

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL REPORT

Wednesday, 2nd October 2013

The House met at 9.00 a.m.

[Hon. Deputy Speaker (Dr. Laboso) in the Chair]

PRAYERS

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, we do not have quorum. I order that the Quorum Bell be rung.

(The Quorum Bell was rung)

Yes, you can now stop the bell, we have quorum. Hon. Timothy Bosire, take the Floor.

Hon. Bosire: Thank you, hon. Deputy Speaker. This is the second time I am raising the issue of a Statement that I had requested from the Committee on Education, Research and Technology. The last time the issue was on the Floor, the Committee committed itself to present the report to the House. If the report is available, I will be happy to have it presented on the Floor.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: What was your Statement on?

Hon. Bosire: The Statement was on the subject of laptops. It touched on various issues to do with the preparedness to handle the programme. Was there any known study before the programme was started or it was a street political pronouncement on this very important sector? The kind of investment going to it is huge and this is public expenditure. I wanted to know the position regarding the whole process.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Member. Is Chair of the Committee on Education, Research and Technology or the deputy in? If not, the Leader of the Majority Party can respond. I can see a Member, hon. Keter.

Hon. Eric Keter: Hon. Deputy Speaker, it was only last week when I rose on behalf of the Chair and assured the Member that we are going to furnish him with the report on how prepared the Ministry is on the issue of laptops. We are anticipating the report this week. We met the Cabinet Secretary last week and he assured us that he is going to give us the report this week. So, I beg the Member to wait patiently as we get this report.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Let us be a little patient. Since they had said that they would give us the report, let us see if we get something, at least, by tomorrow. If not, we can then give a further communication after that.

Hon. Bosire: On a point of order, hon. Deputy Speaker. It has been long enough since July. I am aware and I appreciate that last week, hon. Keter, was quite categorical on the report and the Speaker made a clear Statement that by 1st, if the report is not on the Floor, then something is wrong with the Committee. Now the Member is not even sure. He is only anticipating. I thought this is a very important issue.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Can we hear from the Leader of Majority Party?

Hon. A.B. Duale: Hon. Deputy Speaker, I want to intervene. The laptop project is very important to the Jubilee Government and I will present a report on the progress on Tuesday next week. I will table a report. As the Committee brings a report, I can bring a report to the House on the progress made because I am sure the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology briefed the President on Saturday. I can pick from there, so that the Member can have that report as he waits for a more detailed report from the Committee.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Bosire, the Leader of Majority Party is our link with the Government. So, allow him to come and give us the report, even if it is not as detailed as you would have wished it to be. The Committee can deal with the details and he can give us the overall direction or plans by the Government before the Committee goes into more details. That is the way we should proceed. The Leader of Majority Party has undertaken to do that exercise on Tuesday. Let us give him that opportunity.

Hon. Janet Wanyama, do you have a Statement or are you reminding us of one that is long overdue?

Hon. (Ms.) Wanyama: Hon. Deputy Speaker, I had requested for a Statement a month ago from the Committee on Energy, Communication and Information about the TelKom Kenya staff who were retrenched between 2007 and 2008 and whether they have been paid their dues to date, including the Provident Fund.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: So, where is the Chair or the Vice-Chair?

Hon. Kiptanui: Hon. Deputy Speaker, indeed, the Ministry of Information, Communication and Technology responded and gave us the Statement and after going through it as a Committee, we realised that the information that we were given was not sufficient. Indeed, on Monday, we had a meeting with the Cabinet Secretary in charge of ICT and he promised to give us more information by the end of this week. So, I believe that by Tuesday next week, we should share the information that we have with the Member of Parliament. In a nutshell, the answer given by the Ministry was that all the staff of Telkom was paid. However, we wanted more information and that is why we requested for maybe another week to Tuesday next week.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Janet, I believe you can wait for a little longer for you to get a more detailed report than what the Committee has said they were given. So, Tuesday, it shall be.

I see no more requests or replies to Statements. Next Order.

MOTIONS

REVIEW OF FARM GATE MILK PRICES FOR SMALLHOLDER FARMERS

THAT, aware that milk production is a major source of income for millions of smallholder livestock farmers in the country who account for over 75% of the milk industry's total output; concerned that whereas livestock farming is a tedious and delicate undertaking when compared to farming of other consumable produce, smallholder farmers get a paltry Kshs.27 per litre of milk, way less than what water bottlers get at Kshs60 per litre of water; and further noting that smallholder milk producers encounter numerous obstacles amongst which is the high cost of production but are forced to settle for less when selling their produce; this House urges the Government to urgently intervene with a view

to reviewing farm gate milk prices in order to guarantee smallholder farmers better returns and shield them from endless losses.

(Hon. J.K. Bett on 26.9.2013)

(Resumption of Debate interrupted on 26.9.2013)

Hon. Deputy Speaker: We have the ongoing Motion by hon. Bett. There is a balance of two hours and twenty minutes. Can I see the Members who are interested in contributing and who have not contributed? I hope Members are aware that you do not contribute twice to the same Motion even if it is appearing on a different day. You can only contribute once. Hon. Augustino Neto was on the Floor. He had a balance of seven minutes. He is not there. So, he foregoes those seven minutes.

Hon. Mwaura: On a point of order, hon. Deputy Speaker. I wish to raise a point of order with regard to the way the Motions before the House are drafted. I know that they are ending with the same statement that we have been against; urging the Government to do something. I thought there was a kind of a directive from the Speaker that Motions should be saying that “this House resolves”, so that it is a process of the House. I just wanted to raise that.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Mwaura, that is true. The Chair was actually advising hon. Members to make it stronger than just urging. If hon. Members continue not to take the advice, there is nothing that the Chair can do. So, really on the part of the Chair, we gave the advice and this issue of urging should change. You can urge but they decide not to do anything about it. What we said was that it is good to start with a Motion but if you want to see results, you go for a Bill. For some of them, when you see that they are likely to be Bills that can impact on Kenyans, you do not have to start with a Motion. Some people believe that it must go from a Motion to a Bill.

We have our Legal Department here to tell you whether a similar Bill has been done before. A lot of times, hon. Members feel they want to start off with a Motion, just to train because many of us are new. But really, the legislation that is binding is, of course, when it becomes a Bill.

So, hon. Mwaura, it is true, advice is given but if it is not taken, it does not become the Chair’s problem. There is nothing stopping you from amending what is on the Floor, making it to “resolve” rather than “urging”.

Hon. Mulu: Thank you, hon. Deputy Speaker. I rise to support this Motion because it is very important. Just as hon. Mwaura is saying, it is important that we use the word “resolve”. I was also wondering whether, other than just saying “reviewing the prices”, we actually say “reviewing the prices upwards”. That is really the basic thing.

If you look at milk and what we call the nutritional value of milk - I am talking about milk from a cow, goat and camel. Over time, milk has been used in place of mother’s milk where mothers are not able to allow the young ones to breastfeed. On the basis of that, milk becomes very important to the growth of our young ones. But despite all that, just as the Motion says, you find that Kenyans pay more for water than they pay for milk. I think this is quite unfair. Therefore, based on the nutritional value, it is time the Government makes serious decisions and resolves that milk price should actually be improved.

Secondly, when you look at what it takes to produce a litre of milk, it is a lot of work; starting all the way from buying a cow, feeding it, employing people to harvest that milk and at

the same time, getting people to distribute it. In spite of all these efforts, you realize that the prices of milk are quite low. This has discouraged Kenyans from participating in dairy farming. In our rural areas, dairy farming is providing a lot of employment to our young people. Since they are not able to get white collar jobs, they have actually resorted to dairy farming.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, what I have in mind is the increasing number of zero-grazing units which have created employment for our young people; more so in the area of Napier grass production. There are those who are producing Napier grass so that those who are producing milk can buy from them. There are those who are engaged in distribution. Young people have been employed to take milk to the market using bicycles while some walk to the customers. This has really engaged our young people. So, in terms of employment, dairy farming has contributed a lot in ensuring that our young people have employment.

When you compare what it takes to produce a litre of bottled water as compared to a litre of milk, it is evident that more is required to produce a litre of milk. It is really bad for Kenyans and also our farmers to see Kenyans pay more for water than they pay for a little of milk.

With those points, I support this Motion and recommend that the price of milk is reviewed upwards so that our farmers are able to benefit and at the same time improve their standards of living.

With those remarks, I support the Motion.

Thank you.

Hon. Shill: Thank you, hon. Deputy Speaker. I support the Motion. The hon. Member who has spoken before me said we cannot underrate the nutritional value of milk. There is no day that any Kenyan does not take milk either through tea or any other way. Therefore, milk is a very important component in our life.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, to have a healthy population, increasing production of milk is very vital for us, especially for our children who are growing, the sick people and many others. Kenya is an agricultural country and, therefore, the Government must encourage smallholder livestock farmers to produce milk. But by giving Kshs27 per a litre, the Government is discouraging production of milk. When we talk about cows which produce milk, people think in terms of zero-grazing only.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, I come from a pastoralist area and the economic activity there is keeping of cattle, camel and all those animals. Most people who make products from milk, import powder milk. This shows that they have no faith in our milk production because it gets bad very quickly. Why can we not harness milk and make it into powder and even give it out during famine? Famine relief is given in form of maize only and not any other food items. People should be encouraged to produce milk. The Government should cushion farmers so that they can produce more milk that can even be used during drought. Milk from Turkana, Samburu, Garissa, Wajir and Mandela can be dried so that it can be used during famine. We want to encourage the Government to pay farmers well so that they can produce enough milk.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, water is becoming more expensive than milk, therefore, there must be something very serious. You cannot equate milk with water which is available everywhere. Therefore, it is an abuse when you give farmers Kshs27 for a litre of milk. The Government is involved in double speak, they want to encourage farmers and at the same time they are discouraging them.

Nowadays people are not involved in dairy farming because they feel it is not profitable.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, during the 1970s people tried to have grade cows which could produce a lot of milk. When somebody had grade cows at that time, he or she was considered to be rich. However, these days they have made people very poor because they do not help.

Therefore, I support this Motion. We do not only urge but we want to resolve that milk prices should be increased. We do not mean that when the milk prices are increased, the consumers should be affected. We want the Government to pay more for milk but at the same time sell it at a lower price. This is only meant to encourage farmers so that they can produce milk. Many countries do that in many products. They make sure that farmers are encouraged to produce more maize and beans.

We can also import our produce to the East African and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) regions. The other day when we were in Djibouti we found that they get their vegetables and milk from France and yet we are a member of IGAD. This is our neighbouring country. I think there must be something wrong with our system. People are not being introduced to new markets.

Our emphasis is being busy welcoming people from abroad. They do not even try to market our products. Something must be wrong when other African countries import vegetables, fruits and milk products from Europe and yet we are neighbours.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, I conclude by saying that let us encourage our farmers to produce more and let us not discourage them by paying them less for their produce. Let the milk gate price be increased.

Hon. (Eng.) Gumbo: Thank you, hon. Deputy Speaker, for giving me the chance to support the Motion. However, even as I support the Motion, I think the biggest problem for our country has always been the fact that we sell raw materials. This is why people are busy all over the place but you do not see the returns being commensurate with what they do. It is not just in milk.

I come from an area where fishing is a major industry and it saddens you how our fishermen are exploited. They have to sell raw materials or fish without any attempt to do value addition. This is the case and yet when you import the same fish in canned food, the price sometimes is up to 10 times more.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, even as we support this Motion, I urge hon. Kimaru to be a bit more creative so that we look at those practices from other parts of the world. It is a known fact that milk farmers are exploited because milk is a highly perishable product. Sometimes, the sellers are at the mercy of buyers because if you do not sell it within a particular time, then you lose it and this is the problem.

A lot is happening in the world and as Kenya, we probably need to learn from what other countries do. If you take the case of China, for example, how have they become great? I have no doubt in my mind that at the current rate, in another 10 or 15 years, China will probably be the biggest economy in the world. How has China become great? It is simply because there is an industry in almost every village in China producing one thing or the other. I think it is possible even with this Motion.

What we are looking to achieve through this Motion is for us to make it possible, not necessarily through the Central Government but even through the county governments and village level, to do a bit of value addition. Products like yoghurt are very easy to produce. As hon. Shill has just said, this obsession with selling raw materials is what is making it easy for our producers not maximize on the value of their products.

The sorry state of our country has always been seeing so much misery in the so much abundance. You can look at, for example, the energy sector. I belong to the Departmental Committee on Energy, Communication and Information. Just two days ago, we were looking at the proposals to achieve 5 Gigawatts in the next 40 months and then we said that, that is really a tall order because in the last 52 years, we have only managed to produce 1.6 Gigawatts. It is very ironical that Kenya, being a tropical country occupying over 580,000 square kilometres and receiving abundance sunshine for up to six hours in a day throughout the year, is unable to tap even that available energy to be able to make processing at the village level possible.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, it becomes more contradictory when you compare Kenya with, for example, a temperate country like Germany which is just about 60 per cent the size of Kenya in terms of geographical area. This is the case and yet from solar alone, Germany produces over 25 Gigawatts of electricity which is about 30 times what we produce from all our sources of energy.

It is now time that we started thinking in a different way if we have to achieve the goals of Vision 2030. That is why sometimes I get concerned when I look at the programmes, for example, of institutions that we have entrusted with helping us to harness technology, like the National Council for Science and Technology.

Those of us who have been privileged to get higher education at the university sometimes wonder whether the research that goes on in our university is really appropriate to our country. For example, when you go to a university lecture hall and you are taught about Chaos Theory on how you can achieve order through chaos or the principle of entropy, I think these are grandiose things that mean nothing to our people. We should concentrate on basic things, on how we can have industries at the village level so that when we produce milk, groundnut and maize from our farms, it is possible for us to have a certain amount of value addition and a certain amount of preservation so that the perishability aspect which makes our producers easy targets for the buyers is done away with.

This is when you look at it from the point of view that on a good sunny day every square metre of the land surface of Kenya receives over 1kilowatt of energy. To me, what it requires is a minor mind shift in the way we conduct our research to a level where we can make this research more appropriate to the needs of our people instead of pursuing goals which have been achieved elsewhere and which really have no relevance to what we want to achieve.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, therefore, I would urge that, as hon. Kimaru would want to develop this Motion into a Bill, we look into how we can make good use of the available resources. It is always such a contradiction how there is so much misery in the midst of abundance. This is the story of Kenya, Africa and the Third World generally. It is something that requires boldness and doing things a little bit differently. It is something which requires us to even be courageous in undertaking experiments. Sometimes one of the biggest weaknesses that we have is that we are too timid to even make the initial attempt.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Yes, hon. Ali Rosso Dido.

Hon. Dido: Thank you, hon. Deputy Speaker. I rise to support the Motion.

The question that we should be asking, as hon. Members, is whether agriculture is profitable or whether producing food for the country is a rewarding job. Milk is such an important food item for the young, the old and the hospitalised. Even doctors advise patients to take milk. The question that still begs is what happens if there is no milk.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, I would like to add my voice to what the last speaker said on value addition. We used to have Agricultural Extension Officers, whose principal tasks include

teaching farmers better agricultural practices, one of which is how to add value to their produce. In the world that we live today, there is the saying that the rich are getting richer while the poor are getting poorer. Those in the oil industry get richer every day as the farmer producing milk in Uasin Gishu, Kiambu and Isiolo toils every day. They feel like giving up. It also reminds me of a cow bought at Kshs20,000 in Marsabit and sold at Kshs80,000 in Dagoretti. That is the world that we live in today.

We must look at fair pricing to ensure that farmers can work hard, so that farming can be a full time and rewarding job. In the United States of America (USA), the farming population is only 20 per cent but they feed the 80 per cent population that live in cities. The USA Government is very keen on farmers producing more. Farmers in the USA are given subsidies to ensure that they do not incur any losses. It is only in Kenya where we hear of milk glut. In itself, the phenomenon challenges the laws of economics. It is better to have a surplus than to have a deficiency. As Kenyans, we should be able to encourage our farmers and producers in other industries to produce more, so that it can be easier for us to grow our economy.

This Motion must go beyond milk to address issues of agriculture holistically. Although it talks about milk and how dairy farmers are being discouraged, the heart of it is that we are making agriculture a less serious economic business. We are a food deficient country but we are still losing farmland to flower farming and real estate development. So, one must look at the depth and the breath of this Motion to think of how we can keep more people in farming since 80 per cent of our population is found in the rural areas. Twenty five per cent of our GDP is from agriculture. So, if agriculture is not profitable, how do we keep this huge part of our population engaged?

With those remarks, I beg to support.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Yes, hon. Serem.

Hon. Serem: Thank you, hon. Deputy Speaker. I rise to support the Motion.

First, I want to give a few facts about dairy farming. Thirty nine per cent of the milk in this country is processed by Brookside Dairy Limited. Thirty one per cent is processed by New KCC. Thirteen per cent is processed by Spin Knit Dairy, while nine per cent is processed by Githunguri. This totals to about 80 per cent. Fifty-three per cent of the milk produced in this country comes from the Rift Valley region, while 25 per cent comes from the Central region.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, I am a serious farmer. I am very discouraged to note that a litre of water in a supermarket goes for Kshs70 shillings while a litre of milk goes for Kshs20 shillings. This is very discouraging. When the prices of milk are increased, many people go to the streets to protest but nobody protects farmers. So, we are urging the Government to increase the prices of milk and give a subsidy, so that the poor can afford it. Our interest is in the farmer who spends so much money to produce a litre of milk only for him to be underpaid.

The most important way of assisting farmers is through value addition. Another way of doing this is through storage. So much milk of serious farmers like me goes to waste because most of the processers take milk in the morning. In the evening the milk goes to waste. If we were to assist farmers, we should do the right thing. When I was growing up, 80 per cent of the land in my constituency was put to dairy farming. We now have only 20 per cent of land in that area under dairy farming. The rest of the land is being used for tea growing. If the trend continues, and watch my lips, we are going to import milk in the near future and seriously at a higher price. If I am wrong, you can go to the supermarket and you will see imported milk mostly from Egypt. The Egyptians use the waters that come from our neighbourhood, that is, Lake Victoria and River Nile. If we are serious that, indeed, we want to protect our farmers, then

the price of milk must be increased. The only option is to support this Motion. Let us support our farmers so that tomorrow morning we do not end up importing milk from our neighbours.

Hon. Opiyo: Hon. Deputy Speaker, I rise to support this Motion. How I wish the House would appreciate the principles of free market that operate in our country. However, the Government should come up with certain strategies that will encourage our farmers to continue with milk production. We should start opening doors for export market for our milk and in doing so we should organize our small holder farmers in small groups or societies so that they can access that export market in those groups.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, I also wish the Government, through the Department of Co-operatives, would help farmers to acquire cooling plants so that they are able to bargain for better prices for their milk. We know that milk is such a perishable product and sometimes farmers are forced to sell their milk at such low prices such as Kshs27 per litre just because of the fear that their product will perish if they insisted on better prices.

As country, we must encourage farmers to do their farming and also exist in co-operative societies. It will be the business of those co-operatives to bargain for the better prices of milk that we envisage. We know that the cost of feeds and medication for livestock is high. If we continue exposing our farmers to extremely low milk prices, the farmers will get discouraged and that will lower milk production. We will then start thinking of importing milk. So, the Government must take conscious measures to ensure that we encourage the farmers by helping them bargain for better prices so that they feel that dairy farming is actually an undertaking that is worthwhile.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, I think that the best way to go, as my colleague hon. Eng. Gumbo had tried to illustrate, would be to start thinking of adding value to our milk before we sell it. That way the farmers will get the maximum out of it. We should actually shift from simply producing and selling raw milk and expect the highest amount of money from it.

The sub-sector of grains has got an intervention by way of the National Cereals and Produce Board (NCPB) where the Government buys from farmers at an agreeable price - a price that is almost acceptable. However, when you come to the dairy sector, the farmers are left to produce and they are left at the mercy of private milk processors who essentially would want to make the most out of the poor farmers. I wish we had an intervention such as that of the NCPB where the Government has an agency that buys milk from farmers at an acceptable price and then sells to whichever milk processors. This way, the farmers will be cushioned from exploitative tendencies of the private milk processors. If we are going to have the milk processing plants at the village level in all our villages where milk is produced, then the farmers will feel much safer and they will be excited to produce more milk. We will not be concerned that they could be discouraged and therefore stop producing milk.

This country, through its leadership and of course all of us must start making conscious attempts to cushion farmers because our farmers will lose interest in dairy farming and milk production. This will be very shameful because we boast as an agricultural country. Sooner or later farmers will stop producing milk and they will venture into other areas that may promise better returns.

With those many remarks, I wish to support this Motion.

Hon. Elmi: Thank you, hon. Deputy Speaker. I also want to support this Motion because it is very important. However, I want to bring another aspect of this Motion in order to support farmers across the country. Hon. Serem, a few minutes ago, said that 79 per cent of milk in Kenya is produced in Rift Valley and Central provinces. We know for a fact that 70 per cent of livestock comes from the pastoral areas. The statistics that he has is actually the black hole of

statistics of this country where parts of this country or the Kenya that we consider as Kenya is the Kenya covered by the railway line. That has to change.

There are farmers in northern Kenya and southern rangelands who keep animals but they do not have the support that the other farmers have. The Vision 2030 says that for any development to take place, we need a minimum foundation. We also have the ASAL Policy of 2012.

Security is absolutely necessary for any production or development to take place in the north. So, how are those farmers expected to take milk to the consumers? While we are building access roads to people's farms and factories, the Class A Roads in northern Kenya are not yet done. So, that population that forms 15 per cent of this country and occupies 70 per cent of our land mass does not even factor in the market. So, infrastructure is key, if those farmers are going to market their animals and milk and, therefore, be part of this country's economy. At the moment the milk is wholesome and they use it for subsistence.

With regard to education, there is 80 per cent illiteracy in the ASAL areas. The shocking thing is that Kiambu has 10 times the number of adult teachers Tarbaj has. Now, Tarbaj Constituency has 93 per cent illiteracy. So, there is a mismatch.

Education and literacy are very important. For you to market your milk, you have to join co-operatives. That is why hon. Serem is able to quote the figures of those co-operatives; there is a single place where you can count how many litres were sold and who sold what. How do people form co-operatives? That is also a fundamental necessity if people are going to market their milk. Those fundamental foundations that are required for any development are absolutely necessary in those places. I want to support hon. Shill when he says that when we have plenty of milk across this country - we have seen milk being poured - we must turn it into powder and use it during the shortages. Why do we have a national grain reserve for maize and beans instead of a national food reserve that can preserve meat and milk in order to help our farmers across the country to increase the prices that need to be increased?

This is a very important Motion, but all the aspects that are going to support the farmer must be brought out to ensure that we maximize, produce and give them competitive prices. Without competitive prices farmers will remain poor. We will have this huge divide between the very rich and the very poor people and, in the words of the late J.M. Kariuki, be a country of 10 millionaires and 10 million beggars. Now, you can multiply that by 100 since that time. That will continue. The backbone of the economy of this country are the small-scale farmers in agriculture, yet what we see within that subsection that is not well supported--- There is even another group that has for over 50 years been left behind and needs to be supported.

Thank you and I support.

Hon. B.K. Bett: Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I rise to support the Motion. This is a Motion that supports the common man. The issue of milk production in Kenya must be looked into quite critically because it is a high nutritional commodity which should fetch high returns. The people who produce milk are hard working Kenyans, who are helping this country to have economic stability and enhance citizens' economic welfare. They must be motivated and have reasonable returns. This is a high potential sector which must be supported through deliberate efforts, so that more people can venture into it.

I also want to point out that if this sector is supported, it will address the problem of food insecurity that we have in Kenya. The same will also assist us in solving the unemployment problem that we have. It will also assist us to eradicate poverty that we have in Kenya. If the

Government puts in place deliberate efforts to support these farmers, I am sure that farming in Kenya will be a profession which most people will prefer to venture into.

As we debate this Motion, we have also to realise that a healthy nation is a wealthy nation. So, as we try to solve the poverty problem in Kenya, we must look into this sector because it accommodates almost all Kenyans. I support and I thank the Mover of the Motion, my friend, hon. Bett, who is also my namesake. I want to urge all of us to support this Motion alongside other agricultural activities like maize and potatoes production and even horticulture, so that we can improve the welfare of the common *mwanaanchi* and our nation. This will enable us to have a bright future for the next generation.

With those few remarks, I support.

Hon. Waititu: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. I also rise to support this noble Motion on milk. When we touch milk in this country, we are touching the hearts of many people in our country. As one of my colleagues has said, in the past milk could feed and educate children when the Government was concerned about the production and the marketing of milk. I am a Member of the Committee on Agriculture, Livestock and Co-operatives, and we are looking into this issue closely. We visited Kwale District and we were shocked to see milk going to waste.

As the Government, we need to look at all the 47 counties. We know very well that the Government is now devolved and it is the duty of the devolved governments to see that there is no wastage of milk. It is the duty of the governors to build proper roads, so that when farmers produce their milk, they can access markets. As we look into the issues of county governments, the governors and the Senators should see how well we can manage milk that is produced. I know that some of them are beneficiaries of a milk feeding programme that was there during the Moi era. I know Members like hon. Kajuju, hon. Kanini Kega and the Chair of the Committee on Education, Research and Technology have benefitted from the Nyayo Feeding Programme. Even hon. Bett, my friend here, is saying that he was a beneficiary.

We need to look into this issue carefully, put it in our systems and see how we can feed school children with milk. I am happy I can see some school children at our public gallery. We should feed children with the milk that is going to waste. Maybe the CDF can be increased a bit, so that we can have the school feeding programme. The 47 Women Representatives can be given the duty to go round the schools and create markets for the milk farmers. That will be a good job for them. We are with them here in Parliament and they need to be busy. We can fund them so that they can control all the milk produced in all the 47 counties.

Hon. Kajuju: On a point of order, hon. Deputy Speaker. I truly appreciate the sentiments of my defender in Parliament, hon. Waititu. But, I think as County Members of Parliament, we are busy enough. We will appreciate also because we are the mothers of this country to carry out that role. I do not think it is in order for him to attempt to create for us a job because we already have jobs that we are doing.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: I think that is in order. Hon. Waititu, hon. Members of Parliament from the counties are hon. Members of Parliament like you.

Hon. Waititu: Thank you hon. Deputy Speaker. Hon. Kajuju, I stand corrected. As an hon. Member of this Departmental Committee on Agriculture, Livestock and Co-operatives, we sat down with our new chairman to look at how we could properly look at this milk issue. I know it hurts a farmer when he produces milk and does not have a market for it. I am looking at North Eastern and the Rift Valley regions, and even Eastern Province, where farmers produce milk but they do not have access to markets. When we come together as a nation and look at this

issue of milk, the production is very good but there is no market. Where do we take milk after producing it?

Hon. Deputy Speaker, hon. Shill stood here and said that, if we can have a milk factory in each county to process excess milk into milk powder, that will help Kenyans to market their milk in powder form.

The Mover of this Motion, who is also a very good friend of mine and a farmer too, asked me to tell my Committee of Agriculture that even if milk is devolved to the counties, we should also, as a committee visit every county, so that we can see what our farmers are going through.

With those remarks, I support and think hon. Members will also support this noble Motion, move forward and save this country from lack of market for milk.

Thank you.

Hon. Bunyasi: Thank you, hon. Deputy Speaker. I rise to contribute and support this Motion in principle. It is a great idea to seek to increase farmer income for our farmers, large and small because that is how we are going to grow our economy. I am concerned with the strategy that is proposed. If the Government sets the price, it must be prepared to pack it. Otherwise, it is useless to set prices as nobody will honour them. The prices that will be set will then be subjected to market forces of supply and demand.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, my colleagues have raised very many and useful suggestions, revolving mostly around value addition and I fully support that. We need to put into context the value addition strategies. What need is a value chain approach. You may have value addition proposals and strategies, but they need to be linked to a chain. It is possible within the domain of government to look at issues of value change. I think it is no longer the domain of Government to fix prices that are not able to back the supplies that come to the market at the prices that they have fixed. We know that for a fact, because that it is where we came from during the early years of Independence; we inherited from colonial regimes those guaranteed minimum prices which later became impossible to back because we could not guarantee them in the market.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, dairy farmers are particularly vulnerable because of what has been mentioned. The issue of perishability of commodities, the difficulties of transportation costs and, of course, lack of economies of scale in marketing reduce the bargaining power of small-scale farmers. I would call upon my colleague, who has raised this issue--- I think the best we can do on this matter is to seek from the Government an approach that seeks to enhance the value chain in each region.

Even our colleagues from the pastoral communities have camels and goats that have got their own value. My farmers in Busia, Nambale, have their values. For example, as I speak now, most of our milk is supplied from Nandi. The reason we are supplied from Nandi is that they are able to produce it much more cheaply than we do; they can transport it to Busia and sell it. I think it would be better to look at the value chain in each of these areas; solutions will be different. Some have reached the surplus level that can enable them to move up the value addition chain that has been suggested. It includes high value products as well as the powder milk type.

Therefore, I would urge the Mover of the Motion to consider that we ask the national Government to have a careful look at value chains in the different agro-ecological zones, or, perhaps, even counties. Even though the function is devolved, it is worth having a national outlook and looking at what might be the policy implication at the national level.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Order! Order, hon. Members! The level of consultations is going high; this is the trend since yesterday. If you do not allow hon. Members to contribute, you know

the consequences – you will be thrown out of the Chamber. Please, lower the level of consultations.

Hon. Bunyasi: Thank you, hon. Deputy Speaker.

Therefore, even though this is a devolved function, the national Government has got responsibility to set policy, and deal with the fear that we had expressed - possible imports from distant countries into our market. We need to look at this strictly. The reason is that, you cannot do this for every commodity. Milk is different; it is crucial and has high demand elasticity. It means that as incomes grow, the demand for milk grows. This is demand for both raw milk and its various products. So, it is a commodity that grows with the economy. It is a commodity that has far reaching implications like job creation and enrichment of our diets; there is a good reason to look at milk, unlike, maybe, other commodities.

So, I support this Motion strongly. I would like to urge my colleagues that we look at it a bit more broadly. We can look at the value chain for milk and this is going to be very important in all our counties in this country.

Hon. Aden: Thank you, hon. Deputy Speaker. I rise to support the Motion. Supporting this Motion is supporting our farmers. I must say that Kenya is a growing economy. One of the opportunities that we have in this country is to invest in our agriculture sector and ensure that it succeeds. In this very competitive world, where food prices continue to rise, we should ensure that we support our farmers, so that Kenya becomes a surplus food producing country.

*[The Deputy Speaker
(Hon. (Dr.) Laboso) left the Chair]*

*[The Temporary Deputy Speaker
(Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu) took the Chair]*

On the issue at hand today, supporting our dairy farmers, I want to say that there is a paradox in terms of the prices the farmer is offered for a litre of milk compared to the price at which a litre of milk sells at the supermarkets. Farmers are offered Kshs27 per litre at the gate of their farms; the price of the very same milk, even for half a litre, is Kshs50 in the supermarkets. This means, therefore, that a litre of milk actually costs Kshs100 on the shelves of the supermarkets.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I just want to correct a perception earlier given by some colleagues, that water is actually cheaper than milk. I do not agree with this view because a half-litre of Milk is actually going for Kshs50 and a litre is, therefore, Kshs100.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, we need to ask ourselves, what exactly is happening. A middleman somewhere is taking the benefit that the otherwise very hardworking farmer should have taken. So, at the price of Kshs27 the middleman or the businessman in the chain of supply of milk is the one who makes the product expensive.

In a free economy, where there is a willing buyer willing seller, the Government might not be able to do much to fix the price of milk and say that it will raise it from 27 per cent to 50 per cent. Indeed, doing so will be giving advantage to the middleman, who will increase the price further and thereby affect the common *mwananchi* and the child who is out there, and who is supposed to be bought milk at an affordable price. A litre of milk will then go beyond Kshs100 in the supermarket and that will be very expensive. What exactly can we do?

I urge hon. Members and the policy makers of this Government to consider investing in milk processing plants in all the milk producing regions. Where I come from where we have a large number of cattle, camels and goats, we should ensure that specific policies are developed to establish milk processing and packaging outlets in all the areas. We can target the wards. Those are the ones that produce a lot of milk. In every ward headquarters, there should be a milk processing and packaging plant owned by a farmers association. That way, the farmer will not have to sell his litre of milk at Kshs27, but will be able to sell it at a much higher price because of the value addition that will have been put by the middlemen.

The issue is not to ask the Government to increase the gate price of milk from the farmer; as I said earlier on, price is determined by willing buyer willing seller mechanism. I do not think there is much that can be done in that. Even if that is done, the middlemen in the chain will further increase the price and this will not help the common *mwananchi*.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, we are now making a lot of noise in the country about inflation. One of the products whose prices has really risen right now is milk. While I very strongly support that we, indeed, ensure that value is given to our farmers and not middlemen who do not do much other than just packing the processed milk into lorries and transporting it, we need to organize our farmers to form co-operatives that will be supported to run milk processing plants for the market.

In other words, we should break the long chain of middlemen and bring the farmers closer to the market. The farmer should be the one fixing the price at Kshs100 and not Kshs27. I think that is the best approach that we can adopt to assist our farmers to get better returns for the good work that they do.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, with those few remarks, I support this Motion.

Hon. Barua: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. I rise to support this Motion by hon. Bett. To me, it is very timely. I would like to say that this Motion is very important. It applies to many other products in the agriculture sector like French beans, bananas and potatoes.

I would like to say that these farm products have been used by middlemen for many years to benefit themselves to the detriment of farmers. It is quite unfortunate that the Kshs27 paid per litre of milk as the farm price is not able to meet the production cost. This in essence has discouraged farmers from venturing into dairy farming.

In Gichugu Constituency which I represent in Kirinyaga County, we have many dairy farmers but they are reducing by the day. This is because dairy farming is not benefiting them. Many areas of Kenya have been supported in terms of their local economies by coffee and tea farming. As of now, the family farm size is reducing from an average of 10 acres per family to two acres, and in some cases one acre per family. With one acre per family, it is not possible for somebody to plant coffee or tea because it cannot be cost effective. So, it is only wise for such farmers to venture into agricultural practices that employ intensive agriculture. Dairy farming is one of them.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, dairy farming, if well managed, can secure employment for poor people. Right now, youths with small acreages are not able to sustain their livelihoods because even if they try to keep animals, they cannot break even.

I would like to call upon the Government of Kenya to provide to the local farmers better animal breeds; that is grade cows which produce a lot of milk. It should also improve the agricultural extension services, so that farmers can benefit from those services. As hon. Shill has said, milk is produced in all parts of the country. It is produced in both pastoralist and crop-

growing areas. It is better to produce excess than have a deficit. In the case of excess production of milk, I propose that we practise value addition, so that we can get more money for our milk.

I support the comment by Abdikadir that we should not create a situation where we raise the price of milk products to the benefit of middlemen. I want to propose that once we increase the unit cost of milk from Kshs27 upwards, the Government should come up with a way of guiding the cost of the products in the supermarkets. This is because we may end up increasing the production cost. At the same time, since we are in a free market economy, the middlemen and businessmen will end up increasing the price. To avoid a situation where a litre of milk in a supermarket costs Kshs100, the Government should come up with an innovative way of capping the price at which milk can be sold in a supermarket.

Further to this, I would like to say that for us to be able to increase milk production in our various constituencies, it is paramount that we improve our road network. Right now, in many areas, like where I come from, it is difficult to transport milk from one point to another. Milk is a perishable product, and that is why farmers are vulnerable; they accept whatever price they are given. Access roads to agricultural areas are important. Every part of the constituency or this country should be made accessible not necessarily by tarmac road. We should ensure that our constituencies have a network of all-weather roads.

It is important to say that farmers of whatever product should be protected. We should be able to protect French beans and banana farmers from middlemen. That is the situation that prevails on the ground now. Our farmers in the village can sell a big banana for Kshs50 because there is no market now.

So, since agriculture has been devolved, I would like to call upon the county governments headed by the governors to work on a system of having commodity markets in all the counties to ensure that our products are not bought at a throw away price. Therefore, I support the Motion by hon. Bett, which seeks to have the farm prices of milk raised from Kshs27 per litre.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Yes, hon. Roselinda Soipan Tuya.

Hon. (Ms.) Tuya: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. I stand to support the Motion. I would like to start by saying that it is a very important and relevant Motion to Kenya at this time when we are all talking about the need to enhance our Gross Domestic Product. Focussing on one of those very easily forgotten sectors is consolidating our efforts.

As we know, milk is very important food and commercial product. The high cost of farm inputs facing small-scale milk producers comes out as a very strong deterrence to them in milk production. We know that besides being a product of commercial value, milk is also staple food for some communities, if not for many communities in Kenya. I must say that I grew up on milk. So, besides being of commercial value, milk is of nutritional value. It is, indeed, a very important food product.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I would like to add another perspective in supporting this Motion. Looking at it from a gender perspective, women in this country are at the centre of food production in many respects. For example, in the agriculture sector, women are at the centre of food production yet they own none of the agricultural assets or even the products that come from their food production business. Milk is very unique. It is the only product over which women in the rural areas have full control. They know how much milk should go out for sale and how much should remain at home to feed their children. I am looking at the Motion from that perspective, because milk sector is very important for economic empowerment of women. We

know that women form a large percentage of the small-scale farmers focusing on milk production.

Therefore, in support of this Motion, I would say that besides just reviewing the prices of milk, and in addition to value addition and improvement of the sector, we also need to ensure that prices of farm inputs are subsidised. We need to support small-scale farmers by providing them with milk coolers and the necessary education in order for them to improve their yield. As I said, it is a key contributor to enhancement of our GDP. Focussing on this sector means job creation and economic empowerment for women, the youth and the marginalised communities in this country, who focus on milk production. Talking of marginalised communities, it is common knowledge that pastoral communities have livestock farming as their economic mainstay and means of livelihood. These are people who are marginalised in many respects.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, focussing on the milk sector and appreciating its contribution to the GDP will have a ripple effect if we make sure that infrastructure in milk-producing areas is improved, and make sure that dairy farmers are empowered to improve their yield as they continue to make their contribution to economic development.

With those few remarks, I beg to support the Motion.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Yes, hon. Kangogo Bowen.

Hon. Bowen: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. I stand to support the Motion and congratulate the hon. Member for bringing it to the House.

There are very many countries which have succeeded in dairy farming, especially in milk production. The economies of a small country like Fiji as well as Australia and Denmark have been spurred by milk production and export. We cannot talk of youth employment if we do not revive the dairy subsector in the country and increase the prices of milk. The Ministry of Agriculture has focussed more on wheat, tea and coffee production. They have provided so many subsidies in those areas. The former KCC collapsed in the 1990s due to debts, and the Government has not even written off those debts. However, the Government has done a lot of subsidising in the coffee and tea subsectors. They have even written off debts incurred by the players in those subsectors in order to revive them. On the other hand, the former KCC, which ran the sole Government plant for milk processing, was left to collapse.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, as many of my colleagues said, milk is a source of income for people in the rural areas. I come from a pastoral community where we mostly survive on milk and meat. However, we do not have a market for the milk. Farmers spend most of their resources on their cows but they do not benefit from milk. The Jubilee Government talked about ensuring that we have a double-digit economic growth rate, but this cannot be realised until we revive plants like the KCC to enable us generate foreign exchange and revive our economy.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, in order for us to revive and build the milk industry, we need to look at the milk cooling systems. The Government needs to do something in every constituency. We need to have a milk cooling system in every constituency, so that we avoid wastage of milk. This is because there are some areas in the country where roads are not accessible and so milk, being a perishable commodity, does not get to the market in good time. If we can have those cooling plants, farmers will be able to store this milk for a while before they take it to the factories.

Many of my colleagues have talked about water. They have said that water costs more than milk in this country. I do not think that is in order. The Government needs to do something about this in order to benefit farmers. In order to revive the milk industry in Kenya we also need

to look into the issue of corruption. There are so many brokers in the dairy subsector, and so farmers do not get anything. The brokers are the ones benefiting from this milk.

Look at a person who does yoghurt processing, he or she buys milk from the farmers at Kshs20 a litre, yet the price of a 500 ml packet of yoghurt is very high. We need to check the corruption in the industry. We know that KCC went down because of corruption.

If the Government increases the price of milk, I think farmers will benefit more and we will have our youth employed because our industries will grow. We will have a lot of income generated for the farmers, which they will use to sponsor their children to schools. The economy of this country will grow because of the foreign exchange earnings.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): What is your point of order, hon. Kathuri?

Hon. Murungi: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. I was requesting, pursuant to Standing Order No.97--- Noting the mood of the House, that as many Members as possible---

(Loud consultations)

Hon. (Maj-Gen.) Nkaisery: No! No!

Hon. Murungi: I was requesting hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker whether we can reduce the time to at least five minutes, so that as many Members as possible can contribute to this Motion. Issues to do with dairy farming concern many Members. I kindly request you to give us five minutes each to air our views on this important Motion.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Hon. Members there is a request from the hon. Member that we reduce the time allocated to five minutes. Are we in agreement?

Hon. Members: Yes!

Hon. (Maj-Gen.) Nkaisery: After me, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): After you, I agree.

Hon. (Maj-Gen.) Nkaisery: Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I want to support this Motion and also thank the Mover, hon. Bett, for bringing it. When you look at Kenya, 70 per cent of the land mass is occupied by pastoralists. The mainstay of pastoralists is livestock keeping. They produce a lot of milk and beef. For a very long time this subsector has been given a raw deal by the Government. I hope that the Jubilee administration will look into livestock farming, if it is, indeed, serious that it wants to improve the economy of this country. This will enable us produce a lot of milk and beef. If the Government is serious, it should look for markets close home. Take the example of the Middle East. We could have a big market there for our milk.

I think hon. Bett had this in mind when he said that the Government should intervene and help rural farmers to produce enough milk and look for markets. The Government could target the Middle East market. With the production of a lot of milk, we will be able to sell more of it at an affordable price. Five years ago I initiated a milk project in my constituency using the CDF money. Rural women in my constituency were very poor, but when I initiated this project, now these ladies have what they call “Kajiado Central Milk Co-operative”. This is an organization led by the Kajiado Central women. These ladies are able to sell 2,000 litres a day at Kshs20 a litre. We forced New KCC to give us more money per litre and now these ladies are producing about 20,000 litres per month. They are now very rich women. If only the Government could intervene as a regulator, rein in the big sharks and let them pay more, things will be good. I like the words

of the hon. Member that the Government should intervene so that rural farmers are paid a little bit more than Kshs27.

I want to urge this House and the Jubilee Government that we should look for a milk market within the region. The pastoralists have been given a raw deal for a very long time. If each county government sets up a milk headquarters I am sure farmers will produce a lot of milk and even decide the price for their milk.

The only thing we need to do as a Government is to regulate the market. The Government should give the amount of money that is needed. If we are selling what---

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Time is up; Hon. Joseph M'eruaki M'uthari.

Hon. M'uthari: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. I rise to support this important Motion, aware that milk and the whole livestock subsector are very important. Our country, Kenya, at times I see it as a land of contradictions. Sometimes we talk of excess milk and at other times we have shortages. We urge the Government to put more effort and facilitate the farmers, so that the prices of milk and milk products can be improved.

Improvement of the prices will lead to encouragement of more farmers to invest in farming. As it has been said by many hon. Members, those countries that have been more serious have been able to stimulate production by encouraging the producers. When the producers are encouraged then there is more production, and we can invest in energy for processing.

In our country, at times we are faced with the problem of drought, or other disasters, and we have to get food from outside. Sometimes, we try to get some of the relief agencies, like the World Food Programme, to provide commodities which are not available within the country.

If we have investors encouraged by the Government through public-private sector partnership they will establish factories. Such factories will make various milk products such as powder milk, which can be used here locally and be exported.

It is high time we, as a country, gave priority to where we need to invest; what are our areas of competence? Our country depends mostly on agriculture and this is where most of our people are employed. When you look at it, what is the level of investment by the Government in this sector? At times, we put our efforts where they do not pay. The Government should invest in both the central and county governments. Resources should also be invested at the local level; in various regions we should have investors being encouraged and supported to establish these factories. At the same time, the farm gate prices of commodities like milk should be improved even if it means the Government investing and using resources to supplement the farmers, let that be done.

This will encourage more farmers; if it is dairy farming, it will become a profitable activity. When it becomes profitable, I am sure many people will invest in the whole chain, from production, processing and marketing. We will increase the number of people working in this subsector. The Government could also buy this milk and give it to the school feeding programme. The most important thing is to encourage the processing of milk products.

When milk products are processed, there will be a market for them; this enables us to increase and improve the prices given to the farmers. Once this is done there will be a multiplier effect, and more people will be employed in this particular subsector. We will export milk products to our neighbouring countries. Our missions abroad will not only market the country, but will also assist us in the marketing of milk products where they are stationed. This will improve the welfare and livelihood of our farmers, who are involved in dairy keeping.

This will make our country's economy grow, considering also that of late we have started discovering some minerals. What we need to do is put more efforts. The majority of our farmers keep livestock, but because of the poor prices this---

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Hon. Members, let us get ready for the five minutes each. Yes, hon. Florence Kajuju.

Hon. (Ms.) Kajuju: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. I rise to support this Motion brought by hon. James Kimaru. In doing so, I take notice of the fact that the majority of the Kenyans in dairy farming are small-scale farmers.

As Kenyans, we know that most of our farms nowadays are small as a result of a lot of adjudication and sub-divisions. We find that most of the farmers concentrate on zero grazing among other activities to be able to meet their basic needs. Therefore, if our population relies mostly on milk production then it is only important that they are properly remunerated to be able to get a fair return on the investment that they have made. It really hurts to see that a farmer can be paid Kshs.27 per litre of milk considering the input he makes in order to get that one litre of milk. Really, there is no value addition but still we expect to be able to better the lives of our farmers.

I appreciate our President, hon. Uhuru Kenyatta, for pledging to give women and the youth Kshs.6 billion from the *Uwezo* Fund. My understanding of the *Uwezo* Fund is that it is meant to boost women and youth who are engaged in small-scale farming. I think these are some of the efforts that the Government is making. If the Government was to invest in such projects and farmers did not get a return on the investment, then the amount in such projects would be lost, since there would be no income for farmers.

The gap that exists between farmers and the Government is due to lack of regulations and laws which should be in place to protect and cushion the small-scale farmers in their business. You will see that farmers mostly sell their produce to the middlemen; it means that they cannot get a fair price for their produce. If we have proper laws in place, then farmers will be protected and will get proper earnings.

I, therefore, say that this is the kind of a Motion that should be translated into a Bill in due course, so that we can get laws that will protect our farmers. This is important now that the Constitution recognizes the fact that every person has a right to invest and work in a free market. We should encourage farmers, especially the women--- I appreciate what hon. Waititu was saying, that we can really bring up this aspect of our economy.

It would be a great idea if we were to have the laws and regulations that will cater for dairy farming. This is a Motion that is very important to the lives of Kenyans. This is the way we should go as the fathers and mothers of the nation and as the Republic of Kenya.

Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Yes, hon. James Opiyo Wandayi.

Hon. Wandayi: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. Firstly, I wish to support this Motion even though I have different views on how we need to progress with this matter going forward. I remember having talked to hon. James Bett just before he introduced this Motion and I was very impressed by his concerns. This is a very important Motion.

From the outset, I must state that I do not believe that the Government needs to meddle in commercial business. Two, also to reiterate that the Government's cardinal role is to provide an enabling environment for private businesses to thrive. That is very important. One of these roles in terms of providing an enabling environment is to ensure that there is a level playing ground. That is very critical if businesses are to thrive and compete equally. I am sure the Government

will not come in tomorrow and fix the farm gate price for milk. That obviously is illegal and cannot happen in a liberalized market environment such as ours, but the Government needs to play its role in terms of supporting farmers by providing the dairy farmers with proper extension services which are geared towards addressing their final growth margins.

The Government needs to ensure that dairy farmers have easy access to affordable farm inputs. This will go a long way in ensuring that at the end of the day, when you balance the cost of production and the output, then the farmer has something reasonable to take home. That is very important, but more importantly, in the dairy sector, the Government needs to work on the marketing channels. What has happened in the past is that the small dairy farmers have been exploited by the so-called middlemen. If the Government can come in through a framework, either legal or obligatory, that can ensure that the marketing channels are clear to everyone, that the small-scale farmers wherever they are, after sweating in their farms to produce milk, can access those markets and get requisite prices for their milk, it will go a long way in addressing the concerns and the needs of these very useful and important farmers in our country.

I am sure that this country does not have enough milk for its consumption. Therefore, it is unreasonable for the small-scale dairy farmers to continue incurring losses yet the demand for milk outstrips the supply. What logic would dictate that farmers get lower prices for their milk when the demand is higher than the supply? Therefore, it means that this is basically artificially manipulated to enrich a few people in the value chain at the expense of the primary farmer who toils in the fields to produce the milk. Therefore, I support this Motion and I would want to urge my friend, hon. Bett, to take it up from here and introduce a Bill that will ensure that sanity prevails in this vital sector.

Hon. Murungi: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to air my views and contribute to this important Motion. From the outset, I support this Motion as moved by hon. J.K. Bett. The dairy sector is one of the key sectors that drive our economy and which many Kenyans, especially the small-scale farmers depend on for their livelihood. I note with great concern that it is key to food security in this country. It contributes to the creation of employment and income generation. I note that most of the rural farmers are small-scale farmers and this is what they depend on. The income they get is what they use to support the education of their children.

By supporting this Motion, we will be moving a notch higher to safeguard the interests of our constituents and our poor farmers who are languishing in poverty. It is regrettable to note that in my constituency, we do not get the Kshs27 that hon. Kimaru has quoted here. We get as low as Kshs24 and Kshs23 per litre of milk. There are many dairy societies which were started even before I was born and they have never been able to help the poor farmers. The cartels in the dairy industry are so entrenched and because agriculture has been devolved, it is high time we tasked the county governments to see how they can support farmers in this sector. The challenges that the farmers have are especially the poor road networks. These are the bottlenecks. These are the issues the milk markets lump to fix their prices. Some of the roads are impassable and it is a big problem for the milk to get to the market. The county governments are playing a key role in developing the county roads, so that the farmers can access the markets with ease.

Another problem that we have in the dairy sector is the marketing of milk. A lot of middlemen are interested in this sector. Therefore, through the introduction of good marketing strategies, our farmers will be in a better position to earn proper benefits that will enable them to have a decent life. During my campaigns, I was interested to see how we can do value addition to our products. Dairy farming is one of the key sectors that if we do good value addition, our

farmers can benefit. Instead of selling raw milk, we can have ghee, butter and cheese and farmers can get good profits for their product.

I thank hon. Kimaru for this initiative and he should move forward and come up with a Bill that will enable us to entrench good systems that will take care of our dairy farmers.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Hon. Patrick Keturet ole Ntutu.

Hon. ole Ntutu: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. My names are Patrick Keturet ole Ntutu. I know it is a little bit hard to pronounce the second name. Let me begin by supporting this Motion, which is very important and has come at the right time. I want to thank my good friend, hon. James Bett, for bringing the Motion.

In this country, the only commodity whose price has never gone up is milk. Honestly, when you look at all the other commodities in this country, their prices have been going up except the price of milk. I support this Motion because 90 per cent of my constituents are livestock farmers. Most of the Members who have spoken have said that milk sells at Kshs27 per litre. In my constituency, it sells at Kshs19 per litre. It is a pity and a shame for our country to see that water is more expensive than milk. We all know that milk has more nutrients than water, yet as livestock farmers, we continue to suffer because of these low prices.

One of my colleagues said that one litre of milk in Nairobi costs Kshs100. That is true because the 500ml packet costs Ksh50. But how much do they pay the dairy farmer for one litre? In fact, they pay very little money.

So, we think the Government can increase the price of milk. But what we are saying as pastoralists is this: We should have three things, if the Government wants to help farmers. One, let us put coolers in our local areas, our constituencies and wards to store milk. Secondly, we should put up milk processing plants where milk can be processed. The same thing should apply to packaging plants. That is the only way the value of our milk will increase. But just saying that we must increase the price is a tall order.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I also support this Motion because the majority of people in our population consume milk. Many farmers are suffering. I support this Motion because it can employ our local people if the prices are increased. They say that agriculture is the backbone of our economy.

If the Government is really serious in improving our economy, it must address the plight of our farmers. That is the only way of going forward. I know that His Excellency the President in his Jubilee manifesto said that we should start giving children who are in school milk. I also want to urge our President not to go back on that promise because it will help farmers. The Government can buy milk from our farmers. That will contribute to stabilizing price levels.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I think what my good friend hon. Bett can do is to bring a Bill that can address the issue of prices of that commodity. Just urging the Government is not enough. Many Motions have come before this august House, but at the end of it all, we continue saying “urging the Government”. Which Government is this that is not going to do what we do in this House? We should bring a Bill to this House to implement what we have discussed.

Thank you.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Hon. Members, there is a proposed amendment by hon. (Ms.) Wanjiku Muhia. I now call upon hon. Ms. Muhia to move her amendment.

Hon. (Ms.) Muhia: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. As I support this Motion, I feel that there are some gaps that we need to address and I wish to move the amendment as follows:-

THAT, the Motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word “House” and inserting thereof the words “resolves that the Government should urgently review the farm gate price to Kshs45 per litre and review the price from time to time to reflect the cost of production”.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I wish to say that many Motions have been read in this House and many hon. Member speak of “urging the Government”. I feel it is time that hon. Members spoke of “resolves” instead of “urges”, so that we can see how far or how serious the Government can take the implementation of the Bills originating from the resolutions of this House.

With regard to the price, I feel that we have left it hanging. We have not spoken about the price that we expect for farmers’ produce. Although we cannot really conclude that this is the price, it should be reviewed from time to time. I wish to put Kshs45 at the current price in our supermarkets. A litre of milk costs Kshs90. Therefore, there is a big gap between the farmer and the businessmen.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I come from Nyandarua County which is the largest producer of milk in Central Province. A research was done and it shows that about 3.1 billion litres are produced in a year. That is the volume of milk that is sold not even at Kshs27. Sometimes, we even give it for free because there is no market. The co-operative societies have continued to buy milk at Kshs18 to Kshs20. That is very frustrating to the farmers.

So, I wish to move the amendment and be seconded by hon. Chepkong’a.

Hon. Chepkong’a: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. First and foremost, I would like to congratulate and thank hon. (Ms.) Muhia for bringing this very appropriate amendment. You know the House cannot discuss things in vain. The House cannot “urge”, it “resolves”. That is the most appropriate language that the Government listens to. This House is involved in serious business and we must be seen to be involved in serious business.

I rise to second this amendment which brings clarity. I know many people will wonder why hon. (Ms.) Muhia is seeking a price increase of Kshs45 instead of leaving it open. I think she has made it very clear that the Government, through the dairy board, needs to review those prices from time to time. I am reading a book written by John Maxwell and it is entitled: “Today Matters.” The author says that we may not be certain of things, but we need to be clear on what we are seeking to do. I think hon. (Ms.) Muhia intends to bring clarity to this debate by stating in no uncertain terms and in very unequivocal language that the prices should be increased from what the farmers are selling to middlemen, including those who are seeking to buy milk from farmers at Kshs18 and some at Kshs27.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, if you look at this country, we are creating all sorts of things, including the price of petrol, diesel and paraffin, which benefit foreigners. Why can we not regulate milk which we produce? Hon. Members have suffered so much. My constituency is a hub of milk production, but you would see a farmer who has 10 cows being unable to pay school fees. They would come to my house and say: “*Mheshimiwa* Chepkong’a, I cannot pay school fees because Brookside or KCC is buying my milk at Kshs18.” Now we have to fundraise for somebody who has 10 cows because they cannot pay school fees. If we are serious as hon. Members, we should pass this Motion.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I am urging hon. J.K. Bett to bring an amendment to the Dairy Board Act so that we can have teeth in terms of implementing this Motion. But I am certain we are going to pass it without doubt.

*(Question of the first part of the amendment,
that the words to be left out be left out, proposed)*

Hon. Sang: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. I also rise to support this Motion as amended by hon. Muhia, and as introduced by hon. Kimaru Bett. I must appreciate that this Motion has come at the right time. I must also appreciate that, sometimes back our farmers used to take their children to school and pay school fees in time. We also used to see young people get employment everywhere. Unfortunately, there is a problem somewhere now.

It is a fact that milk production is a major source of income for many small-scale farmers. In Bureti Constituency which I represent, most of the farmers depend on milk. They also depend on tea. Unfortunately, when tea started---

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Hon. Sang, please, be directed that we are debating the proposed amendment. Let us be relevant.

Hon. Sang: Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I support the proposed amendment.

I appreciate the fact that milk farmers have some few challenges. They have told me that they need a market so that they can market their produce well. They have also told me that the current price of Kshs29 to Kshs32 per litre is very low going by what they used in the form of input. We are supposed to support those farmers so that they can market their produce very well. We are also supposed to improve Artificial Insemination (AI) services so that we can improve on the breeds. That way, we can also improve milk production. We are also supposed to give out something small to enable farmers to establish micro-finance institutions.

In my constituency, there is a micro-finance company called Cherop. For a very long time, they have been trying to do something small. Unfortunately, because of mismanagement and what have you, it has gone under. But I know that it will be revived. We are also supposed to do something on value addition so that we can encourage our farmers to add value to their milk so that they can be paid higher prices. We should also enable farmers to be educated because we all understand that knowledge is power. That has to do with record-keeping. We are supposed to keep the farmers on their toes so that they can have the latest information on the milk industry.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I must appreciate the dairy board for doing a very good job in my constituency. It has done away with the middlemen who have been going round collecting milk from farmers at the farmers' expense. The Kenya Dairy Board has done something and the price of milk has gone up.

As hon. Muhia has indicated, we support that the price should be, at least, Kshs45. Let them go up so that our farmers can benefit. I would like to remind my friend, hon. Kimaru that, all the time, he compared milk with water. He said that half a litre of water costs about Kshs60 while one litre of milk costs Kshs27. Both products are very important. Scientists say that about 70 per cent of our body mass is made up of water. So, milk is also nutritious.

I would like to tell the Government to pay farmers, at least, Kshs45, so that they can continue farming and take their children to school.

Otherwise, I support this Motion as amended. We want the Government to do something for the farmers.

Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Korir: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. I would like to support the amendment because setting the price is key than even talking about all this. We can talk and talk but if the price remains that low, we will not achieve anything. The worst thing that all the farmers in this country are going through is lack of market and price setting. As a Government, if

we do not set the price, the middlemen will come in and exploit the farmers. So, we will continue saying that we urge the Government--- We want the Government to establish a Commission that will continue looking at the price of milk. The price of milk in the shops is going up but the price of milk to the farmers is not going up.

If it is because of Value Added Tax we know that, that tax was introduced on the products in the supermarket and on the products that farmers use to feed those cows. So, as the price of milk in the supermarkets goes up, we also need to make sure that the price paid to the farmers goes up. That can only be done if the Government forms a commission that will look at the price of milk on a regular basis.

We need to have our farmers educated on modern technology. The commission which will be setting the price will also educate the farmers on modern technology of farming. We say nowadays that maize and milk production is becoming digital. We should make sure that farmers are very competitive. We need to make sure that the people of Kenya are educated on the importance of drinking milk. We are comparing milk and water and yet, water has a market. We drink water even when we come to Parliament. I have not seen a day when they have brought milk here. So, water has a market. We must find a market for milk so that we can sell it.

So, I support the amendment to make sure that the price of milk is stated clearly. That way, middlemen do not continue to exploit farmers.

Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy.

Hon. Makenga: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. I wish to support this Motion as amended by hon. Muhia.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Hon. Makenga, we are not supporting the Motion as amended, but the amendment by hon. Muhia.

Hon. Makenga: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. I support the amendment. This Motion, as tabled, is very timely. It is important to note that many Kenyans are farmers in one way or the other. They keep animals or cows in their farms and they expect to make money from the farm produce.

The price of Kshs27 per litre of milk is very low compared with the life in the constituency. That is the case and yet, farmers are expected to make money so that they can improve on their lifestyle. So, the amendment to raise the price of milk to Kshs45 per litre is ideal.

Let the Government establish milk coolers in every constituency where milk can be taken, stored or chilled so that farmers can be encouraged to increase their animals. If this is done, it will improve the economic power of our people. The Government should also think about finding a market for milk. Sometimes, farmers produce milk, but it ends up going to waste because there is no market.

Therefore, the Government should also establish markets where farmers can sell their produce.

With those few remarks, I beg to support the amendment.

*(Question of the first part of the amendment,
that the words to be left out be left out, put and agreed to)*

*(Question of the second part of the amendment,
that the words to be inserted in place thereof
be inserted, proposed)*

*(Question of the second part of the amendment,
that the words to be inserted in place thereof be
inserted, put and agreed to)*

(Question of the Motion as amended proposed)

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Yes, hon. Jacob Waweru Macharia.

Hon. Macharia: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. Coming from Molo Constituency, which is the epicentre of dairy farming; and having seen the tribulations of my people in producing milk in small-scale and large-scale, I would like to support the Motion by hon. James Kimaru Bett, as amended by hon. Wanjiku Muhia.

I would also like to propose to hon. Wanjiku Muhia that we should have put the farm gate price at 50 per cent of the retail price, and not at Kshs45. I say so because, currently, milk retails in shops at Kshs90 to Kshs110 per litre. Therefore, a farm gate price of Kshs45 per litre is lower for some brands of milk, unlike for Molo Milk, Brookside Dairy and for other brands. So, probably, we should have said that the price of raw milk should not be less than 50 per cent of the price of processed milk on the shelves of retailer outlets.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I know that almost all of us in this House have reared a dairy cow at some time. I have also been through the tribulations related to rearing of dairy cows and milk production. Maybe, to give a brief scenario, some of us from the Rift Valley region know how we have produced milk. Sometimes, we had to travel long distances to deliver the milk. The bad roads and other problems have been against us. Sometimes, we would go back with our milk, having not delivered it to the people who were supposed to pick it.

We also know that school-going children sometimes wake up at 3.00 a.m. to milk their cows and deliver milk before going to school. In the evening, they rush home to milk their cows. With all those tribulations, we would finally be left at the mercy of the milk brokers, who sometimes would tell us: “*Endeni mukakunywe hiyo maziwa*”. It is sad that amid all these tribulations, in trying to produce milk, we get media reports of businesspeople importing powder milk from Holland, Ukraine and other places. So, we pour our milk because we have nowhere to take it.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, let me put it on record that those tribulations have culminated into despair. Almost all the milk companies in the country operate from my constituency but, as hon. ole Ntutu has said, they buy our raw milk at Kshs20 per litre. Therefore, I would like to say that, as a country, we should stand for the milk farmers. We should stand to be counted. Hon. Kimaru Bett, kindly, bring to the House a Bill on this matter. As I told hon. Kimaru when we met in the Table Office - he was just ahead of me - I was also taking there a similar Motion.

With those remarks, I beg to support.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. Ms.) Mbalu): Yes, hon. Francis Waweru Nderitu.

Hon. Nderitu: Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I also rise to support the Motion, which is very dear to me because where I come from, people cannot discuss anything without talking about the cost of milk production versus its sale price. I would like to thank the Mover of the

Motion, hon. James Kimaru and the lady, who is my County Woman Representative, Nyandarua, hon. Wanjiku Muhia, for bringing an amendment to remove the ambiguity on the price.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, it is the wearer of the shoe who knows where it pinches. I am a farmer. Whenever I go to my constituency, I deal with matters related to milk production. For the last two months, I have been dealing with two societies. One of them is called Nyahururu Umoja SACCO. There is a newly constituted dairy co-operative society which deals with milk collection and selling of milk as well as value addition.

There is also another one which is also very active and has brought a bit of life in that part of Nyandarua. I have always been urging our people to change their attitude even on what we are producing. It is a very sad affair because you find that those small dairy societies manufacture yoghurt and yet, consumers opt not to buy those products. I urge our local consumers to be keen on what they are consuming. If you are producing a commodity, it is good to look at the ready market and be one of the consumers of that commodity. I know we are faced with a situation where, as Members of Parliament, we are ready to discuss other issues such as funding of youth and women.

Where I come from, we are addressing the issue of funding the youth and women. We are exploring areas where we want them to expend that money. I keep on urging my people to invest in dairy farming in my constituency. We have a lot of challenges. In Nyandarua, which is the food basket for Nairobi, we have one of the worst infrastructure in terms of roads. I know that we have young people who work day and night to ensure that milk comes from the farmers. Most times, they use motorbikes to ferry milk. It is a sad affair to see young men and women struggling in the night trying to move milk from the farmers. Due to the nature of the roads, you see them pouring milk by the roadside for being unable to access the market. I am very sure that if the farmers are given the right incentives, and our infrastructure is enhanced, that is, the feeder roads, every farmer will use the least amount of time to get his or her product to the market.

I come from an area where we do not talk about anything else except farming. If it is not dairy farming, it is potato farming. The issue of potato farming is even more critical because of poor infrastructure, but I will not dwell on that. I want to deal with the issue of milk. My emphasis is that---

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Hon. (Ms.) Lay Wanjalah.

Hon. (Ms.) Lay: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I stand to support this Motion as amended. It is high time the Government stepped in to defend the farmers. We know that farmers have been suffering in the hands of middlemen for a long time. It is high time something was done in order for the farmers to get the full profits of their produce. I speak as a Member of Parliament for Taita Taveta County because that problem has been going on there for a while. My suggestion to the Government is this: We have two major leading companies that enjoy the monopoly of milk business.

My idea is to have them devolve that business to every county. We are talking about adding value to the milk. They should have a packaging and processing plant in every county because this will enable our youth to get jobs in the county. Right now, the additional price will be transferred to the end consumer and so the milk on the shelves will be very expensive. In order not to transfer the additional price on the milk on the shelves, the best thing is to have packaging and processing plants in each and every county.

I am speaking on behalf of the farmers because I saw that problem in our county and I stepped in. We helped them put up a 20,000 litres cooling plant. We have also registered them as a co-operative society and we can see a change. Most of them now can pay school fees and even

access loans. We have gone to the extent of training them on how to manufacture and use biogas so that they do not pay money for electricity.

My other suggestion is that we have a campaign that every household should have a dairy cow. This will help alleviate poverty in our county. Through the *Uwezo* Fund, it is important that we go out there and encourage our youth and women to have dairy cows in their homesteads. We also need to have a law that will control the middlemen. As far as milk is concerned, they really put our farmers down. They get milk at a very low price and in turn sell it at a very high price. The dairy board needs to bring a Bill here after this so that the law is implemented on the ground.

I support.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Hon. Members, the time to ventilate on the Motion is now over. I now call upon hon. James Kimaru Bett the Mover, to reply.

Hon. J.K. Bett: Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, before I give my final remarks, I would like to take this opportunity to give two minutes each to hon. Rose Mitaru, hon. Mburu and the hon. Member seated next to me.

Hon. (Ms.) Mitaru: Thank you. I came here very early in the morning because I am so happy with the Mover of this Motion. When I was growing up, I knew that my school fees was coming from the sale of milk. This nation must understand that it is not just the nutritive value of milk that we are looking for. We are also looking at the economy and food production. Kenya has a diversity of climate. In Embu County where I come from, we have a lot of milk that goes for less than Kshs20 a litre. There are other areas in my county which do not have milk at all and people buy milk at Kshs50 a litre. My desire is that we ensure that milk production in this country is well distributed and the prices are well organized. People are now buying milk from supermarkets at Kshs60 for half a litre and yet, our farmers are stranded with their milk which they are selling at Kshs20 a litre.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I want to support this Motion 100 per cent because I know it is going to help not just my county, but the whole of Kenya. The cost of buying a cow for milk production is about Kshs200,000. If you look at how much money a farmer gets from that cow, it is very little. Let us consider the farmer, the poorest of the farmers in the rural areas, so that we can balance the cost. The consumption of milk should be encouraged.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Hon. Member, you should be finishing. You were given just two minutes.

Hon. (Ms.) Mitaru: We should distribute milk to all the constituencies of this country at a reasonable price.

Hon. K.K. Kinyanjui: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. I wish to thank hon. Bett for giving me two minutes and for moving the Motion. I come from a constituency where we depend mainly on farming and dairy farming is one of sources of income. This Motion is, indeed, very timely because in my constituency, I have five co-operative societies which are divided into various divisions. Most of them have collapsed simply because the prices of milk cannot sustain milk production in terms of animal feeds. If we were to talk about the increase in the price of milk, it will do a lot to help the farmers.

The dairy farmers have been exploited, first, by the middlemen and secondly, by the big companies in our areas. They take advantage because when a farmer gets the milk probably in the morning and he misses the brokers who go round with motorcycles, he will have nowhere else to take the product. On the same note, one thing that I have realised in the milk industry--- The laws that govern the co-operative societies have big gaps which allow members to be

exploited. We have formed co-operative societies but the officials who run them at the end of the day, embezzle funds. The laws that we have within the co-operative societies are not good enough to help us to nab them, so that farmers can get back their money.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Hon. Member, your two minutes are up. You should be winding up.

Hon. K.K. Kinyanjui: Yes, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. I am winding up. One of our factories was closed down because of mismanagement and when we tried to take those people to court, we realised that the laws are not well established to take them to court. Hon. Bett should move forward and introduce a Bill on this. We should also look into the co-operative laws, so that our farmers can be protected and they can get value for their produce.

Hon. Injendi: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. I rise to support this Motion. I am a victim of poor prices of milk in Malava Constituency. The co-operative society that we used to have collapsed because of low prices and the place produces a lot of milk. Therefore, I support this Motion, particularly with the amendment to state clearly that the prices should be at Kshs45, subject to review from time to time.

When it comes to milk, for example, in western Kenya, it touches many lives. Most homes, at least, have cows, if not a cow. Therefore, if we improve the price of milk, most of the homesteads will enjoy. Mostly, the persons who will enjoy will be women because in most homes, particularly in western Kenya, it is the women who look after the cows. It is women who go round selling milk. Therefore, if we improve the prices of milk, the women will enjoy and we know very well that when a woman improves her welfare, her entire household and the entire nation will benefit.

Western Kenya, for example, is a region that is known for bull fighting. If we improve the price of milk, something will certainly happen in western Kenya. In the region where they believe in bull fighting, which is associated with a lot of poverty, you will find that people will start rearing dairy cows and this will increase milk production. When men are going out for bull fighting, women will be looking after their cows.

When it comes to price control, I know we are talking of a liberalized market. But I also know that in Kenya, we have minimum prices set for products like maize, tea and coffee. If we can do the same for milk, we will be moving our economy a step forward. As a country, we need to improve our economy and our pockets in order to chase away poverty.

I support the Motion.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Hon. James Kimaru Bett, you can reply.

Hon. J.K. Bett: Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity to thank all hon. Members for their contribution. When we talk on the Floor of this House, we represent all the dairy farmers in Kenya, all the way from Uasin Gishu County, Trans Nzoia, Kiambu and every other place where milk is produced. We are saying that we are not going to allow the forces of supply and demand to set our market prices, when we know that farmers cannot break even when they sell their milk.

I want to concur and agree with farmers that we need to improve on value addition of milk, so that they can sell it at a price which will enable them to be empowered economically. We want to see farmers take their children to school, meet their medical bills and other financial obligations, just like any other Kenyan. I want to assure all the farmers of Kenya that this Parliament, with the support of the Members, will pass this Motion and move to the next level,

namely, make it a Bill and give them a good price for their milk. That will enable them live a decent life.

With that, I rest my case and ask Members to be with us all the time. Thank you very much.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Hon. Members, we are not in a position to put the Question. So, I direct that the Question will be put in the next sitting, this afternoon, Wednesday, 2nd October, 2013.

ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL UNIFIED IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

Hon. C.M. Nyamai: Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I beg to move the following Motion:-

THAT, aware that the process of obtaining national identification documents such as birth certificates and national identification cards is long and complex due to the different centres of processing such documentation; deeply concerned that there is a multiplicity of identification documents in registration of IDs, birth certificates, passports, elector's cards, driving licences, NHIF and NSSF cards yet there is a proposed simplified way of doing the same; noting that the Government is embracing new ICT measures in line with Vision 2030, this House urges the Government to spearhead the establishment of a national unified identification system that harmonizes all personal bio data.

I am moving this Motion bearing in mind the background of where we stand today as a country and what has happened in this country. Also, I wish to remind my colleagues what happened at the Westgate Mall. The issue of a unified identification system has a bearing on this. However, before I got there, the history of identification is as old as mankind. Going back to the times of Babylon when slaves were the tools of trade, the rulers then would come up with a system of identifying their slaves as tools of trade. Over time, various countries have come up with various reasons for having identification cards. Back here, every Kenyan knows about an identification card which is synonymous to being Kenyan. Of course, it gives a person his identification. Without going far away, even in this House, for me to address this sitting, it is an identification that I have been given by Parliament which helps me to get a chance to contribute.

As I move this Motion, it pains me. One, of my daughters who applied for an identification card on 23rd May, has not got it. In today's newspapers, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) says that 6 million Kenyans did not vote because they did not have identification cards. When Form Four leavers book their exams, they go through pain because of birth certificates. When you are registering a company in this country, what you go through in terms of various documents that are required is not easy.

What has happened in this country in terms of identification card, passports, National Social Security Fund (NSSF) number, Personal Identification Number (PIN), electors card *et cetera* is that, technology has gone to a level where all this information can be put in one small chip. It is a simple card that we are using for Automated Teller Machine (ATM) or the card we are using here in Parliament. It contains all the information about every Kenyan we have in this country.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, if we were to go in that direction, the benefits to this country would be enormous. First and foremost, on the security side, today, our country has got such porous borders where you do not know who comes in and who leaves this country.

However, with the unified integrated identification system, it will be possible at any point in time to know who has come to this country and how one has left this country. That way, even our security forces and security organs will be able to manage our security issues far much better than they are doing today.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, with such a system, it will not be possible for people to walk in and walk out the way terrorists walked into this country and caused mayhem at Westgate Mall. So, among the many reasons why we should have a system of consolidated identification--- We should not talk about the cost involved. That is because today when you go to get an identification card, it costs money. You get a passport tomorrow, it costs money. You go to get National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) card, it costs money. Just one card will eliminate the cost of carrying all those other cards.

But from the security perspective, I want to emphasize that this country will move a very big step towards ensuring that we are secure. We shall know what is happening around the country at any point in time.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, we have been told that security in Nairobi City is going to improve. Some CCTV cameras have been installed, and we are very happy about that. But in as much as cameras have been installed, as long as there is no centralized place where that information will be cross-checked once it has been taken by the cameras, it will not be of much use to this country. Therefore, it is my plea to this House that we support this Motion so that we make sure that, not only will we cut our costs in terms of having that identification document, but we shall have one centralized information system. I am saying that because I know we have been trying to establish a forensic laboratory in this country for a long time. However, it is one thing to invest in such an expensive venture and it is another thing to have the information which we require. The information which the forensic laboratory will require will be available if we establish an integrated national identification system.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I want to move this Motion and request the Member of Parliament for Kirinyaga Central, hon. Gitari, to second.

Hon. Gitari: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. First of all, I want to be on record thanking my friend for bringing this timely Motion, which I want to second.

In a normal man's wallet, there are not less than 27 cards. In a female colleague's case you can see the kind of bags they are carrying day in, day out. Our primary school pupils carry birth certificates when they are going to register for their Kenya Certificate of Primary Education examinations. They carry some other documents like baptism cards. For the ones who are going to register for Form Four exams, some of them even have identification cards.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, I can tell you for sure that the time I left carrying a wallet in my pocket was long time ago. I was privileged to serve in the Tenth Parliament. I remember we were given a story by the then Assistant Minister for Internal Security, the late hon. Ojode. There was one colleague of ours during the last Parliament who was attacked by thugs and because of the bulkiness of his wallet, they imagined he had a lot of money. On checking the wallet, they found that he had only Kshs500. They asked him: "*Wewe ni Mbunge wa wapi?*" They really hammered him. Actually, it took the intervention of the then Assistant Minister who rescued hon. Akula.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, you know that it is normal routine. When we came to this Parliament, we were given the logging-in card and another card for identification as a Member of Parliament. By the time we were coming to this House, we had ATM cards, ID cards,

passport and a driving licence. If this system can be put in place whereby we can be using only one card, it will be a welcome idea.

From the constituency I come from, the headquarters of the district is called Kerugoya. There are some thugs who spot people coming and they look at the bulkiness of the wallets in their pockets. They entice people and tell them that they have a mirror in their hand. They blow it off and after blowing it, they tell them especially the semi-illiterate: “*Hiyo mirror imeingia kwa mwili wako. Twende nikakutoe.*” But it is because of the bulkiness of your wallet.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, if this system can be put in place, I do not see the reason why when you attain the age of 18 years, you must apply for an identity card. I wish it would be automatic because they have my records showing when I was born. It should be automatic when I go to the Registrar of Persons to get my ID.

I would like to be on record as saying that there was a time we discussed this issue with hon. Nyamai when he left his wallet in my car. He was asking me to read for him the account number of one of his banks, but I told him that I was tired of that when I perused the documents. I asked him to come for his wallet. That was the genesis of this Motion.

So, I second the Motion and hope that our colleagues will come in handy without looking at partisan politics. People know that hon. Nyamai comes from the other side of the divide while I come from the other side of the divide. However, this Motion is for this House and this country. I think we should support it.

Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker.

(Question proposed)

Hon. (Ms.) Gathecha: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. I rise to support this Motion. I thank hon. Nyamai for introducing it to this House. In light of the recent events in this country and, in particular, the Westgate Mall incident--- If we had one identification system or bio-data, we would have been able to identify some of the people who carried out that terrorist attack. They are able to sneak into the country because they can purchase a national ID card from anywhere. We are aware that there was a gentleman who was caught with 50 IDs in the last two days, which he wanted to go and sell to other aliens. In this country, we have chiefs who register deaths. That information is contained in massive books that are at every chief’s office in this country.

This country is moving towards Vision 2030 and we are saying that we are a digital economy. If that is the case, we need to start harmonizing all that bio-data. We have all our photographs in our national IDs, but we are not able to get any criminal who engages in any criminal activity with that information. That is because we are unable to centralize that data. If we had one central system of identification of bio-data collection, we would be able to not only identify criminals, but we would also be able to identify the ethnicity of a person when he or she goes to open a bank account.

Right now, we have people coming into this country. They are able to go anywhere, buy a birth certificate and get any document they want. The authorities are not able to verify all the data because it is scattered all over the place. Once we centralise, a simple query will tell us where a person was born and who his ancestors are. That is important information for us, as a country, in order for us to also engage the particular technology that will allow us to advance as a nation.

Therefore, I support this Motion, so that we can have a unified and harmonised bio-data system from which we can get all the necessary information about an individual. We can even integrate the information in our healthcare system such that even when one goes to hospital with NHIF card, the authorities can tell which part of the country that person comes from. Such a card will not only allow us to collect such information, but it will also help us, as a people, within the banking system. We will be able to collect information for loans. We will be able to process whatever information we require in order for us to pursue our particular development agenda.

Hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker, this Motion is not only timely, but it is also essential. It is important that this country starts looking for different ways of doing things because we are dealing with very sophisticated criminals. If we are not able to collect such information, we will have problems. We have CCTV systems all over the place but they are not intelligent enough to tell that persons coming in through our border entry points are wanted terrorists. We are not able to identify them once their photos are taken and yet, we take their photos at our airports and other main entry points. We should be able to integrate all these systems, so that we can be able to identify wanted criminals and arrest them at the points of entry. Such a system will not only help us in ensuring our national security, but will also help us in every economic activity that requires us to be IT savy.

With those remarks, I beg to support.

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms.) Mbalu): Yes, hon. Abdulswamad Sherif Nassir.

Hon. Nassir: Thank you, hon. Temporary Deputy Speaker. Please, accept my apology for my very long name.

I rise to support this very timely Motion, bearing in mind what the Mover, hon. Nyamai, had indicated. Considering what happened very recently, and which seems to be continuously happening within our borders, I would recommend that once the Bill or this matter comes to this House, we establish a registration bureau that will have all the bio-data of individuals within one particular centre. This is not only important for the many other aspects that have been mentioned earlier, but we can be able to know our statistics very easily. Our day-to-day work in Government relies a lot on statistics. More than anything else, we will be in a position to ensure fairness.

I come from an area in Mombasa where it is very common to have somebody who has a Kenyan Passport but who, for some reason, does not have a national identity card. One may be lucky to have a national identity card but may not have a passport here. Therefore, there are lots of things that we shall have to address once the Bill is introduced here. We must provide for mobile ICT units to enable security officers to swipe a card and be able to tell who its bearer is. Such technology comes with a very heavy financial burden on us but this is something which needs to be supported. I urge other hon. Members to support it.

Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

The Temporary Deputy Speaker (Hon. (Ms) Mbalu): Hon. Members, as I keep on saying, this House has rules and procedures. It is now 12.30 p.m. Therefore, the House stands adjourned until this afternoon at 2.30 p.m.

The House rose at 12.30 p.m.