

# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

## OFFICIAL REPORT

Wednesday, 2nd September, 2009

The House met at 9.00 a.m.

*[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]*

PRAYERS

### QUESTION BY PRIVATE NOTICE

#### POLICE ASSAULT ON MR. NICHOLAS MURIITHI

**Mr. Ruteere:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to ask the Minister of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security the following Question by Private Notice.

(a) Could the Minister explain the circumstances surrounding the brutal assault on a taxi driver, Mr. Nicholas Muriithi, by police in Imenti North on 14<sup>th</sup> August, 2009 and the subsequent blocking of Meru/Maua/Nanyuki Road at Makutano Shopping Centre by demonstrators on 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 2009?

(b) What justified the use of excessive force by the Police on Mr. Muriithi, who was unarmed?

(c) What disciplinary action will the Minister take against the traffic officers concerned?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is the Minister of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security not here?

Next Question!

**The Assistant Minister, Ministry of State for Defence** (Maj-Gen. Nkaisserry): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I think the Minister is on the way coming and if he is not, then I undertake to inform him to answer this Question, maybe, tomorrow.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, Mr. Assistant Minister!

**Mr. Ruteere:** On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. Last week this Question was scheduled to be on the Order Paper yesterday but the Assistant Minister, Ministry of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security requested that it be put on the Order Paper today when he would be in the House. I am surprised that he is not in. Is it in order for us to defer the Question again to tomorrow?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Let us go to the next Question, we will come back to it later. By the time we come back to this Question by Private Notice and the Minister is not in, the Chair will give direction.

### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

*Question No.099*

## COMPENSATION FOR KAPTERIK/SHABAN CLANS IN KAPSOWAR

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is Mr. Kaino not here? We will leave his Question until the end. Let us move on to the next Question.

*Question No.140*CONFISCATION OF LAND FROM TELDET/KIBOROA  
RESIDENTS BY GOVERNMENT

**Mr. Kapondi** asked the Minister for Lands:-

(a) whether he could confirm that residents of Teldet and Kiborua in Trans Nzoia West bought land but the same was subsequently reclaimed by the Government; and,

(b) when the Government will either return the land, provide alternative land or compensate the residents.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is the Minister for Lands not here? We shall come back to that Question at the end. Let us go to the next Question.

*Question No.363*COMPENSATION FOR LANDOWNERS ALONG  
ORINIE-KAPSETEK-NAKURTAKWEI ROAD

**Mr. Lessonet** asked the Minister for Roads:-

(a) whether he could confirm that part of Orinie-Kapsetek-Nakurtakwei road runs on private property; and,

(b) what plans he has to compensate the affected farmers, considering that the road has now been blocked by the farmers.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is the Minister for Roads not here? Let us move to the next Question.

*Question No.036*DELAY IN FILLING OF VACANT POSITIONS  
IN ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS

**Mr. Letimalo** asked the Minister of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security:-

(a) why the Government has not filled the ten vacant positions at the Administrative units (locations and sub-locations) in Samburu East district, thus creating a huge gap in the delivery of services to the people; and,

(b) when the vacancies will be filled.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is the Minister of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security not here?

Let us move on to the next Question by Mr. Chachu.

*Question No.200*

CRITERIA FOR CREATION OF NEW DISTRICTS

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is Mr. Chachu not here? Let us move to the next Question.

*Question No.061*

WITHHOLDING OF ACADEMIC CERTIFICATES  
OF EMPLOYEES BY SECURITY FIRMS

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is Dr. Kones not here. We will leave this Question until the end.

*Question No.217*

DISMISSAL OF POLICE CORPORAL  
RICHARD OMBWAYO NERIMA

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is Mr. Washiali not here? We will come back to that Question at the end.

*Question No.278*

MURDER OF MR. FRANCIS KAINDA NYARURI

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Mr. Ombui not here! Let us move on to the next Question. We shall come back to that one at the end.

*Question No.220*

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON  
RESETTLEMENT OF IDPS

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Mr. Namwamba is not here! We shall come back to that Question at the end.

*Question No.267*

ALLOCATION OF NZAMBANI ROCK  
TO PRIVATE DEVELOPER

**Mr. K. Kilonzo** asked the Minister of State for National Heritage:-

(a) to explain the circumstances and by who Nzambani Rock, the most significant site and monument in Nzambani District, was allocated to a private developer; and,

(b) whether he could de-gazette the allocation and return the rock to the community.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is the Minister of State for National Heritage not here? Let us move to the next Question. We shall come back to this one at the end.

*Question No.395*

GOVERNMENT PLANS ON DECENTRALIZING NHC PROJECTS

**Mr. Pesa** asked the Minister for Housing:-

(a) whether the Government has plans of decentralizing National Housing Corporation (NHC) projects to towns like Migori in an effort to address the housing deficit which currently stands at 420,000 houses in both urban and rural areas;

(b) what plans the Government has for densely populated low income areas such as Apida, Oruba and Shauri Yako in Migori Municipality; and,

(c) whether the National Housing Corporation has plans of putting up modern high-rise houses in Migori to alleviate the housing problems.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is Mr. Pesa not here? We shall come back to this question. Next question!

*Question No.210*

IMPLEMENTATION OF TOBACCO CONTROL ACT

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is Mr. Were not here?

**Mr. K. Kilonzo:** On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. It is clear that hon. Members have come here early to ask Questions and in the Front Bench, there is the Assistant Minister, Ministry of State for Defence and the Minister for Public Works. What other demonstration can be given to show that the Government is not taking the business of this House seriously? Under the new Standing Orders, which are very clear, we seek your direction on what should be done when the entire Cabinet decides to boycott the House. Is it because of Mr. Ringera or have they been instructed from high offices not to appear here?

**The Assistant Minister, Ministry of State for Defence (Maj-Gen. Nkaisserry):** On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. It is also true that while the Ministers are not available and I am not defending my colleagues for not being here, 60 per cent of the Questioners are also not here. Out of 222 hon. Members, only 80 are in the Cabinet. The remaining 140 are in the Backbench, but only eight Members are in this House. I want to challenge the Backbench because they are the ones to put the Government on its toes to be here. Of course, we have bypassed some of the Questions which were supposed to be asked by hon. Members because they are not here. Maybe, there are some negotiations

going on. I am not very sure of what is happening, I do not know why my colleagues and I would be here alone. We need to go out and consult.

**Mr. Pesa:** On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. I really cherish this Assistant Minister for taking seriously his work in this House. We have asked several Questions this morning, but none of them have been responded to. So, the question of Backbenchers not being present should not arise when Questions have been asked and nobody has responded even to a single Question. Is he in order to mislead this House, that the House is failing because of the Backbench?

**Mr. Ruteere:** On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. The Assistant Minister for Defence should not have blamed the Backbench when several Questions have been asked and no Minister has responded to any of the Questions. Again, it is not right to have only two Ministers out of 80 to transact Government business in the House. It shows that they have absconded their duties. They are not interested in the affairs of Parliament. It is time they resigned and went home.

**Mr. I. Muoki:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is very disappointing because, although the Assistant Minister responded that the Backbench is not there, we have many Backbenchers and we have raised these Questions. It is the responsibility of the specific Ministers who are supposed to answer the Question on the Order Paper to make efforts to be in the House. So, shall I be in order to ask that if these Ministers are not competent enough to come to the House at the right time, they should resign and we have another Cabinet in place to be able to transact the business of this House?

*(Mr. Lessonet stood up in his place)*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, hon. Lessonet, we are going to take the Questions again.

Mr. Ruteere, could you ask your Question by Private Notice again?

### QUESTION BY PRIVATE NOTICE

#### POLICE ASSAULT ON MR. NICHOLAS MURIITHI IN IMENTI NORTH.

**Mr. Ruteere:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to ask the Minister of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security the following Question by Private Notice:-

(a) Could the Minister explain the circumstances surrounding the brutal assault on a taxi driver, Mr. Nicholas Muriithi, by Police in Imenti North on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2009 and the subsequent blocking of Meru/Maua/ Nanyuki road at Makutano Shopping Centre by demonstrators on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2009?

(b) What justified the use of excessive force by the Police on Mr. Muriithi, who was unarmed?

(c) What disciplinary action will the Minister take against the traffic officers concerned?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Minister of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security is not here. Fair enough! Under the circumstances, the Chair will take a firm action and invoke provisions of the Standing Orders. Standing Order No.46 says:-

“It shall be disorderly conduct for a Member to fail to ask or for a Minister to fail to answer a Question listed on the Order Paper without the leave of the Speaker”

The word “fail as used here means absence, failing to be available to answer the Question and also failing to answer the Question when the Minister is actually in the House. It is a disorderly conduct and the Chair directs that the Minister of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security will not transact any business in the House until such time that he is able to give a satisfactory explanation to the Speaker and the House.

Next ordinary Question No.99

### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

*Question No.099*

#### COMPENSATION FOR KAPTERIK/SHABAN CLANS IN KAPSOWAR

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Boaz Kaino is still not here. Hon. Members, this sword cuts both ways. That is what the Standing Orders say. It says failure to ask and failure to answer. So, it is as punitive to the Minister’s failure to answer as it is to the Backbenchers failure to ask. Under the circumstances hon. Kaino will not be able to transact any business in this House until he is able to give a satisfactory explanation to the Chair.

*(Question deferred)*

**The Minister for Public Works** (Mr. Obure): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, did you notice that the Minister is already available to answer that particular Question?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Indeed, the hon. Minister came late. Hon. Minister you came late. You will get away with a slap on the wrist for this.

**The Assistant Minister for Lands** (Mr. Bifwoli): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I apologize, but you know our Ministry has no vehicles. We are sharing one car with Mr. Rai.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** It is not the responsibility of the Chair to make a vehicle available for you. In any case, your absence is only noticed when the Question is asked. So, you can get away with this. The Question was not asked because the questioner was not here. You are getting away with this.

Hon. Kapondi, Question No.140.

*Question No.140*

#### CONFISCATION OF LAND FROM TELDET/KIBOROA

**Mr. Kapondi** asked the Minister for Lands:-

(a) whether he could confirm that residents of Teldet and Kiboroa in Trans Nzoia West bought land, but the same was subsequently reclaimed by the Government; and,

(b) When the Government will return the land, provide alternative land or compensate the residents.

**The Assistant Minister for Lands** (Mr. Rai): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, first, I want to apologize for coming late.

**An hon. Member:** Why? Is it the question of the vehicle?

**The Assistant Minister for Lands** (Mr. Rai): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is not the question of the vehicle, but I have just come late because when you are travelling anything can just happen to you on the way. I want to plead with the Chair that I have come late, but I am in the House at this particular time.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Minister, take note. The Chair notes that this is the final warning to you as a Ministry that you come late. Next time you come late, the Chair will take a firm action against you as a Ministry.

**The Assistant Minister for Lands** (Mr. Rai): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have consulted with the hon. Questioner. There are certain issues we need to put in place before answering this Question. So, I just want to request for the Question to be deferred to a further date, so that I can consult further with the hon. Questioner for a suitable answer to be given.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Assistant Minister, I notice that this Question is No.140; that means it is a very old Question. It is not sufficient for you to come here now and say that you do not have an answer that is satisfactory when the Question was asked months ago.

**The Assistant Minister for Lands** (Mr. Rai): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have been consulting with the questioner. What is important is for me to give him a comprehensive answer. If he is prepared for us to proceed, then there you are.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** What do you have to say, hon. Questioner?

**Mr. Kapondi:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, last week, this Question came and the answer that he had provided was completely insufficient. I had further information which I supplied to him. This rendered the answer he had completely off the mark and irrelevant. So, he had requested that he goes to the bottom of the matter because we want an answer that is useful to the people who are affected. So, similarly today, he has consulted me and I agree because I want a truthful answer not just an answer for the sake of it.

**Mr. K. Kilonzo:** On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. I want to seek your guidance on the practice of the House. When a Question is asked, does it become the property of this House or it is the business of a Minister and one Member of Parliament to discuss and agree? Members of Parliament could be having other questions which they also want to ask. So, I want to seek your guidance whether it is in order for Ministers and questioners to settle matters privately, then the matter is withdrawn, or it is for the House to dispose of such business.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Basically, the Questioner has the first charge on that Question. That is why an hon. Member can withdraw a Question if he or she wishes to do so. Under the circumstances, it is both the property of the House as well as the very

charge on the hon. Member himself to ask the Question. So, the Chair's problem is this: You had a whole week to get to the bottom of this matter. Mr. Assistant Minister, why did you not get to the bottom of the matter early?

**The Assistant Minister for Lands (Mr. Rai):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I can just give the House the answer I have, but from the way the Question is put, I am not in a position to give any proper answer because I have not been furnished with better particulars to the land in question. That is why I want more particulars for me to give him an answer.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** But you had a whole week to do that! Why was the Question withdrawn last time? Is it not for the same reasons that you are indicating now?

**The Assistant Minister for Lands (Mr. Rai):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, not really! The fact is that this is private land and my Ministry has nothing to do with that because if a transaction has been made, there is very little that I can do. I am requesting to know the land which was bought by these particular residents so that I can know what it is that needs to be done.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Fair enough! The Question will appear on the Order Paper tomorrow in the afternoon. Is that okay with you, Mr. Assistant Minister?

**The Assistant Minister for Lands (Mr. Rai):** Much obliged, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

*(Question deferred)*

*Question No.363*

COMPENSATION FOR LANDOWNERS ALONG  
ORINIE-KAPSETEK-NAKURTAKWEI ROAD

**Mr. Lessonet** asked the Minister for Roads:-

(a) if he could confirm that part of Orinie-Kapsetek-Nakurtakwei road runs on private property; and

(b) what plans he has to compensate the affected farmers, considering that the road has now been blocked by the farmers?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Minister for Roads is not here? Under the circumstances, I am invoking the provisions of the relevant Standing Orders; the Minister for Roads is not going to transact any business in this House until such a time that he gives a satisfactory explanation as to his absence today from the House to answer this Question.

*(Question deferred)*

Next Question by Mr. Letimalo!

*(Mr. Letimalo stood up in his place)*

Order, Mr. Letimalo! You came late!



**Mr. Letimalo:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I was here on time. In fact, I asked this Question but the Minister was not here!

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Fair enough! Can you ask the Question again?

*Question No.036*

DELAY IN FILLING OF VACANT POSITIONS  
IN ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS

**Mr. Letimalo** asked the Minister of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security:-

(a) why the Government has not filled the ten (10) vacant positions at the Administrative units (locations and sub-locations) in Samburu East District thus creating a huge gap in the delivery of services to the people; and

(b) when the vacancies will be filled.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Minister is not here? Already, a directive has been given by the Chair as to the fate of this Minister. He will not be able to transact any business in this House pending a satisfactory explanation as to his absence.

Next Question, Mr. Chachu!

*Question No.200*

CRITERIA FOR CREATION OF NEW DISTRICTS

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Mr. Chachu is not here? Therefore, the Question is dropped! In the same light and breadth, Mr. Chachu will not be allowed to transact any business in the House until he gives a satisfactory explanation as to his absence from the House today to ask his Question.

*(Question dropped)*

*Question No.061*

WITHHOLDING ACADEMIC CERTIFICATES OF  
EMPLOYEES BY SECURITY FIRMS

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is Mr. Chachu or Dr. Kones by any chance out on parliamentary business? Dr. Kones is not here. He will not be allowed to transact any business in the House until he gives a satisfactory explanation as to his absence.

*(Question dropped)*

Next Question, Mr. Washiali!

*(Mr. Washiali stood up in his place)*

Mr. Washiali, you came in late!

**Mr. Washiali:** I agree, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. I want to apologize for coming late. I was held up in a breakfast meeting on climate change.

*Question No.217*

DISMISSAL OF POLICE CORPORAL RICHARD OMBWAYO NERIMA

**Mr. Washiali** asked the Minister of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security:-

(a) whether he could explain the circumstances under which Police Corporal Richard Ombwayo Nerima (Force No.53135) was dismissed from the service; and,

(b) whether due procedure was followed in his dismissal.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Minister is already sanctioned!

*(Question deferred)*

*Question No.278*

MURDER OF MR. FRANCIS KAINDA NYARURI

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Mr. Ombui is not here? He will not be allowed to transact any business in the House until and unless he gives a satisfactory explanation as to his absence from the House this morning to ask this Question.

*(Question dropped)*

*Question No.220*

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON RESETTLEMENT OF IDPS

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Mr. Namwamba not here? Fair enough! He will equally not be allowed to transact any business in the House until he gives a satisfactory answer as to his absence from the House this morning to ask this Question.

*(Question dropped)*

*Question No.267*

ALLOCATION OF NZAMBANI ROCK TO PRIVATE DEVELOPER

**Mr. K. Kilonzo** asked the Minister of State for National Heritage:-

(a) under what circumstances and by who Nzambani Rock, the most significant site and monument in Nzambani District, was allocated to a private developer; and,

(b) if he could degazette the allocation and return the rock to the community.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Minister of State for National Heritage is not here? He will not be allowed to transact any business in the House pending a satisfactory explanation as to his absence from the House this morning to answer this Question.

*(Question deferred)*

*Question No.395*

#### GOVERNMENT PLANS ON DECENTRALIZING NHC PROJECTS

**Mr. Pesa** asked the Minister for Housing:-

(a) if the Government has plans of decentralizing National Housing Corporation projects to towns like Migori in an effort to address the housing deficit, which currently stands at 420,000 houses in both urban and rural areas;

(b) what plans the Government has for such densely populated low income areas as Apida, Oruba and Shauri Yako in Migori Municipality; and

(c) whether the National Housing Corporation has plans of putting up modern highrise houses in Migori to alleviate the housing problems.

*(Mr. Shitanda moved to the Dispatch Box)*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Mr. Minister, you came in late!

**The Minister for Housing** (Mr. Shitanda): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, may I apologize for coming in late to answer this Question. I was held up in a traffic jam from Community to this place.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Much as being held up in the traffic jam is not an explanation that the Chair is prepared to accept, you have a responsibility to be here on time. Nonetheless, you will get away with that today because you are here.

Proceed!

**The Minister for Housing** (Mr. Shitanda): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. I beg to reply.

(a) The current national housing policy was adopted by the Government in June 2004. It is intended to address deteriorating housing conditions countrywide by facilitating annual production by, at least, 150,000 housing units in urban areas that include Migori Municipality and quality improvement of, at least, 300,000 units in rural areas. The combined annual housing delivery is, therefore, 450,000 for the entire country. The role of the Government will be to facilitate stakeholders, especially the private sector, to construct houses in urban areas. In this regard, the Government has developed housing incentives with a view to attracting investment in the housing sector.

(b) Apida, Oruba and Shauri Yako in Migori Municipality will benefit from the Ministry of Housing physical infrastructure programme which will be done in collaboration with Migori Municipal Council and my Ministry will initiate construction of sewer lines, pipe water lines and electrical power supply line.

(c) National Housing Corporation (NHC) has 90 towns programme including Migori where construction of houses will be implemented. This will be done when the local authority of Migori avails land for that purpose.

**Mr. Pesa:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to thank the Minister for giving that elaborate plan the Ministry has to ensure that we get houses, not only in Migori, but we are asking about what he intends to do all over Kenya. I would like to know the programme because this is what he is telling me in paper. Has he contacted Migori Municipality and asked them to avail the land he is talking about?

**Mr. Shitanda:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the NHC has approached all the councils of the 90 towns where they intend to carry out this programme, including Migori. We are just awaiting communication from Migori Municipal Council before we can move to the next stage; that is after they have availed land for the development of housing.

**Mr. Ruteere:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Minister is talking of 90 towns. Could he lay on the Table the list of those towns? Could he also tell us where he expects the local authorities to get land, especially in cases where there is no available land under trusteeship of the local authority?

**Mr. Shitanda:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I do not have the list of the 90 towns where we intend to carry out this programme. On the issue of availability of land in various councils, this has been the trend and any council that has intended to benefit from NHC programmes avails land. So, if there is no land, it might be a problem for the National Housing Corporation (NHC) because it does not have any land in any council. If a council is able to avail land, we are able to construct housing units in those councils.

**Dr. Eseli:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, now that many new districts have been created and will require district headquarters, of the 90 towns that the Minister has told the House, how many will be new district headquarters? What is the Minister planning for the other district headquarters that are not included among the 90?

**Mr. Shitanda:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, currently, we have more than 200 districts. It is true that those districts are facing a lot of problems in terms of housing. My ministry is drafting a proposal to discuss with the Minister for Finance to see how we can address the problem of housing in the new districts. But as we do that through the NHC 90-Towns Program, funds have been a major problem. But we are trying, with the little that we have, to see if we can start housing programs in some of the towns. I do not have the list of the towns but I know that Kimilili is one of those towns that have been earmarked under the NHC 90-Towns Program.

**Mr. Ruteere:** On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. The Minister has said that he does not have the list of the towns. Who has the list of towns if the Minister does not have?

**Mr. Shitanda:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I do not have the list here, but I have it in my office. If the Chair rules, I can avail it.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Ask the last question on this issue, Mr. Pesa!

**Mr. Pesa:** Thank you, Mr. Minister, for giving me that answer. In fact, I want to undertake and assure you that, within one month, we shall write that letter to NHC. Can

you undertake to assure this House that once you receive our letter from Migori, you will make sure that those houses will be done in that municipality?

**Mr. Shitanda:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, once we get an undertaking from Migori that they are able to avail land, my Ministry will take action.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Next Question by Mr. Were!

*Question No.210*

IMPLEMENTATION OF TOBACCO CONTROL ACT

**An hon. Member:** *Hayuko!*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I am made to understand that Mr. Were is attending a Public Accounts Committee (PAC) meeting. He will get away with it, much as it is parliamentary business. But it is not a good enough reason for an hon. Member to fail to ask a Question in the House. Questions are in possession of hon. Members from the beginning of the week. So, every hon. Member understands when he has a Question to ask and when a Minister has a Question to answer. It is upon hon. Members and Ministers to make sure that they are available at the time, Session or Sitting when they are supposed to ask or answer Questions.

So, Mr. Were will get away with this now because he has communicated to the Speaker's Office. Therefore, Question No.210 is deferred until tomorrow afternoon.

*(Question deferred)*

Next Order!

**Mr. Letimalo:** On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. Considering that we have got so many Questions that are pending, and now that the Minister of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security has come, I beg your indulgence that these Questions be answered because some of them are really old and have taken time to be disposed.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Chair has given direction on that already. That direction is known to hon. Members as well as Members of the Government. Until such a time that the Minister is able to give us a satisfactory explanation as to his absence or his reason for coming late, he will not transact any business in this House! It is incumbent upon the Government and the Back Benchers to take the business of the House seriously. Next Order!

**POINT OF ORDER**

STATE OF AFFAIRS AT POST BANK LTD

**Mr. Ochieng:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to seek a Ministerial Statement from the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance on the state of affairs at Post Bank Ltd. The Minister should be able to explain to us the reason why the bank has not been able to prepare its books of accounts for the last three years and, if it has done so, what is the position of the balance sheet for those three years? When is it converting into

a complete bank? Are there any impending retrenchments and if there are any, what is prompting them?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** That is fair enough! Is the Minister for Finance here? In the absence of the Minister for Finance, could another Minister give an undertaking on when the Ministerial Statement will be available?

**The Minister for Housing** (Mr. Shitanda): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I undertake to inform the Minister for Finance about the Statement.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Indeed. When? You have to give an undertaking on the Ministry's behalf on when you will have the Ministerial Statement ready. It is in the collective responsibility that you all share.

**The Minister for Housing** (Mr. Shitanda): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, maybe, next week on Tuesday.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** That is fair enough! It is so directed. Is there any Minister who wants to give a Ministerial Statement?

Next Order!

## MOTIONS

### ENHANCEMENT OF GOVERNMENT FUNDING TO HELB

THAT, acknowledging the good work performed by the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) in providing loans to students in both public and private universities from poor background in order to access education; noting that higher education financing is a problem in most countries including the industrialized; appreciating that middle level technicians are key to industrial development; this House urges the government to enhance funding to HELB and further to widen the scope of its funding to include middle level colleges especially those offering technician certificates.

*(Dr. Esseli on 26.8.2009)*

*(Resumption of Debate interrupted on 26.8.2009)*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Dr. Esseli, you were moving this Motion. You have 17 minutes to conclude moving this Motion.

**Dr. Esseli:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this is a Motion to urge the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) to increase its scope of coverage, so that it can issue students in tertiary institutions with loans. As I had said earlier, the Ministry of Higher Education has really put in a lot of effort in trying to improve tertiary education. That is exemplified by the fact that they have stopped the idea of universities taking over middle level colleges. Indeed, the Minister has actually said that she is intending to put up about 16 new tertiary institutions or middle level colleges in the country. I think that is a very good effort.

Despite the fact that the Ministry gives bursaries to students who attend middle-level colleges like polytechnics and technical training institutions, most hon. Members

recognise that by the end of the year when we give bursaries, most of the applicants are in these colleges. These students, therefore, require more help than what they get. At the same time the Ministry has expanded the coverage of the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) because it is now able to cover parallel degree students. Recently, the Minister said that the Board will cover students outside the country, especially those in the East African region. At the moment, the HELB only targets university degree students while students in other institutions have been left out.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we should realise that many students do not qualify to join university, but qualify to join middle-level colleges and yet they have no financial back up to be able to join these colleges. This has meant very many students from poor families have fallen by the wayside. These students cannot continue with their education. Probably, this could be contributing towards the large number of youths we have in the country that are jobless and idle in market centres and towns.

The Higher Education Loans Board Act is very clear. One of its functions is to solicit for funds and other assistance to promote the function of the Board. That means the Board can solicit for funds so that it can lend to potential beneficiaries. The other function is to borrow such monies from such sources as may be approved by the Minister in concurrence with the Treasury and secure such loans in such manner as it deems fit. So far, the HELB has only been getting money from the Government. The Board gets a budgetary allocation from the Government which it adds onto its kitty for onward lending. The HELB has not exploited this section that allows it to acquire money in different ways. This has constrained it to the extent that it is unable to cover the number of students it should cover.

The over-concentration on degrees has led to a sort of infatuation of Kenyans with degree courses. Various universities have now mushroomed and we have many degree holders who are jobless. This is the case and yet middle level graduates are more likely to be self-employed because they are electricians and clinical officers. In the process of being self-employed, they can employ others. This is the case and yet we do not give them the emphasis that is required for them to acquire this education.

The middle-level college graduates are the backbone of any economy and might be the backbone for any industrialization. As a medical doctor, even if I went to a ward and saw patients, nothing would happen unless there is a nurse to take instructions and eventually give medication. Nothing would also happen if there is no laboratory technician to look at the specimen that we have taken to the laboratory. These people are the backbone of any economy.

If we look at our education sector, we will find that most of our children are in primary school and their teachers graduate from middle level colleges. Unfortunately, they are unable to access any funding for further education except relying on the Constituencies Development Fund (CDF) bursaries. Sometimes they rely on the bursaries that the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology gives them. This is so and yet many of them should get loans from the HELB and pay for their education because they are more likely to repay the loans because of the potential for self-employment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, if we talk about industrializing this country and yet we forget this crucial number of possible technicians, then it is a pipe dream. Industrialization will be very difficult because these are the masons who will build

structures that we want. Although this is the case, we do not facilitate them to access education. If these people venture into self-employment, they will assist the Government in its quest to create jobs in our economy.

We should exploit the HELB Act in full. As much as there could be a problem, for example, the HELB lacking enough money, they have not exploited the Act fully. There are various ingenious ways they can exploit the Act fully. For example, many parents would like to save for their children's education. A lot of that money is being saved in banks and insurance companies. These same people could be encouraged to buy the HELB bond so that the money can be on lent to those who require it. It is very unfortunate that we have refused to be innovative in our thinking and, therefore, constrain the development of our education system. There are many ways the people who would like to save with the HELB for the future of their children's education can raise money. When the time comes, they can withdraw the money and educate their children. However, in the intervening period, the money could be on lent to these students.

Another innovative way the HELB can acquire money for on lending to potential students is probably to use the CDF method. That is a certain percentage of the gross Government revenue be allocated to the HELB for onward lending to potential students. This will take care of what I consider the consumer side of education who are the "students". We also have the provider side of education who are the "higher education institutions". We can then come up with a method to ensure that they reach all the people because the CDF is restricted. We can only give bursaries up to 10 per cent of the CDF. These cannot possibly cover all the students that require bursaries.

In my constituency, because of the large population, we can give up to a maximum of Kshs5.5 million as bursaries, but when we take the university students and the middle-level college students, we find that all the students who deserve those loans can only access a maximum of about Kshs3,000 a year. That will not help them at all and yet these are students from very poor backgrounds. If they could be allowed to borrow from the HELB, they could complete their education and serve the country. We need to bridge this gap and that is the reason I have brought this Motion before this House. We want to urge the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology to look at ways and means to bridge this gap and reach out to all the potential students so that they can access these loans.

We should expand the HELB to save our people from illiteracy because if we do not, many children after completing Form Four will regress into illiteracy at home. We should not allow this state of affair to happen if we are talking of industrializing this country in the near future. We cannot always think so small that we say that the cake is too small. If we think that the cake is too small and yet we have the ability to bake a larger cake, then we should start thinking widely. I am sure that the people who set up the HELB initially, probably, their intentions are exactly what I am talking about, but along the way, we seem to have stagnated. I urge this House to support this Motion so that we can give our children a better chance in future.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, with those few remarks, I beg to move and call upon Mr. Mbadi to second.

**Mr. Mbadi:** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. I rise to second this Motion. I would like to first of all thank the Mover of this Motion for a well-thought out Motion which is timely. Before I even go to the details as to why this Motion should be supported



by this House, I would like to take this opportunity to thank, appreciate and congratulate the HELB for the work they have done in the recent past. This is one Government department one would refer to as nearing efficiency.

In the recent past, we have seen increased cash flow in the HELB which has basically been as a result of public campaigns to enhance better loan repayment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, my appeal to Kenyans who have been fortunate enough to benefit from this fund – especially to those of us who are in gainful employment and in businesses, and therefore in a position to repay their loans – is that they pay up, so that other Kenyans can also have an opportunity to realise their dreams. It is only through education that the principle of the law of equal finality can be realised. This is the only way through which the son of a peasant farmer will be able to, at one time, sit round a table and share a meal with the son of a king; it will happen only if they go to school.

With the subsidised secondary education, where the Government is paying between Kshs10,000 and Kshs11,000 per year per student, we have seen an increased enrolment in high schools. We have also seen this as a result of the increased number of secondary schools that have been put up across the country, courtesy of the Constituencies Development Fund (CDF), and other Government funding. However, we have not seen a corresponding level of accessibility to university education.

This means many of our children who will be coming out of secondary schools will need to find other alternatives in the form of tertiary colleges, and this is where middle-level colleges come in handy. With this in mind, and with the prevailing difficult economic situation in the country, including hunger and other economic problems that we face, there is need to support students who leave high school to join middle-level colleges, so that they can also have the capacity to realise their dreams.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to support Dr. Eseli when he says that there is too much emphasis on university education in this country. University education is important. We know the role that university education plays in any economy. Therefore, we cannot downplay the significance of university education. However, that does not mean that other courses that are being offered in middle level colleges are not important.

Therefore, I appeal to this House to approve this Motion, so that the Government can consider increasing funding to the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) and ask HELB to make provision, so that we can extend the loans facility to cover financing of our children who go through middle-level colleges.

I will also not forget to support the Mover of this Motion when he said that there is need for HELB to be more creative and innovative in its activities by trying to look into other ways of raising funds. I support this suggestion because I know that a lot of Kenyans have only insurance companies to fall back to. Without really discrediting them, there are lots of issues with insurance companies. You can faithfully contribute premiums to an insurance company for five years, but if something happens on the way and you default for even three months, you will certainly have a problem accessing the insurance benefits when the time comes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, that is where HELB comes in handy. I support the idea that HELB can start thinking of issuing education bonds, so that parents can buy them for their children for even ten years, if one knows that one's child will be at the college level in ten year's time, during which time HELB can invest that money. That will bring more

income to HELB. When the time comes for your son's or daughter's education, you will be able to access your money with ease.

Therefore, it is my wish and prayer that this Motion will see the light of the day, and that it will be supported across the board in the House, so that we can have hope for the children coming out of high school; that is that they will join middle-level colleges.

With those remarks, I beg to support.

*(Question proposed)*

**The Assistant Minister for Labour** (Mr. Ojaamong): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, for giving me the opportunity to support the Motion. I must thank Dr. Eseli for moving the Motion eloquently.

This Motion is going to address so many issues we are currently faced with. Very many middle-level college students will be admitted to various institutions in a week's time, starting from 5<sup>th</sup> September onwards. Currently, as Members of Parliament, we are receiving so many applications for assistance from these students. The applications are quite overwhelming.

Whereas we appreciate that HELB has done its best in assisting university students, we feel that there is a very big gap, because majority of high school dropouts need to join middle-level colleges.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, personally, I support the Motion. I feel that the Ministry should move with speed to request more funds from the Ministry of Finance, so that these students can benefit. As much as we appreciate the work that is being done by HELB, I also want to add my voice and say that HELB should be proactive. Personally, I have paid my HELB loan. I urge other people who may not have paid to do so.

There are so many NGOs that tend to operate in secrecy. They solicit a lot of money in the name of assisting most of our students, right from nursery school to middle-level colleges and university. Unfortunately, this money does not reach the intended beneficiaries. If HELB went round the country, and the East African region and beyond, they would be able to solicit a substantial amount of money that will enable them to assist our needy students.

So, I want to add my voice and say that HELB should not just be seated at Anniversary Towers. They should go out and start soliciting for funds. They should solicit for cheaper loans, which I am told are found elsewhere in the developed countries, so that our people can borrow this money and pay it back later on.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, HELB has been living in an ivory tower – just at the Anniversary Towers. There is no single time I have heard that these people have gone down to the constituencies to talk to stakeholders, including the students themselves, on the problems they face. It is necessary that HELB moves out of the ivory tower they are living in and talks to people, so that some of us and other stakeholders can be give them ideas on how best to improve the Board.

I know that this is a very important Motion. I will not even waste time, but just request my fellow legislators that we move with speed and, if necessary, amend the Higher Education Loans Board Act, so that majority of the students, who leave high school, can benefit. I am appealing to the Ministry of Finance to ensure that during the Supplementary Budget, we give HELB more money than even the Office of the

President. If possible, I could even request the President that instead of having so many of these Ministries which are serving no purpose at all he should try to dissolve them and channel this money to the HELB. Some of these Ministries are delivering nothing to the public; they are not giving the public value for the taxes they pay.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, my appeal is that in the supplementary budget and, in future legislation, the President and the Prime Minister should ensure that some Ministries which we all know have no value at all should be scrapped and the money be re-channeled to the HELB.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

**Mr. Imanyara:** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to first thank the Mover of this Motion. Dr Eseli is one of the most prolific Movers of Motions. As usual, he has brought a Motion that is not only relevant, but is critical to anybody who supports education in this country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this Motion could not have come at a better time. It is unfortunate that it will require a Motion of this House to get the HELB to do what it is actually supposed to do. As Dr. Eseli said in his contribution, if you look at the law that set up HELB, you will find that they have great scope and facilities for raising money, but they have continued to rely heavily on the Government.

We need to think outside the box and become more relevant. I know that the current Chief Executive Officer of that organization is very hardworking, but the board needs to sit down and find ways of raising more money. I would go to the extent of suggesting that the Government thinks seriously about opening an office of HELB at every district headquarters in the country.

A nation without educated people is a nation in decline. This country is famous for sending students overseas for learning. If the Government were to open a HELB office in every district headquarters as department of Government within the Ministry of Education, then we will be expanding opportunities. This will ensure that we do not have to conduct *harambees* every single week to support our constituents to go overseas for studies.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there are so many institutions in this country that are providing first class education facilities, but we have this fixation with international education. People spend huge sums of money sending their children outside this country that cannot provide as good education as is provided in this country.

Part of the reason for this is because the HELB is not taking its mandate seriously. I would suggest that for every student who goes out of this country, the HELB should require that the money that is being paid to foreign universities be channeled to the HELB, so that we can reduce the number of students going overseas and also ensure that the money that we are raising locally is used to educate our children locally rather than sending money out of the country then these children change courses.

You raise huge sums of money here and send it abroad! A child goes to India to study and when he reaches there, there is no control. We do not know whether the education that they are pursuing there is relevant to what we raised money to send them there to study.

If the HELB can be streamlined to participate fully in pursuing higher education in whatever form, then we would be able to trace and bring back a lot of these children

who go outside at a very tender age and are subjected to external influences that are not always positive.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in supporting this Motion, the Government must have a specific Vote Head in the annual estimates, every year that not only increases the money made available for the HELB, but also for enhancing their capacity, so that they are able to follow up, not only the repayment, but more importantly, to ensure that the money that is given out actually goes to funding relevant courses that are being pursued by our students overseas.

Since everything that I wanted to say in regard to this Motion has been said by both the Mover and the Seconder, I support this Motion.

**Mr. Pesa:** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, for giving me time to support this important Motion.

Education in this country is a pillar to the development of this country. The idea of HELB was actually implemented way back in the year 1975/76 Academic Year in our universities in Kenya. At that time, there was need to ensure that education was funded not only by the parents, but by other agencies like the Government and other supporters.

In that respect the Government decided that they form this board which has supported a lot of students in this country. We have the 8-4-4 System of Education. If the HELB had not been in existence, one wonders how these students would have completed their studies at the university level.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, apart from university studies, we have majority of our students in the middle-level colleges. I think the Mover must have left out something which I want to bring an amendment to, so that we encompass the entire segment of the middle-level colleges.

There are these Medical Training Colleges and teacher training colleges. The way this statement is put here, these are not covered. Therefore, I would like to move an amendment to this Motion so that in those areas which are very important, where the majority of our students do not qualify to go to the universities, they are assisted.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Motion be amended by deleting the words "especially those offering technician certificates" in the last line and insert in place thereof the words "offering diplomas and certificates". That leaves out the diploma colleges that I am talking about.

In that respect, we would, therefore, have this Motion to read as follows:

THAT, acknowledging the good work performed by the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) in providing loans to students in both public and private universities from poor background in order to access education; noting that higher education financing is a problem in most countries, including the industrialized; appreciating that middle level technicians are key to industrial development; this House urges the Government to enhance funding to HELB and further to widen the scope of its funding to include middle level colleges offering diplomas and certificates.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that amendment.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Who will second the amendment?

**Mr. Pesa:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I ask Mr. Chanzu to second the amendment.

**Mr. Chanzu:** Seconded.

*(Question of the the first part of the amendment, that*

*the words to be left out be left out, proposed)*

**The Assistant Minister of State for Defence** (Mr. Musila): Thank you Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, for giving this opportunity. I stand here to support the amendment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have always been an admirer of the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) because of the good work it has been doing in assisting students complete their university education. Recently, the HELB has gone to the extent of extending this facility to students in private universities. This is welcome.

This motion seeks to get these loans further down to colleges. This is supported because at the moment the only bursaries that are available now are those from the Constituencies Development Fund (CDF). Everybody seems to think that the CDF has monies that cannot be exhausted. Therefore, I think it is high time the HELB came down to providing loans to colleges. These institutions are equally important.

Before I move to that, I want to also put a case for the amount of money that the HELB is advancing to students. It is not just important to say that they are extending loans to college and private university students but at the same time continue reducing the amounts that they advance. I would like this extension to private universities and colleges to be enhanced by increased amounts. At the moment, the HELB gives up to Kshs35,000 per year for university education. This is too small an amount to expect a student to cover most of the important expenses at the university. Therefore, I would like first of all, to urge the HELB administration to increase the amount that is advanced to students. At the moment, a maximum of Kshs50,000 is given and sometimes a minimum of Kshs35,000. I think this should be doubled to Kshs100,000 per student. This is because university education is very expensive. It would be meaningless if this is not done. I believe Dr. Eseli agrees with me. It would be meaningless to say that we are extending loans to students in private colleges and universities or lower colleges and reduce the amount. It would not make any sense at all. Therefore, I want the HELB administration to seek more funds to increase the funding so that the monies advanced to students is increased accordingly.

Now, where does this money come from? I know that there are many students studying overseas who get Government funding. Some of this money is given to students who are not even in school. I know this because during the Eighth Parliament, we went to visit certain embassies to investigate how the money that is sent by the Ministry of Education to students who study overseas is given out. We were shocked. For example, in Germany, we found monies collected by students who are even married there and are not studying. They probably went to study five years or ten years ago. The money still keeps on going to them. There is no proper administration of these funds by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we made certain recommendations that every year, for a student receiving funding from the Government, there must be a letter from the academic registrar to confirm and certify that the student is in school. Even as I speak, I know there are students overseas who are not studying but are receiving Government funds. Therefore, these are monies that can be channeled to the HELB instead of being kept in Jogoo House to favour students of certain well to do families.

If a parent chooses to take a student to a high class university, he must be able to pay. The State should not be made to pay. The HELB should be restricted to providing loans to students who are unable to meet their expenses.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on that note, I also want to touch on the administration of bursaries issued by various Governments all over the world to the Kenyan Government. These bursaries are given or dished out to friends and relatives at Jogoo House. These bursaries are not transparently distributed to students. Every year there are hundreds of bursaries being administered by Jogoo House for student overseas. However, we are not clear how these bursaries are given. Therefore, a transparent system of distributing or giving away these---

**Mr. Chanzu:** On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. It may be a point of information but anyway, Jogoo House houses various Ministries. Is it in order for the Member to refer to Jogoo House instead of referring specifically to the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology?

**The Assistant Minister for Defence (Mr. Musila):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, you know Mr. Chanzu has even said he is not sure whether his is a point of information or a point of order. I think that is a point of information. It is not a point of order because I have not contravened any Standing Order of this House.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Mr. Musila, please, proceed!

**The Assistant Minister for Defence (Mr. Musila):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, be that as it may, it is well known that Jogoo House houses the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology. If you want me to be specific, it is the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Assistant Minister, the worry that the Chair has is that you are criticising the functions of a Government which you are part of. You are in the Cabinet and basically, what you are discussing right now---

**The Assistant Minister for Defence (Mr. Musila):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I do not think that I am appointed by the Government for my views to be muzzled. If I cannot express my views here for the people I represent, then I would rather be the Member for Mwingi South.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, Mr. Musila! You have forums in the Government to address the issues that you are addressing on the Floor of the House. The Chair is cognizant of the cardinal doctrine of separation of powers. You are part of the Executive and the Chair will not entertain a situation in which Ministers are criticising either the actions or the functions of the Government they belong to.

So, please, contribute on the merits of the debate itself without---

**The Assistant Minister for Defence (Mr. Musila):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to appreciate your ruling but I have problems with it. This is because the Legislative arm of the Government is now doing the work of the Executive. If the Executive, who is my employer, is dissatisfied with my performance and utterance in the House, then the Executive can take action. I do not think it is fair for the Legislature to muzzle the views of Members of Parliament who were elected. Having said that, with respect, I wish to continue.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I finally want to talk about the stipend that is given to students who study overseas. Last week, I had the honour to meet Kenyan students who study in China. It is very appropriate that I convey the message I was given by these

students to the Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology. They said that the stipend they get from the Government is not sufficient. They feel that the Government should enhance the stipend because it was fixed 20 years ago and it is still the same. However, the cost of life and exchange rate of currencies has fluctuated many times. To go back to the Motion, I want to support very strongly that HELB should continue to do the good work it has been doing and that it enhances it by ensuring that the funds that are allocated are increased and further, that it is spread across board, to all universities, public and private and to all colleges, regardless of whether they are technical or not.

*(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)*

**The Assistant Minister for Lands (Mr. Rai):** Bw. Naibu Spika, nasimama kuunga mkono Hoja hii. Ningependa kumpongeza aliye wasilisha Hoja hii na yule aliyeifanyia mabadiliko machache kwa sababu wakati umefika ambao tunafaa kujitambua na kuyajua matatizo yanayoikabili nchi hii. Tatizo la vijana kufikia wakati huu ni ukosefu wa ajira ambalo limechangiwa sana na watoto kukosa kwenda kuchukua kosi ndogo ndogo kama vile zile zinazotolewa katika vyuo vya waalimu na kusomea katika medical colleges kwa sababu ya ukosefu wa pesa.

Nchi hii imekumbwa na umaskini na nilazima tukubali. Umaskini ni kilema na umefika wakati ambapo tunapona Hoja kama hii, ni jukumu letu kama watunga sheria kuangalia ni njia gani mwafaka inayoweza kutumika ili kuokoa vijana hawa ambao kwa muda mrefu wamekuwa mara kwa mara wakiitwa katika medical colleges na vyuo vya waalimu lakini hawawezi kwenda kwa sababu ya ukosefu wa pesa. Kwa kuwahusisha katika mpango huu wa mkopo, watoto hawa watasaidika ipasavyo. Nina imani ya kwamba jambo hili litapunguza idadi ya vijana ambao mara nyingi hawabahatiki kuwa na masomo kama haya. Ni maombi yangu kwamba tunapoendelea kufanya mambo kama haya ama kuhamasisha sheria ya bodi ya mikopo--- Serikali ilitoa elimu bila malipo. Kumekuwa na ongezeko la watoto wanaomaliza masomo. Ili kuongeza na kuokoa vijana hawa ambao ni taifa la baadaye, nadhani umefika wakati ambapo hata vyuo vya ufundi vitawajibika kutoa masomo yasiyo na malipo kwasababu kama watoto hawa wote wangepata taaluma yao katika vyuo vya ufundi, naamini matatizo mengi ya ukosefu wa ajira yangepungua na watoto wengi hawangebaki manyumbani kwasababu ya hali hii ya umaskini ambayo imekita katika nchi yetu.

Ningetaka kumuunga mkono Bw. Imanyara kwa kusema kwamba ofisi za bodi ya mikopo zafaa kupelekwa katika wilaya kule tunakotoka. Tatizo moja kati ya matatizo yanayokumba watoto wetu ni kwamba wanapopewa fomu hizi na kuziwasilisha Nairobi, jambo hili huwa kama mgonjwa anayeenda hospitalini na kuandikiwa dawa na badala ya kupewa dawa hizo, anaambiwa aende anunue dawa. Mgonjwa huyo analazimika kwenda nyumbani bila dawa. Ni lazima tupate njia ya kuyaangalia mambo haya ili tuwasaidie vijana wetu.

Ni lazima tuseme ya kwamba CDF imejaribu kusaidia katika mambo mengi. Asilimia 50 ya pesa za CDF huenda kwa mipango ya elimu lakini hazitoshi. Tumekuwa

tukilia hapa kwamba pesa hizo zinafaa kuongezwa kuwa asilimia 5 ya Bajeti. Kule nje kwa sababu ya kutoeleweka, inaonekana kwamba hata Wabunge kusimamia pesa ya CDF limezoa utata. Pesa nyingi zimepotea. Ukiangalia pesa zile ambazo zimepotea katika Goldenberg na Anglo Leasing, kama zingalikuwa zimepewa HELB, naamini kwamba watoto wengi wangekuwa wamepata masomo ya kutosha na wangekuwa wamesaidika. Ninamshukuru aliyeyleta Hoja hii kwa sababu Bodi inayohusika inafaa kuandika mapendekezo ambayo yatasaidia nchi hii ili Wizara ya Fedha iwaongeze pesa na hata kile kiwango wanachopata sasa hivi kiongezwe. Kuna haja gani ya mtoto anayefanya utafiti na mambo mengine kupewa Kshs35,000 peke yake? Ikiwa pesa hizo zinaweza kuongezwa, itakuwa jambo la kusaidia.

Bw. Naibu Spika, ni lazima tuseme ukweli. Ingawa bodi hii inafanya kazi nzuri, kuna uhaba wa pesa. Wakati haujapotea kwa sababu bodi hii ina muda wa kutayarisha mapendekezo yake na kuyawasilisha kwa Ofisi ya Naibu wa Waziri Mkuu na Wizara ya Fedha ili waongezwe pesa wakati wa Supplementary Estimates.

Kuna parallel programme ambayo pia imehusishwa katika mipango hii. Kuna baadhi ya watoto ambao wanapelekwa nje kusoma. Kabla ya vibali vya watoto wetu kuenda nje kupata masomo vitolewe, kuna haja ya Serikali kuweka sheria mwafaka ya kujaribu kulinda watoto wanaoenda nje. Kwanza, tunafaa kuhakikisha kwamba wanaopeleka watoto nje wana uwezo huo. Watoto wengi huenda kusoma katika nchi za nje na wanapofika huko, wanaanza kufanya kazi ambazo si haki kwa binadamu kwa sababu ya ukosefu wa pesa. Pengine akiagiza pesa kutoka nyumbani, pesa hazipatikani. Kwa hivyo, ni lazima ajihusishe na mambo ambayo si mazuri kwake yeye mwenyewe na pia kwa nchi hii. Kuna haja ya kuwa na sheria mwafaka ambayo itawalinda watoto hawa kabla hawajapata vibali vya kutoka nje ili kuhakikisha dhahiri kwamba kuna pesa za kutosha za kuhimili watoto hao mpaka wamalize masomo yao wakiwa nje.

Haki za watoto ni lazima zilindwe. Tumesema mara nyingi kwamba hata watoto ambao wanaokwenda katika mfumo wa parallel programme, hata kama watapata pesa za HELB, ni lazima tujiangalie kama tumejitayarisha. Kuna haja gani ya kufanya kosi mwaka mmoja halafu mwaka wa pili hauwezi kuendelea kwa sababu mambo yameharibika? Huwezi kurudishiwa karo ambayo umelipa kwa mwaka wa kwanza. Kwa hivyo, itakuwa vigumu kwa mwanafunzi huyo kulipa mkopo huo ili tuweze kuwasaidia watoto wengine. Kuna haja ya kuwa na sheria ambazo zitatusaidia kuokoa hali hii.

Uhuru umepatikana lakini jambo moja ambalo Serikali lazima ipambane nalo ni kuhakikisha kwamba imepambana na tatizo la kutokujua kusoma na kuandika. Watoto wengi hawamalizi masomo yao kwa sababu ya ukosefu tulionao. Ni lazima niipongeze Serikali kwa kukubali kwamba watoto wanaotoka katika shule zetu za misingi wanafaa kupewa chakula hata wakati wa likizo ili waweze kuendelea na masomo na kuhakikisha kwamba masomo yao hayakatizwo.

Jambo la kusikitisha ni kwamba kufikia wakati huu watoto katika sehemu nyingi kame wameanza kuacha shule kwa sababu ya ukosefu wa chakula. Ninajua Serikali ilizindua msimu wa kusema ingesambaza chakula kwa kutumia magari ya kijeshi lakini magari hayo hayajarudi tangu yalipotoka. Chakula kimo katika maghala na watoto hawawezi kupata chakula. Hii ni hali ngumu.

Bw. Naibu Spika, iko haja ya kuhakikisha kwamba mambo ambayo hatuyawezi, tukubali hatuyawezi na yale ambayo tunaweza kuyaendeleza, tuyaendeleze ili tuokoe taifa hili. Maisha na hatima ya baadaye ya vijana wetu yatatokana na mipango mizuri



tutakayo itengeneza sisi kama viongozi. Kwa hivyo, naunga mkono vilivyo Hoja hii. Hoja hii ikipita, mikakati ya kisawa itapata kushughulikiwa haraka iwezekanavyo, ili ikifikia mwezi wa Kumi, tuone kwamba mipango hiyo imeanza kutekelezwa.

Hivi sasa, kuna baadhi ya watoto ambao wameitwa katika vyuo vya mafunzo ya walimu na utabibu. Watoto hao wanahitaji msaada kutoka wa Wabunge. Kitengo cha CDF hakijapata pesa kwa sababu mwaka ulifungwa na hakuna pesa. Watoto hao wanahitaji kwenda shuleni na hatuna njia ya kuwasaidia. Kwa hivyo, ikiwa msimu huu unaweza kukamilishwa kwa wakati unaofaa, nina imani tunaweza kuwaokoa watoto hao ambao tayari wametishika kwamba hawataweza kuchukua nafasi zile. Utafika wakati kwamba mwenye nguvu pekee ndiye atakayeweza kuwapeleka watoto wake shuleni. Lakini, mnyonge, siku zote, ataendelea kubaki nyuma. Haikuwa nadhiri ya Serikali hii kwamba wakati wote ni wenye nguvu ndio watafaidika na wanyonge wataendelea kuumia.

Kwa hivyo, Hoja hii ikipitishwa, watoto ambao tayari wametishika kwamba hawataingia katika vyuo tofauti tofauti wataweza kuendelea na masomo yao. Kama itawezekana pia, hata zile taasisi ambazo zimewaita watoto hawa, zinafaa kuwa na mawasiliano ya kutosha ili kuhakikishe kwamba, wakati mipango inapoendelea kutengenezwa, watoto hao watakubaliwa kuingia katika vyuo vyao. Kwa sababu, utafika wakati ambao wataambiwa kuwa nafasi zimefungwa ili wenye nguvu, ambao wako tayari hata kuhongana wachukue nafasi zile; watafanya hivyo na wanyonge watabaki nyuma. Tukitaka kuwaokoa wanyonge, ni lazima tutoe mapendekezo fulani ama taarifa fulani kwa hizo taasisi ili zipate kujua kwamba watoto hao wanahitajika kuchukua nafasi zile, ili nao pia wapate nafasi ya kujiendeleza kimasomo.

Najua tuna matatizo mengi. Lakini swala la elimu ni muhimu katika taifa. Iko haja ya kuhakikisha kwamba mambo haya yametiliwa maanani ili tuokoe nchi yetu ipasavyo.

Kwa hayo machache, naomba kuunga mkono.

**Ms. Karua:** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. I rise to support this Motion. I want to say from the outset that the Government's policy on education is wrong. Education is a basic right and the policy should aim at making education accessible and affordable to all. Even though we have a free primary education policy - and now secondary education is being subsidized - we have not seen a spirited effort by the Government to streamline even the issue of accessibility for secondary schools, where fees charged in spite of the Government directive, end up being beyond the reach of the ordinary person.

On university education, Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) currently funds only university students. Even that funding is totally inadequate. There are three components that must be funded so that students can undertake their studies and give equal access to both poor and rich families. Those components are tuition, accommodation and meals. The loans given must cover the three. But the way the accommodation and meals are currently structured, even where accommodation is available in public universities, the loans given are not adequate to cover the three. The universities halls of residence have been turned into slums. The students are sub-letting the halls and are cooking in there. Life is pretty difficult for students from poor families who are struggling on a daily basis to get a meal on the table and to complete paying fees.

Whereas I support this Motion that the money given to HELB should be enhanced to enable the Board fund students in middle-level colleges, especially those offering technical courses, it is imperative that, while that is being done simultaneously, there must be a re-look on the funding for university students, so that we are able to give funding that equalizes the children from poor and rich families. Education is a commodity not exclusively for the rich, but for all human beings.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Government must start asking itself why students from our country are flocking elsewhere in the world. They are flocking to India, America and Europe. It means that Kenya is funding the education system of those countries. When you go as a foreign student, you pay more than the local students. But they are going there because education is cheaper in India than it is in Kenya. It is cheaper in Uganda and Tanzania. How come that our public universities, when they offer parallel courses, charge almost as much as private universities? What benefit is the Government giving to the public? We need to look at the fees structures. We also need to grade our middle-level colleges. Other than the ones run by the Government, there is no system of helping Kenyans identify genuine and bogus colleges that are set up only for commercial reasons. Such colleges end up ripping off Kenyans. We need that so that we can know we are funding students who will then do courses that are useful.

While waiting for that to happen, I know that most of us are spending a greater percentage of our CDF on education. In Gichugu, we have not been offering any bursaries except for secondary schools. But now, we have embarked on offering bursaries for both university and middle-level colleges. But we are having problems in grading. I am, therefore, saying that if CDF, which is just a small fraction, can do something about education, how much more can the Government do if it embraces the noble idea of enhancing the amount given to HELB to cover middle level colleges?

Finally, I want to say this: Even those middle-level colleges are becoming unnecessarily expensive. To take a student to Kenya Medical Training College (MKTC), it costs roughly Kshs60,000 for the regular courses. For parallel courses, it is towards Kshs70,000. For education, it has moved from Kshs25,000 to over Kshs40,000. That is totally unaffordable. The Government must subsidize the running of the Government-aided colleges to make training accessible to both the poor and the rich in the society. Currently, many people who have been offered places in middle-level colleges are dropping out because they cannot afford the fees charged there. There is something wrong in the way we are pricing education. If one thinks about it, it is a question of accountability and transparency in the way we are running our education facilities, beginning with the universities to middle-level colleges. If we have transparency, accountability and efficiency in the way we apply our financial and human resources, then education would be affordable.

I like quoting the example of Cuba. Cuba is a country that not only believes in, but also practices the ideology that education is a basic right and makes sure that it is accessible to all. Cuba pays for the education of her citizens throughout their life cycle. If Cuba, which is not one of the richest nations can do it, with proper planning, we can do it too. That is why I said that our policy on education is all wrong. We need to re-look and prioritise education. We also need to manage it efficiently. Even the free primary education is not managed efficiently. Let us have a re-look and as we support the

additional money, let us also ask the Government to re-look at the entire policy to make our education system meaningful.

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

*(Mr. Kaino stood up in his place and sat down)*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Mr. Kaino, do you want to stand or sit down?

**Mr. Kaino:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to stand.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Why are you sitting and standing? You know the ruling of the Chair. You have been sanctioned by the Chair. As much as you have approached the Chair and explained yourself, you also need to explain to the House why you were not here on time this morning to ask your Question!

**Mr. Kaino:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on the outset, let me very sincerely apologise to the Chair and also to the House for being late. Last night, some people travelled from my constituency and I went to the stage to pick them around 5.30 a.m today. I also meet councillors who had come to attend a meeting here in Nairobi and sign performance contracts. I was delayed in the traffic jam by a few minutes. I apologise for coming late.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, thank you very much for accepting my apologies. I wish to contribute to this very important Motion.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Chair did not accept your apologies! But nonetheless, the Chair directs that you will be allowed to get away with this. However, make sure that you use your Personal Assistant and other people. Make sure that you are available in this House when you have a Question. In any case, you had known for a whole week that you had a Question on Wednesday morning.

Proceed Mr. Kaino!

**Mr. Kaino:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have taken the point. Let me also contribute very briefly on this very important Motion. I thank the Mover of this very important Motion. Education is a very important tool in this country. If you visit different parts of the country, you will realise that the construction of buildings and roads and other jobs are being carried out by people who went to Kenya Polytechnic in Nairobi and Mombasa Polytechnic and obtained diplomas. These people are doing a fantastic job. If these people were given bursaries and loans to pursue higher education, many Kenyans could not be in the streets today. They could even be doing their jobs. So, this Motion is very important and I strongly support it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I also urge the Government to increase the allocation to the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB). If there is anything this country exports to other countries today is the idea of the HELB. The Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology and the HELB should be congratulated for the good job that is being done today. Many Kenyans are in school today with the establishment of the HELB. This is despite the fact that the allocation is too small. I urge the Government to increase the allocation it makes to the HELB. This is an idea that other African countries can emulate. We can also export this idea to those countries.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance said the other day that he will sell expensive Government cars. Apart from re-settling the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) this money could finance the HELB activities. If the Deputy Prime

Minister and Minister for Finance is serious with what he said in this House, he should realise that our children are more important than any other thing, for instance, driving very big cars.

There is an increase in the number of colleges in Kenya today. Many universities have come up and some of them do not have a charter. In supporting this Motion, I would like the Ministry to assist all the students by issuing charters to universities in this country. This will ensure that students, especially those from very poor families can access bursaries. Since the HELB is like a revolving fund, the opening of branches in every district is very important. It will ensure that many students will join colleges knowing that they will get some assistance from the HELB.

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

**Prof. Kamar:** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, for allowing me to contribute to this wonderful Motion. I want to thank the Mover of the Motion for giving us a well articulated Motion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, higher education should be a right to every Kenyan. We thank the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology for spreading loans through the HELB to private universities. We should start asking who benefited from the universities. I happened to have been a university professor and a Deputy Vice-Chancellor. More than 50 per cent of the students who managed to go through the regular programme are from private high schools. When we talk about private high schools, we are talking about students from able families. The computer will capture those students, because the Government uses the marks scored to sponsor university students. If the students who are captured in the regular programme come from private schools, it means that we are capturing students from able homes. So, the students who have been in the Parallel or Module II or in private universities are the ones who have come from public institutions. This means that they are from poor families. This has created a complication because the sponsorship of the Government is obviously to the top students. The students who meet the cut-off points and are admitted to public university under the regular programme get automatic funding. This is the case and yet the students who are left out are normally from poor families. As I support this Motion, I urge the Government, through the HELB, to consider the students who are admitted under the private sponsorship programme even more than the other students, because they are from poor families. It is very important that we identify a clear criteria for giving the loans to the students. If we are talking about a needy student, let us look for the needy student. Let us not even use the cut-off points criteria.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, currently, Uganda hosts more Kenyan students than most of our universities because the education programmes in Uganda are cheaper than those in Kenya. In fact, you will find that we have Kenyan high school students schooling in Uganda. This implies that in spite of the thirst for education in Kenya, our institutions are unable to take all the students. The only way we can enable these institutions to take Kenyan students is to enable the parents, through their children, get support.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, therefore, I recommend that the HELB loans should be spread and should not be limited to the students who are in Module II or privately sponsored students or private institutions because those are the students that we must capture. The universities use a mean grade of C+ and above as the entry point internationally. It is very important that every Kenyan who has got a C+ and above

should be facilitated to go through higher education. The current problem of unemployment in this country is crowding the lower group that has finished Form Four. We have many Form Four products with a mean grade of B who are cleaners and are looking for small jobs because they are unable to access higher education. If these youth are facilitated to take up degree courses as long as they have a mean grade of C+ and above, we will be talking about an education society. We will also be talking about a society that can move out of this country and be employed in another country.

We know that the Southern Africa region has been looking for employees from Kenya, because our human resource development is of very high quality. We have even primary school teachers teaching in the region, but we must enable them to get those certificates before they go.

Coming to the expansion from sponsoring university students to colleges, again I would like to thank the mover of the motion, because we have a cadre of youth who we would have exported as human resource. If we cannot export gold, let us export human resource from this country, because our training institutions are excellent. We have had an exodus of nurses and medical practitioners out of this country, to the extent that sometimes, we have a shortage in the country. If only we facilitated the training of these nurses and, medical officers, we should be able to export them as human resource to the countries that are in need. Africa still requires them, the US and the UK requires our nurses, why do we not raise them? The only way we can raise them is to implement what this Motion is seeking; that we should actually expand the ability of HELB to cover these middle level colleges and allow our youth to work anywhere in the globe.

If we are able to train nurses to fill the capacity in the US and the UK as they demand, I think we would be a better society. We know there is good repatriation of funding back, Currently, the only repatriated funds in Kenya are dominantly from athletes. Those are not the only people who can capture these funds from outside. Our own human resource can capture the same money if not more. I know for a fact that almost every university in South Africa has a Kenyan professor, I know for a fact that in Namibia, we have nurses from Kenya. If we can train these people, we know the funding will come back. I know the only problem that we are having currently is the way the HELB can track down the beneficiaries and get their money back. That is a system issue and we would like to challenge the Ministry to ensure that the HELB has a system that can capture every individual that has received the funding so that it can revolve and we can be able to take care of our people. I strongly support this Motion and I believe if we all support it, we should be able to move our youth from the level that they are in, of unemployment to a better level of being skilled and sourcing for jobs not only nationally but also outside this country, because there are jobs out there.

The East African Community (EAC) has opened up and there is going to be movement of persons. We would be able to have our youth employed in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi. We need to prepare ourselves, we need to build the human resource that will be able to look for opportunities outside, but if we stay the way we are doing, our unemployed youth will be unemployed and unskilled. If you have youth who are not skilled and are not employed, then you have a worse problem, than if you had a skilled lot who are not employed because they can be able to look for jobs elsewhere. I urge the Ministry to move with speed to revolve itself and transform itself to be a provider of the right of education.

Finally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in most countries, at the age of 18, our youth should not depend on our parents. They should go out and fend for themselves. If the HELB can capture everybody above age 18 to get a loan so that they repay for themselves, we shall be able to free our very poor parents from the burden of educating everybody including a married son or a married daughter. The problem currently, and the reason why we cannot move out of the poverty, is the fact that we are depending on a very poor parent to educate the child from nursery to university and after that we are expecting the same parent to be able to provide for jobs because there are no jobs. We are expecting the same parent to provide land for a youth who is educated as well as the youth who has not been educated. So to be able to move out of the poverty circle--- our Constitution talks of an adult being 18 years, that these people should be independent from their parents. We need to support them at that age so that they can move out train them, facilitate them, make sure that they refund after they have been trained but enable them to live independently out of the closet of their parents. It has also brought in a lot of social problems and created social misfits within the families when you have a grown up of 35 years still depending on the parents to be able to complete a degree under the mature programme. I think it is very important that each of us supports this motion, and seek for speedy change of rules and regulations or policies within the Ministry of Education to ensure that everybody after 18 years can independently depend on the government, and not the parent.

**The Minister of State for National Heritage and Culture (Mr. ole Ntimama):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to apologise from the bottom of my heart for having come late when my Question was called. It is the first time for so many years that I have been in this Parliament that I have been really late in answering a Question. I want to apologise applause.

I live near Kangemi and normally, there is heavy traffic on that road. I tried my best, I woke up very early but still I was unable to reach here and answer the Question. I was listening to the radio in my car and I was shocked when I also heard the Question relating to my Ministry being called out, which is the fifteenth question. I had assumed that probably, every Question in the normal circumstances would take four to five minutes but it seems everything went so fast that Question 267 was called out before I arrived to answer it. I apologise to the hon. Questioner.

**Deputy Speaker:** Fair enough. Given your advanced age and given the fact that you have such an impeccable record in the past, the Chair is satisfied. You can now transact business in the House.

**The Minister of State for National Heritage and Culture (Mr. ole Ntimama):** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

**Mr. Chanzu:** As you all know, education is a basic requirement. That is why it is important that when we talk about education, we are talking about education at all levels. The problem with Higher Education Loans Board (HELB), which we are supporting now and many institutions, which has been an upshot of the institutions from the Government, is that HELB has worked well but it has not worked in a business-like manner. Hon. Members have talked here how to raise funds; we know we are limited as a country on the amount of money available to spend. We want the HELB to be innovative enough so that they are able to raise funds from other sources so that we can cover as wide a scope as possible. There is now a new innovation about universal funding in every sector in the

world. The HELB should be thinking in terms of having a universal Fund, a Fund which is larger than what they are expecting to get from the Central Government in order to fund the activities. If the HELB is only able to fund students who are going to university at the rate of a maximum of Kshs35,000 and we know very well that the backlog is among the students who are supposed to go for diplomas and certificates, which means the burden would be more on them in terms of funding. So, we have to be innovative enough in order to be able to raise funds to meet this challenge.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, I want to congratulate the Government for the initiatives that it has made as far as primary education is concerned in this country. If you remember, when we had 8-4-2-3 system, there was kind of pruning. When students got to Form Four, there are those who remained there. They only went to technical colleges and so on. The rest went to Form Five and Six. There was a sieving mechanism, whereby we did not have the kind of situation we have today where at the Form Four level, there are so many students but those going to university are very few, which means so many students miss going to university. These are the students that we need to take care of in this Motion.

I know politics has interfered with education more often than not. The Ministry of Education is sometimes one Ministry and sometimes it is split and in the process, some information that is kept is lost. I think it is time that we got structures in place so that when we talk about education, there is a Ministry dealing with it. We should not have this business of splitting Ministries. At the moment, we have the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology and the Ministry of Education. I think there is confusion there which can be taken care of if we have proper reforms and structures in place which determine what sector we are talking about.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, regarding the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB), I support the view that it should be moved out of Nairobi to the grassroots. This will enable it to know realistically, the needy students to be assisted because the business of sending forms to students to fill them, sometimes the students do not know where to deliver the forms. So, I am suggesting that as we talk about supporting HELB to get funding through the Central Government, its restructuring is going to be of utmost importance. We want HELB to be restructured in a way that it can be able to work independently so that it is also strengthened and be able to make their own decisions regarding funding and not to make decisions pegged on what that the Central Government is going to give them.

The criteria of funding should also be very clear. If anything, the criteria of funding should be made public through the Press so that every applicant or needy students are aware on what they need to do to get the funds.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

**Mr. Njuguna:** Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this very critical Motion. First, I wish to thank the Mover of the Motion; the Motion is long overdue. It should have come a long time ago because of the serious circumstances that we find in our universities. Secondly, I wish to thank HELB for the manner that it has been managing the little resources allocated to it. I also want to thank public and private universities for continually providing quality education in our institutions. It is important that we note that private universities have continued to provide education to our needy students. It is important that we deliberate on this

important issue. We should urge these universities not to increase the fees because of the situation prevailing in the nation.

We have also noted that there is a very serious exodus of our students to the neighbouring countries. About 22,000 students are learning in the neighbouring countries like Uganda and Tanzania. Almost a quarter of our student population is likely to be out of this nation because inflation in this nation is very high. To tame that, the Government must increase this Vote Head so that affordable education is given to all the students. When you look at the parents who are working day and night to make sure that their children are educated, sometimes they have sold their pieces of land and animals to pay fees. Even *harambees* have been conducted. Sometimes, even the students intended to go to the universities are not able to go. Drought has also affected our lifestyle in this nation. Therefore, we have a big number of students who would like to join the university but because of these factors, they cannot access this education. Therefore, it is important that we promote and enhance that Vote Head.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, you also realize that this nation is currently being affected by a very big number of orphans because of HIV/AIDS victims. This is a very delicate issue. Therefore, the students affected and those from very poor backgrounds must be enabled and assisted by the Government. It is the prime responsibility of the Government to provide education to them. Therefore, this increased funding will help those students.

It is saddening and very embarrassing when you look at the rate of drop-outs from public universities. The drop-outs are sometimes touted as *matatu* drivers and operators. At times, they are attracted to illegal groupings because of moving out from the universities. We need to encourage retention of our students in the universities so that this nation can really industrialize. We cannot record or achieve socio-economic advancement until we invest heavily in that sector. I would imagine the role that is being played by our university by way of admitting students. The number of admitted students could be increased if more funds are allocated to this sector. It is, therefore, important that all of us fully support increased funding to HELB so that all the students in this nation get education at the right time.

With those few remarks, I support.

**The Temporary Deputy Speaker** (Prof. Kamar): Hon. Members, it is time for the Government responder. He has kindly agreed to donate three minutes to Ms. Odhiambo, four minutes to the Chairman of the Departmental Committee on Education, Research and Technology and three minutes to Mr. Ngugi. But if you can reduce it to two minutes, we may be able to save for other two hon. Members, then he will have ten minutes.

**Mrs. Odhiambo-Mabona:** Thank you, Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker. I would want to thank the Government for donating its time. I also want to thank Dr. Eseli for bringing this noble Motion.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, I would want to say that the HELB is a key institution that has helped many students. Many of us are here courtesy of HELB. I am sure if my poor mother was given the opportunity to educate me out of her own resources, I would not be standing here today. That is why it is, indeed, important for us to have it. But I would want to say that HELB has also helped a lot of marginalized and vulnerable groupings. I know that the hon. Member who has spoken ahead of me has



spoken about persons who were offered support as a consequence of HIV/AIDS pandemic. Many of them could not go to school. Many of them are heading child headed households and are taking care of their siblings. So, we have children who are not able to go to school because of these circumstances. So, because of that, they do not perform at par with other children. Therefore, when they have an opportunity to go through tertiary level education, they will actually access the job opportunities as others.

There are other Government policies that are not favourable. For instance, the policy that provides that in rural areas, the medium of instruction is mother tongue, whereas the medium of instruction in urban schools is English. So, it actually gives a head start for children that are in town schools and yet, they sit the same exams. As a result of this, most of the children in rural schools who already do not have the same resources and money perform poorer and, therefore, go to this level of education. They also need as much access as children whose parents are endowed economically.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, because many young girls are not able to access the same sort of resources, many of them have been forced to turn to commercial sex work through no choice of their own. Therefore, if this money was introduced at this level, it will be instrumental in enabling young women access this money. It is, however, important that this fund be better managed.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

**Mr. Koech:** Thank you, Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to contribute to this very important Motion, although the time is very short.

From the onset, let me thank the Mover of this Motion for bringing it forth. Education is key to development of any nation. Any country that is serious about developing must develop the human resource. Education is a basic right. It is a basic right to every child born in Kenya. It is the duty and responsibility of the Government to ensure that every child accesses education. Therefore, there is need to relook at the policy of education today. We keep talking about accessibility and affordability. Those two key factors must be taken very seriously by the Government to ensure that every Kenyan in every part of this country access education.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, today as a country, we give a huge Budget to the education sector. We allocate about Kshs150 billion to the education sector. A farmer will always go to the farm knowing and putting resources and investing in order to reap. We, as a country, must assess how we are getting back from the investment in education in terms of the human resource that we produce. Therefore, there is need for us to address professionalism and courses that are offered in our universities.

I would like to applaud the free primary education and free day secondary education. But HELB is assisting students in the universities. This is discriminatory because we are only taking care of students in primary, secondary and those who qualify to go to universities without taking care of the middle level colleges. It is the high time that we stop the discrimination and ensure that every child in this country gets access to the loan. I had a lot but thank you for the opportunity.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

**Mr. Ngugi:** Thank you, Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker. I want to thank the Government side for donating three minutes to me. I want to thank hon. Dr. Eseli most sincerely for this Motion.

This Motion is about equity. It is about comprehensive Government policies that will take care, not only for the rich, but also the poor. Right now, the entry point for university is B plus, whereas we know anybody with a C plus is eligible to go to the university. But because we have few universities, all these people from B plus to C plus and even C who can go to universities are lost. This is why it is so important that we extend the loan facilities also to those in technical colleges and other institutions, so that they can also get their education.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, the way forward for this country is to develop skills- based education as opposed to mere academic education. Skills education is provided by technical colleges. So, by extending the loan facilities to these children, we will be achieving our Vision 2030 easier than if we just concentrated on purely academic education.

With those few remarks, I support the Motion.

**Mr. Affey:** Thank you very much, Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to support this Motion.

First of all, as the Chair of the Committee on Equal Opportunity, I want to say that this Motion is completely in line with the way we want this country to be moved in the years ahead. I want to request the Government to provide more funding to the universities, so that many Kenyan youth who are able to pursue education realise their dreams. Particularly, I want to use this opportunity to thank Moi University. Moi University is first among equals. It is a university in this country which has decided to think outside the box. For the first time, they give very limited chances to people from the so called arid and semi arid areas in this country. Quite a number of young people from this region who could never have seen the inside of a university are now able to pursue this dream, courtesy of the progressive thinking of this one university in this country. Funding must go to this kind of universities which want to imagine that this country can progress when all Kenyan population is given equal access and opportunity to education. HELB must also fast-track the recovery of the loans already given to students who are beneficiaries. The system is such that students who acquire these facilities find jobs, but some of them do not have the courtesy to repay back these loans. Therefore, I would like to request HELB to see whether they can fast-track the recovery of the loans.

Finally, they should decentralise their operation in all the parts of the country, so that young people are able to access universities right from the villages.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

**The Assistant Minister, Ministry of State for Defence (Maj-Gen. Nkaisserry):** Thank you, Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker.

I also stand to support this Motion very strongly and thank the Mover for bringing this Motion to the Floor of the House. You realise that the cornerstone of national development is education. Therefore, this Motion has been brought at the opportune time; more so, when we look at the situation the country now finds itself. Not only are the poor affected. It is not only the poor the Government should take care of, but every child must be supported. Most importantly, the children from the pastoralist communities whose livestock is the main source of livelihood are frustrated by the current drought. So, the Mover has given this country a very good message. It is the responsibility of the Government to adopt the recommendations of this Motion.

With those few remarks, I support.

**The Temporary Deputy Speaker** (Prof. Kamar): Hon. Minister, you have five minutes to respond.

**The Minister of State for Defence** (Mr. Haji): Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, from the outset, I want to support the Motion because it is in line with Government policy. It will be recalled when this country declared itself a Republic in 1964, there was a very important document which was called African Socialism which declared the path this country was going to take to fight ignorance, poverty as well as disease. So, the Motion is really in line and in keeping with the policy of the Government I stated earlier.

As many of those who have contributed have said, I think emphasis should now be laid on the middle colleges because they are very important. They are very important in industrialization and manpower in this country. Many countries like the UK and the USA, I am told, depend so much on Kenyans who have gone there to seek employment because they have the skills and the knowledge. In that way, we will be overcoming the problem of unemployment in this country which is a very serious issue. They have also been making remittance to their families for their upkeep and enhance our foreign exchange.

Under the Constituencies Development Fund (CDF), I can confirm that most of the applications that we receive for bursary, particularly in the marginalized areas of this country, are for middle colleges. Now that people in the North Eastern Province, Eastern Province, parts of Maasailand and other pastoralist areas have realized the importance of education, many children are now going to school; some are going to the universities. However, many of them do not meet the cut-off points which have been set by the universities, they go to middle level colleges and, therefore, they apply for loans. This has become a very big burden for the CDF because we have also to take care of secondary education. So, I would say that this Motion is very timely and the Government has not objection in supporting. I, therefore, wish to emphasize that we support it.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

**The Temporary Deputy Speaker** (Prof. Kamar): We will now give the Floor to Dr. Eseli to reply to the Motion.

**Dr. Eseli:** Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, first, I would like to thank all the Members who have contributed to this Motion for the overwhelming support it has received from the contributors. Indeed, a community's level of civilization is judged from how well it treats the youth. This Motion is about our young people. If we ensure the future of our youth, we ensure the future of this country.

I beg your indulgence to digress a bit and congratulate the two new hon. Members; Mr. Kizito for Shinyalu and Eng. Ogari for Bomachoge. I also want to mention that Eng. Ogari is a former schoolmate. So, now my school is a proud owner of, at least, 10 Members of Parliament in this House; the oldest being Mr. Nyamweya and the seniormost politically being Mr. Mudavadi. I would also like to commend the Chief Executive Officer of the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) for the good work he is doing. He is an alumni of one of the premier schools in western Kenya which is in my constituency, Friends School, Kamusinga. Their motto is very simple: Use your common sense! That is the motto of the school that the boss of the HELB went through. That is why, as I moved this Motion, I brought out the HELB Act which allows them to borrow monies, secure those monies and if in case they are worried about who they are lending it

to, they can go further and insure that money. I am sure when he uses his common sense as his school taught him, he will be able to expand the scope of the HELB as this Motion requests.

I would also like to congratulate the Government for coming up with the HELB in the first place and coming up with an Act because that Act that supports HELB is very open. What this Motion is asking for is within that Act. So, we are not asking them to amend the Act in any way but just to implement it to the full, which means that the Government had the foresight when they set up the Board in the first place. I think it is imperative that we ensure that all children born in this country are sure of an education and this is one of the ways of doing it. Let us ensure that the bursaries are given on academic merit but every child should have access to HELB loans once they finish Form IV and want to go on with their education.

I am sure those who are in polytechnics or aspire to join medical training colleges (MTCs), technical training colleges (TTCs), the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication (KIMC) and all those institutions this Motion, when taken seriously by the Government and implemented, they understand the benefits that they are to draw.

Finally, while I praise the good work of the Ministry and HELB, I call upon us, not just as the House but as a nation, to start thinking forward and think out of the box; not just thinking and planning but we should start implementing our plans. It is important that we implement our plans. The HELB Act was a plan but has not been fully implemented. We should start implementing our plans!

With those few remarks, I beg to move.

*(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)*

*(Question of the Motion as amended put and agreed to)*

*Resolved accordingly:*

THAT, acknowledging the good work performed by the Higher Education Loans Board (HELD) in providing loans to students in both public and private universities from poor background in order to access education; noting that higher education financing is a problem in most countries including the industrialized; appreciating that middle level technicians are key to industrial development; this House urges the government to enhance funding to HELB and further to widen the scope of its funding to include middle level colleges offering diplomas and certificates.

ESTABLISHMENT OF POTATO COOLING CENTRE IN NORTH RIFT

**Mr. Kaino:** Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, I beg to move:-

THAT, appreciating the significance of potatoes as the second most consumed food crop in Kenya; noting that the entire country is served by a single run down potato cooling facility located in Molo; aware that there has been a remarkable increase in potato acreage in the country; appreciating the need to enhance seed development and research on potatoes; this House urges the Government to establish an additional potato cooling center in the North Rift of Kenya to serve Western and Nyanza Provinces.

On the outset, let me start by saying that the potato is one of the most important food stuff in this country but very little has always been done to develop it or do research so that the best seed is available to the farmers. Molo has been the only area which has been serving this country for a long time since colonial times without considering that there is population increase and the urban areas that we have today were not there during colonial times. Today, there are so many urban areas and the main food in urban areas is potatoes. When you go anywhere in urban areas, even in Nairobi, you will find that there are French fries everywhere commonly known as chips.

There are kiosks everywhere. They serve the citizens of this country with french fries. If you move just a few meters from Parliament, you will see several kiosks selling french fries commonly known as “chips”. That is the main food which is commonly served with sausages and soda. It is actually the main food in this town and other urban areas. Potatoes serve this country well, especially in urban and rural, where that crop is produced.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, farmers who grow potatoes undergo serious problems because of the negligence by the Government. The Government has not taken them very seriously. To get suitable seeds for various regions is not easy. Even if it is possible, no awareness has been created in the country to tell the people: “This is the best seed for your area.” That way, people can buy that seed and grow it in their areas. It is unlike maize, where we have maize seeds suitable for every area. People go to buy only those maize seeds that are suitable for their areas. You do not go for seeds that are not grown in your area because it is not going to do well. So, unlike maize and other seeds, potatoes have been neglected and that has really frustrated potato farmers.

The Government must come out very clearly to support potato farmers by constructing preservation centres. During a bumper harvest, potato prices come down to even as low as Kshs200 per bag. That is because everybody has potatoes everywhere! But it is only for a very short time – around two or three months. After that, potatoes become scarce. During that potato scarcity time, the price of a bag of potatoes rise from Kshs200, Kshs500, Kshs1,000, Kshs1,500 and even Kshs2,000. It can go up even as far as Kshs4,000 per sack. If a potato preservation facility is given to farmers, during the times of scarcity, the potatoes which are preserved during a bumper harvest could be brought out to the market. They would fetch the farmers very good amounts of money. The farmers would feel that they have a crop which they can depend on.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, it is not only for food but for economic use. It can boost the income of the communities which depend on them. If we can improve that crop by way of providing seeds, preservation facilities and getting markets for the farmers, Kenyans in those potato-growing regions will be very proud. They will have a

lot of money. They will be rich people who will be able to educate their children and meet their daily basic needs.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, this Motion calls upon the Government to assist farmers to develop research facilities and seed production sites in the North Rift. Potatoes are grown in Chepkorio, Lelam, Nandi, some parts of western Kenya, Nyanza and the entire country. The Government should come in strongly and help those farmers.

So, Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, the Government should set aside funds for that crop. It is a very important economic base for some regions in this country. That way, Kenyans who depend on that crop will not be frustrated. They will be proud Kenyans. When they are proud, they will be happy to expand the acreage because they know that they have got good seeds which are suitable for their areas, they have got preservation facilities where during a bumper harvest, they can take their surplus crops there and preserve them for some time waiting for the prices to go up during the times of scarcity. We should also have agricultural field officers to assist them even in marketing their crop.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, I will end there by urging the Government to come out very strongly to support the farmers. I request hon. David Koech, the hon. Member of Parliament for Mosop, to second this Motion.

With those few remarks, Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, I beg to move.

**Mr. Koech** seconded.

*(Question proposed)*

**The Temporary Deputy Speaker** (Prof. Kamar): Is there anybody wishing to debate? Yes, Mr. Muthama?

**Mr. Muthama:** Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, I wish to thank you for giving me the opportunity to support this very important Motion that has been brought by hon. Kaino.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, it is extremely important to recognize that this country has suffered since the time we attained Independence. I do remember that when I was a young boy, immediately after Independence, Kenya was given food by the late President J.F. Kennedy. We have continued on the same pace since that time up to today. The planning by the Government has been extremely wrong. After 46 years since Independence, we are still begging and asking for food from foreign countries. This country has got what it takes to grow enough food, but the problem has been planning within Government organs.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, my friend here has talked about potatoes. I want to go beyond the potatoes. We need to have stores that can preserve our harvests. We grow sweet potatoes in this country, but when it is harvesting time, we allow our bumper harvest to go to waste because nothing is preserved. The same happens to crops like cassavas, pumpkins, maize and beans. Instead of this Government spending money to construct administrative offices, it should divert it to build stores and cooling plants that can preserve food. If that was done, the Government would have bought all the pumpkins, store them and sell them to Kenyans in future and there would be no shortage of food then. The same should apply to sweet potatoes and other harvested crops. It is a big shame to see money being spent to fuel the big cars used by Ministers. This is the

case and yet the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance directed that all the vehicles with higher capacity should be surrendered, the money saved and used to save the lives of Kenyans. We are purchasing the same vehicles when we do not have food stores. We are also spending money to construct buildings to house our Ministers. I agree with the Government that it needs to construct administrative blocks which will house officers who render service to Kenyans.

If the money used to construct buildings could be used for scientific research on how we can improve our food, it could have been beneficial to this country. I urge the Government to consider constructing stores in all corners of this country so that we can have enough food to feed our children.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, with those few remarks, I beg to support this Motion

**Mr. Njuguna:** Thank you, Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, for giving me this opportunity once again, to contribute to this very important Motion. First, I would like to thank the Mover of this Motion because it is one that cares for the health of our people. In our country, the potato crop comes second after maize. It should, therefore, be given a lot of attention. I urge the Government to allocate more funds to this sector so that the farmers are capacitated to increase the acreage in the rural areas. By so doing, the agricultural productivity in this nation will be enhanced. This will also create employment for our youth. It will create a conducive environment for the youth to access employment. In order to support the farmers, the Government should allocate more funds to this crop so that farmers can have enough seeds and fertilizer. If you look at this industry critically, you will realise that in the big towns, potatoes are consumed immensely. Potatoes are also consumed in our secondary schools and universities. It is a crop that supplements other food stuffs in our schools. It is, therefore, important that farmers are encouraged to increase the acreage under the potato crop.

Consequently, storage facilities for this important crop should be constructed. Enough funds should be set aside for research. Modern research needs to be done so that farmers can get the best seeds. It is a crop which, if well maintained, cultivated and harvested in good time, can increase the revenue of this nation. We can export potatoes to countries that are faced with starvation, for example, Somalia and Ethiopia. That will enhance the Ex-chequer funds.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, I propose that the cooling centres should not only be set up in the three provinces that the Mover of the Motion proposed. This is because he forgot other areas such as Central, Eastern and Coast provinces. It is important that as we give our blessings to this Motion, other areas are captured.

I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr. Kigen:** Thank you, Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, for this opportunity. I would like to thank my colleague Mr. Kaino for this Motion that he has brought in respect to provision for cooling facilities for potatoes. This is a major crop that is eaten across the world and not just in Kenya.

The country really ought to address this concern with a lot of attention because the only crop that this country has been relying on as food is maize. This crop has got more attention from the Government and the people of Kenya have been made to think that food is synonymous with the availability of the maize crop. We encourage that the growing of potatoes be enhanced and the produce be stored. I propose that the

Government should provide storage facilities in areas where this crop does well. That way, we will reach Kenyans across the country. We should keep the harvest safe for future use. The Government has only provided farmers with one cooling facility in Molo and yet we need to have cooling facilities in all the areas where the crop is planted.

Along with providing storage facilities, we encourage the Government to go out there and popularise the crop even more. The Government should encourage farmers to set aside money to develop this crop even further. This will ensure that the provision of cooling facilities to store this crop make economic sense in terms of providing employment to those who will grow it and as a supplement food crop whenever there is a shortage of the traditional foods.

I have been seeing this crop since I was born. You will find potatoes being served in restaurants and in ceremonies. This is an indication of its importance. Therefore, to neglect the crop and yet we have conducive climatic conditions to grow it is being short-sighted as a country.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, therefore, I recommend that the Government should set aside funds for the development of research facilities, where we will produce high-yielding and disease-resistant seeds that can last long, and be able to supplement and assist in provision of food.

I want to thank the Mover of this Motion and ask my colleagues to popularise this crop in their areas. Even though this crop is not grown all over the country, it can be sourced from the areas where it is grown, so that those people who grow it can increase the acreage under this crop on their farms and produce enough to assist, especially at times like now when we are only looking out for maize.

Currently, the Ministry of State for Special Programmes is just sourcing maize from wherever it is grown and distributing it to famine-stricken areas. Once people are given maize, we do not talk about anything else. We just say that our people have been fed. There are alternative crops that, if developed locally and preserved, will ensure that this country does not get into the kind of situation we are in today.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, this is a Motion that is addressing a very important concern in as far as food provision in this country is concerned. Therefore, we should give it the necessary support by providing storage facilities, research facilities and ensuring that our people across the country get it.

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

**Mr. Mureithi:** Thank you very much, Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker. I stand here to support the Motion with amendments.

I beg to move:-

THAT, the Motion be amended-

(a)(i) by deleting the word “an” appearing between the words “establish” and “additional” on the sixth line;

(ii) by deleting the word “and” appearing between the words “Western” and “Nyanza” on the seventh line;

(iii) by deleting the word “Centre” appearing immediately after the word “Cooling” on the sixth line and substituting therefor the word “Centres”.

(b) by adding the words “Nyandarua and Meru regions” immediately after the word “Provinces” at the end of the seventh line.



Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, the amended Motion will, therefore, read as follows:-

THAT, appreciating the significance of potatoes as the second-most consumed food crop in Kenya; noting that the entire country is served by a single run down potato cooling facility located in Molo; aware that there has been a remarkable increase in potato acreage in the country; appreciating the need to enhance seed development and research on potatoes, this House urges the Government to establish additional Potato Cooling Centres in the North Rift Kenya to serve Western and Nyanza Provinces, and also Nyandarua and Meru regions.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, I beg to move the amendments.

**The Temporary Deputy Speaker** (Prof. Kamar): Is there anybody seconding the amendments?

**Mr. Ngugi:** Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, I stand to second the amendments to this Motion, which we support because Western and Nyanza are not the only provinces that are not catered for. Places like Nyandarua and Meru grow even more potatoes than those provinces. That is why we are moving these amendments to include these regions, so that they can also have cooling centres.

With those few remarks, I second the amendments.

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

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

**The Temporary Deputy Speaker** (Prof. Kamar): Is there anybody wishing to debate the amendments?

**An hon. Member:** Put the Question!

**The Temporary Deputy Speaker** (Prof. Kamar): That is allowed. Is there any hon. Member who would like to support or oppose the amendments? If there is none, I will put the Question.

*(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** (Prof. Kamar): Is there anybody wishing to debate?

Mr. M'Mithiaru!

**Mr. M'Mithiaru:** Thank you, Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. I would like to support the Motion as amended.

The uses of the potato, in terms of consumption and other uses, cannot be over-emphasized. We know that in terms of staple food for Kenyans, the potato plays a very big part. We know that in Kenya, there are now very many places where potatoes are grown. In particular, Kenyans can attest to the fact that the potatoes that are grown in the Meru region are amongst the best varieties we can have in this country. If you get to Kenyan chips or crisps from potatoes grown in the Meru region, you will attest to the fact that, that is the best variety of potatoes available for Kenyans.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, talking of cooling plants, we know that potato is one of the crops that is easily perishable, if not properly preserved, hence the need to have cooling plants for potatoes. As we talk about preservation of potatoes, we should also not forget about the research into them, so that we can have good varieties that are drought-resistant, and which will also give good yield. I am aware of a number of potato research stations like the one in Limuru that is spearheading Kenya in terms of getting good varieties for Kenyans to have potatoes that are drought resistant and also that are disease-resistant.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, we know that the uses of potatoes are many. We can have potatoes in any form. We can have mashed potatoes, chips or crisps. We would like those people wishing to process to start having potatoes in powder form, so that they can prepare soup from these potatoes.

As we support the establishment of the potato cooling centre, we should also support the processing so that processing industries can come up. This will create employment for our youth and, at the same time, open up the foreign market. We will then export the potatoes in very many forms.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, we also want to increase the yield of potatoes so that many Kenyans can consume it. This cannot be done unless there is increase in acreage.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, I am aware of many of our research stations where land was grabbed. We would wish the Government to ensure that all the grabbed land has been repossessed. The Limuru Potato Research Station land was grabbed. I understand that about 70 acres of this land was grabbed. I would wish the Government to move with speed to ensure that this land is repossessed.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, we are also aware of the many repossessed grabbed land from the ADC farms which can be used for the growth of potatoes. If we are willing to alleviate hunger and ensure that there is food sustainability in this country, the only way out is to ensure that there is increase of acreage of the growth of potatoes.

Since Kenya is one of the countries that are signatories to the Millenium Development Goals and we want to get rid of hunger, then we should ensure that we have the cooling of potatoes, so that there is proper preservation. This will ensure that when there is bumper harvest, we can preserve the potatoes. This will also ensure that the potatoes are consumed in various forms. That way, we shall be able to ensure that there is enough food to ensure that our people do not suffer from hunger.

I support, Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker.

**Mr. Koech:** Thank you, Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to support this very important Motion as amended. We, as a country, must encourage farmers. This is a Motion dealing with the food security situation in our country. We must encourage our farmers to diversify on the food production. We want to

encourage them to grow maize, beans, green vegetables and all other vegetables that can be grown in Kenya.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, potatoes have become very popular in the name of chips or French fries and you can never miss to find these in most of our restaurants in Kenya. You will find Kenyans really enjoying this meal. We, as a country, want to support this.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, we, as a country, are talking of moving resources closer to the people. It is high time that we also moved the raw materials required for production, closer to the people. This Motion seeks to take the raw and the certified seeds closer to the people.

In the agriculture projects in our schools, sometimes the students are encouraged to grow potatoes. Principals and teachers find it hard to find the certified potato seeds. You can imagine them travelling all the way from Mandera to Molo to get these certified seeds. This Motion seeks to move the raw materials closer to the people and it should be encouraged.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, potato is a perishable crop. As a result, centralizing the cooling plant has made the production of the same very costly. That is why in some parts of this country not so many farmers grow them. In my own constituency, potatoes can do very well and can help farmers prosper and increase food security.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, when you travel from Eldoret towards Nakuru, you will see many farmers suffering. They sit along the roadside from morning up to late in the night looking for market for their produce. As a Government, we must encourage the farmer. We must look for markets for farmers so that they do not suffer. We need to have as many cooling plants as possible for the preservation of the potatoes. We also need to have cooling stores all over the country so that the people in North Eastern Province, Coast Province, Nyanza Province, Western Province and the entire country can access fresh potatoes.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

**Mr. Kiilu:** Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, I would like to support this Motion as amended.

Potato is a major crop and this Motion seeks to cure the perennial food shortage in this country. As the Mover has said, potatoes are the second most popular food in this country. You only need to go to most of these schools during visiting days and see what parents carry for their sons and daughters. You will not see *muthokoi* or *ugali* although those are the popular foods. However, you will find most parents carrying chips or boiled potatoes for their sons and daughters. This enhances the importance of this food crop as a substitute to the many food crops that this country has relied on.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, in supporting this Motion, we are saying that this is a high yield crop. Secondly, it is fast growing. In a country which has perennially suffered from food shortage, the Government must put in more money into doing research on producing this crop. This would help this country attain a suitable level of food production.

Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, as we do so, we appreciate the fact that this is a highly perishable crop. Therefore, in order to make it available to as many people as

possible, stores will not only be put in the areas we have proposed but also in areas like Oloitokitok. I am proposing that more stores be put in places where this crop is grown.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

**Dr. Eseli:** Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, I rise to support this Motion. This is especially based on the issue of food security, food diversity and opening up the export market for processed potatoes. This will create employment.

The key area is research. Different types of potatoes grow in different areas. We need research to identify the correct material for the correct places. Further to that, if you notice in this country whenever there is a glut of potatoes, the prices come down so drastically and the farmers earn little. When there is a shortage, the prices shoot up so much and you cannot even afford a plate of chips. If we did our research properly and used appropriate technology, we can have a situation where we freeze-dry the potatoes or use dehydration to dry them so that at the times of need, we have enough. If preserved that way, we can also export. The potato industry has a very huge potential to provide not just food security but also wide employment opportunities and also satisfy the export market.

With those few remarks, I beg to support.

**Mr. Ngugi:** On a point of order, Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, now that this Motion is very popular and everybody is supporting it including myself, could we ask the Mover to respond?

**The Temporary Deputy Speaker** (Prof. Kamar): Yes, it seems as if there is nobody else who wants to contribute to debate. We will allow the Government Responder to respond before the Mover of the Motion.

**The Minister for the Development of Northern Kenya and other Arid Lands** (Mr. E.I Mohammed): Thank you, Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker, I wish to say that I support the Motion. The potatoes are a very important food crop in this country. I am sure that it can be developed in more places. I believe that this Motion that seeks to set up cooling plants will be of big support to farmers who grow this crop. It will also boost the economic activity in this country.

This country has not done much in terms of storing perishable goods. In northern Kenya, we produce a lot of milk during the rainy season. In some of the pastoral communities, the milk is given to camels to drink because we do not have a preservation mechanism. Potato is one similar crop that I believe we will not only support farmers and increase food security in this country but also boost economic activity and bring additional needed jobs in this country. All the cooling plants will require employees and there will be transport required to transport the items from there.

Therefore, I fully support the Motion.

**Mr. Kaino:** Thank you very much, Madam Temporary Deputy Speaker. Let me take this opportunity to thank my colleagues, and especially the Minister who has supported this Motion. Many Members have spoken in support of this Motion. This is a very important crop in this country and there is need to expand and improve it. There is need also to modernize the farming of potatoes.

When we talk about Molo being run down, I wish to urge the Government to take it seriously and rehabilitate Molo, so that we do not come back again to talk about the issue. Molo is a very important area for the production of potatoes. If we allow the facility to be run down and probably open other facilities in Cherangany, Meru and other

areas where potatoes are grown and leave out Molo which is the house of potatoes, then we will not be doing much. I urge the Minister to rehabilitate and protect the land so that it is not grabbed, so that the facility can still help the farmers in the South Rift and other areas surrounding Molo.

The Minister has responded positively and I urge the Ministry to take it seriously and open up many centers, so that even in areas where this crop is not grown, the citizens can enjoy eating this crop which has a lot of nutrients in those areas. By passing this Motion, we will create a lot of jobs for the idle youth in this country. There will be a lot of income in the regions where this crop is grown and many people in this country will meet their daily needs and we shall alleviate poverty in the poverty stricken households in this country.

With those few remarks, I beg to move.

*(Question of the Motion as amended put and agreed to)*

*Resolved accordingly:*

THAT, appreciating the significance of potatoes as the second-most consumed food crop in Kenya; noting that the entire country is served by a single run down potato cooling facility located in Molo; aware that there has been a remarkable increase in potato acreage in the country; appreciating the need to enhance seed development and research on potatoes, this House urges the Government to establish additional Potato Cooling Centres in the North Rift Kenya to serve Western and Nyanza Provinces, and also Nyandarua and Meru regions.

### ADJOURNMENT

**The Temporary Deputy Speaker** (Prof. Kamar): Hon. Members, that concludes the business of the morning. The House is, therefore, adjourned until this afternoon at 2.30 p.m.

The House rose at 12.20 p.m.