwa nini Benki ya Taifa la Kenya (National Bank of Kenya) iliuzia LASIT Ltd; shamba la Ceres Ltd; la hekta 532 bila ya kibali cha Halmashauri ya Kusimamia Mashamba (Land Control Board) ya Bahati iliyokataa kutoa kibali hicho mpaka kwanza maskuota 182 walioishi katika shamba kwa miaka zaidi 40 watengewe ardhi ya makao kwa mujibu wa mwongozo wa Serikali?

(b) Je, kando na Mhe. Rais, kuna ofisa wa Serikali ambaye ana uwezo kisheria kumwamuru katibu wa Land Control Board kutoa kibali cha kuuza shamba la kilimo

bila ya kuihusisha Land Control Board?

(c) Je, Serikali inafanya nini kuhakikisha kwamba LASIT Ltd., imegawia maskuota wa Ceres Ltd., ardhi ya makao kabla ya kuanza kulitumia?

(Question dropped)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Next Question by the Member of Parliament for Mogotio Constituency!

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Question No.109

RECRUITMENT OF POLICE OFFICERS IN 2003

Mr. Korir asked the Minister of State, Office of the President:-

(a) how many officers were recruited into the police force during the recruitment of 2003; and,

(b) whether he could enumerate the number of officers recruited from each district, indicating their gender.

The Assistant Minister, Office of the President (Mr. Kingi): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, once again, I seek the indulgence of the House to bring the answer to this Question on Tuesday next week. I have been told that the answer to this Question was prepared and given to the Minister, but he did not sign it and he is out of the country. I am sure he will be available on Tuesday. I will bring the answer once it is signed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Just before you say that, I think the Chair is taken aback by the newly appointed Assistant Minister. Since yesterday, you have just been seeking the indulgence of the House on the account that you are new. You know that the office has been running before you were appointed as an Assistant Minister.

(Applause)

So, we expect you to do better than you have done. We want to give you the benefit of doubt. But could I hear from Mr. Korir, first?

Mr. Korir: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, as you can see, this is Question No. 109. It means that it came up last year or early this year and the answer should have been ready by now. Let me request the Assistant Minister to keep his promise and bring the answer on Tuesday.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It is not a question of requesting the Assistant Minister. The Chair now orders the Assistant Minister to answer this Question on Tuesday afternoon.

Maj-Gen. Nkaisserry: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order on my order? I have already ordered! General, you know the rules. When an order is given, no other order is given! So, that is gone like that.

Next Question, Mr. K. Kilonzo!

Question No.341

NON-RECOGNITION OF DIPLOMA CERTIFICATES BY UNIVERSITIES

Mr. K. Kilonzo asked the Minister for Education, Science and Technology:-

- (a) whether he is aware that diploma certificates in medical training, especially in clinical and nursing courses, are not recognised when a candidate enrolls for a degree course;
- (b) whether he is further aware that the failure to recognise the diploma certificate means that the students are not entitled to exemptions of academic units for the degree course; and,
- (c) what measures he is taking to ensure that diploma holders in the affected disciplines benefit from exemptions while pursuing degree courses.

The Assistant Minister for Education, Science and Technology (Dr. Mwiria): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to reply.

(a) I am aware that diploma certificates in medical training, especially clinical and nursing courses, are not recognised when a candidate enrolls for a degree course in our universities.

(b) I am further aware that failure to recognise the diploma certificates means that the students are not entitled to exemptions of academic units of the particular degree courses where they register.

(c) The Government recognises that there exists gaps and challenges between tertiary institutions and universities. To address those challenges, the Government has made bold recommendations through the recently discussed Sessional Paper 1 of 2005. Among other recommendations are the following:-

(i) The establishment of an all-embracing national accreditation system with credit transfers, so that we will be able to transfer credits.

(ii) Certification of education and training at diploma and degree levels will be offered through the Commission for Higher Education, to enable those from diploma institutions to upgrade their qualifications.

(iii) To ensure integration of attachment/internship into the training system to enhance relevance and productivity that will minimise wastage.

(iv) To promote opening of universities and distance education to increase learning opportunities for all diploma certificate holders, which will include those from medical training schools.

Mr. K. Kilonzo: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wish to thank the Assistant Minister for that comprehensive answer. But given that there is a Sessional Paper which is already in place, I will wait for it to come before the House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Mr. Assistant Minister, did you hear what the hon. Member said?

Dr. Mwiria: Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. He is satisfied.

An hon. Member: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: When somebody is satisfied, why rise on a point of order? That matter is finished.

Next Question, Prof. Olweny!

(Loud consultations)

Prof. Olweny: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, hon. Members are consulting too loudly.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No! No! I think that is not right. It is you who was absent-minded. There were no loud consultations.

Question No.047

PAYMENT OF ARREARS

TO MIWANI FARMERS

Prof. Olweny asked the Minister for Agriculture:-

(a) whether he is aware that the continued inoperation of Miwani Sugar Mills is causing untold suffering to the farming community in Miwani Zone; and,

(b) what steps he is taking to pay arrears owed to farmers by the sugar mill and re-open it for business.

The Assistant Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Kaindi): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to reply.

(a) I am aware of the difficulties being experienced by sugar-cane farmers in Miwani Zone due to continued inoperation of the Miwani Sugar Mills.

(b) I have directed that the farmers' arrears for cane delivered be paid through the Kenya Sugar Board immediately. We are in the process of working out modalities of clearing the books of accounts and debts owed by the company. Once that is done, the strategic investor would be identified to invest jointly with the Government and re-open the factory.

Prof. Olweny: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, may I know from the Assistant Minister when the arrears will be paid because some of them date back to 1998?

Mr. Kaindi: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we recognise the fact that, that has been a long-standing matter. But the hon. Member also knows that the reason why we were unable to pay was that Miwani did not have a management team on board. That is why we have decided that the money should be paid through the Kenya Sugar Board as soon as possible. We discussed with them yesterday and they are working out the modalities for that.

Mr. Mwandawiro: Bw. Naibu Spika, nashukuru kwamba Waziri Msaidizi ameamuru wakulima hao walipwe mara moja. Lakini swali ni hili: Kwa nini wakulima wa miwa hawalipwi, na sukari inanunuliwa kila siku? Hata sasa, kuna upungufu wa sukari. Hakuna shida ya soko la sukari. Ni nini kinachovifanya viwanda vya sukari kutowalipa wakulima haki yao kwa wakati ufaao?

Mr. Kaindi: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, most sugar factories accumulated arrears for a long time. Those arrears stemmed from direct loans that were lent to them by lending organisations. However, because of the inefficiency in the sugar sector, they were unable to meet their obligations. Therefore, there were arrears and penalties on arrears, and they accumulated for a very long time. But as a Ministry, we have made efforts to ensure that most of those arrears are paid, except for a few like Muhoroni and Miwani. We are doing very well in Mumias, where most of the arrears have been settled. I think it would be fair for hon. Members to give us an opportunity to work out modalities to settle those debts.

Mr. Arunga: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I believe the Assistant Minister is aware that, that is the only sugar factory in the country that has the capacity to process industrial sugar. It has been out of operation for a long time. Could the Assistant Minister give us an indication of how long it will take before it starts operations? That is because strategic partners are waiting to move in.

Mr. Kaindi: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, for the benefit of the hon. Member, my Ministry and Treasury have been holding consultations; that is, after we appointed a technical team to evaluate the modalities of opening that factory. That report is ready, and once we finalise, we will be able to give an indicative date. But that would depend on strategic partners. As he has indicated, there are a number of strategic partners who are willing to come on board. Those are the things that we are doing to ensure that the agony faced by farmers is settled once and for all.

Mr. Omamba: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, thank you for considering me to ask a supplementary question on this sugar business. The words "as soon as possible" are annoying farmers. I am a very big farmer in my area. "As soon as possible" can mean after six months or nothing at all. For example, in

December, I was given a promise that electricity will be connected to my health centre "as soon as possible!" Up to date, there is nothing. So, he should tell us the specific date!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Uliza swali!

Mr. Omamba: So, when? Which month? We do not want to hear "as soon as possible"!

Mr. Kaindi: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we consulted the Kenya Sugar Board yesterday and they are in the process of working out these areas. We are giving our undertaking that these arrears are going to be paid soon, and "soon" means as soon as possible. These are not arrears that we are not aware of. They are arrears that we have computed. It is a question of making the necessary modalities in terms of the monies and be able to pay appropriately.

Prof. Olweny: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, one of the reasons why Miwani farmers were not paid their arrears when other farmers in other factories were being paid is that the Kenya Sugar Board does not have someone taking care of its interests there in the form of a receiver. The receiver-manager on the ground is taking care of their Oriental Bank. What is the Government doing about this, so that its interests are taken care of in Miwani before the factory is opened?

Mr. Kaindi: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, apart from the issues which have been raised by the technical team, there is the determination of the receiver-manager. Once that is done, as a Ministry, we will put the machinery in place to protect the interests of Government. But as it is today, it is true the receiver-manager is taking care of the interests of the bank. But as a Ministry, we are assuring the House that immediately that report is ready, we shall redeem that factory.

Question No.037

MOBILE CLINIC SERVICES
FOR BUTERE CONSTITUENCY

Mr. Oparanya asked the Minister for Health:-

- (a) whether she is aware that mobile clinic services at Masaba Church in Butere Constituency by Manyala Sub-District Hospital stopped in 2002; and,
- (b) when the services will resume.

The Assistant Minister for Health (Dr. Kuti): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to reply.

(a) I am aware that mobile clinic services at Masaba Church in Butere Constituency by Manyala Sub-District Hospital were reinstated last year, in September, 2004 after increasing staff in Manyala Sub-District Hospital.

(b) In February, 2005, the Ministry, in collaboration with the Anglican Church of Kenya, opened a permanent clinic and now patients receive medical services on a daily basis.

Mr. Oparanya: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank the Assistant Minister for that answer. The clinic is now operational. I am very satisfied with the answer and I have no further questions to ask.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Very good. At least now, we are getting Ministers answering Questions satisfactorily, to the extent that there are no supplementary questions. That is very good. Keep it up.

Question No. 276

FINDINGS OF EXTRA-ORDINARY INSPECTION AT MARSABIT COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. Sasura asked the Minister for Local Government when the last extra-ordinary inspection was done at Marsabit County Council and what its findings were.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the Minister for Local Government not there? I will defer the Question until tomorrow afternoon.

Could someone tell the Minister that, now that the civil servants' strike is over, we expect him to come and answer Questions.

Next Question, Mr. Mukiri.

(Question deferred)

Question No.256

ENFORCEMENT OF STANDARDS
IN CELL PHONES

Mr. Mukiri asked the Minister for Information and Communications what action he is taking to ensure that all cell phones being sold in the market are of quality standard.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the Minister for Information and Communications not here also? I will defer the Question to tomorrow afternoon.

(Question deferred)

Mr. Ndambuki: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. We only resumed yesterday and now you can see the Government side is not ready for business. Could the Chair be firm on the Ministers, and equally on our side, to make sure that everybody is here? This is a very bad show, just on the second day of business.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It is a bad show at any time. Once again, the Chair does not want to belabour this matter, that Ministers have a responsibility to be in the House to answer Questions. Similarly, Members have a responsibility to be in the House to ask Questions. I think this matter has been dealt with over and over again, even including talking to the Leader of Government Business.

So, could I ask Dr. Mwiria, who is here, to ensure that he talks to the Ministers for Local Government and Information and Communications and inform them of the order that the Chair has given, that these Questions be answered tomorrow afternoon?

The Assistant Minister for Education, Science and Technology (Dr. Mwiria): I will do that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Mr. Maore: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. The placement of this Question should be under the Ministry of Trade and Industry because, standards may not be at the docket of any other Ministry apart from that of Trade and Industry, which controls the Kenya Bureau of Standards.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Well, I leave that to the Clerk to the National Assembly.

Mr. M. Maitha: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. I think the Chair is punishing Members of Parliament. When they are not there to ask their Questions, the Questions are dropped, but when the Ministers are not there to answer Questions, you defer the Questions. Could the Chair be fair to Members by also deferring their Questions when they are not there?

(Applause)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Why do you not ask me to be fair by dropping all Questions and we move ahead? I think, in the meantime, to be fair to the public; not only the Members, the Chair has been deferring Questions when the Ministers are not there because we feel that the public should not

be punished due to absence of Ministers.

However, I have taken your sentiments.

Question No.220

EVICION OF MAGARINI PLOT RESIDENTS
BY DIAMOND TRUST BANK

Mr. Kombe asked the Minister for Lands and Housing:-

(a) whether he is aware that the residents of Madzayani in Pumwani Sub-Location, Magarini Constituency, are being evicted from Plot No.575 by Diamond Trust Bank;

(b) whether he is further aware that this eviction has heightened tension and insecurity in the area; and,

(c) what measures he has put in place to ensure that the area is adjudicated and the residents given title deeds.

The Assistant Minister for Lands and Housing (Mr. Mungatana): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to reply.

(a) I am aware that about 30 residents of Madzayani in Pumwani Sub-Location are being evicted from Plot No.575 by Diamond Trust Bank.

(b) I am further aware that this eviction has caused tension in the area due to incitement by some quarters in order to resist relocation by the bank.

(c) The plot is currently under private ownership. But the Government will undertake to verify the total number of squatters present and initiate possible discussions with the owners, with a view to reaching an amicable solution, which will involve sub-division of a section of the land.

Mr. Kombe: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, could the Assistant Minister tell this House when the title deed of the land was issued and to who?

Mr. Mungatana: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I cannot give the hon. Member the exact date when the land was registered. But I can tell him that the land had been owned by the Baxton family who used the title deed to secure Kshs75 million from the Diamond Trust Bank and they failed to pay the bank promptly, and in settlement of that debt, the Diamond Trust Bank went to court and got orders to seize the land.

Mr. C. Kilonzo: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the issue of title deeds is a crucial one, because there are instances where this document is given to people who are not occupants of land. Now, when the Assistant Minister says that he cannot tell when the title deed was given, does he mean that he does not know when this was done or that nothing was done?

Mr. Mungatana: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, that is a substantive question as to when the title was issued. This Question is about whether I am aware that the residents are being evicted. It is not asking about when the title deed was issued. So, if that is the specific issue that he wants to know about, I am more than willing to tell him, but I would beg to be given sufficient time to do that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Yes, Mr. Khamisi.

Mr. Khamisi: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the issue of eviction of squatters is very common in the Coast Province. Now, the Assistant Minister has agreed that it is causing insecurity. Could he order a freeze of all evictions in the Coast Province until such time when the Government will be able to handle the matter of land evictions in this province?

Mr. Mungatana: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. That is a good question. But I wish to inform the House that in some instances, where an eviction order is obtained from a court, the Government becomes unable to order anything against what a court has authorised. But where evictions are to be carried out on an administrative basis by our Ministry of Lands and Housing,

something can be done. I know for sure that there is no eviction that is going on right now, sanctioned by our Ministry. We are, indeed, trying to settle squatters in the Coast Province.

Mr. Salat: My question to the Assistant Minister is about an eviction which has been carried out in Narok South. Could he tell the House if it is his Ministry or that of Local Government that has sanctioned it? The people of Narok South hold genuine title deeds to their land, and I do not know why they have been evicted.

Mr. Mungatana: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, what I know is that we received a delegation at our Ministry yesterday with regard to an eviction in Narok South. But I wish to clarify that this eviction was not sanctioned by my Ministry, as far as I know. However, we are trying to look into the circumstances in which this eviction was done, and see if we can devise a system through which peace can be restored in that area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we have the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources which controls forests. So, sometimes when orders for evictions are given, it is not necessarily our Ministry which is involved. But because we are charged with the management of land resources in this country, when land issues arise, we try to mediate and see if amicable solutions can be found.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: We are not opening debate on any matter concerning Narok South. This is a completely a different Question.

Last Question, Mr. Kombe.

Mr. Kombe: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, you heard the Assistant Minister say that he does not know when the title deed was issued. I tend to wonder which other Ministry issues title deeds if not his Ministry! All the same, it is unfortunate since this parcel of land was not used to secure a loan. Could the Assistant Minister tell this House under which law the bank transferred the parcel of land to itself if it was not the parcel of land that secured a loan?

Mr. Mungatana: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member must have heard what I said. I said that the said parcel of land was charged to Diamond Trust Bank for Kshs75 million. When a person fails to repay a loan, the simple law of repossession or the enforcement of mortgage rights is imposed by the mortgager.

Mr. Kombe: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. Is the Assistant Minister in order to say that this parcel of land was charged to a loan when it was not? There are other parcels of land which were charged to that loan, but not this particular one.

Mr. Mungatana: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am totally in order because the parcel of land that we are talking about is Plot No.575 in Madzayani, Pumwani Sub-Location, Magarini Constituency.

Mr. Kombe: On a point of information, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Mr. Kombe, if you want to give information, you should ask the Assistant Minister whether he wants you to give it to him. In any case, this is Question Time and we are not debating. I have given you sufficient time.

Mr. Kombe: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the parcel of land in question is not among the parcels of land that were charged to the loan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Mr. Kombe, be that as it may, we cannot sit here and ascertain which parcel of land was charged to the loan. Would you take time and sit with the Assistant Minister and resolve the matter?

Mr. Kombe: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, that is all right, but could the Assistant Minister assure the House that nothing will happen to that parcel of land since there is a case in court?

Mr. Mungatana: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Luseno Advocates, who are representing the bank in this case, have gone to obtain an eviction order. However, the Government has come in to try and negotiate and see how we can assist the squatters. As far as I am aware, we have an agreement

with Luseno Advocates not to enforce the order. For the time being, this is satisfactory as we look for a permanent solution to this problem.

Question No.024

MEASURES TO SAVE NYAKONGO
VILLAGE POLYTECHNIC FROM COLLAPSE

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Dr. Awiti is not here? His Question is dropped.

(Question dropped)

Hon. Members, we still have time for Questions. I have reconsidered the fate of Question No.276 because the Assistant Minister has arrived. I withdraw my order that it be answered tomorrow because the Ministers will be out of the country. Therefore, in the public interest, I allow this Question to be answered now.

(Question reinstated)

Question No.276

FINDINGS OF EXTRA-ORDINARY INSPECTION
AT MARSABIT COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. Sasura asked the Minister for Local Government when the last extra-ordinary inspection was done at Marsabit County Council and what its findings were.

The Assistant Minister for Local Government (Mr. Kamanda): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, first, I want to apologise to the House for coming late.

However, I beg to reply.

The last extra-ordinary inspection in Marsabit County Council was completed in December, 2004. In that report, there were cases of misallocation of the Local Authorities Transfer Fund (LATF) to projects and expenditure that were not budgeted for. There were also cases of gross disregard of the financial regulations and misuse of funds by both the officers and the councillors.

Mr. Sasura: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I must thank the Assistant Minister for being very candid and conceding that there was misappropriation of funds in Marsabit County Council because, in most cases, Ministers say that they are not aware

Having conceded that there was disregard of financial regulations by officers and councillors, could he tell us what action he has taken against the officers, especially those who are employees of the Ministry?

Mr. Kamanda: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we have already sent officers to Marsabit County Council to implement the report. We have removed the officers who were involved in the misappropriation from the council. We have not taken any action against the officers because we have to write to them and give them 14 days to defend themselves, before we can take action against them.

Mr. Billow: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the best action the Ministry of Local Government ever takes on reported corruption or theft of public resources is transfers. Transfers are not a solution. There is a syndicate always with the people on the ground having connections with the people in the Ministry of Local Government. The employees in the Ministry are the clerks who have been

transferred from the districts who are used to corruption. Could the Assistant Minister tell this House what action his Ministry will take with regard to the corrupt people in the Ministry, who have been transferred from the districts and have been taken to the Ministry Headquarters? These are people who have failed in the past.

Mr. Kamanda: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we have already reported to the Public Service Commission (PSC). We have even recommended that ten officers should be sacked by the PSC because council employees from Grade Nine to One are employees of the PSC. We have recommended to the PSC to sack the officers whom we have found to have stolen money.

Mr. Ethuro: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the issue of extra-ordinary inspection reports not being acted upon by the Ministry is very prevalent in this country. The Assistant Minister has said that he needs to give employees 14 days to defend themselves. This report was completed in December, 2004, and we are in June, 2005. Is he satisfied that 14 days have not elapsed since 2004?

Mr. Kamanda: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I quite agree that there has been a delay. The inspection was even done when the current Minister was not there and we are now trying to speed up its implementation. There are many other reports like this one.

Mr. Ojaamong: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Ministry of Local Government has conducted so many extra-ordinary inspections. Unfortunately, the leaders on the ground do not know what these reports contain. What is the Ministry doing to ensure that these reports are not just kept at the Ministry headquarters, but are circulated to leaders in the various councils, for example, the District Commissioners, hon. Members and the council chairmen, so that the public is aware of the misappropriations and the irregularities that are there?

Mr. Kamanda: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the procedure that we have adopted in the Ministry now is that once the report is ready, we go to the council and invite the officers and the public. We have done that with the Nairobi and Kisumu reports and we are planning to go to Marsabit.

Mr. Ngoyoni: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I also come from Marsabit and earlier I had asked a Question on the same issue. Is the Assistant Minister aware that the inspection team that went to Marsabit was compromised and given a free spending shopping session in Moyale, which is 270 kilometres from Marsabit Town, so that they could doctor the report and hide many other things that had happened in Marsabit County Council?

Mr. Kamanda: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am not aware of that.

Mr. Maore: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, if you remember very well, at the beginning of 2003, there was a lot of hype about this Government and the issue of zero tolerance to corruption. What is the Assistant Minister going to do about the issue of sacking and prosecuting the officers of this council and even the councillors instead of transferring the clerks to Garissa?

An hon. Member: *Chukua hatua!*

Mr. Kamanda: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we have recommended that. Even the report says that some people need to be prosecuted and we are going to do that.

Mr. Sasura: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, our major worry is that in most cases, recommendations in these reports are not implemented. Could the Assistant Minister table the details of the report so that as leaders of the area, we can follow up the actual implementation of the report as far as surcharging is concerned and even charging those involved in court?

Mr. Kamanda: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have a copy here but it is the original one. I will undertake to give the hon. Member a copy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Mr. Minister for Lands and Settlement, are you able to answer the second Question by Private Notice?

The Assistant Minister for Lands and Settlement (Mr. Mungatana): Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Mr. Wamwere, you can now ask your Question.

Mr. Wamwere: Bw. Naibu Spika, nakushukuru sana kwa kunihurumia.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Ulichelewa wapi?

Mr. Wamwere: Bw. Naibu Spika, gari langu liliharibika njiani. Naomba msamaha.

(Question reinstated)

IRREGULAR SALE OF LAND BY NBK

Mr. Wamwere: Bw. Naibu Spika, naomba kumuuliza Waziri wa Ardhi na Nyumba Swali Maalum lifuatalo.

(a) Je, Waziri anaweza kueleza ni kwa nini Benki ya Taifa la Kenya (National Bank of Kenya) iliuzia LASIT Ltd., shamba la Ceres Ltd., la hekta 532 bila ya kibali cha Halmashauri ya Kusimamia Mashamba (Land Control Board) ya Bahati iliyokataa kutoa kibali hicho mpaka kwanza maskwota 181, walioishi katika shamba hilo kwa miaka zaidi ya 40 watengewe ardhi ya makao kwa mujibu wa mwongozo wa Serikali?

(b) Je, kando na Mhe. Rais, kuna ofisa wa Serikali ambaye ana uwezo kisheria kumwamuru katibu wa Land Control Board kutoa kibali cha kuuza shamba la kilimo bila ya kuihusisha Land Control Board?

(c) Je, Serikali inafanya nini kuhakikisha kwamba LASIT Ltd., imegawia maskwota wa Ceres Ltd., ardhi ya makao kabla ya kuanza kulitumia?

The Assistant Minister for Lands and Housing (Mr. Mungatana): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to reply.

(a) The National Bank of Kenya (NBK) was granted consent to sell Ceres Limited land to LASIT Ltd., by Bahati Land Control Board in a meeting held on 4th November, 2004.

(b) There is no other Government official who has authority to exempt controlled transactions from the application of the Land Control Act apart from His Excellency the President as provided for in Section 24 of Cap.302 of the Laws of Kenya.

(c) The plot is currently under private ownership. The Government will undertake to verify the total number of squatters present and initiate possible discussions with the owners with a view to reaching an amicable solution which would involve sub-division of a section of the land.

Mr. Wamwere: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, if it is true that the consent to sell this land was given on 4th November, 2004, to LASIT Limited, could the Assistant Minister explain how on 17th March, 2005, the Bahati Land Control Board met to discuss the sale of this same land and refused to grant consent because the question of squatters had not been settled?

(Mr. Raila stood up in his place)

The Minister for Roads and Public Works (Mr. Raila): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. This Question is in Kiswahili and the Questioner originally spoke in Kiswahili. The Standing Orders are very clear that if the Question is in Kiswahili, the Questioner must raise it in Kiswahili. Even the subsequent questions must be Kiswahili. Is the hon. Member in order to continue violating the Standing Orders?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Mr. Wamwere, I know that you are capable of speaking in Kiswahili.

Mr. Wamwere: Bw. Naibu Spika, nililkuwa nauliza kwa Kiingereza kwa sababu nilikuwa nahofu ya kwamba namna Serikali imejibu swali kwa Kiingereza, labda ina matatizo kuelewa lugha ya Kiswahili lakini naomba kuendelea.

(Laughter)

Bw. Waziri Msaidizi anaweza kulieleza Bunge kama kweli kibali cha kuuza shamba hili kilitolewa kwa LASIT Ltd tarehe 4 Novemba, 2004, kwa nini Halmashauri hii iliketi tarehe 17 Machi, 2005, na kujadili juu ya uuzaji wa shamba hili na ikakataa kutoa kibali kwa sababu swali la maskwota lilikuwa halijasuluhishwa?

Mr. Mungatana: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the question of the meeting of 17th March, 2005, is news to me. As far as we are concerned, the minutes of the Bahati Land Control Board held on 4th November, 2004, at the District Commissioner's Board Room tackled 220 items. The 219th item involved the transaction that is in question here. The Land Control Board approved the consideration for this transaction to LASIT Limited for Kshs75 million. As far as we are concerned, there was nothing here to suggest that there was any problem or disagreement. I would like to table these minutes before the House so that it can inspect and satisfy itself.

Mr. Kombe: Bw. Naibu Spika, utakubaliana nami kwamba Swali la Bw. Wamwere ni tofauti na swali nililouliza lakini ninashangaa kwamba jibu la Waziri Msaidizi ni sawa na lile alilonipa. Je, ni kiasi gani cha ardhi, kwa mujibu wa sheria, kinahitajika kukatwa kwa sehemu ambayo ni ya benki ama mwenye shamba kupewa maskwota?

Mr. Mungatana: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, if I understood the hon. Member properly, he is asking what percentage or amount of land is supposed to be excised in a transaction like this. With due respect, it is private land. As the Government, we try to intervene and negotiate on behalf of the squatters because we have a responsibility towards those squatters. There is no particular percentage that I can say we shall excise or that the law provides for. However, we shall negotiate, even in this case to see whether the squatters can be accommodated.

Mr. Serut: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, from the answer which the Assistant Minister gave, it appears as if he has relied entirely on the minutes of the Land Control Board and not the consent. Could he produce the consent of the Land Control Board that allowed the transaction or transfer to the current owners of that particular piece of land instead of relying on the minutes from the DC's office?

Mr. Mungatana: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the consent is a public document. The Standing Orders do not compel me to produce public documents which the hon. Member can access. However, if he so wishes, I will assist him to get the consent.

(Mr. Serut stood up in his place)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No, Mr. Serut! You cannot do that! You cannot ask questions twice!

Mr. Sambu: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, could the Assistant Minister inform this House and the nation about a situation where a farm, which is leasehold and belongs to the Government, and has a title with the Commissioner of Lands, could be divided and small title deeds issued because of the so-called Land Control Board consent? Those small title deeds are now being used to sell off portions of the large farm! Is that in order? If it is not, could he, if shown proof of such, arrest those who are producing fake title deeds when the head title is still with the Commissioner of Lands?

Mr. Mungatana: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank the hon. Member for that question. The question of illegal or fake title deeds is very serious. They have been used in many occasions to obtain extension of loans from banks, much to the suffering of both the loanees and loaners. We have discussed that matter in our Ministerial Policy Committee and have agreed that those who will be found out, and if evidence is provided, will be sent to the relevant department - that is the police - to be dealt with.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Last question, Mr. Wamwere!

Mr. Wamwere: Bw. Naibu Spika, ikiwa ni kweli kwamba hakuna ofisa yeyote anayeruhusiwa kutoa kibali cha kuuza shamba bila ya uamuzi wa Land Control Board, Waziri Msaidizi anaweza kutueleza ni kwa nini Mkuu wa Wilaya ya Nakuru, Bw. Mwaura, alitoa kibali shamba hilo liuzwe? Kampuni iliyouziwa shamba hilo inamilikiwa na Bw. Mwiraria na George Kamau Muhoho peke yao. Anaweza kutueleza kwa nini wakati wahusika ni watu wakubwa, sheria inawekwa kando na maamuzi ya Land Control Board yanawekwa kando? Waziri Msaidizi anaweza kukubali kwamba huo ni ufasidi ambao tunaambiwa Mawaziri wa Serikali hii wanaongoza kupinga?

(Applause)

Mr. Mungatana: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am against corruption! I am sure the Government that I serve is also against it. If there is particular evidence that corruption was used, we shall deal with the issue decisively. However, as far as I am concerned, the consent was obtained from the Land Control Board on 4th, November. In that particular instance, there was no suggestion from the minutes that any undue influence was used.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, as I have said, the law only allows His Excellency the President to issue title deeds under Section 24 when the Land Control Board has refused. But in that particular instance, that did not happen. There was no need for that to happen. So, with a lot of respect to the hon. Member, if there is suggestion of corruption, we shall have to deal with it once evidence is provided to us.

(Mr. Sambu stood up in his place)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Mr. Sambu, I have only one minute! What is it?

Mr. Sambu: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. Is the Questioner in order to impute improper motives on Mr. Mwiraria by alleging that the company belongs to him? Could he be asked to table evidence that the company, indeed, belongs to Mr. Mwiraria?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Well, I am sure Mr. Sambu wants to introduce another angle to this issue. Mr. Wamwere mentioned the ownership of the farm and the Assistant Minister did not deny it. Therefore, I do not think we need to go back to that issue. So, the matter is closed!

Mr. Wamwere: Jambo la nidhamu, Bw, Naibu Spika.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Bw. Wamwere, nimekuruhusu kuuliza swali la mwisho! That is the end of Question Time! I have been very generous. It is now 10.00 a.m. and Question Time is over! Next Order!

MOTIONS

REPEAL OF PYRETHRUM BOARD OF KENYA ACT

THAT, aware that pyrethrum farmers are facing a lot of problems due to huge backlog in payment for their produce delivered; considering that the Pyrethrum Board of Kenya Act imposes a lot of restrictions to both prospective producers and marketers; bearing in mind the need to liberalize the industry in order to reap maximum benefits for the farmers and for the country; this House do grant leave to introduce a Bill for an Act of Parliament to repeal the Pyrethrum Board of Kenya Act and to replace the same with a new Act, the Pyrethrum Development Act, through which the pyrethrum

sub-sector will be liberalized.

(Eng. Muriuki on 11.5.2005)

*(Resumption of Debate
interrupted on 11.5.2005)*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Who was on the Floor? Mr. Lesrima was on the Floor. He is not here! So, he forfeits his chance. Who wants to contribute?

Mr. Cheboi, please, proceed!

(Mr. Cheboi moved to the Back Bench)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, Mr. Cheboi!

Mr. Cheboi: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am only a Shadow Minister in hon. Biwott's Cabinet. So, I am not allowed to contribute from the Front Bench.

(Laughter)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. The pyrethrum sub-sector, as we have always said in this House, has practically collapsed. Part of the reasons why that has happened is because the pyrethrum market has not been liberalized. There are quite a number of wrong things that are happening in the Pyrethrum Board of Kenya, and that can only be rectified by the liberalization of the market.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, if you recall, the pyrethrum factory burnt down a few years ago. When that happened, most of our pyrethrum processing is being done in Rwanda. Early this year, the insurance company paid Kshs240 million for the revival of the factory. When that money was paid, they said that they will build another extracting plant in Nakuru, without considering the plight of farmers who have not been paid for a very long time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the German firm, much as it won the tender for Kshs250 million, may not be able to build the extracting plant. The amount insured is very little compared to what is needed for the actual construction of the factory.

Pyrethrum farmers are owed over Kshs1.2 billion, which is quite a lot of money. The Pyrethrum Board of Kenya is now paying farmers their current dues, leaving a huge backlog of arrears unpaid. That is what Kenya Co-operative Creameries (KCC) is doing. It is paying farmers for current deliveries. The other amounts have not been paid to date.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Pyrethrum Board of Kenya (PBK) and the pyrethrum market must be liberalized, so that they have competitors. When there is competition, of course, there will be more value. The PBK is now engaging in unnecessary capital investments. The other year, they went ahead and did a perimeter wall. What were they guarding against? The factory ended up being burnt down even with the perimeter wall. They have engaged in painting the buildings, purchasing new vehicles and even employing new employees. Then you ask yourself: Where is the interest of the farmer?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this afternoon, we will be receiving the Budget. We, as pyrethrum farmers, are praying very hard. As I said, my constituency is the highest producer of pyrethrum in this Republic. It contributes almost 40 per cent. We are praying that this afternoon the Government will look at the sector of pyrethrum. It has always been looking at the sectors of sugar, cereals and coffee. We are praying very hard that this afternoon we hear a good Budget Speech that will touch on farmers.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, just a few days ago I was the leader of a Kenyan delegation to China and the Far East. I must say it is a shame that the Government has not been able to place trade officers in these countries. In China, for example, which we know can be one of our best markets, we have not placed a trade officer there. Instead we have decided to place a defence attache there. I wonder what we are defending ourselves against when we cannot defend ourselves against poverty. I participated in the Polish Marathon and in the Eastern European countries we do not even have an embassy, leave alone a trade office. These are countries which we could depend on for giving us good markets. We have ended up relying on the old American market which is very unpredictable. We rely on Johnson and Johnson Company which is now beginning to think of going to synthetic markets. I think the Government should take a more pro-active role. They should be more active in looking elsewhere. We should not rely on the American market only.

We must thank the president for having sourced the market from Japan. We are told that the Japanese agreed to buy pyrethrum worth Kshs300 million every year. However, that one has not trickled down to the farmers. What we only see is the directors getting fatter and fatter.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Nakuru District where I come from and Nyandarua District are one of the highest producing areas in terms of the pyrethrum crop and, of course, not forgetting Bomet and other areas of that nature. However, when we get a chairman, we get one who comes all the way from Meru. When we get a managing director, we get one who comes all the way from Luo Nyanza. What we are saying is that we get somebody who knows how to fish and not how to harvest flower pyrethrum. That is why sometimes ago I even had to bring a pyrethrum crop here because some of these hon. Members do not even know the difference between a pyrethrum and a flower. We are saying that we should localise the market. Where, for example, we know the fishing industry is thriving like in Kisumu, let us place a local resident from that place. When we know that pyrethrum is being planted more in that part of Rift Valley and Nyandarua, let us get more directors from there. Let us make sure that we make the farmers feel that they are well represented.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the other day the Government decided to opt for a situation whereby they elect a few directors. That is one way towards the liberalisation of the market. However, what is the other number of directors who are appointed by the Government? All the directors should be elected by the farmers so that they can pursue their interests. If that was done we would not be getting chairmen and managing directors from different areas who do not even know what a pyrethrum flower looks like.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker left the Chair]

*[The Temporary Deputy Speaker
(Mr. Ethuro) took the Chair]*

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want the Government to assist the Pyrethrum Board of Kenya by, for example, using the stockpile which we have in the Nakuru factory and giving it some loan. If the Government is not able to give the farmers direct loans it should act as some security and the Pyrethrum Board can source loans from countries like Egypt, for example, where the African Development Bank (ADB) is located and other banks. It should get the Kshs1.2 million and pay the farmers. If that is not the case, the Kshs240 million which was paid by the insurance company should not be used for building the factory. It should be used to pay the farmers because we may end up building a magnificent and ultra-modern factory but we have no flowers to process.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, with those few remarks, I beg to humbly support the Motion.

The Minister for Roads and Public Works (Mr. Raila): Thank you, Mr. Temporary Deputy

Speaker, Sir. I also rise to support this Motion. The Motion is in very good spirit. It is intended to enhance efficiency not only in production but also in the processing and marketing of pyrethrum.

I support this Motion because I know that quite a number of our farmers are dependent on pyrethrum production and I also understand their plight. I know that just like the sugar-cane, tea and even the coffee farmers, these pyrethrum farmers have suffered for a long time because some of them have supplied their crops to the factory and they have not been paid their dues.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I do not agree with the hon. Member who has spoken when he suggested that we should not modernise the factory and instead we should pay the farmers. I hold the view that the two can go concurrently; that we source the money to pay the farmers and at the same time look for the money to modernise the factory. We need to diagnose the problem. What is the cause of this problem? What is it that has caused the deterioration to lead to the status quo?

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I do not think that it is production. I do not think that it is processing. I think that the main cause is marketing. I think that we have not been aggressive enough in marketing of the products coming out of the factory internationally, and this is what has led to the international businessmen facilitating research for the production of the synthetic pyrethrin. We now have a situation where the natural pyrethrin is competing for market with the artificial synthetic pyrethrin. The usage of this product is limited and, therefore, we ourselves as producers of natural pyrethrin need to carry out more research aggressively in order to diversify the use of this product.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, this product can be used for example as animal feed. It can also be used as a protection against insect bites on humans and animals. So, we need, therefore, to try to find alternative uses for this product locally and we also need to be more aggressive in marketing it regionally. We have got a regional market in the Sudan, for example, and other countries which neighbour us. I am told that when part of the factory was destroyed our board was forced to export part of our products to Rwanda for processing. So, we are having a situation where we are exporting raw materials to Rwanda for processing and then bringing it back to Kenya for storage. I am told that we have thousands of tonnes of processed products which have gone to Rwanda and come back here. This makes our production costs so high that we are not able to compete effectively on the international market.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank the hon. Member for bringing this Motion here seeking leave of the House to bring a Bill that will enable us to come up with a law that will facilitate aggressive production, processing and marketing of pyrethrum in our country. Even locally, we need to use pyrethrin to treat mosquito nets.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to appeal to the Ministry of Health which is at the moment engaged in the importation of treated mosquito nets from outside the country, to look for ways and means of using the local pyrethrin for treatment of mosquito nets locally. This will increase the consumption of the products from this factory.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

Mr. Salat: Thank you, Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, for giving me the opportunity to contribute to this Motion. I would like to thank the Mover of the Motion, Eng. Muriuki, who never ceases to bring Motions that are always supported by both sides of the House.

As the hon. Member of Parliament for Bomet where we also grow pyrethrum, I would like to add my voice to those of my colleagues who have said that the morale of pyrethrum farmers is very low right now. It has got to a point where farmers in Bomet, for example, wanted to start uprooting pyrethrum plants. When the President went to Japan and came back with good news that we will start exporting pyrethrum to Japan to the tune of Kshs300 million, this gave farmers some hope and they have decided not to uproot the crop.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, one of the problems that have been bedeviling the pyrethrum industry is the political appointment of the directors. This has led to the appointment of

people who have no interest in making sure that this industry is run properly. That is why, as we speak now, we have a backlog of billions of shillings which has not yet been paid to the farmers. It is very sad for a country that has been stable since Independence to export its products to a country that has just come out of war for processing. Right now, pyrethrum is being processed in Rwanda and yet it just came out of war the other day. Now they are processing a product which Kenya is known to be the highest producer and grower, besides being an important tourist destination.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, we should stop these political appointments in this industry. As my colleague, Mr. Cheboi, has said, the directors should be appointed from the areas where this crop is grown. In essence, that will give confidence to the farmers, whose interests will be well represented.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, we need to diversify the use of this plant, for example, for treatment of mosquito nets, among other uses. Some countries like Ghana are known to be producers of cocoa, whereas Kenya is known to be one of the major producers of pyrethrum that we should cherish. We should make sure that we are leading in all areas so that the farmer can benefit.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

Mr. Khamasi: Thank you, Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, for giving me a chance to contribute to this very important Motion.

I would like to support the Motion, taking into account the problems that the pyrethrum farmers have gone through. I do not think the Government has been very serious with the plight of pyrethrum farmers. The amount of money farmers are owed is a clear demonstration that the Government is not serious about promoting business in pyrethrum farming. The fact that farmers are owed over Kshs1 billion, is clear indication that we want them to continue living in poverty and yet they are producing one of the highest quality pyrethrum worldwide.

I want to specifically comment on the Pyrethrum Board of Kenya (PBK) and the way it is managed. In the last regime most parastatals were basically cash cows. I believe the PBK was one amongst them. The senior management and other officers at the PBK were not bothered about promoting this particular crop. All they did was to earn salaries and occasionally loot the parastatal. We cannot continue like this.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, when the NARC Government came into place, we said we wanted to provide proper leadership that was sensitive about the needs of the citizens of this country. As of now, I do not think we have achieved that yet. We are still in the same old system where we made parastatals cash cows. In those days, people only concerned themselves with what they could get from parastatals and left them to collapse.

The pyrethrum that we produce in this country will be of much benefit to this country, particularly if we take into account the fact that Malaria is still a number one killer and the pyrethrum produced in this country is still the best in the world. Why can we not improve on processing what we have here and combat this number one killer in the world?

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I think the Government needs to take this issue seriously. We need a shake up in the management of the PBK to make sure that farmers actually benefit from their sweat. We should not have farmers who toil day and night and at the end of the day, they get nothing. Their children cannot go to school and they cannot afford to pay for medical services because of poverty. It is high time the Government ensured that it improved the management of the PBK.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

Mr. Serut: Thank you, Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, for giving me the chance to contribute to this Private Member's Motion. I support the Motion.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, pyrethrum is also grown in Mt. Elgon. As I speak today, most pyrethrum farmers are no longer growing this cash crop. This is because farmers are not getting returns for their crop. They take it to Nakuru where it is supposed to be processed, but they are not

paid.

Pyrethrum was introduced in this country in 1922. Since then, Kenya has been the leading producer of this crop in the whole world. Kenya produces about 70 per cent of the world's produce. It continued to do so up to around 1998/99 when Kenya lost its market. This was taken over by production of synthetics because Kenya could no longer continue to sustain its market. There was lack of enough produce because mismanagement had taken place. People who have no interest in pyrethrum farmers were appointed. Those people whose names were in the correct books joined the parastatal with the aim of looting and yet no action was taken against them. Later on, the factory collapsed. There was enough produce and that is why I think the board decided to go and process it in Rwanda.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, the other day when I visited my constituency, the farmers told me that the management had told them that they had not lost their crop. There is produce worth Kshs1.2 billion lying unsold in the stores, in Nakuru. The reason is that Kenya actually lost its market. All that is required is for the Government to come in and assist this board to pay the farmers. Once these products are sold and Kenya recaptures its market, then the board should be able to reimburse the Government. I want to plead with the Government that at this point in time, the Ministry of Agriculture should seek, on behalf of the board, a guarantee similar to the one that was given to the Kenya Farmers Association (KFA) so that the pyrethrum farmers are paid. I am sure that once the farmers are paid, they will continue growing and producing pyrethrum.

With regard to the issue of insurance, I am a Member of the Agriculture, Lands and Natural Resources Departmental Committee. When we visited Nakuru, farmers told us that they were to be paid Kshs230 million with regard to insurance. However, we were shocked the other day to learn that out of the Kshs230 million, about Kshs120 could not be accessed because the farmers had an overdraft with the Barclays Bank. Therefore, we request the Government to intervene in this matter regarding the money being held by Barclays Bank so that farmers can be paid their money. That way, they will continue growing pyrethrum and there will be no threat of losing our pyrethrum market. What is happening now is that the board is trying to negotiate with the former purchasers of its products in order to benefit the farmers.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, concerning diversification, I am happy that when we went to Nakuru we realised that there are about seven products being produced from pyrethrum. These include animal vaccines. I think that is the direction we should take and I hope that the board that will be set up will actually move in that direction so that farmers do not get discouraged.

Pyrethrum grows in most parts of this country, but the only thing that is lacking is proper representation. In future, the Minister for Agriculture should come forward and offer assistance especially with regard to management. He should set up the right board and at the right time so that he saves this country from the problem of mismanagement which has been there for the last 40 years.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, with those few remarks, I beg to support.

Mr. Karaba: Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wish to congratulate the mover of this Motion, hon. Eng. Muriuki, for bringing it on the Floor of the House.

Pyrethrum growing is, in itself, a very important agricultural activity, particularly in those areas that geographically favour its production. Pyrethrum is known to do well in very cold highlands, part of the Rift Valley and parts of Central Province bordering the Aberdares Mountain. There is nothing else that can grow in such areas and yet pyrethrum does well here through natural selection. There is very little we can say about pyrethrum-growing in other areas except in areas where it can do well. It is a crop which cannot be alternated with another one and, therefore, we cannot introduce its alternate in these areas where it grows well. It is, therefore, very important that we come up with a solution, for example, determine whether there are other crops that can do well in those areas where pyrethrum seems to be the only crop that does well. Our argument should start from that point.

All Kenyans who support the economic activities in the country need to support the growing of pyrethrum because it is the country's pride. When I used to teach Geography, we used to say that Kenya is the leading grower and exporter of pyrethrum. So, if we neglect the growing of pyrethrum and anything related to it, we shall be doing a great disservice to our pyrethrum farmers. It is, therefore, important that we support this Motion and ensure that a relevant Act of Parliament is put in place so that people from the pyrethrum-growing areas manage the growing and exportation of pyrethrum.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is annoying to note that the leading cash crop in Kenya, and one of the greatest foreign exchange earners, is neglected and left to decay. In fact, it has been left to chance now that our Government does not support the growing of the crop. We need to support this Motion to the hilt.

We need to research a lot more concerning the growing of the crop. We need to find out if there are other areas that the crop can do well other than the highlands and sections of the Rift Valley. Since the crop was neglected in the late 1990s, most research stations were closed. We hear that our pyrethrum is processed in a distant country and not even a neighbouring country. I really wonder why we have to take our pyrethrum to Rwanda for processing when we have facilities which can be put in place to do that work.

It is important to note that research ought to be carried out to find out if the kind of pyrethrum grown in its typical environment can also be grown in other areas such as Meru and the slopes of Mt. Kenya. However, in the absence of any attention given to the growing and research of pyrethrum, many areas have been denied the opportunity of growing this crop. We need to ascertain whether other parts of the country can sustain the growing of pyrethrum.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, Kenya, being an agricultural country and pyrethrum being a very valuable crop to this country, why can we not concentrate on the growing of the crop and even make use of the God-given natural resource? The moment we neglect pyrethrum we shall, in effect, be neglecting a natural resource and the economy of this country. At the end of it all, it is us who will suffer. So, let us revisit the growing of pyrethrum so that we can revitalise that industry.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is important to note that various hybrids of pyrethrum can be researched just as is the case with wheat, maize and coffee. For example, with regard to coffee we have the Ruiru Eleven which, of course, does well in the rural hot areas. We could intensify research on pyrethrum so that people who can afford to provide land can be introduced to the growing of pyrethrum. That way, the crop will be viewed as a Kenyan crop and many farmers will be able to grow it and make a living out of it. We need to introduce agro-based industries based on pyrethrum. By doing that, we will have many more industries coming up even at the cottage level and I am sure that the crop will help to employ very many Kenyans. That is what entails development and industrialisation of a country.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, with those remarks, I beg to support.

Mr. Midiwo: Thank you, Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir. I rise to thank and support this Motion by hon. Eng. Karue. I believe that most of these boards, for example, the Pyrethrum Board of Kenya, the National Cereals and Produce Board and many others have outlived their usefulness in this country. These are relics of colonialism and one-party system, where everything was controlled from State House. I am saying this because in some of these boards, those people who are appointed to head them have no idea about what they have been appointed to do and in this case, they have no idea about pyrethrum. The same is true with many other cases and in many other boards.

In 1998, Kenya was producing 70 per cent of world's pyrethrum, and that was 15,000 metric tonnes of pyrethrum per year. Pyrethrum production then declined to 2,000 metric tonnes per year, but it has fortunately come back to over 3,000 metric tonnes per year. But unfortunately, even with the produce being as little as 3,000 metric tonnes, we have to transport it all the way to Rwanda for

processing before we can bring it back here and, therefore, we cannot compete with the rest of the world. There is need for this country to come up with local and international marketing strategies so that we can compete favourably.

I believe that if I was in a position on the board, I would not hold Kshs1.2 billion worth of pyrethrum produce in a warehouse, as you watch synthetic products being sold, even in our own local markets. What would be wrong with the Pyrethrum Board of Kenya selling what is being held in warehouses? Farmers are uprooting all their pyrethrum crops because they cannot be paid and, therefore, they see no reason for further production of the crop! The Pyrethrum Board of Kenya owes farmers only Kshs107 million, and this is the amount needed in order to establish a new factory, and I believe the Government will find it necessary to factor this amount in the Budget which is going to be read this afternoon.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, there is need to broaden our research in this sector and arm it with necessary facilitation. By that, I mean we should invest some money into pyrethrum research so that we can have a competitive advantage. There is no imaginable reason whatsoever, why we should be the world's largest producer of pyrethrum and yet we are not investing in that field; we are not doing research or anything like that. In that case, research should be delinked from the issues of the management of the board and the board should only have a say in the regulation or farming of pyrethrum.

There is also need for the Government to change its attitude towards the miseries of farmers in general in this country, whether it is coffee, cotton or pyrethrum. If we are to keep on defining ourselves as an agricultural country, there is need to look into this issue, stay with it and do something about it. We should put our money where our mouth is. As a country, we have no business treating nets or buying treated nets from outside this country, while we produce locally all the requirements and we have nowhere to take them simply because we are in the habit of importing everything, be it maize or sugar. We cannot develop a country if we are a net importer!

*[The Temporary Deputy Speaker
(Mr. Ethuro) left the Chair]*

*[The Temporary Deputy Speaker
(Mr. Khamasi) took the Chair]*

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, with those few remarks, I beg to support the Motion.

Mr. Ethuro: Thank you, Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir. I rise to support this particular Motion and from the outset, I would like to say that I do not grow pyrethrum or literally any crop where I come from. But I think the plight of pyrethrum farmers is a national tragedy.

(Applause)

It is a shame for a country which excels in the production of a particular commodity, goes on to become a world leader over time, to allow its own industry to collapse as it watches.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, the NARC Government started with the promise of reconstruction, and I think we have lost this dream because I do not see that portfolio anywhere. We gave it such a high profile so that some of these particular industries, especially where there are natural advantages, we should be able to rehabilitate them so as to retain our position as a world leader in pyrethrum production.

I cannot agree more with hon. Members who have contributed to this Motion and I rise to support it because I know that hon. Eng. Muriuki who has moved it again has the interests of Kenyans

at heart, just like he did for the Constituency Development Fund (CDF).

(Applause)

This Motion is focused on those farmers, and we will have no business as a Government or even as a nation wasting our time in bringing this Motion to discuss something that the Government should have taken the liberty of making the necessary amendments to the Act, instead of wasting our time as a House, seeking leave in order to do what should have been done, especially with the kind of vision and mission we have as a Government.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, we need to look into the issues of tea, coffee, dairy production, maize, wheat and all those commodities that enhance our food security, in addition to raising revenue for this nation. As a nation, we should not be waiting for factories to collapse and for boards to be mismanaged in order for us to cry. A situation where we have about 15,000 metric tonnes of production has gone down to almost zero. To be honest, I think we should have taken a moment just to cry, because our hearts should be bleeding. I hope that when the Minister finally responds to this Motion, he will treat this matter with the seriousness it deserves.

Although I do not grow this particular crop, I happen to occupy one of the greatest lakes in the Rift Valley known as Lake Turkana. Even in the fishing industry, pyrethrum is important in fish processing. So, it has various purposes and, therefore, we should give it the strategic importance and classify it as a strategic crop so that the Government can allocate adequate resources for its production, processing and marketing. When the alternatives were being looked at, we, as a nation, were watching. When other people were getting the market from us, we were just watching. These are the issues I would like us to be careful about. We should be having long-term plans and visions for each and every commodity that we, as a nation, grow.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, when we take our crop to be processed in a foreign country like Rwanda, with due respect, we, as a nation, have reason to be worried. It is not that Rwanda is any less a country, but given its history *vis-a-vis* our own history, competence and pronouncements of agriculture as the backbone of our economy, one wonders whether we are really watching or we have decided to be blind.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, we need to look at the issue of the boards that are running the production and marketing of some of these commodities. At least, there is a board looking into the affairs of each commodity in this country. Hon. Members have said, and I would like to reiterate, that appointment to these boards should be on the basis of professional competence, merit and demonstrated commitment in a particular field. While the previous regime used appointments as a political reward mechanism, this regime is not any better. We have only shifted from State House to our palatial offices at the Ministry headquarters where we are promoting our cronies to these boards. We need to overhaul that system, so that some of these board members and directors are vetted by the relevant Departmental Committees of this House. This is the only way we can ensure that proper and competent people are appointed to these boards.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, we need to look at other crops that we have not even exploited, especially in ASAL areas. Pyrethrum is generally a high-potential crop. But I am commenting on it, so that I draw the attention of this House to the fact that we, as hon. Members, have a national responsibility to consider the plight of farmers in the remotest corners of this country. This is because their plight are equally important to this House as those of other farmers. The same hype is being generated in ASAL areas. However, could that be translated into crops that are disease resistant, that need low precipitation, that can grow within the normal rainfall duration of one to three months? These are the challenges that we, as a House, would like to draw to the attention of our researchers, so that we do not go back to a situation where our leading commodities collapse, but we

can actually promote them as well as look into other areas that have not been exploited previously. In fact, classification of high, low and marginal areas is completely misleading. It creates in our mind sets that nothing good can come out of Galilee. The story of Jesus tells it all.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, with those few remarks, I beg to support.

The Assistant Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Kaindi): Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, first of all, let me take this opportunity to thank the Mover of this Motion, Eng. Karue. It is the right of hon. Members of Parliament to bring Private Members' Bills. We, as a Ministry, recognise that right. Therefore, Eng. Karue is right in prodding our Ministry to think in his line about this important sector. I would also like to appreciate the valuable contributions from hon. Members. They are contributions that will help our Ministry to refocus more attention into the policy reforms that we want to initiate. That is what we would like to put into this particular sub-sector.

As many hon. Members have alluded to, the historical background of pyrethrum dates back to the 1920s. Continuous growth of this sub-sector has been faced with serious challenges. Some of these challenges have to do with what hon. Members have alluded to, that marketing has not been very well done. But I would like to inform hon. Members that the *El Nino* weather phenomenon was one of the biggest challenges to this sub-sector. Flowers are perishable and vulnerable to weather conditions. Therefore, the *El Nino* rains caused a big dent to this particular industry. Being a world leader in terms of production, for three to four years, we, as country, were not able to keep up with that production. That became our biggest turning point as a world leader in production of this particular product. We had huge markets. In fact, America was our leading market. We were selling 70 per cent of this product to that market. However, because we were not able to sustain that production capacity during those four years, many of those investors chose to look at a different window of opportunity. Therefore, many of them took to synthetic pyrethrum. Therefore, as we got out of that surge where we were faced with production that was coming up, there was no sufficient market. This was because that situation had eroded the market capacity, competence and confidence that investors had in us.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, suffice to say that this particular product for those years was being produced for the external market, not for the local market. Therefore, when effects of weather affected us and our market, as we sped up production, then the challenges dawned on us. As I speak, and as many hon. Members are aware, Nakuru Town, where our main plant is located, there is extraction of about 15,000 metric tonnes per annum of this product. We have huge stocks worth about Ksh2.1 billion. The biggest challenge to our Ministry and Government in general is the inability to arrest farmers' arrears that today stand at Kshs1.2 billion. How can we create the necessary momentum and incentives to our farmers to continue with cultivation of this important product when they have not been paid?

It is no longer true that we are doing the extraction of this product in Rwanda. However, the reason why we had to take this particular product to Rwanda was what hon. Members again alluded to, that the extraction plant in Nakuru Town whose major capacity was to deal with the raw product was burnt down. It has taken time to cope up with the supply that was coming from farmers hence the need to off load some of that product to Rwanda where there is a plant.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, let me also inform hon. Members that there are a few industries that do extraction of this particular plant. We have one in Rwanda and the other one in the southern part of Australia. A memorandum of understanding was signed between the producing countries that in the event of fire, like the one that affected our industry, countries could look for the next alternative option. It is important to point out that the agreement stipulated very low tariff rates that were to be applied by that particular country. We were not proud of taking our product to Rwanda, but the circumstances were such that we had to do so, but we are no longer doing so.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, as hon. Members of Parliament indicated, the insurers paid close to Ksh230 million. But since this money was channelled through Barclays Bank of Kenya

where the Pyrethrum Board of Kenya (PBK) again had an overdraft, as that money landed, Barclays Bank of Kenya decided to take close to Kshs100 million. We are on course, as a Ministry, and as a Government, to ensure the revival of the extraction plant because it is important for sustainability and production of this particular crop.

One of the challenges that I want to talk about is that of legislation. As we indicated during the agricultural conference, as a Ministry, we have 130 pieces of different laws that affect the agricultural sector in one way or another. As a Ministry, we have recognised the need to harmonise some of these laws so that we have one piece of legislation, which deals with a specific crop and others dealing with other crops. If we have such laws, we will be able to repeal laws which have no relevance to us any more.

Some of the statutes we have were set up during the colonial times and are not in tune with our present circumstances. We have appointed a committee which is coordinating that aspect of our legislature. Once the committee develops a framework, of which we already have a draft, it will be easier to deal with the whole realm of legislation. However, that does not stop hon. Members from bringing Private Bills to this House on certain crops. The Bills are a challenge to us and give us an opportunity to compare the thinking of hon. Members with that of the Ministry officials.

Pyrethrum has become a monopolistic product. The Pyrethrum Board of Kenya was doing the processing, purchasing and marketing of the crop. That can no longer be sustainable. As a Ministry, we have recognised the cry, need and plight of farmers. We also had consultations with them in a workshop that we held sometime in December last year at our KARI station. We were able to think about the problems that affect this sector. Many farmers were of the view that the only incentive that the Government can give to them is to arrest their arrears. We should pay farmers so that they can produce more crops. The challenges faced in that area have to do with financial institutions around the country. The institutions have not been very cooperative. Barclays Bank has not been very cooperative, and therefore, we have been pursuing different options. One of the options the board took was to apply for a Kshs800 million overdraft. The Government has not yet approved this because the Ministry is still holding consultations with the Treasury. The Treasury has been asking the Ministry very pertinent questions. For example, it has been asking what capacity the organisation has to repay the loan. Our answer has been simple: We have stocks worth over Kshs2 billion. That is enough money on its own.

I call upon the Minister for Finance to look into that aspect. We are not dealing with an industry that cannot repay its loan. We have money held in stocks. We only need to regularise and deal with the market. Once our sales improve, we will be able to pay the loan with ease. We have sourced for money externally. The board has held discussions and negotiations with Exim Bank, looking at the possibilities of accessing external funding. We have also held fruitful consultations with the ADB Bank, in the same light. Corresponding negotiations are still on-going. We hope that as a Government corporation, whose focus is to operate commercially, that idea will be sustainable.

Marketing is the only way out for this product. Therefore, arising from all these concerns, as a Ministry, we put up a machinery to review the entire policy that governs the pyrethrum sector. The Mover of this Motion is aware of the initiatives and efforts we are putting in place.

Yesterday, we were in Naivasha, as a Ministry. We were discussing about the Private Members' Bills which have come to this House so that we can see the best way to input and ensure that we move on course. I want to confirm to hon. Members that we have no incrimination in taking over Private Member's Bills, but we want to play a complementary role so that we can ask ourselves as a Ministry; how much have we done? We also want to know the concerns that Private Members have contributed to a particular Bill. Together, we will be able to develop a law which is sustainable so that if it is not enacted, it is subjected to amendment. This is the direction we want to take. That is the reason we are saying that Eng. Muriuki had the right to bring this Motion. We support his initiative.

Indeed, he has been to the Ministry, and we have consulted on these issues. We will continue consulting so that we may bring this Bill to this House. Let me also indicate to hon. Members something that was raised by the technical committee which was established by this House--- This Motion was moved by hon. Eng. Muriuki, who comes from an area which grows a lot of pyrethrum. The committee is about to finalise its discussions. Arising from the stakeholders meeting which was held on 10th December, a Cabinet memorandum has been developed for discussion. Once approved, we will move on in the same direction, hence, the importance of the contribution that hon. Members are making to this debate. The areas we are looking into in terms of the new policy shifts will have to do with crop and product research. It will have to do with processing, marketing and value addition. These are critical issues as we move on to the next phase.

As I finish, I want to thank hon. Members for their initiative, not only regarding the crop in discussion, but also in other crops. We are challenging the Ministry so that we can all move together. As a Ministry, we are ready and will be reciprocal to the initiatives of hon. Members so that all of us can make laws that will help this country move into prosperity and benefit hon. Members.

With those few remarks, I wish to support.

Mr. Poghio: Thank you, Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker. I rise to support this Motion. I will start with observations I have made. We are talking about one Government Act and replacing it with another, which may still have Government attachment. That is what I am wary about. We may be developing another parastatal in the name of liberalising and creating the same set of problems for ourselves. I hope as it has been said here, we are going for a new Act that will indeed, be new. I have not seen a new thing yet in this country. There is nothing that can be referred to as new in this country.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Ministry of Agriculture is one of the laziest Ministries we have in this country. This has nothing to do with the people who head it. This Ministry has been lazy for many years and yet nothing has been done about it. Wananchi are ahead of this Ministry. We do not only stockpile pyrethrum but also maize. So, we will create new problems if we start talking about something new which is associated with this Ministry.

We want to liberalize the pyrethrum sub-sector. As we grant leave for the introduction of the new Bill, I hope the universities, institutions of higher learning and our research institutions will develop new ideas as to what we will do with the pyrethrum we grow. This is because the pyrethrum we grow today is dependent on markets outside this country. Our researchers should tell us what we should do with this crop when we cannot sell it to the outside market. Why should we have Kshs1.2 billion worth of arrears and stockpile of pyrethrum in our stores if we cannot sell it to the United States of America (USA) market? What should we do with this crop because we cannot use it to feed our cattle? We should inform research institutions what we do. The universities can take us places and help us understand what we can do with our stockpiled pyrethrum if they are funded.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, we have a problem with management. I am not pouring cold water on this aspect because I respect my colleague who has brought this Motion before this House. Management is a problem which exists among Kenyans. If you appoint me to head an organisation, I will look for somebody who has a name like mine and appoint him as my manager. His first qualification is that he should come from my village and share my name. If I get somebody like that, he will ruin the organisation. That is what ruined the Pyrethrum Board of Kenya (PBK). We made our parastatal heads live like kings. If somebody lost an election, he was appointed a parastatal head and was free to raise his or her salary as he or she pleased. One parastatal head earned a million shillings per month, and yet these were the same monies the farmers were supposed to be paid. The Chief Executives Officers of parastatals had big cars and their spending was completely out of control. That is why most of our parastatals collapsed. I am disturbed that we are going the same way by thinking that we can get managers from our tribes. We are so nepotistic and tribalistic. We need to re-think what we think is new.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, if I were to advise Kenyans, and this is free of charge, let us look for the small tribes of this country to manage the affairs of our big institutions. Why do I say this? For example, if you appoint a Samburu or Pokot to manage a big institution, how corrupt can he or she be? Even if he or she employed all the villagers who are educated he or she will leave all the jobs available and take care of the organisation. They cannot be corrupt. When these people do something, the villagers know that they have done something wrong. The smaller communities need to be given a chance to lead this country because the big communities have failed.

The Assistant Minister for Education, Science and Technology (Dr. Mwiria): On a point of information, Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir. I just want to remind Mr. Poghismo that former President Moi was supported a lot because he came from a small tribe. The hon. Member knows how much damage they did to this country.

Mr. Poghismo: Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, that is a mistake because the Kalenjin community is not a small tribe. I would like to give the hon. Member the list of the small tribes. They are, Pokot, Ormas, Samburus and Turkanas.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to support this Motion.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Mr. Khamasi): It is now time for the Mover to reply!

Eng. Muriuki: Thank you, Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir. Before I make my concluding remarks, allow me to donate two minutes out of my ten minutes to Mr. Moroto.

Mr. Moroto: Ahsante sana, Bw. Naibu Spika wa Muda. Ninamshukuru Eng. Muriuki kwa kunipatia dakika mbili. Wakenya wametaabika sana. Kama wangukuwa na namna ya kumtembelea Mungu, wangemtembelea na kumueleza taabu zao.

Wakenya walikuwa na matumaini makubwa wakati waliipigia kura Serikali hii. Walifikiri kwamba itawaondolea taabu zao. Inafaa Rais Kibaki afahamu kwamba kati ya wale watu ambao wanathamini maisha ya Wakenya, Eng. Muriuki ni mmoja wao na amteue Waziri ili ainue maisha ya wananchi.

Sisi tunatoka katika kabila ndogo vile Bw. Poghismo amesema. Hata katika makabila makubwa, kuna watu ambao wanawatumikia Wakenya kama wenzao.

Bw. Naibu Spika wa Muda, katika Kapenguria, tunakuza pareto kule Lelan. Pareto hupenda mahali kuna baridi nyingi. Tunawahimiza watu wetu wakate msitu, wapande mahindi na wapate jua kuliko kuumia na mmea kama huu. Ninampongeza Waziri Msaidizi kwa yale aliyosema. Kama Serikali ingetatua shida za wananchi, hatungekuwa na vita kati ya Wapokoti na Waturkana. Tunazozana kwa sababu ya shida ndogo ndogo.

Ni heri Serikali itilie manaanani yale mambo ambayo tumeongea hapa kuhusu pareto na mimea mingine kwa sababu Kenya imebarikiwa. Serikali ikitumia kiasi kidogo cha rasilimali zake kuinua ukuzaji wa vyakula, tunaweza kulisha dunia nzima.

Bw. Naibu Spika wa Muda, kwa sababu ya muda, ninamshukuru Eng. Muriuki, na Mungu ambariki.

Eng. Muriuki: Thank you, Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir. Let me take this opportunity to, first of all, thank all those hon. Members who have spoken in support of this Motion, and those others who wish to speak like my colleague here, but are unable because we have run short of time. I also want to thank the Government for the very good support and commitment it has shown to this very important sub-sector.

Let me say something about the Private Members' Bills because the Assistant Minister has touched on it. When hon. Members seek leave of the House to bring Private Members' Bills, it is because there is inadequacy in the delivery of services by the Government and there is a gap to be filled. Occasionally, the Government may wish to take over a Private Member's Bill to enhance it and this is quite in order. The Government should realise from now henceforth that developing a Bill from scratch to the end and drafting it takes a lot of time, effort and personal resources. I have had this

experience. I would like to request the Government that if it wants to take over the Motion, it should do so early enough and not after Private Members have used a lot of their personal resources to bring the Motion.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, as pointed out by a previous speaker, pyrethrum is, perhaps, the only crop that requires permission to grow in this country and, maybe, anywhere else. It is also the only crop or product that someone requires permission to sell. It is very unfortunate that there have been a lot of enquiries about the purchase of the stocks of pyrethrum in the stores in Nakuru and elsewhere. There has been a lot of delay by the Government or the Pyrethrum Board of Kenya to dispose of that product. I had an occasion to visit India and many industries confronted us asking: "Why are you refusing to sell the pyrethrum to us?" When we came back, I wrote a note to the Ministry of Agriculture but never got an answer. Later on, the Government decided that, that was a matter for the Ministry of Trade and Industry and it was taken there. Later, somewhere along the way, it ended up in the Office of the President. That happened six months ago and to-date, the e-mails are still coming from those industrialists willing to buy that pyrethrum.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have no doubt in my mind that the Kshs1.5 billion worth of pyrethrum that is lying in our stores would not be lying there if the board, which we are going to set up, will be run by owners of pyrethrum. The reason why nobody is interested is because the Ministry of Agriculture is a go-slow monster. I believe that, once we put the new Act in place and make farmers the real owners of the crop and the product, they will institute measures to market their product and the issue of pyrethrum lying in stores would be a thing of the past.

The information we have is that, although the industrialists are using synthetic pyrethrin, they do not like it. They like the natural one because it is very effective on insects and it does not remain in the air after you have used it. So, everybody in this country should know that we are not selling our pyrethrum because of our own faults. It is because of the laws that we have made. It is for that reason that I call upon hon. Members to support this Motion and pass it, so that we can get a law that is friendly to the farmers and our country.

With those few remarks, I beg to move.

(Question put and agreed to)

INTRODUCTION OF COMPULSORY COMPUTER STUDIES IN SCHOOLS

Mr. Karaba: Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move the following Motion:-
THAT, in view of the ever-increasing importance of computers, this House urges the Government to introduce computer studies as a compulsory subject in all schools and provide all public secondary schools with computers for teaching purposes.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, as I move this important Motion aimed at the development of education in our country, it is important to note that our education system has undergone an interesting evolution even before Independence. As you all know, we started with a report that provided education to whites and non-Africans. But through the famous Ominde Report, that position was changed to provide education for all. That situation went on changing hands until we had the Gachathi Report in 1967, which provided that technical subjects should be introduced in schools. That report also provided for industrial subjects like wood work and metal work. Things did not rest there. We had very many other reports by McKay, Kamunge, Koech and Naomi. Even during the last session, we passed Sessional Paper No.1 of 2005 on education. All that was geared towards evolving an education system that was suitable to Kenya. But to many observers, our education system has also been tested many times. We even introduced a different system which almost rendered

our education system useless. Even students will be allowed to use calculators in examinations set by the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC). They will be introduced in some schools and not all.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, since the inception of Information Communication Technology (ICT), there are very many computer colleges all over the country. Some Form IV school leavers enrol in various City computer colleges for various courses and pay a lot of money. That renders students from rural areas useless, unless they have access to such institutions. Students from rural areas are also made to use computers and calculators in their examinations and yet, they have never seen them. Those gadgets cannot assist them to make head or tail of the examinations. Most rural students cannot attain grades in computer studies because they also lack competence in science subjects.

*[The Temporary Deputy Speaker
(Mr. Khamasi) left the Chair]*

*[The Temporary Deputy Speaker
(Mr. Poghio) took the Chair]*

It is important to come up with a policy where computers will be provided to all schools and make computer learning compulsory. I am sure you will say that, that will be limited in some rural schools due to lack of power. That is something that can be addressed. It is possible to provide electric power or solar power to rural schools. In remote areas where that is not possible, we can have one centre where all the schools can converge for learning.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, even the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is not properly equipped with computers. That is the reason why we cannot make computer teaching accessible to schools. That policy should ensure that the Ministry's headquarters is fully computerised as is the case in other countries.

It is important to note that Kenya, 42 years down the line since Independence, is still languishing in poverty and mediocre type of education system which cannot be compared to the one in developed countries. Between 1963 and 1968, this country was to be reckoned with because of the advancement that it had made in education and economy. But since that time, it seems like we have been towing with education to a point where we have even lacked continuity. I, therefore, urge hon. Members to understand that without computer literacy introduced in our schools, it will be pointless for us to imagine of a country which will emerge as an economic giant even in the years to come. Going by the fact that for over 40 years we have seen a lot of disparities in our education system, it is, therefore, important to bring in an equality of education system in our country. It is, therefore, important to note that this computer literacy has been a very great omission in some areas. This has not been the problem of such areas. It is just because the Government has not been able to provide education proficiency to all those who learn in those schools. As a result, schools which are located in big towns such as Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Thika and Nyeri, among others, will only acquire computer knowledge because they can afford to teach computers. It is also possible to access the same through the neighbouring colleges. Those other schools which are not able to get those computers will not acquire that knowledge. This, therefore, has led to corruption in education. In a long term, this corruption can affect the economy. This is because those people who will have acquired computer knowledge at their lower classes will proceed very easily to understand the science-oriented subjects such as Physics, Chemistry and Biology. When they pass their Form Four examinations they will find it very easy even to understand university education. The same people, therefore, will study the professional courses offered in the universities, because they will also be able to have that upper hand understanding of computer sciences. Therefore, at the end of the day, they will emerge winners in

some of the professional courses. This will be at the detriment of those students who, otherwise, would have done it if it were not for the problem of lack of provision of computer literacy in the rural schools.

I will, therefore, urge the Government to consider this as a very serious omission in our education system. If this continues to be the case, we will create a society of the "haves" and "have-nots". The "haves" will be made up of those people who have had a better system of education. They will proceed and pursue important courses in the university. They will also be able to learn more through the internet and communicate with the rest of the world. Since we are not in isolation, it is imperative that we also make sure that our population in Kenya accesses computers without discrimination. This discrimination will extend to professional courses, earnings in employment and status later on. Therefore, it is important to make sure that facilitation is made to make computer literacy universal in all schools.

It is important also to note that to develop this computer knowledge in the rural areas, we need to also develop an electricity policy. Let us have electricity connected in all schools in our rural areas. I am sure this is possible. It is also important that we review the telecommunication policy in this country. In fact, many schools in rural areas are not even connected to any telephone lines. Therefore, if the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the Ministry of Communication can liaise to make sure that those schools are connected with telephone lines, it is possible to come up with a policy which will benefit schools in our rural areas. As I speak, we have very many vacancies in our schools for unemployed teachers. Maybe through induction it is possible to bring them into the fold and introduce them to computer knowledge. It is very possible to employ teachers who have been trained in computer literacy to teach in both secondary and primary schools.

It is also important to note that, unless we have the Government introduce computer literacy in our schools, we will be exploited by these dubious computer colleges which have introduced very many funny diploma certificates in computer studies. If this was regulated, I am sure that many Kenyans would not be as exploited as they are today due to the thirst that they have for education. There are very many other people who might not even be able to handle computers. We can, therefore, even develop special computers. Computers are not very expensive. Likewise the equipment can also be easily imported. The Government can even waive duty charged on the same. If this could be done through the Ministry and other related Ministries, I am sure we will introduce a system of education in Kenya which will be seen as complete, as in other countries in the world.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, going by example, Kenya which, of course, can be said to be developing, cannot compare with those countries which, at one time, it was in the same group with in 1960s. This has been seen because of the computer literacy that most countries have introduced in their education system. We have countries, for example, Korea, Japan and Malaysia where with the introduction of compulsory computer education in primary schools, students grow and develop their computer skills all the way to the universities. These are the same people who then continue to man the countries' economies. It is, therefore, important to note that the introduction of computer literacy in our schools will be a very important investment in our country.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is also important we facilitate this computer knowledge, not only in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, but also in all sectors. So, lack of computer literacy in our schools in Kenya, both in rural and urban areas is a very great hindrance to the understanding of education aspects and general development. This is because without computer literacy, we are doomed even to understand what happens here in Kenya and other countries.

Computer knowledge is important in the sense that it can maintain a very clean environment. It can also bring in the understanding of Electronic Mails (E-Mails). Instead of keeping very many books in the libraries it is possible to have only one diskette containing all the necessary materials. Therefore,

it is important to note that if most of the Members of Parliament were literate in computers, we would not be dealing with a lot of paper work. We would be accessing information through the computers. This a drawback. It is not of our own making, but history. Instead of history always repeating itself, it is important to bless it all and say that it is important we introduce computer literacy in all our schools. Without doing that, we are creating inequality in education and backwardness in our country. It is important to be with the rest of the countries in the world.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, with those few remarks I beg to move and request Mr. Angwenyi to second.

Mr. Angwenyi: Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to thank hon. Karaba for bringing this Motion to this House. From the outset, I want to say that the Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC) has realised that a vast majority of the hon. Members are computer-illiterate and we are providing a course to make all of them computer literate.

I have stated that to demonstrate the importance of computer knowledge. Computer knowledge should be considered as basic as the traditional literacy as well as the traditional arithmetic. By the time our children get to Standard Eight, they should learn something about computers. In this era of Information Technology, computer literacy is a major sphere of life for all the people in the world. There is no area where computers cannot be applied. For example, in education, you need computers to do some of the research that you want to do. If our lawyers are computer literate, they can access knowledge even on cases which have been decided in other jurisdictions that have similar laws as ours.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, last year, I was embarrassed when I was in Germany and we were told to visit an e-Parliament. When we got there, Eng. Okundi was more computer literate than me and he was able to understand what they were doing. I looked dumb and I did not know what they were doing. When I came back here, I attended computer classes in some of the *Dukawallas* that give sub-standard computer knowledge in this city. It is very embarrassing that we cannot access our newspapers when we are abroad. We, hon. Members, want to access the political goings on in our country while we are abroad. If you are not computer literate, you will have to look for somebody to assist you to access the internet, so that you can access the *Standard*, the *People* or the *Daily Nation* newspapers. This becomes very embarrassing.

To avoid our children being embarrassed when they complete their studies, we must make sure that they are computer literate. This Motion has come at the right time, especially when we are going to discuss the Budget in this House from this afternoon. We must see whether the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has allocated funds for introducing computer studies in all our secondary schools and maybe, in another year or two, extend the programme to primary schools.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, last night, I was being taught some computer operation by my son who is 14 years old and in Form One. He knows more about computers than I do. Therefore, to avoid that kind of embarrassment, where you have to be taught by your son or daughter who is 13 years old, we must introduce computer studies in our schools. So that, by the time people finish school, they are computer literate already.

I know there are the impediments of electricity and telecommunication in our rural areas. But the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology can liaise with the Ministry of Energy to introduce solar energy in every secondary school in this country at very minimal cost, compared to what we lose if we do not introduce computer education in our schools. The children who go to school in towns have access to computer studies. But the ones who go to school in Meru or Turkana or Kilifi have no access to computer knowledge. So, when they join university or some other tertiary institution, they are handicapped. The others know about computers but those from rural schools have to learn right from scratch, and they would not be able to compete effectively with their colleagues. So, we are currently giving discriminatory education to our youth. This Parliament must ensure that we allocate

adequate resources to the two Ministries so that we can offer computer knowledge to our children.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, Parliament is going to introduce a website. I am urging all Members of Parliament to take time to study and have some computer knowledge so that they can access the website and know what is written about them. They can even satisfy the terms given by the Minister for Planning and National Development regarding surveys made on Members of Parliament. On the website, we will be having whatever the Member of Parliament does on the Floor of the House, in the Committee and in his constituency. So, it should be accessible for public scrutiny. Computers are going to stay with us. We used to think that computers were important to those people who want to go to the moon. But, today, computers are important to us for banking services and even getting an air ticket from Nairobi to Mombasa. Therefore, we should offer that important knowledge to all our children in secondary and primary schools in the near future.

With those remarks, I beg to second.

(Question proposed)

Mr. Bahari: Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to join my colleague in thanking hon. Karaba for bringing this Motion to this House which is, perhaps, long overdue.

I cannot over-emphasise the importance of making each and every Kenyan computer literate. This can best be done by putting the same in our educational curriculum so that the young Kenyans and the rest of us will be able to learn computer skills.

In the developed world, certainly issues like employment are transacted through Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Sometimes, you will find a list of curriculum vitae in the system and from there you will be able to meet and transact business with those people. Also, actual business transactions are done on computers. It is important to put ourselves right there and interact with the rest of the global society. That way, we will not be left behind.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, efficiency will determine the growth of our economy. By introducing computers, we will be able to transact business much faster and more efficiently. In the process, we will be reducing costs and our products will be more competitive in the market. Unless we do that, we can be sure that we will be left behind by the rest of the world. We will just be crying and providing a market for products from the developed world. I have seen instances where, at some stage, specimens are required abroad and one has to carry them physically. I have also seen instances where one does not need to do that. That is because of computerisation and development of Information Communication Technology (ICT). You can transact whatever you want with the actual specimen through the computer. They will be able to provide the necessary guidance and solution to the problem that has made you send the specimen to Europe and beyond. So, practically, it has been proven beyond doubt that computers introduce a lot of efficiency and precision in determining certain issues.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, there is a lot of wastage in ordinary transactions; for example, the hard copies of letters that we receive instead of e-mails. How fast are they? It is, therefore, incumbent upon us, as Parliament, to ensure that resources are allocated to schools to ensure that students are computer literate and exposed to the rest of the world.

A lot of research and storage of materials can be done using computers. So, it is extremely important to provide our schools, both in urban and rural areas, with that infrastructure. For example, students in most schools in this country, particularly in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs), have not even seen a computer. Forget about introducing them into the school system! They have not seen a computer! These things are beginning to come to light now. In some schools, students learn computer skills while in others, students have never seen a computer. That is a very serious inequality in this country. It is inequality in access to information and facilities. With that, many other things go with it. I

remember providing some computers to a secondary school in my constituency recently. Six months down the line, they have not been able to set them up because the teachers themselves, are not prepared for them. They are computer illiterate. The computers are lying there. It has to take someone to push them very hard and, perhaps, guide them to set them up.

I have recently been to one primary school in Meru South. The set-up itself is not right. They are trying to keep pace with what is going on. I am happy they have a computer which the students can see. However, I can assure you that they have a long way to go. Even the set-up of the rooms is done very unprofessionally.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, many other things go with the introduction of computers. Like an hon. Member said, issues to do with provision of power and setting up of certain standards that are going to be met needs to be looked at critically. It is important that the Ministry comes up with a policy. We have to start now so that the necessary infrastructure is put in place to introduce computers in some of these schools. Even communication within the education system would be better done if we had some policy documents. The other day, I had a situation in my district where one and half months down the line, the administrators were insisting that we implement certain policies yet we had already gone through the process. If it takes a long time for a memo from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to reach the District Education Officer, what about the schools? It will take a longer time! These are the things that make us irrelevant. If we start moving with files to get information that was submitted from a school more than six months ago or information that went through the education office six months - one and half years down the line is when it reaches the Ministry's Headquarters for it to act on it - it would no longer be relevant at all. The actions the Ministry would take would not solve our problems.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, with those few remarks, I beg to support.

Dr. Kibung'ochy: Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to start off by thanking Mr. Karaba for coming up with this timely Motion.

I also want to acknowledge the fact that the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, right now, is one of our best Ministries in the country after grappling with the free primary education, which was a feat that not many people would have accomplished. This is a Ministry that is on the right track. I am very sure, seeing that the Assistant Minister is here, that they are going to take this Motion very seriously. Just like the Mover of the Motion put it, this is a Motion that should have been implemented a long time ago. We are living in an era of computers. Right now, looking at what is happening in the world, if you look at our education system through the eyes of the world, we are in the Stone Age. This is because right now, virtually everything is in the line of computers.

Because of those sentiments, and what is happening in the world, this Motion should be supported by all. I would urge the Ministry, together with the Government, to move very fast and implement the spirit and the objects of this Motion.

Computer study is something that started off as a luxury. However, right now it is as necessary as the teachings that we went through in our primary schools; of learning the mathematical tables. It is as necessary as learning the alphabet, because virtually everything else in the world has a component of computers behind it.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would think the biggest hindrance to the realisation of this Motion will be the question of power, especially in the rural areas. In many parts of this country, Lugari Constituency included, we do not have any reliable source of power. This is an area where the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology needs to liaise very closely with the Ministry of Energy to make sure that rural electrification programmes are speeded up so that we have power in most of our schools in the rural areas.

As many have mentioned, I would also like to concur that in areas where it is virtually impossible to get electricity, it should be considered as a necessity that we get renewable forms of

power, like solar and the windmill, where we can then be able to access a reliable form of power in order to install computers in our schools.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, all our secondary schools need computer studies for equity to be achieved in terms of education. I would like to concur with the Mover of this Motion, that there is no way we can fight the inequalities in terms of access to education, if we do not look at the issue of computer studies. Most of our urban schools have computer studies because of access to power. Since these students are ahead, there is no way students who come from rural areas and have never even seen a computer can compete with them. That inequality can only be magnified as they go ahead. Those who have and those who do not have - maybe that Biblical statement is right - even the little they have will be taken away from them. Equity and equality can only be realised in education once our students have access to computers throughout the country.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, this is a timely Motion that should be supported by all hon. Members. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology should move swiftly as soon as we are through with this Motion, to see how best this can be implemented.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

Mr. ole Metito: Thank you, Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir for giving me a chance to contribute to this very important Motion. I would like to thank the Mover, Mr. Karaba, for bringing up this Motion.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, it has been said that information is power, and we are in the information age. If information is power, I think it is high time we gave our children the power that comes along with information. Information Communication Technology (ICT) is making the world a global village. Upon pressing of a button, one can access any information in this world. Therefore, I think it is right to say that computer skills are of necessity in today's world.

With information, this country can achieve the much needed economic growth rate that we are likely to hear about in the Budget Speech this afternoon. Let me talk about the importance of computers. If we could have a website for the education curriculum in this country, it would help reduce the disparities we are experiencing in our current education system. You cannot expect, currently, as it is, those students at Alliance High School and the like to compete very favourably with those from the Harambee schools at the district level. However, if we could have a website for our education system, I am very sure that we would not be talking of the disparities we are experiencing in our education system right now. A student at Oloitokitok High School will just need to press the button and access the topic in any subject that is being taught in any school in this country. A website for all our public secondary schools will actually help to harmonise those inequalities we are experiencing in our education system.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, we would also want to kind of stop most of the colleges especially in Nairobi, whose standards are very questionable, from asking for exorbitant computer fees from parents. Actually, as hon. Karaba has said, the quality of the computer studies that they offer are really questionable. Why do we not start computer education at the secondary level?

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, when we talk of information technology, many of those students in high schools are aspiring to become doctors, lawyers and engineers. I think they can tap that knowledge at that very early age because in the field of information technology we have several aspects of knowledge. We can have knowledge-based information systems that will assist as a term of reference that you can use to get knowledge. If you aspire to be a medical doctor, you can actually use that knowledge-based information system to get the skills that are required in that field. You can take the aspects of management information systems for those who are aspiring to be managers and they can assist to equip them with the skills needed in running those organisations. We can have the decision support system for politicians and I will request the Parliamentary Service Commission as it aspires to connect our offices with this very important skill to include the decision support system.

They can help those who want to make very key decisions in this country to acquire the skills necessary for that. We have the expert support system that one can use to explore the knowledge needed in any field. So, I think with those few aspects of computer information technology, we can have our students at a very early age equip themselves with these skills and not just to see computers when they are already employed in very big firms.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, many have said that computers make work in the offices fast and efficient. They can lower the cost of doing business and it is very educative to have computers in those schools. They do assist in communication, like sending e-mails and then we will become the global village that the information communication technology aspires to make. We have talked of power and telecommunications for those schools but I think those are administrative issues. Once the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology implements this policy, the rest will come as administrative issues.

I would like to urge the Government to take this Motion seriously and have primary schools equipped with computers because it is at that early age that we can make our youth become very productive and reliable people. By doing that, we will surely attain high levels of economic growth.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, with those few remarks, I beg to support.

Mr. Muchiri: Thank you, Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir. I would like to support this Motion that has been moved by hon. Karaba who is also the Chairman of the Education, Research and Technology Departmental Committee.

Computer technology has become a necessity in our economy and education system. I think the issue of having an education system that incorporates computer technology in our schools, particularly in secondary schools, is long overdue. Computer technology is, indeed, a necessity for many activities in this country.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, you are well aware that nowadays there are no typewriters in our offices. They have been replaced by computers and anybody who has no knowledge of computers is fairly disadvantaged in whatever sphere of influence he operates. Whatever profession one aspires to pursue, computer knowledge is a must. For example, if you go to a clinic, you will see a doctor trying to sort out his medicines using the computer; architects now draw their plans using the computer; there is a lot of computer work in accounting; lawyers store and produce bulky documents using the computers and so on. There is, therefore, no question about the wide use of computers. There is no way you can advance without having some knowledge in computer. I, therefore, think that this Motion should be supported by both the Government and the Opposition sides of this House so that we can give this country the advantage of being in tandem with the rest of the world.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am only worried that when I draw a parallel between our public schools and the private ones, there seems to be a lot of inequalities. You will find that children going to private schools are introduced to computers in Standard One whereas to pupils in the public schools, a computer is an animal that has never been seen. So, for us to bridge the gap that exists between the rich and the poor, it is necessary for the Government to go an extra mile and provide for funds in order to introduce computer education in our public schools.

In our effort to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor, we shall be doing great service to this country. It is as if those who go to private schools buy education because they pay dearly for it. Education is a human right and, therefore, we need to have a system that cuts across and benefits all Kenyans.

If we are really going to advance in this particular pursuit, the Government must also give tax concessions to computers and their accessories such as discs, diskettes, computer stationery and so on because they are fairly expensive. I come from the private sector and computer stationery and related accessories are very major items in the expenditure of our offices. We all know that computers will be a major expenditure for our schools. So, I would like to call upon the Government to give

concessionary tax rates. Perhaps, computers and their accessories should not be charged VAT. They should be zero-rated, so that they become cheaper and accessed by many people in this country.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, this Motion is fairly important. I know we will meet a lot of hurdles and constraints while trying to implement this programme. I know we have no electricity or energy to drive computers in most of our rural areas. But, certainly, that should not be the case. This is because we could ask the Ministry of Energy to also make an effort to provide electricity and other alternative energy in our schools, so that this is realised.

We know students go through the theory and practical stages of learning. With computer courses, our students could even start learning the theory aspects and later on learn the practical aspects. When I was at the university, for example, I was taught about construction of buildings, but we never did this practically. However, we knew how one would build a house. So, I would like to urge the people concerned not to feel constrained just because of lack of electricity in our schools. We should start computer studies, teach the theory part of it, then the practical aspect could follow later. We should have dummy computers, so that computers do not just look like very strange things to our students. Therefore, the lack of electricity in most of our schools should not be a constraint.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I know we will also have the constraint of teachers. However, I am also aware that a number of college students have studied computer and, therefore, that should not be a problem. We have various colleges, for example, the Kenya Technical Teachers College (KTTC) which is producing a lot computer teachers. I am sure they can be utilised in the best way possible.

Since computer literacy is becoming necessary, even in our careers as hon. Members of Parliament. I am sure we will find computers very useful. In fact, we would be able to store data on all the problems facing our people in the constituencies. So, a computer is a very important tool to a Member of Parliament. It can assist us assess different situations in our constituencies in a very short while. I also would like to urge hon. Members of Parliament, through their Constituency Development Fund (CDF), to have computers in their offices because they are quite useful. In Ol Kalou Constituency, for example, Eng. Muriuki has put all his road network data in a computer. It becomes very necessary because he is in a position to know about the road network. This kind of data is also important for those of us who may not be fully literate in computers. I would like to thank the Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC) for their intention to assist hon. Members of Parliament to advance their computer literacy.

Some of us went to school in those olden days when gadgets like computers were not there. Even when we attained degrees, this technology was still not even there. But since it has now come, let us take advantage of it.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, without further ado, I would like to thank Mr. Karaba for bringing this Motion. I would like to urge hon. Members of Parliament to support this Motion.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

Mr. Muturi: Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, thank you for giving me this opportunity to contribute to this Motion. From the outset, I would like to declare that I support this Motion. It is timely. My only worry is that the Motion is merely urging the Government to introduce computer studies as a compulsory subject in all schools. This in effect means both in secondary and primary schools. The Motion goes on to suggest that all public secondary schools be provided with computers for teaching purposes. As would be well appreciated, a Motion of this nature which merely urges the Government to do this or that, will definitely pass. This is because we are merely urging them to do this and that, but since they never get urged, it will go to the shelves and Mr. Karaba, the Chairman of the Departmental Committee on Education, Research and Technology will have done so much work in researching on the necessities to have computers provided in our secondary schools, but all will be in vain. I hope that Dr. Mwiria, whom I had the privilege of sharing some high school with, is going to

feel sufficiently urged on behalf of the Government, to ensure that the very good intentions of this Motion are realized.

Unfortunately, Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, a while ago, I have been going through the Printed Estimates which, as we know, are going to be presented to this House through the financial statement by the Minister for Finance. If you look through it, you will not see any much significance being paid to this very important topic of Information Communication Technology (ICT). The mention in the Printed Estimates is so casual and the allocations so minimal, that I really do not know when we will fully realize the benefits, if the Government were to attempt to implement this Motion.

That notwithstanding, I think one cannot gainsay the importance today of ICT because we have now created some cliché of the world having become a "Global Village". That village requires communication on a regular basis and constantly. The only way that this can be realized is through the use of computers. It is a fallacy that we talk of the world having become a global village because of the advances made in ICT. We can very proudly say that we talk to some people in whatever corner of the globe. The importance of this Motion is captured in the fact that in as much as we can proudly say we want to talk to somebody in Tokyo, Berlin or Washington, but when I want to talk to someone in my village, I will have to drive all the way there. This is what creates the fallacy I am talking about. Here we are, accepting the fact that we are a part of the so-called "Global Village", but we have not quite taken sufficient measures, particularly in our educational institutions, which must drive this kind of knowledge and development in our country. We have not addressed the issue of providing this knowledge to our pupils and students.

Today, when you present one computer to an institution, it becomes news in that village. The next question you will be asked is: "What shall we do because we do not have electricity here?"

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, even as we appreciate the importance of computer studies in learning and making them compulsory, this must be tied to the provision of electricity in the rural areas. I am aware that a Motion has been proposed to deal with the Rural Electrification Programme. I hope we will debate it and give our ideas. I agree that we should make computer studies compulsory. However, we must also tie them to the provision of electricity to all our schools because without electricity, we will be saying like we did some years back that the 8-4-4 system of education would produce artisans and yet there is none. All of them have become touts and yet there was fanfare when we introduced workshops in primary schools. All of us went out there and built workshops some of which have today become stores in some of our schools. This is because we built the physical infrastructure but failed to get equipment.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would not like to see a situation where the spirit of this Motion is defeated by lack of necessary supporting infrastructure which primarily, in my view, should be the provision of electricity. Therefore, there is need for the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to liaise with the Ministry of Energy to ensure that there is a sustained programme to provide electricity to all our schools. I am aware that there is an attempt by the Ministry to provide secondary schools with electricity but it is a small drop in the ocean. As the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology implements the Motion to introduce computer studies as a compulsory subject, it should not be frustrated by the basic supporting infrastructure.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, with those few remarks, I beg to support this Motion.

Mr. Onyancha: Thank you, Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir. I would like to thank Mr. Karaba for bringing this Motion before this House.

I sat here quietly as hon. Members were debating this Motion knowing that, indeed, computers have made this world a global village except for the citizens of Kenya. Whereas I have no problem with the hon. Member urging the Ministry to come up with computer classes as a compulsory subject, I find no reason why the Ministry should wait to be told that. The reasons are very clear. Computer

studies especially in secondary schools is a service subject like English, Kiswahili or French. So, our education system would immensely benefit from the introduction of such a service subject which will be used in teaching other subjects. As I have said, the Ministry should introduce this subject not withstanding the fact that its introduction will cause additional expenditure on its budget. However, the benefits far outweigh the constraints.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is interesting that the developed world cannot understand why, for example, the Kenyan Parliament is in the process of coming up with internet facilities at this time. In other areas, computer knowledge is as basic as arithmetic. This goes without saying; that computer education should have been started much earlier. Therefore, Mr. Karaba is right by saying that the Government should introduce computer studies right from primary school level.

Our education system is loaded with a lot of disparities in terms of distribution of resources. This, as you know, affects our educational performance. You only need to attend a parents' day in one of our big schools in this country, for example, Alliance or Starehe High Schools, and you will know that those people who matter in this country are the ones who have put their children in those schools. The people who have resources are the ones who have access to good education. Therefore, such disparities will continue to exist if they are not addressed. It is the good schools that have well established computer education systems. Students come out of these institutions with computer knowledge. Introduction of computer education in schools in this country will help reduce educational disparities.

Mr. Temporary Deputy Speaker, Sir, rural electrification should be a way of easing this problem. I wish to suggest that provision of power can also be done in other ways. We do not have to electrify every school. My colleague has indicated that we could start teaching computer education from the theory part of it, and move on to using dummies to illustrate what a computer is, so that the equipment is not a mystery to our students in all schools. If we moved on in that direction, we would help standardise teaching in our schools. For instance, if we taught languages by use of websites, this would standardise our teaching skills. This would help us have a common way of doing it and would reduce the disparities which occur, owing to having different teaching set-ups and teachers. This can be achieved through online teaching and would benefit us in general.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

ADJOURNMENT

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Mr. Poghisio): Order, hon. Members. It is now time to interrupt the business of the House. The House is, therefore, adjourned until this afternoon at 2.30 p.m.

The House rose at 12.30 p.m.