



## PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

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### OFFICIAL REPORT

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THE  
PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF GHANA

FIRST MEETING, 2025

Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2025

*The House met at 11.09 a.m.*

[MR FIRST DEPUTY SPEAKER IN  
THE CHAIR]

[PRAYERS]

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, at the moment, we do not have a communication from His Excellency the President, and there is also no formal communication by the Speaker.

May we kindly take the item numbered 5 — Correction of *Votes and Proceedings* and the *Official Report*.

**VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS  
AND THE OFFICIAL REPORT**

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, the *Votes and Proceedings* of Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2025, is for correction.

Hon Members, page 1...7—

Yes, Hon Member for Sefwi Akontombra?

**Mr Pious Kwame Nkuah:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Page 7, the item numbered 4(18), “Nkuah, Pious Kwame (Sefwi Akontombra)”, I was present yesterday.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Table Office, kindly take note.

Page 8...11—

Yes, Hon Patrick Boamah?

**Mr Patrick Yaw Boamah:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

On page 11, the item numbered 9(iii), I want it to be corrected. The Statement on the World Kidney Day by the Hon Member for Afigya Kwabre North, it is “Mr Collins Adomako-Mensah”; is it not supposed to be “Hon Collins Adomako-Mensah”? It is written “Mr”.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Yes, we have used “Mr”.

**Mr Boamah:** “Mr Collins Adomako-Mensah”. I do not know if it is hyphenated. I am not sure it is hyphenated.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Look at page 10, “Mr Frank Asiedu Bekoe”.

**Mr Boamah:** Yes, that is for Suhum.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** The item numbered 64 on page 10 is “Mr Frank Asiedu Bekoe”.

**Mr Boamah:** I am talking about “Collins Adomako-Mensah”. It is not hyphenated.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Well, is it the concern that “Adomako-Mensah” is not hyphenated? Is the Hon Member in?

**Mr Boamah:** He can come and correct it.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Very well.

Table Office, take note and take it up with the Hon Member.

Page 12 ...13—

**Mr Boamah:** Mr Speaker, I am told by Hon Sandaare that it is hyphenated.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Very well.

Page 14?

Hon Members, the *Votes and Proceedings* of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Sitting, dated, Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2025, as corrected, is adopted as the true record of proceedings.

Hon Members, the *Official Report* of Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2025, is up for correction.

Hon Members, any correction?  
*[Pause]*

*[No correction was made to the Official Report of Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2025]*

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, we will take the item numbered 6, Business Statement for the 10<sup>th</sup> week. *[Pause]*

**Mr Ricketts-Hagan:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, I want to apply to read the Business Statement on Behalf of the Leader of the House, who is not in the Chamber at the moment.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Leave is hereby granted.

*[Pause]*

**Alhaji Habib Iddrisu:** Mr Speaker, I think the Deputy Majority Leader needs to clarify his application. He said he wants to seek leave; is it leave of the House or the leave of the Speaker? He did not clarify. It is a house of record, so he needs to say whether it is the leave of the Speaker or the House. He should make it clear.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Deputy Majority Leader, proceed to present the Business Statement.

11.19 a.m.

**Arrangement Of Business****BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Vice Chairman of the Business Committee/ Deputy Majority Leader (Mr George Kweku Ricketts-Hagan) on behalf of the Chairman:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

I am going to read the Business of the House for the 10<sup>th</sup> week ending Friday, 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2025.

Mr Speaker, the Committee accordingly submits its report as follows:

**Formal Communications by the Speaker**

Mr Speaker, you may read any available communication to the House.

**Question(s)**

Mr Speaker, the Business Committee has scheduled the following Ministers to respond to Questions asked of them during the week:

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		<b><u>No. of Question(s)</u></b>
i. Minister for Finance	—	3
ii. Minister for Lands and Natural Resources	—	2
iii. Minister for the Interior	—	3
iv. Minister for Tourism and Creative Arts	—	2
v. Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection	—	3
vi. Minister for Education	—	3
vii. Minister for Trade, Agribusiness and Industry	—	2
viii. Minister for Food and Agriculture	—	3
ix. Minister for Youth Development and Empowerment	—	1
x. Minister for Environment, Science and Technology	—	<u>2</u>
<b>Total Number of Questions</b>		<b><u>24</u></b>

Mr Speaker, in all, ten (10) Ministers are expected to attend upon the House to respond to Twenty-Four (24) Questions during the Week. The Questions are of the following types:

i. Urgent — 1;

ii. Oral – 23

### **Statements**

Mr Speaker, pursuant to Order 91 (2), Ministers of State may be permitted to make Statements on Government policy. You may also admit Statements by Hon Members in accordance with Order 93.

### **Bills, Papers and Reports**

Mr Speaker, in accordance with Order 159, Bills may be presented to the House for First Reading. However, those of urgent nature may be taken through the various stages in a day in

accordance with Order 160. Pursuant to Order 97, Papers may be laid during the week and reports from Committees may also be presented to the House for consideration.

### **Motions and Resolutions**

Mr Speaker, Motions may be debated and their consequential Resolutions, if any, taken during the week.

### **Commentary on the Budget Statement and Economic Policy of Government**

Mr Speaker, pursuant to Order 195(3) the Business Committee has programmed the commentary on the Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government to commence on Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> and end on Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2025.

Accordingly, the Business Committee, recommends the following time allotments for contributions by Hon Members:

i.	Majority Leader & Minority Leader	—	45 minutes
ii.	Other Leaders	—	30 minutes
iii.	Ministers	—	15 minutes
iv.	Chairpersons & Ranking Members of Committees	—	15 minutes
v.	Vice Chairperson & Deputy Ranking Members	—	10 minutes
iii.	Other Hon Members	—	5 minutes

**Sitting Time and Extended Sittings**

Mr Speaker, the Business Committee recommends that the House keeps to the 10:00 a.m. Sitting time and also have extended Sittings from Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 to ensure that the business scheduled for the Week is exhausted.

Mr Speaker, Hon Members are to take note that, during the Eleventh Week, in view of the limited time and the volume of work in respect of the consideration of the Annual Budget Estimates and to pass the Appropriation Bill by the end of March, the House is scheduled to sit on Mondays commencing on Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2025. The House would also extend Sitting beyond the prescribed Sitting hours. Committees are also urged to sit in the mornings as plenary Sittings will commence at 12 noon.

**Submission of Budget Estimates**

Mr Speaker, the Business Committee urges the Ministry of Finance, other Ministries and Bodies to submit to their sectoral estimates to Parliament on time for the consideration and approval of the House.

**Referral at Committees**

Mr Speaker, in respect of the Annual Budget Estimates, the Business Committee urges Committees to expedite work and report on same to the House for consideration.

**Reminder on the Post-Budget Workshop**

Mr Speaker, following the presentation of the Budget Statement and Economic Policy of Government a post-budget workshop is scheduled for the participation of all Members of Parliament.

Hon Members are hereby informed that the post-budget workshop would be held from Saturday to Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 in the Chamber of Parliament.

**Conclusion**

Mr Speaker, in accordance with Order 216 (2) and subject to Order 67, the Committee submits to the House the order in which the Business of the House shall be taken during the week.

**Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2025**

Roll Call

National Pledge

Statements

- The Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025.

- *Commencement of Comments*

Urgent Questions

**Mrs Mavis Nkansah-Boadu (Afigya Sekyere East):** To ask the Minister for Finance what measures the

Ministry is taking to address the recent significant depreciation of the cedi.

### Questions

**\*1. Dr Kingsley Agyemang (Abuakwa South):** To ask the Minister for Finance what plans have been put in place to resolve the tension among commuters as a result of the recent directive by the National Insurance Commission (NIC) to increase the compulsory third-party insurance premiums by 10 per cent effective 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2025.

**\*2. Mr Frank Yeboah (Atwima Nwabiagya North):** To ask the Minister for Finance what measures have been put in place to ensure the timely release of National Health Insurance Funds (NHIF) to avoid delays in claims to healthcare providers.

**\*53. Mr Anthony Mmieh (Odotobri):** To ask the Minister for Lands and Natural Resources what the Ministry intends to do to ensure easier and cheaper registration of land under the Lands Act, 2020 (Act 1036).

**\*54. Mr Anthony Mmieh (Odotobri):** To ask the Minister for Lands and Natural Resources the efforts the Ministry is making to implement a new National Land Policy since the old Policy is outdated and does not address current needs.

**\*3. Dr Abdul Kabiru Tia Mahama (Walewale):** To ask the

Minister for the Interior plans to curb the increasing cases of armed robbery in the Walewale Constituency and in the western part of the North-East Region in general.

**\*4. Dr Kingsley Agyemang (Abuakwa South):** To ask the Minister for the Interior measures being taken by the Ministry to enforce the insurance of public and commercial buildings in compliance with section 218 of the Insurance Act, 2021 (Act 1061).

**\*42. Mr Vincent Ekow Assafuah (Old Tafo):** To ask the Minister for the Interior the current state of resources and logistics available to the Ghana National Fire Service in tackling fire outbreaks.

### Presentation of Papers

### Motions

### Committee sittings

**Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> March, 2025**

### Roll Call

### Statements

- The Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025.

*- Continuation of Comments*



## Questions

**\*5. Nana Asafo-Adjei Ayeh (Bosome Freho):** To ask the Minister for Tourism and Creative Arts the plans the Ministry has to develop the following waterfalls: i. Baatei ii. Awan iii. Bobiam iv. Abrewa v. Danne vi. Amomorso vii. Tabre viii. Tebeso and Subriso.

**\*6. Mr Akwasi Gyamfi Onyina-Acheampong (Kwabre East):** To ask the Minister for Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts what the Ministry intends doing to create market access for kente weavers in Adanwonomase, Asonomaso, Ntonso and Abira in the Kwabre East Constituency to the global fashion houses.

**\*18. Mrs Mavis Nkansah-Boadu (Afigya Sekyere East):** To ask the Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection what measures the Ministry is taking to ensure the full compliance to section 87 of the Children's Act, 1998 (Act 560) which prohibits Child Labour exploitation.

**\*19. Mrs Mavis Nkansah-Boadu (Afigya Sekyere East):** To ask the Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection what plans the Ministry has to address the increasing number of streetism amongst children of school going age.

**\*36. Mr Vincent Ekow Assafuah (Old Tafo):** To ask the Minister for Gender, Children and

Social Protection the plans of the Ministry to ensure the continuity of the Kayaye Empowerment Programme.

**\*30. Dr Fred Kyei Asamoah (Offinso North):** To ask the Minister for Education when the boys and girls dormitory, multi-purpose dining hall, teachers quarters and two (2) storey-classroom block will be completed in the Akomadan Applied Technology Institute.

**\*41. Mr Vincent Ekow Assafuah (Old Tafo):** To ask the Minister for Education the details on the interventions aimed at bridging the digital divide in rural schools.

**\*65. Mr Rudolf Amoako-Gyamerah (Upper Denkyira West):** To ask the Minister for Education the immediate plans of the Ministry to complete the Diaso Senior High School: i. Girls & Boys Dormitory ii. Teachers and Headmasters Bungalow and other facilities the previous Government started which is about 20 per cent completion.

Presentation of Papers

Motions

Committee sittings

**Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2025**

Roll Call

Statements

- The Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025.

- *Continuation of Comments*

### Questions

**\*20. Mr Davis Ansah Opoku (Mpraeso):** To ask the Minister for Trade, Agribusiness and Industry the steps being taken by the Ministry to operationalise the rural enterprise factory in Mpraeso.

**\*21. Dr Abdul Kabiru Tia Mahama (Walewale):** To ask the Minister for Trade, Agribusiness and Industry the plans of the Ministry to ensure the operation of the Walewale Watermelon Factory that was recently commissioned under the 1D1F.

**\*22. Mr Davis Ansah Opoku (Mpraeso):** To ask the Minister for Food and Agriculture the status of the Bepong Warehouse being constructed which has been abandoned after 50% completion.

**\*23. Dr Abdul Kabiru Tia Mahama (Walewale):** To ask the Minister for Food and Agriculture the intention of the Government to address the destruction to rice fields by migratory birds which has left many farmers helpless in the Walewale Constituency and the geographic north at large.

**\*46. Mr Seth Osei-Akoto (Atwima Mponua):** To ask the Minister for Food and Agriculture to expatiate in the short to long-term “Feed the Industry” programme the Ministry wants to implement for benefits of farmers.

### Presentation of Papers

### Motions

### Committee sittings

## Friday, 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2025

### Roll Call

### Statements

- The Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025.

- *Continuation of Comments*

### Questions

**\*31. Mr Akwasi Gyamfi Onyina-Acheampong (Kwabre East):** To ask the Minister for Youth Development and Empowerment when work will resume on the abandoned Mampongtenng AstroTurf which was started by the National Youth Authority in 2020.

**\*45. Ms. Patricia Appiagyei (Asokwa):** To ask the Minister for Environment, Science and Technology when the Computer Numerical Control

(CNC) machine tooling project will be commissioned and made operational.

**\*47. Mr John Darko (Suame):** To ask the Minister of Environment Science & Technology the steps the Ministry is taking to address the plastic waste menace in the Country.

Presentation of Papers

Motions

Committee sittings

Respectfully submitted.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, the Business Statement has been presented. The floor is now open for comments.

**Mr Patrick Yaw Boamah:** Mr Speaker, looking at the Chamber, it is very important that next week, Tuesday, the debate commences in earnest. I am not raising quorum now. We know you would not succeed.

Mr Speaker, let me refer you to the time allotment for the Budget debate on paragraph 3 and I am reading that in conjunction with Article 111 of the Constitution. I do not know if you have yours with you. With your kind permission, I would quote Article 111 of the Constitution:

“The Vice-President, or a Minister or Deputy Minister who is not a member of Parliament, shall be

entitled to participate in the proceedings of Parliament and shall be accorded all the privileges of a member of Parliament except that he is not entitled to vote or to hold an office in Parliament.”

Mr Speaker, I realised that the Business Committee has made allocation for Ministers of State, leaving out the Vice President of the Republic who has been very quiet. It would be very important to see her in action on the Floor, debate the President’s economic and financial policy. Especially having been a former Minister for Education, it would be very important for her to be here to articulate the policy decision of His Excellency President Mahama.

Mr Speaker, so I want the Business Committee to amend this and have a time allotment for Her Excellency, the Vice President, Prof Jane Naana Opoku-Agyemang to be here and debate the President’s Budget since she is the first female Vice President of this country to come and participate because she is clothed under the Constitution to participate.

Mr Speaker, we want her to be here. She is being accorded all the advisors—

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Patrick Yaw Boamah—

**Mr Boamah:** From the former Party Chairman—

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** *Order! Order!*

**Mr Boamah:** Mr Ofosu Ampofo— He is in her office. My constituent, Alex Segbefia is there; Mr Pratt—

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Patrick Yaw Boamah, ordinarily, I would not engage in this exercise but because you are a lawyer, let us take a second look at Article 111 and read the second line—Read in between the second line. Well, read all but concentrate—

**Mr Boamah:** I read the entire 111.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Yes, you said, “the person shall be entitled”.

**Mr Boamah:** Yes, so we are inviting her.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Entitlement.

**Mr Boamah:** We are inviting her.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** It is talking about entitlement—

**Mr Boamah:** And I made an application to you to ask the Business Committee to invite her and amend the time allotment. It is an invitation.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Patrick Yaw Boamah—

**Mr Boamah:** She can decide to accept the invitation that she has the right to participate in every proceeding of the House—

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Patrick Yaw Boamah, so, by your understanding of Article 111, you mean to say if the Business Statement did not expressly state that she is entitled to come and participate.

11.29 a.m.

Though the constitutional provision is very clear, she cannot come and do so, if she so desires. Is that the interpretation you are putting on the Constitution?

**Mr Boamah:** Mr Speaker, it is an invitation, and I am making the application to the Business Committee that she is entitled under the Constitution of Ghana, to participate in our proceedings—[Uproar]— It is an invitation, Mr Speaker. She can accept it or refuse it.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Patrick Yaw Boamah, will you take a cue from the Chair?

Yes, Hon Isaac Adongo?

**Mr Isaac Adongo:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity. Only a few days ago, they were sitting on this Side of the House. A few weeks ago, they were sitting here, and they were programming Business Committee meetings. Did they programme the Vice President then to appear in this House? Or he was not entitled? Or do they assume that appearing here and nodding his head

constituted participation? Unfortunately, the Vice President is very busy things. She does not want to come and be nodding her head, but if they say she has been very quiet, we cannot force them to listen to her. Yesterday, I listened to her, and many other Ghanaians listened to her, but the Minority Side can refuse to hear. At the appropriate time, if she needs to be here, she will be here, but we are taking a cue from His Excellency Alhaji Dr Mahamudu Bawumia. He never appeared here; he only appeared here to nod his head. We never heard him in the *Hansard*. We have never heard him in the *Hansard*, and the *Hansard* does not capture nodding of head—[*Laughter*]—

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, I will take comments on the Business Statement. But on the issue of the entitlement of the Vice President, I will no longer entertain comments on that simply because a right given by the Constitution cannot be taken away by the Business Statement. A right which is not given by the Constitution cannot be conferred by the Business Statement, so once the Constitution makes provision that the Vice President is entitled to come to the House and participate, when the Vice President so decides to come to the House and participate, the Constitution has given that particular option without reference to the Business Statement.

Hon Deputy Minority Whip?

**Alhaji Habib Iddrisu:** Mr Speaker, just some observation. When the Deputy Majority Leader was presenting the Business Statement, he made mention of comments on the Statement from Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2025.

Mr Speaker, Committees will be engaging and tomorrow he said we will start the Budget workshop. We still do not have the estimates. Yesterday you directed that the Whips should engage. Nothing happened after you said they should engage. If those copies are not made available, it is definitely something that will affect us.

Mr Speaker, when the Deputy Majority Leader was presenting the Business Statement, he said by the 24<sup>th</sup> of this month, Sitting will commence from Monday. Mr Speaker, this Business Statement is supposed to end on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2025, so why is he talking about 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2025, when we are not done with 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2025?

Mr Speaker, Hon Adongo was trying to mislead the House when he said a few weeks ago we were on this Side. My small English, few weeks should be a time period between 3 to 5 weeks, and they have been in Government more than that—[*Uproar*]— And for that matter, he cannot say a few weeks ago we were there. A few weeks is a time period that is not above 5 weeks. So, it is not between 3 to 5 weeks. He cannot say that.

Mr Speaker, we need the estimates. If we do not have the estimates, it will affect the Business that we are going to do, and the workshop starts tomorrow and we need to get the estimates so that Committees will start to work. He said by the end of this month we should be adjourning *sine die*, but if we do not have the estimates, how can Committees be able to function so that we can be able to finish that?

For the comments on the Budget, we are ever ready to comment on the Budget Statement and Economic Policy of Government, 2025.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Deputy Minority Whip, yesterday I directed that you should engage. Have you done that? You can speak into the microphone. Has that been done?

**Alhaji Habib Iddrisu:** Mr Speaker, the Majority Chief Whip, Rockson-Nelson Etse Kwami Dafeamekpor, has done nothing about the directive that you have given that the Whips should engage and get the estimates for various Committees. He has done absolutely nothing about it.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** It takes two to engage.

**Alhaji Habib Iddrisu:** Because, Mr Speaker, if he had done something about it, we would have seen results.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** It takes two to engage.

**Alhaji Habib Iddrisu:** He only engaged this morning.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Majority Chief Whip?

**Mr Rockson-Nelson Etse Kwami Dafeamekpor:** Mr Speaker, if I may be heard on this small matter, indeed, I engaged his boss. His boss is not here. We engaged and, Mr Speaker, let the record bear me out that the estimates are being produced. They are voluminous. So, I am sure by close of today, we should have some number ready, and by Monday, we should be able to have nearly all ready for the Committees to start their work from Tuesday.

Indeed, we do not need the estimates for the debates or the comments. Neither do we need the estimates for tomorrow's seminar. It is the Economic Policy that we need which is available for every Member. It is even online. So, Mr Speaker, my Leader will tackle the rest of the issues. But I want to assure the House that the estimates are being produced with alacrity, and by Monday, they should be available for the Committees to start work.

Thank you.

**Mr First Deputy speaker:** Yes, Hon Vincent Ekow Assafuah?

**Mr Vincent Ekow Assafuah:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I have gone through the Business Statement. This is the fourth time that I am raising this Question. I filed a Question to the Minister for Defence, and as we speak, for the fourth time, the Question is not showing in the Business Statement. Is it the case that somebody is trying to shield the Minister of Defence from explaining to the House what those military men were doing in the House of the Mr Ken Ofori-Atta because—

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Assafuah, after adjournment, can you show me a copy of the admitted Statement?

**Mr Assafuah:** It is not a Statement. It is a Question that I filed.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** The admitted Question.

**Mr Assafuah:** Yes

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** That your Question has been admitted.

**Mr Assafuah:** I filed it. They gave it back to me to make corrections, which corrections I made and submitted to the Clerk again.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Assafuah, I stated yesterday that when a procedure is set down for a right to be exercised, you follow the procedure in exercising the right. You always state

that your Question has been admitted but not programmed by the Business Statement, and the question that I am asking is that is your Question admitted? If so, after adjournment, show me a copy of the admitted Question. So, once it is admitted, then we know what to do.

11.39 a.m.

But if you send a Question to the Clerk, the Clerks does not admit questions, so it means that you have been sending your question to the wrong forum, expecting same to be admitted. Just do the needful.

Hon Members, if a Question or a Statement is submitted, and there is the need to rephrase the Question or the Statement, after doing so, you again follow the same channel for the Question or the Statement to be admitted. It is after the admission of the Statement or Question that it will be forwarded to the Clerk, who will in turn programme same to be taken.

Yes, Hon Nyindam?

**Mr Matthew Nyindam:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, I still want us to look at the Budget Estimates. Most at times, when these Estimates are delayed, it puts a lot of pressure on us getting to the end of the Sitting. So, I want to appeal to you and the Business Committee to put out some timelines. Because if we say we expect it as soon as possible or

expect it to come timely, and there are no timelines, it becomes a bit open. And when we do not get these Estimates early, the pressure on us will be too much. Mr Speaker, I will urge you to get the Business Committee to give us some kind of timelines for these particular Estimates.

Mr Speaker, the second issue I want to draw your attention to and also appeal to you has to do with the extended Sitting, where we have to come on Monday, and Sitting might be extended. But we do not know how far we will go through the extended Sitting. I want to appeal to the Business Committee and the Leadership to try and make adequate provision so that when we are doing the extended Sitting, Mr Speaker, Members do not suffer. I know what I am talking about. Sometimes, when we come here, it becomes very difficult for us after some period to even get water to drink.

Mr Speaker, although the Post-Budget Workshop has already been scheduled to take place in the Chamber, and I know we want to cut down costs, experience shows that most of the time, when we have these Post-Budget Workshops in-house, attendance is a bit poor. So I do not know, Mr Speaker, if you can look at it. Next time, we can look at attendance, cost cutting and how effective a workshop will be. These are the few concerns I want to put across.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Yes, Prof Kingsley Nyarko?

**Prof Kingsley Nyarko:** Mr Speaker, thank you for indulging me.

My concern has to also do with the time for Sitting, from Tuesday, next week. Mr Speaker, we are supposed to commence Sitting at 10 a.m. and from next week, we also have extended Sittings. I am pleading with you and the House that 10 a.m. should be 10 a.m. because if we are doing extended Sitting, and one comes at 10 a.m. and Sitting starts at 12 noon or 1 p.m., then it means that we are going to sit here for a very long time. Look at the Business Statement; Questions have also been programmed. It means that there are going to be a lot of activities for us to embark on from next week. So please, Sitting should start 10 a.m. so that we can effectively maximise the time we are going to spend in the House.

This is my concern, and I am hoping that we all heed to this important suggestion. Thank you.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Thank you very much. Yes, Minority Leader?  
*[Pause]*

Yes, Hon Member, you have the floor.

**Dr Isaac Yaw Opoku:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.



Mr Speaker, my concern is on the allotment of time for Hon Members who may wish to contribute to the Budget Statement. If we look at the last category, the time allotted to the other Hon Members is only five minutes. Mr Speaker, I think five minutes would be too short for any meaningful contribution. So, if I may, I want to suggest that we increase the allotment for the last category to 10 minutes and the last but one to 12 minutes.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Member, previously, the time allotted was the same five minutes.

**Dr Opoku:** It was 10 minutes and we even struggled with the 10 minutes.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Yes, Hon Eric Afful, I saw you on your feet.

**Dr Eric Afful:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, I was going to say the same thing that the Hon Member lamented about. This is a Budget of hope; the Budget that everybody in this country wants to hear something about. Our constituents want to hear us on this Floor. So, I also plead that we adjust the time for the Hon Members to 10 minutes at least, for us to also speak on the Budget for people to also hear from us. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minority Leader?

**Minority Leader (Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin):** Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity and let me commend my Colleagues opposite me for—

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, order! The background noise is too much.

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** Mr Speaker, again thank you for the opportunity and let me commend my Colleagues opposite me for putting together the Business Statement which was ably presented to us this morning.

Mr Speaker, I am also happy that this morning, I have seen the Majority in their numbers. Yesterday, you recall, I drew the attention of the House to their frequent absence in this Chamber, making the work of their Whips difficult. I am happy that this morning, they have come in and I pray that they stay to do Government Business. It is not the work of the Whips to be whipping them into the Chamber. Jubilee House is not an extension of Parliament. So, it is good—  
[Interruption] — It does not matter. We are dealing with the Government Side. So, it is good they have reported today.

Mr Speaker, that said, yesterday we heard of the sacking of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dampare. We heard that the President had sacked him and, in his place, Commissioner of Police (COP) Yohuno has taken over. The President has dismissed the IGP,

and in the statement from the Government's spokesperson and the Minister for Government Communication, there was no gratitude being expressed. The statement issued was to the effect that the President has made a new appointment, so the IGP, Dampare, was sacked yesterday, and there is going to be a swearing-in tomorrow.

Mr Speaker, on the Business Statement, I was expecting the Hon Member who presented the Business Statement to have talked about the electricity situation. Yes, Mr Speaker, I read.

11.49 a.m.

The Electricity Company of Ghana scheduled outages on March 11th and 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 across Ashanti Region, Volta Region, Greater Accra Region and Tema, while unscheduled cuts like 24-hour blackouts were reported, and this compounded the suffering of households, students who are in school and the business community.

Mr Speaker, these frequent power outages, obviously, interrupt business and the studies of students, and I would plead with the Minister for Energy and Green Transition to come to this House to provide a clear schedule, and this can only be done if the Leader of Government Business takes this matter up. We are barely three months into the office of this new Administration, and we do not expect this *dumsor* to come back again, so that is issue one.

Mr Speaker, related to this matter, on the road leading to the Jubilee House, we know that the Greater Accra Regional Minister promised us that the street light will be on. It is not good for the security of the Presidency. If the entire route leading to the Office of the President is so dark, and this is in the heart of the city. It is worrying, so I would plead that the Leader of Government Business programmes the Greater Accra Regional Minister to come and assure this House of the steps she is taking to address the situation. We need sufficient street lights in the city, particularly so in the area where the seat of Government is located. So, that is my second prayer to the Leader of Government Business to include this in the Business for the ensuing week.

Mr Speaker, that said, there were a number of issues that the Leader of Government Business assured us last week. The Ablekuma North situation where the Electoral Commission (EC) has told the whole country that they are done with their work, and what they need is sufficient security.

Mr Speaker, this matter was raised on the floor of the House. The understanding was that there was going to be some engagement, and the Majority Leader will report to us. The week has passed, and nothing has been heard. So, as a follow-up, can the Deputy Majority Leader take this matter up for the ensuing week? Because this is supposed to be a 276-Member Chamber. If for the first time in the history of our

politics, we are in the third or even fourth month after election and we still have one constituency still outstanding, I think we must bring a closure to this matter, especially so when—  
[*Interruption*]

**Mr Dafeamekpor** — *rose* —

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Majority Chief Whip, I would give you the floor after he is done.

Hon Minority Leader, you have the floor.

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** Mr Speaker, thank you.

Mr Speaker, what is happening is not good for our democracy. We are in this together as one big family. We have had elections, and that constitutional body responsible has issued a public statement to the effect that it is done with its work, and upon taking steps to make a declaration, some hoodlums and thugs interrupted and vandalised their property and threatened their very lives. They have been calling for enhanced security to enable them bring closure to the matter in Ablekuma North.

Mr Speaker, we raise this as the representatives of the people, and the Leader of Government Business was to make a follow-up, engage his Colleague, the Minister for the Interior, and the Inspector General of Police (IGP), and, for that matter, the Election Security Task Force. Although—

[*Interruption*]—No, I mean the former one; the one who was just dismissed—  
[*Interruption*]—Very well, it is all right.

Mr Speaker, though the IGP has been dismissed by President Mahama, it does not matter. It is still the Police administration to coordinate this process. So, I would want the Leader of Government Business to address this. Let him finish. I do not want to overload him. Let him finish, so I can come up with the other set of the issues.

Mr Speaker, thank you so much. I appreciate it.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Deputy Majority Leader?

**Mr Ricketts-Hagan:** Mr Speaker, thank you.

Mr Speaker, the first question, I think Mr Patrick Boamah—The Vice President, as Mr Speaker rightly said, will come here if she so wishes. It is not something that we can actually compel her to do. So, if she so wishes. I am sure one day you will see her here if you so desire.

The second issue has to do with the Budget Statement, and my Hon Brother knows so well. He has been in the House for a while to know that we do not require Budget Estimates to actually carry out a workshop or to do a debate. But as we do know, once we start the debate, the Budget Statement will begin to come in, and Committees will be able

to work on it. So, he should exercise patience; things are still in order. It is true that the Business Statement actually ends on the 21<sup>st</sup>, but what the Committee chose to do here is to give Members a head start about the extended Sitting, which is commencing on Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2025.

The Hon Member who asked the question knows that his Question has to be admitted by the Speaker. So, it is also his responsibility to follow up, but I will see to it for him. Thank you.

Mr Speaker, on adequate provision, I would like to assure the House that adequate provision will be made when we are having the extended Sitting. The issue of timelines will also be taken on board. On the issue of allotments, I think the allotment was done carefully by the Committee to make sure that Hon Members get the opportunity to make contributions. We are quite a number here; therefore, we are working also within time constraints, so we have to make sure that each person who chooses to speak gets the opportunity to do so. So, I think it is fair, but as the debate goes on, we will look at it. People may speak less or more, but I think that can be done when the debate is actually going on.

11.59 a.m.

Now, I am not sure what the Minority Leader wants me to say about the sacking of the IGP. I really do not

know what he wants me to say because the information came out, I think, last night that was after we had done the Statement, so we will have a look at it when we sit at the Committee Meeting and consider if it is needed.

On the issue of roads, the Hon Member talked about lights in the Greater Accra Region – that it is dark and all that. If the Regional Minister is needed here, I am sure we can schedule that for the Hon Regional Minister to be here. So, regarding the electricity situation that the Hon Member mentioned, if we need the Hon Minister for Energy here, I think we can do that.

Now, on the issue of the Electoral Commission, the Hon Minority Leader whom I know is a very good lawyer, knows I am not a lawyer, but he knows that per Article 45 of the 1992 Constitution, we are not to interfere with the work of the Electoral Commission. I am sure he knows what to do; if he needs to file a Question to the independent constitutional body, which the Electoral Commission is, he may do so.

Mr Speaker, I think I have exhausted all the questions that I was able to write down. For the other issues that are comments or advice, I will take the them on board, and I believe that they will be addressed in the next Business Committee Meeting when we get to it.

Thank you very much.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, the Business Statement as presented is hereby adopted.

Hon Minority Leader, I had given you the floor, and you had made all your points before allowing the presenter of the Business Statement to come and respond, after his response my responsibility is to have the Business Statement adopted.

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** Mr Speaker, with respect, my respected Hon Colleague will bear me out that in making my submissions, I said I did not want to overload him so he should respond to them; I said so. The *Hansard* will bear me out. The Hon Leader knows that I would not mislead the House. I said I wanted him to take those ones and then when he is done—Because I acknowledge the fact that some Hon Colleagues had asked some other questions prior to mine. I have been in that hot seat before and when you are overloaded, it is a problem, so at least, he should answer, and then we come back.

Mr Speaker, I will not make your work difficult. I am left with two issues that I wanted him to finish then I come in and we close it.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Well, Hon Minority Leader, what I know is that we allow your back to make comments on the Business Statement and then it gets to your turn, after which

opportunity is given to the Majority Side and then after that the Business Statement is adopted, and that was exactly what we did. We took comments from behind you, and we got to your turn which you have also made your comments and I have the Business Statement adopted.

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** Mr Speaker, not to disturb your ruling, but let him take note of these two so that he knows what to do.

Mr Speaker, respectfully, I did not raise a constitutional issue under Article 45. I did not raise a constitutional issue, and it is important that *Hansard* captures this because all that the Electoral Commission is calling for is security; so, that is a point I raised.

The second and final issue on this rising, has to do with what Hon Boamah brought up earlier. Mr Speaker, the Government has presented to us its Budget Statement. Who is the Chair of the Economic Management Team? Is it the Vice President or somebody else? We want to know.

Mr Speaker, I rest my case.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, I believe strongly that some issues are definitely not matters for consideration in the Business Statement.

Hon Members, the Business Statement as adopted still stands.

Hon Members, the next item is item number 7; Urgent Question. Hon Members, the Hon Minister for Roads and Highways has been programmed to appear before us to respond to some Urgent Questions. The Hon Minister for Roads and Highways honoured the invitation and he is here appropriately to respond to those Questions. The Urgent Question stands in the name of Hon Dickson Kyere-Duah, the Member of Parliament for Berekum West.

Hon Member you have the floor.

### **URGENT QUESTION**

#### **MINISTRY OF ROADS AND HIGHWAYS**

#### **Steps taken to rehabilitate the Berekum-Sampa Trunk Road**

**Mr Dickson Kyere-Duah (NDC — Berekum West):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for indulging me to pose this Urgent Question to the Minister for Roads and Highways.

Mr Speaker, I beg to ask the Minister for Roads and Highways the steps that have been taken to rehabilitate the Berekum-Sampa Road which has been in bad shape since 2017.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Thank you.

Hon Minister, your response.

**Minister for Roads and Highways (Mr Kwame Governs Agbodza) (MP):** Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity.

#### **The Background**

Mr Speaker, the Berekum -Sampa-Gyinigini Road designated as inter-regional road IR9 is 119 kilometres trunk road in the Bono Region. It traverses key districts including Berekum East Municipality, Berekum West District, Dormaa East, Jaman South Municipality and Jaman North District. This road plays a critical role in connecting the Bono Region to Ahafo Region and serves as a strategic trade route linking Ghana to Côte d'Ivoire through the Sampa Border.

#### **Current Program**

The section from Berekum-Sampa to Sampa, 80 kilometres of the road has been awarded for reconstruction under the contract titled “Reconstruction of Jinijini to Sampa Road 80 Kilometres IR9 with Funding from the Consolidated Fund the Project Was Awarded on 11th December, 2024, for a Duration of 48 Months.” The contract is scheduled for commencement soon.

Mr Speaker, as we speak no work has been done. The contractor has not even turned up on site. So that is the answer to this Question.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Thank you very much, Hon Minister.

Any supplementary question?

**Mr Kyere-Duah:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

As the Hon Minister for Roads and Highways has said, no work is currently ongoing, but the good people of Berekum West from Jinijini, Fetenta, Botokrom up to Jaman South and Jaman North are suffering. The streets are always engulfed with dust. So, in the interim what is the Minister going to do to mitigate the suffering of the good people of Berekum West and the other five constituencies that this important road connects namely: Sunyani East, Sunyani West, Berekum East, Berekum West, Jaman South and Jaman North, and as a strategic socio-economic road linking us to Côte d'Ivoire, what is he doing to mitigate the suffering we are going through?

Thank you.

**Mr Agbodza:** Mr Speaker, I sympathise with my Hon Colleague just as I sympathise with everybody who lives in communities with bad roads, and it is common to all of us.

12.09 p.m.

I agree with him that we should take steps to improve that. That is why in my Answer, I said, this project was awarded on 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2024, after the election. I am not sure why the contractor did not turn up on site. The length of the road is 80 kilometres. The contract price is about GHC800 million.

It is not that easy to do so much work unless the contractor turns up on site.

Mr Speaker, the difficulty is that, there is not even a start date or completion date to this project, so we would work with the contractor to determine that. By the way, it is Government of Ghana (GoG) funded. There is a reason we said after the elections, that certain key decisions should be left for the next Government.

Now, this project is awarded for GHC800 million and I am yet to know whether it is part of the Budget or not. Because the work has not been started, so it would not have been captured. Once it is a very strategic road, we would work together to see what we can do to get it done, just as many other roads that require urgent work. We would work with the contractor to see when he would start work, as soon as possible.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Are there any supplementary questions?

**Mr Kyere-Duah:** There is none, except to thank him very much for the comprehensive Answer provided.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mr Ahenkwah** — *rose* —

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Member, is this not a Constituency specific Question?

**Mr Kyere-Duah:** Mr Speaker, it passes through that.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Very well.

**Mr Fredrick Yaw Ahenkwah:** Mr Speaker thank you.

I would like to ask the Minister for Roads and Highways for the name of the contractor who is supposed to work on the road. Because in his submission, he did not mention the name of the contractor.

Looking at the road and according to the Minister for Roads and Highways, the contract was signed on 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2024. But surprisingly, in April 2024, a durbar was organised in Gyinigyini where all Members of Parliament (MPs) who were part of the then Government attended a programme including the District Chief Executive (DCE) and all Government functionaries at that time. We, the two MPs who were in opposition then, were not invited. We heard of the programme; when we got there, they had gathered all the chiefs along the stretch for a groundbreaking ceremony. That was the day the groundbreaking programme was held.

So, today, I am surprised to hear from the Minister for Roads and Highways that the contract was signed in December while the groundbreaking ceremony took place in April. It is surprising—*[Laughter]*—

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Order! So, what is your question?

**Mr Ahenkwah:** My question is, what urgent steps is the Ministry of Roads and Highways taking to complete this road for us?

The Minister said work has not commenced. The road is already tarred but there are a lot of potholes on the road and the contractor has begun removing the old surface. He has done it from Gyinigyini up to Drobo and skipped to Sampa. He has started from Sampa to some parts of Suma and has halted. So, I do not understand what actually is taking place on the road. I need some clarity.

Thank you.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Yes, Hon Minister?

**Mr Agbodza:** Mr Speaker, in my Answer, I said this road between Berekum-Sampa and Berekum-Gyinigyini is 119 kilometres. The one under contract is 80 kilometres. The contractor is already within the area. This is the contract data: “Contractor—Rango; Project length—Gyinigyini to Sampa; Contract sum—GH¢800 million; Commencement date—yet to be determined; Contract duration—48 months; and the original completion date is yet to be determined.

There is a principle that normally when one is contracted to construct a



road, maintenance of that road is the contractor's responsibility until the road is completed. So, it is possible that the contractor out of goodwill is trying to patch potholes on the road. But as we speak, according to data, the start date and completion dates are yet to be determined. So, if one sees some actions being carried out, it means that the contractor is just carrying out the responsibility to make the road motorable, before the real construction starts.

Mr Speaker, I thank you.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Yes, Hon Ntim Fordjour?

**Rev John Ntim Fordjour:** Mr Speaker, thank you.

The Minister submitted that the road has been awarded but the contractor is yet to commence work. Residents of the Constituency by their abled representatives have provided additional information that, indeed, months back, the contractor had started even scarifying portions of the road and work had begun. Will the Minister consider reconciling these facts and indeed extend the needed support to the contractor to continue work?

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Former Deputy Minister for Education, I think the Minister is clear in the Answer that, if the contractor out of goodwill has taken a decision to ensure

some maintenance works are done on the road, it is a different thing altogether. But from his record, the contract is yet to commence. There is no commencement date and completion date. I think the Answer is very clear.

Hon Patricia Appiagyei?

**Ms Patricia Appiagyei:** Mr Speaker, thank you.

Mr Speaker, since this is a house of record, I think we cannot leave without understanding the real position. What I would like to find out from the Minister for Roads and Highways is that—It is very clear that he has not visited the site. Since we are having that controversy, is he going to assure us that he would make sure he visits the site and know exactly what has happened and report accordingly to the House, so that we know the state of the construction?

Thank you.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Minister, would you consider visiting the site?

**Mr Agbodza:** Yes, Mr Speaker. When projects are awarded to contractors, a date is set on which the site is handed over to the contractor. So, if one awards a contract to a contractor and has not handed over the site to the contractor, what is the contractor doing on site? So, there is no need to reconcile anything.

The contract data shows that the project has not yet started and the completion date is not yet set. So, if there is anything to do—I agree with the next part of her inquiry, which is, what can we do to make sure the project comes to fruition? That is exactly what we are going to do. When we are ready and the contractor is also ready with the consultant, they would go to the site and hand over the site. On that occasion, hopefully, there would not be the need to do another round of gathering of MPs and chiefs to do another inauguration. What we need is the contractor on site doing his work. I believe that the answer is clear enough.

Mr Speaker, I know the contractor and we have had interactions with them. I repeat that the issue is that—the reason why and in fact—there are many projects in our portfolio. All contractors or majority of contractors who actually got their contracts after the election are hesitant to go to the site to start work; that is the fact. There is a reason—we should probably make a law that after election, certain key decisions should be left to whoever wins the election. But this is a road and whether it was to be done last year or this year, it is a national road and it would be done.

I can assure the Deputy Minority Leader that, yes, this project is a priority and it would be done. But as we have always said, the Minister for Finance stood at the same position and gave us the position of the country in terms of money. Ninety per cent of contractors

who are not working are not off site because they do not want to work, but it is because they have worked and we owe them over GH¢20 billion. That is why they are off site. We need to think of how to pay them instead of asking them when they would be completing the projects.

12.19 p.m.

If we do not pay them, they cannot go back to site and complete the work GH¢800 million is a lot of money so, we should factor that into our Budget. That is just one of the roads. So, Mr Speaker, this road will be done and the contractor will be taken to the site, then we would determine the start and completion date, and make adequate provision for payment whenever he raises certificates.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, let us end the Urgent Questions here and move to the item numbered 8.

Hon Members, before doing so, we have students from some educational institutions visiting the House. They are from the following institutions: South Bridge Montessori School, led by Mr Anthony Zormelo, head teacher. They are from Ablekuma South Constituency and are 275 in number.

*[Students of South Bridge Montessori School were acknowledged]*

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** We have Mag Mount Zion International School, led by Mr Solomon Oppong, a teacher. They are from Kpone-Katamanso and are 100 in number.

*[Pupils of Mag Mount Zion International School were acknowledged]*

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** We have Christ Union Academy, led by Mr Abraham Tetteh, a teacher. They are also from Ablekuma North and are 82 in number.

*[Students of Christ Union Academy were acknowledged]*

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** And we have Hon Lord Boam Independence Day Quiz finalists. They are led by Mr James Azupero, lead organiser. They are from Pru East, 73 in number.

*[Finalists of the Hon Lord Boam Independence Day Quiz were acknowledged]*

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, on behalf of the House, and on my own behalf, I wish to welcome our dear students and wish them a fruitful visit to the Parliament of the Republic of Ghana.

Hon Members, the item numbered 8, Questions. Apart from the Urgent Question, other Questions have been programmed for the Minister for Roads and Highways. He is also here to provide answers to those Questions.

Question numbered 55, standing in the name of Mr Isaac Boamah-Nyarko, Member of Parliament for Effia Constituency. Hon Member, you have the floor.

## ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

### MINISTRY OF ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

#### **Intention to Ensure Completion of Effiakuma Number 9 Bypass Road**

**Mr Isaac Boamah-Nyarko (NPP — Effia):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to ask the Minister for Roads and Highways, what the Ministry intends to do to ensure the completion of the Effiakuma Number 9 Bypass Road (Part of Effia Lot 2) as the current state of the road poses great challenge to motorists and the community.

**Minister for Roads and Highways (Mr Kwame Govers Agbodza):** Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity.

#### **Background**

Effia-Kwesimintsim Municipality is located in the southeast part of the Western Region and has Kwesimintsim as its capital town. The 'Effiakuma Number 9 Bypass' forms part of the Effiakuma Main Road, which connects the N1 at the Number 9 traffic light.

#### **Current Programme**

The Effiakuma Number 9 Bypass Road (part of Effia Lot 2) has been

awarded under the project title, “Upgrading of Mapees and Selected Collector and Arterial Roads in Effia Kwesimintsim” to bituminous surfacing.

The contract commenced on 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2019 for completion by 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2021, which was later revised to 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2025.

The project is at 72 per cent physical completion.

The contractor is currently not on site due to delay in payment for work done. Warning letters have been issued to the contractor to return to site and complete the outstanding works.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Member, any supplementary question?

**Mr Boamah-Nyarko:** Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Hon Minister for his response to my Question. As he indicated, the road currently stands at about 72 per cent completion.

The stretch we are talking about now, which is the bypass towards the Police Station, is just about 800 metres. But the effect of that road on the motorists and the community is precarious. So, I would like to find out from the Hon Minister, since the cause of this non-performance is due to payment, and we are talking about just 800 metres of road left, if he could gladly make some arrangement for the contractor to go back to site and complete this for the people of Effia?

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Agbodza:** Yes, Mr Speaker, I agree with my Colleague. Since he says the uncompleted section is just about 800 metres, my staff and I would work with the contractor and appeal to him that while we work towards honouring his certificate, he should make the intervention and reduce the bad condition of that section as quickly as possible. So we will do that.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Any further supplementary question?

**Mr Boamah-Nyarko:** Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Hon Minister for his generosity. Thank you.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Any further supplementary question?

Hon Members, let us move to Question numbered 56, standing in the name of Hon Isaac Boamah-Nyarko, MP for Effia Constituency.

### **Plans to fix Non-functional Effiakuma Number 9 Traffic Light**

**Mr Isaac Boamah-Nyarko (NPP — Effia):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to ask the Minister for Roads and Highways, what the immediate plans of the Ministry are, to fix the non-functional Effiakuma Number 9 traffic light as the current state of the traffic light poses a great danger to road users and the community.

**Mr Agbodza:** Mr Speaker,

12.29 p.m.

### **Background**

Effia-Kwesimintsim Municipality is located in the southeast part of the Western Region and has Kwesimintsim as its capital town.

### **Current Programme**

The traffic signal controls traffic flow at the No. 9 intersection, which is on the Takoradi-Cape Coast Highway (N1). The other two intersection approaches are the Effiakuma By-Pass and Queen of Peace Road. The No.9 traffic signal is currently not operational due to a damaged controller, traffic heads and stolen underground cables.

The nonfunctional Effiakuma No. 9 traffic signal control intersection has been awarded under the contract title, “Maintenance of Traffic Signals for Selected Urban Areas Zone 1”. The project commenced on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2019 for completion by 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2024 and was later revised to 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2025.

The nonfunctional traffic signal will be fixed by the end of the second quarter of 2025.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Any supplementary question?

**Mr Boamah-Nyarko:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the Hon Minister for Roads and Highways for his response.

Mr Speaker, the traffic light that we are talking about, as the Minister indicated, is sitting on the N1 connecting Effiakuma and Takoradi. Because it is a major highway, the non-functioning of the traffic light is really a big issue for the people. It causes accidents, and children get knocked down.

Since 2019, when attempts were made to fix the traffic light, the very day that it was fixed, it went off and it has never functioned again. My checks with the Department of Urban Roads and follow-up have been what he has rightly indicated. I would like to appeal to the Hon Minister. Now he is, at least, giving us some timeline, which is to be fixed by the end of the second quarter this year. I would like to appeal to the Hon Minister that we work within this and get it fixed by the said timeline.

Mr Speaker, I am most grateful to the Hon Minister, for the response.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Thank you very much, Hon Member.

Hon Members, let us move to the Question numbered 57, standing in the name of Hon Seth Osei-Akoto, Atwima Mponua Constituency.

### **Plans to Rehabilitate an Old Bridge in Atwima Mponua**

**Mr Seth Osei-Akoto (NPP — Atwima Mponua):** Mr Speaker, thank you.

I beg to ask the Minister for Roads and Highways the plans of the Ministry to rehabilitate an old bridge that serves communities of: i. Kotokuom ii. Katakwiwa and Akonkye through to Apanemadi in Atwima Mponua Constituency.

Thank you.

**Minister for Roads and Highways (Mr Kwame Govers Agbodza) (MP):** Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity.

### **Background**

Mr Speaker, the Kotokuom Bridge is a 67.2 metre concrete bridge and spans the River Offin at 6.2 kilometres along the Kwanfifin-Kotokuom-Akonkye Road in the Atwima Mponua District of the Ashanti Region.

The bridge is in a critical state of deterioration, posing significant risk to both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Extensive and deep cracks are visible across the bridge deck and supporting elements, indicating severe structural distress. The bottom of the slab exhibits significant concrete spalling, which has exposed the reinforcement and further weakened the structure.

Additionally, the steel beams supporting the bridge slab are heavily corroded and damaged at their joints, compromising the overall structural integrity. Sections of the bridge have already completely caved in due to

combined effects of heavy traffic and structural failure.

### **Current Programme**

I conducted a visit to the site with a team of engineers from the Ministry of Roads and Highways in the company of Ashanti Regional Minister and Regional Security Council (REGSEC) on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2025, to assess the situation.

The bridge requires a complete replacement, and as such, it has been closed for repair works which is to be completed within three months. During the period of the temporary work, an alternative route would be opened for commuters to access through Serebuoso, Bonkwaso, Manukrom and then Kotokuom.

A contractor has been tasked to undertake sectional maintenance works on the alternative route to allow for easy movement of commuters.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Any supplementary?

**Mr Osei-Akoto:** Mr Speaker, thank you.

Mr Speaker, Hon Minister rightly indicated that a contractor has been tasked to undertake sectional maintenance of the alternative route. My checks have revealed that the contractor is not on site. May I know when the contractor would move to the site and the name of the contractor?

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Agbodza:** Mr Speaker, I indicated I went to the site with my team on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2025. Today's date is not far from 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2025. A bridge was almost collapsing; it is an emergency work, so the contractor is mobilising to go to the site. In fact, he is on site because they have carried out the inspection and everything.

We have also asked the same contractor to explore the diversion. So, he is supposed to do the assessment of the diversion to know the interventions that are supposed to be carried out. So, yes, if the Hon Member does not see them demolishing the existing bridge now, it is because we need to work with the engineers to know even how to carry out the demolition because we are not completely demolishing what we see there. We are demolishing the deck and the weak parts, so that we can rehabilitate the bridge. So, the contractor would carry out the work as scheduled.

The name of the contractor is NAG Fairmount Company Limited.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Member, any further question?

**Mr Osei-Akoto:** Mr Speaker, yes.

First, I did not get the name of the contractor very well, and two, my constituents and I are very grateful to the Hon Minister and the Ashanti Regional Minister for embarking on the trip to assess the situation. But I am appealing to the Hon Minister, because

like I have already indicated, my checks have been reviewed, and nothing has been done. So, please, I would continue to appeal, and I would continue to engage him. Because it serves more than 25 communities on that stretch of that road. I am appealing, and we are very grateful to him for assessing the situation himself and the engineers that he took along.

Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

**Mr Agbodza:** Yes, the name I mentioned as a contractor is NAG Fairmount Company Limited, and I would reiterate that this is an emergency work. We identified a contractor in the area with capacity to be able to carry out this work. We intend to carry out this work. We are grateful for your cooperation, and then we hope that, while the work is being done, the directive that nobody should use the bridge is carried out. Because if anybody breaches that, it could lead to a disaster. I would continue to work with you to make sure that the directive that no one uses the bridge while we carry out the rehabilitation works is fully implemented.

Thank you very much, my Colleague.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, we move to the Question numbered 58, standing in the name of Hon Isaac Boamah-Nyarko, MP for Effia Constituency.

## **Plans to Ensure the Completion of the CDH Road**

**Mr Isaac Boamah-Nyarko (NPP — Effia):** Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, I beg to ask the Hon Minister for Roads and Highways what the Ministry intends to do to ensure the completion of the CDH Road as the current state of the road causes grave challenges to motorists and the people of Effia.

Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

**Minister for Roads and Highways (Mr Kwame Govers Agbodza) (MP):** Mr. Speaker, Effia-Kwesimintsim Municipality is located in the south-eastern part of the Western Region and has Kwesimintsim as its capital town. The CDH Road is a minor arterial road that links the Takoradi-Cape Coast Highway N1 to Sekondi By-Pass in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly

### **Current programme**

The Department of Urban Road is undertaking a project titled “**Rehabilitation of CDH Road Takoradi (2.35 km)**” under which the CDH Road shall be constructed.

12.39 p.m.

The contract commenced on the 15<sup>th</sup> December, 2020, for completion by 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2022, and was later revised to be

completed on 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2025. The project is at 43 per cent physical completion. The contractor is currently not on site due to delay in payment for works done, warning letters have been issued to the contractor to return to site and complete the works. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Any supplementary questions?

**Mr Boamah-Nyarko:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, and thank you Hon Minister for the response.

Mr Speaker, the road as the Hon Minister rightly indicated, is about 43 per cent complete, but actually, the greater parts of the work, when we talk about the drainage parts of the work and even the release of crash rocks, have all been placed on the road. It is very true and fair that if funds are released for the contractor, it will take about three months for the work to be completed and as he said, the stretch is just about 2.3 kilometres, and yet the net effect, — It is a very densely populated area and so I will plead with the Hon Minister if steps can be taken for the contractor to be made some payments so that he could go and complete the work for the good people of Effia.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Agbodza:** Mr Speaker, I agree with my Colleague that the stretch he is talking about is not very long, but Mr Speaker, as with many of the thousands



of contractors we have, they have actually invested money in these projects. Once they are not paid, it is difficult for one to compel them to work. So, I can only say that as and when we make money available and pay these contractors, many of them will go to site and work, but we will continue to encourage them to keep maintaining the road to a level that is motorable while we make arrangements to honour their certificates. It is all about money, Mr Speaker. If we owe contractors GH¢20 billion, — It is something that we must work towards and I hope the House will work together.

Mr Speaker, I can understand why the entire debt of the sector was just around GH¢5 billion a few years ago, and it is now GH¢20 billion and counting. It is simply because we are in difficulty financially. So, we shall work and raise the necessary revenue and pay contractors so that they can go back to site and work on our roads so that we can have safer communities.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Any more questions?

**Mr Boamah-Nyarko:** Yes, thank you very much, Mr Speaker and I thank the Hon Minister for the response. But Mr Speaker, inasmuch as I appreciate the constraints of the Ministry and the Minister in terms of payment to contractors, the effect of some of these projects are that when contractors work

to a point and we do not get them to complete, within a short time, all the roads get bad again, and all the investment done becomes futile. So, to the extent that one checks the cost of the construction of the project, and it is within the Ministry's ability, if some prioritisation could be made on this stretch, so that at least we do not get the road deteriorated to an extent that we have to always come back to a reconstruction process—

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Yes, Hon Minister?

**Mr Agbodza:** Yes, Mr Speaker, my Colleague's observation is very true. Unlike buildings, that when one builds to a point, one can leave it, go and come back and continue, roads, once it is not continued to the logical conclusion by sealing it, when it is abandoned for two years, whatever is done becomes a waste, because the weather basically just deteriorates everything that has been done and I agree with him. If we have our way, we should be able to have enough funding to start and finish every project before we start.

Mr Speaker, in the coming months, the most difficult ones are going to be the bypasses on the Kumasi Road. I made mention of this the last time I was here, that at the time of contracting, the total cost of those projects was GH¢1.9 billion. Almost all the contractors have

vacated sites because they are looking for GH¢1.7 billion variation on a GH¢1.9 billion project. That money just does not exist in the contract. So, we need to now go and look for another GH¢1.7 billion as a variation on a project that is GH¢1.9 billion. In fact, some of the lots, the variation is more than 100 per cent on those projects. The question is, how are we going to raise that money? In fact, that money is not even part of what we are talking about today. So, I agree. Maybe we need to take a second look at the way we do road contracts, whether if we do not even have money, we should allow people to just go and clear the whole road and leave it in a state that the public cannot use. So it is a good observation, but going forward, we shall work together to see how we make it better. So, your road is in focus; as soon as we fund the certificate of the contractor, I am sure they will go back to site and complete the work.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Yes, Hon Minority Leader?

Very well.

**Mr Boamah-Nyarko:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the Hon Minister for Roads and Highways for attending to my questions. I am most grateful.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Yes, Hon Minority Leader, this is constituency specific.

**Minority Leader (Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin):** Mr Speaker, rightly so, but in his earlier answer, he was lamenting a GH¢20 billion debt and I just want to find out from him how he intends to raise money to pay contractors. It is not about the debts, but it is about the work they have done. He keeps emphasising debt. When we go into accounting, we have assets and liability. The work done by a contractor amounts to an asset to the state. The state has benefited. The obligation of the state is to pay, which is a liability. So, my question to the Minister is that since these contractors are Ghanaians and their businesses are at stake and they have employees who are Ghanaians to feed, what assurances does he have for them in respect of the GH¢20 billion debts he is lamenting about? It is not a time to lament; it is time to pay. It is the reason he is in Government. He should give assurance to the contractors of his plans.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Minority Leader, does the Minister for Roads and Highways raise money to pay contractors?

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** Mr Speaker, with respect, in the ordinary sense, as you put it, he does not raise it, but he makes a request for that to be raised through the Minister for Finance. I am bringing this up because he raised the issue that there is a debt of GH¢20 billion that must be paid. Mr Speaker, he has the responsibility as the Minister for Roads and Highways to ensure that the

contractors are paid. If he does not forward the certificate to the Minister for Finance, and all the monies will be assigned to Jubilee House, GHC2.7 billion or more to Office of Government Machinery, when he can commit this to pay contractors for them to fix the roads — I mean, Mr Speaker, it is not the responsibility of the Hon Minister for Roads and Highways.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Minority Leader, does the Minister for Roads and Highways raise money for the Jubilee House?

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** No, Mr Speaker, that is not the context. I am saying that if he is able to align with the Minister for Finance, instead of allocating those monies to the Office of Government Machinery, they will prioritise it. Mr Speaker, managing an economy requires prudence and —

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Minority leader, I intend to direct that we file a Question for the Minister for Finance to come and answer.

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** Well, Mr Speaker, as it pleases you.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Thank you very much. So, Hon Minister for Roads and Highways, you are not to answer the question — [*Uproar*] — Hon Minister for Roads and Highways, this is a question — [*Uproar*] — Hon Minister, kindly resume your seat.

Hon Members, let us move to question number 59, standing in the name of Hon Anthony Mmieh, Member of Parliament for Odotobri.

12.49 p.m.

Hon Minister for Finance, this is the last Question for the Minister for Roads and Highways, then we can come to your Business. Very well.

**Mr Ricketts-Hagan:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I would like to indulge you to vary the Public Business to take Addendum for the Minister for Finance to be able to lay his Paper or his Bill.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Yes, Minority Leader.

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** To the Deputy Leader, the practice is that he would first engage us—No, I am saying the practice is that he would first engage, so that he proceeds, which he rightly did. So we are not opposed to the application.

Save that, Mr Speaker, when the Minister for Finance rises to bow, I would want the entire House to observe him. He is wearing cubavera, and I do not want anybody to attempt inviting the Speaker to say that he is not properly dressed. This is Cubavera, *akrakyefo* shirt. A Cubavera is not a pyjama, it is not improper dressing. The Minister for Finance is wearing a Cubavera shirt, a

gentleman's shirt, and he is wearing it. So I am happy he is here. By the way, it is an expensive shirt.

Mr Speaker, the socialist is wearing Cubavera. Yes, that is an original Cubavera.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Yes, Hon Minister, you want to respond to the Minority Leader? Well, you have the floor.

**Dr Cassiel Ato Baah Forson:** Mr Speaker, I have made a commitment to this House to patronise locally made dresses. And so, Mr Speaker, there is nothing wrong if I decide to wear something that is made locally. And I urge Colleagues to learn to buy from Ghana. [*Hear! Hear!*]

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Minority Leader.

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** Mr Speaker, the issue is not about where it was made. It is a Cubavera. Our local fashionistas also make Cubavera. Mr Speaker, I have a local brand Cubavera. The issue is not about whether or not it is a foreign or local Cubavera. What he is wearing is Cubavera. And I want to let the Members know, that is the issue.

By the way, Mr Speaker, this morning, they populated the Chamber. All of a sudden, they are all out, empty seats. And this is a time that the Minister

for Finance is here to lay a Paper. Look at the empty seats. They have left again, going to look for jobs at the Jubilee House. They should come to the Chamber of Parliament and work. Look at all the empty seats. They are 38 in number. Ceremonial Majority.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, Order!

Hon Members, the Order of Business is accordingly varied. Instead of the item numbered 9, we are moving to the item numbered 10 At the commencement of Public Business.

Hon Members, let us turn to Order Paper Addendum, Presentation and First Reading of Bills.

Hon Members, Question time is not over. We are just varying the Order of Business to accommodate the Minister for Finance.

## **BILL — FIRST READING**

### **Value Added Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2025**

An Act to amend the Value Added Tax Act 2013, Act 870, to exempt the supply of motor vehicle insurance from Value Added Tax.

*Presented by the Minister for Finance (Dr Cassiel Ato Baah Forson).  
Read the First time; referred to the Committee on Finance.*

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, back to Question time.

Question numbered 59, standing in the name of Hon Anthony Mmieh.

## ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

### MINISTRY OF ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

#### Return of Contractors to Complete Abandoned Projects

**Mr Anthony Mmieh (NPP — Odotobri):** Mr Speaker, I beg to ask the Minister for Roads and Highways the measures the Ministry is putting in place to ensure that all contractors return to complete projects abandoned for the past six (6) years within the Amansie Central District.

**Mr Agbodza:** Thank you, Hon Speaker, and I also thank you for encouraging me to resist the temptation of telling the respected Minority Leader what the said GHC16 billion was used to do under the slush fund, but I would not say that one today because the GHC16 billion could have made a dent in the GHC20 billion we owe contractors, but that is for another day, so I would not say it here today.

Mr Speaker,

#### Background

Jacobu is the District Capital of Amansie Central district of the Ashanti Region. It is a town located off the Anwiankwanta–Obuasi Road (N10).

#### (i) Jacobu Junction – Jacobu Town/ Jacobu Town Roads

##### Current Programme

Jacobu town roads was awarded as a variation order under the contract title “**Reconstruction of Anwiankwanta – Obuasi road (30km) Lot 7**” (Variation Order No. 3 “**Rehabilitation of Jacobu Junction – Jacobu Town (8.3km) and Jacobu Town Roads – 5.6km**”). The project commenced on 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2019 for completion by 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2023.

The progress of work is at 40 per cent physical completion.

The Contractor is on site and work is progressing.

#### (ii) The Department of Feeder Roads is also undertaking eleven (11) projects in the district. These are:

- (1) Upgrading to Bitumen Surfacing of Fiankoma – Kente Feeder Road (10km)
- (2) Bitumen Surfacing of Fiankoma–Abuakwa-Krobo Ph I (km 0.00–10.20).
- (3) Bitumen Surfacing of Fiankoma–Abuakwa-Krobo Ph II (km 10.20–20.20)
- (4) Bitumen Surfacing of Atia–Mile 14–Atia Junction Ph I (km 0.00–6.00).

- (5) Bitumen Surfacing of Jacobu–  
Abuakwa–Krobo–Odaso F/RD  
(7.00km)

12.59 p.m.

- (6) Bitumen Surfacing of Hia–Mile  
14 – Atia Junction Ph II (km  
6.00-9.73).
- (7) Bitumen Surfacing of Tweapease–  
Mile 15 F/Rd Ph I (km 0.00-  
6.00).
- (8) Bitumen Surfacing of Tweapease–  
Mile 15 F/RD Ph II (km 6.00-  
12.00)
- (9) Upgrading of Finasonkwanta–  
Kronkor and Other F/RD  
(12.9km)
- (10) Rehabilitation of Mile 15 –  
Gyametanahunu and Other F/RD  
(32.8km)
- (11) Bitumen Surfacing of Mile 15 –  
Huu Feeder Roads (9.5km)

- 1) Upgrading to Bitumen Surfacing  
of Fiankoma – Kente Feeder  
Road (10km)

### **Current Programme**

The Fiankoma-Kente road has been awarded under the contract title, “Bitumen Surfacing of Fiankoma-Kente Feeder Road (10km)”. The works commenced on 27<sup>th</sup> August, 2024 for completion by 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2026.

The progress of work is estimated at 8.15 per cent physical completion. The Contractor is currently on site and work is progressing.

- 2) Bitumen Surfacing of Fiankoma-  
Abuakwa-Krobo Ph I (Km 0.00-  
10.20),
- 3) Bitumen Surfacing of Fiankoma-  
Abuakwa-Krobo Ph II (km10.20-  
20.20)

### **Current Programme**

The above projects commenced on 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2020 for completion by 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 which has since elapsed. The contractor is currently not on site and works have since been terminated.

### **Future Programme**

Engineering design studies will be carried out by the end of the second quarter of 2025 to assess the appropriate intervention after which consideration would be given under the 2026 budget subject to the availability of funds.

- 4) Bitumen Surfacing of Atia–Mile  
14–Atia Junction Ph I (km 0.00-  
6.00).

### **Current Programme**

The Atia-Mile 14-Atia Junction Road has been awarded under the contract title, “Upgrading of Atia-Mile 14-Atia Junction feeder road Ph.1 (km 0.00-6.00)” to bituminous surfacing

with funding from COCOBOD. The works commenced on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2016 for completion by 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2017.

The progress of work is estimated at 68 per cent physical completion. The contractor is currently not on site and works have since been recommended for termination.

### **Future Programme**

Engineering design studies will be carried out by the end of the third quarter of 2025 upon termination of the contract to assess the appropriate intervention, after which consideration would be given under the 2026 Budget subject to the availability of funds.

- 5) Bitumen Surfacing of Jacobu–Abuakwa–Krobo-Odaso F/RD (7km).

### **Current Programme**

The Jacobu-Abuakwa-Krobo-Odaso road has been awarded under the contract title, “Upgrading of Jacobu-Abuakwa-Krobo-Odaso feeder road (7km)” to bituminous surfacing with funding from COCOBOD. The works commenced on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2016 for completion by 4<sup>th</sup> May, 2017.

The progress of work is estimated at 65 per cent physical completion. The Contractor is currently not on site and works have since been recommended for termination.

### **Future Programme**

Engineering design studies will be carried out by the end of the third quarter of 2025 upon termination of the contract to assess the appropriate intervention, after which consideration would be given under the 2026 Budget subject to the availability of funds.

- (6) Bitumen Surfacing of Hia–Mile 14 – Atia Junction Ph II (km 6.00-9.73).

### **Current Programme**

The Hia–Mile 14 – Atia Junction Road has been awarded under the contract title “Bitumen Surfacing of Hia–Mile 14 – Atia Junction Ph II (km 6.00-9.73)” to bituminous surfacing with funding from COCOBOD. The works commenced on 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2016 for completion by 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2017.

The progress of work is estimated at 10 per cent physical completion. The contractor is currently not on site and works have since been recommended for termination.

### **Future Programme**

Engineering design studies will be carried out by the end of the third quarter of 2025 upon termination of the contract to assess the appropriate intervention, after which consideration would be given under the 2026 Budget subject to the availability of funds.

(7) Bitumen Surfacing of Tweapease—  
Mile 15 F/Rd Ph I (km 0.00-  
6.00).

(8) Bitumen Surfacing of Tweapease—  
Mile 15 F/Rd Ph II (km 6.00-  
12.00)

### **Current Programme**

The above projects commenced on 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2020 for completion by 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2021. The contractor is currently not on site and works have since been terminated.

### **Future Programme**

Engineering design studies will be carried out by the end of the second quarter of 2025 to assess the appropriate intervention after which consideration would be given under the 2026 Budget subject to the availability of funds.

9) Upgrading of Finasonkwanta—  
Kronkor and Other F/RD  
(12.9km)

### **Current Programme**

The Finasonkwanta-Kronkor Road has been awarded under the contract title, “Upgrading of Finasonkwanta-Kronkor feeder road (12.9km)” to bituminous surfacing with funding from COCOBOD. The works commenced on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2021 for completion by 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2022.

The progress of work is estimated at 4 per cent physical completion. The contractor is currently not on site and works have since been recommended for termination.

### **Future Programme**

Engineering design studies will be carried out by the end of the third quarter of 2025 upon termination of the contract to assess the appropriate intervention, after which consideration would be given under the 2026 Budget subject to the availability of funds.

(10) Rehabilitation of Mile 15 –  
Gyametanahunu and Other F/Rd  
(32.8km)

### **Current Programme**

The Mile 15-Gyametanahunu road has been awarded under the contract title, “Rehabilitation of Mile 15-Gyametanahunu feeder road (32.8km)” with funding from COCOBOD. The works commenced on 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2021 for completion by 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2023.

The contractor is currently not on site and works have since been recommended for termination.

### **Future Programme**

Engineering design studies will be carried out by the end of the third quarter of 2025 upon termination of the contract to assess the appropriate intervention, after which consideration



would be given under the 2026 Budget subject to the availability of funds.

### 11) Bitumen Surfacing of Mile 15 – Huu Feeder Road (9.5km)

#### **Current Programme**

The Mile 15-Huu Road has been awarded under the contract title, “Bitumen Surfacing of Mile 15-Huu feeder road (9.5km)” with funding from COCOBOD. The works commenced on 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2021 for completion by 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2023.

The contractor is currently not on site and works have since been terminated.

#### **Future Programme**

Engineering design studies will be carried out by the end of the third quarter of 2025 upon termination of the contract to assess the appropriate intervention, after which consideration would be given under the 2026 Budget subject to the availability of funds.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Hon Minister.

Any follow up?

**Mr Mmieh:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful, and I thank the Hon Minister for the update. I realised that out of the 11 roads being constructed by the Department of Feeder Roads, the contractors for 10 of them have

abandoned sites; it is a very disturbing experience. What is more disturbing is that some of these sites have been abandoned for over six good years. I think it is not good for us as a nation. Can the Hon Minister assist this House, if he knows, as to the reason why these contractors have abandoned the sites? Not only these contractors, I think it is a canker; it is everywhere.

Mr Speaker, everywhere in Ghana, road contracts have been awarded—and I do not know if it is the practice of contractors to take contracts, sign them, assure the Government of Ghana that they would embark on these contracts, then they just visit the site, and the next moment we realise that they are not there. They do not go back to the site; they do not inform the Government that they do not want the contract and cannot complete the contract. They leave it like that in the books of the Ministry. If we had not embarked on this exercise today, the Minister would be sitting in his office thinking that all these roads have been awarded. I think it is a bad practice. Can we know what the causes are?

1.09 p.m.

Is it that the contractors do not get the cooperation of the Government or is it that the contractors are incompetent? In fact, I have, on several occasions, witnessed contracts being awarded to certain people. I think this practice has to be discontinued; we mean serious business. This is—

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Member, what is your question?

**Mr Mmieh:** So, my question is, what is the cause of this? Why are all these contractors within the Odotobri Constituency abandoning the contracts? Out of the 11 roads that have been awarded by the Department of Feeder Roads, 10 of the contractors have abandoned sites.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Yes, Hon Minister, why are the projects abandoned by the contractors?

**Mr Agbodza:** Mr Speaker, I must say that having 11 road contracts in one district is actually a record, and once upon a time, they were very blessed.

Unfortunately, that blessing has turned into a nightmare for them, and I can sympathise with him. There are various reasons contractors are not on site. But primarily, it would have been the capacity of the contractor and ability of the state to pay for it. That is a fact. But I agree with him; when somebody takes a project and does only 4 per cent and leaves the site, does that not question whether we did proper due diligence before giving them—Because for 4 per cent, all that would have been done was only clearing, by the time the contractor does the 4 per cent, so why did the contractor abandon the project?

But the answer is not far from the House here, Mr Speaker. There is a reason almost all former Ministers for Roads and Highways, and now, I have

the responsibility to answer more Questions about roads. It is because roads are pivotal to almost everything we do. So, every Colleague requires roads. Even the Greater Accra Region is still crying for roads. One can imagine what those of us in the villages have to be crying for. So, it is a matter of us, as a country, perhaps, paying a bigger attention to how we fund roads.

Mr Speaker, I keep asking questions. Why is it all right for everybody to feel that we have rivers, but when we want to bring water to our homes, we fund the collection of that water: treatment and distribution, and it is paid for. It is the same thing with the Akosombo Dam; the River Volta is there, and we used money to dam it, but for one to use electricity, he or she has to pay for it. Somehow, we believe that we can build roads and everybody should use it for free. It is something else; meanwhile, it costs money to build roads as well. But for us to see water as an essential commodity that when we produce it, people pay to use it; when we produce electricity, people pay for using it. But roads also cost money to build and maintain.

I understand that water is different, and road is also different. But road is also something that we do not just build and leave it there. It costs money to build and maintain. So, for how we fund the construction and maintenance of road—We should pay the same attention to the way we produce water and distribute electricity. That is the only way out.

Mr Speaker, the proposal to bring back the road toll is just a fraction of it. Elsewhere, one would have to do more to be able to fund roads and as a House, we have been discussing this. Maybe at the right time, we need to discuss further, whether, for instance—Nobody can tell me that we will be able to fund or pay off the debt of the GH¢20 billion this year. By the time we finish paying the GH¢20 billion, Mr Speaker, there will be more certificates that have come in because contractors have worked.

I do not believe the Ghanaian contractor is lazy or deliberately decided to take projects and abandon them. They are business people; they have invested in equipment and staff and other things. They could not have just abandoned the work for the sake of it; something compels them. And I am saying that, on majority of the occasions, it is the inability of the state to honour our part of the contract: that is to pay for works they have done. I think we should pay more attention to that, irrespective of which political party is in power. If we fail to generate our own sustainable resources for road construction and maintenance, this problem would come and go, and then nothing would change. So, hopefully, one day, we will find a solution to this.

So, I sympathise with my Hon Colleague, but all these roads are necessary in his constituency and the constituencies of other Hon Colleagues. We will do whatever we can to

repackage them and see if we can get them done, so that his community would have better roads.

Thank you.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Any further questions?

**Mr Mmieh:** That is so right, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, my next question is in relation to paragraph 3(i), where he informed this House that the contractor is on site and work is progressing. To the best of my knowledge, the contractor abandoned the site even before the end of 2024. He has not returned to site, and I do not know if he intends to do that.

Does the Hon Minister think it would be in the right direction to write to the contractor to make him aware of his obligations as the contractor for that project?

**Mr Agbodza:** Mr Speaker, yes, once a contractor mobilises to site and is working, we can argue about the pace of the work, but they will tell one that they have plants, equipment and staff on site. So, the pace of the work may be slower, but when we look into the contract, that is still contractor on site. But there are some that the contractor has completely packed off site. In fact, they can even tell us they are not interested in the work. So, that is the difference.

The one the Hon Member is talking about; the contractor has capacity to complete the work. The difficulty is that, cumulatively, the amount of money owed to that contractor is significant. So, it is almost difficult for him to continue working. But I agree with him. All we can do is to appeal to them. And I must say that, without mentioning names of contractors, I am also aware that there are other contractors in similar situations who continue to hold themselves accountable and are on site working as much as they can. So, for those ones, maybe, we need to commend them for the sacrifices they are making because it is not that easy. I know that it is tough for some of them, but maybe, I do not know how they fund it, but some continue to work even though we are unable to honour their certificates the way we should.

**Rev Fordjour** — *rose* —

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Have contractors abandoned projects in your constituency as well? It is a constituency-specific question.

**Rev John Ntim Fordjour:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The contractors in respect to the road projects under question, in the Odotobri Constituency, as the Hon Minister has submitted, were those contractors perhaps paid their mobilization fund, and if they were, consistent with the assurance given by the Minister, that those roads will be re-

programmed for intervention, possibly in 2026, would he, consistent with that assurance, factor these roads in the Fiankoma, Abuakwa, Jacobu, in his next visit to the Ashanti Region, to assure the residents that this will indeed be programmed?

I thank you.

**Mr Agbodza:** Mr Speaker, they are in two parts: Those under Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD)—As we know, based on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Programme, under which we are currently, COCOBOD is to offload all its road projects back to the Ministry of Roads and Highways. The question is, what happens to the certificates that COCOBOD generated before offloading to the Ministry of Roads and Highways? It is something that the state needs to take a look at because it is GH¢5 billion, and COCOBOD does not have GH¢1 billion today to even pay off what they owe. So, it is a discussion that the Government will need to have, even before we start talking about how to repackage those projects for continuation.

So, it is going to take a bit of time, but eventually, we will do it. I agree with him; fortunately, for those contractors, some were paid mobilisation by COCOBOD. The Government of Ghana hardly pays compensation.

1.19 p.m.

If somebody takes compensation and does not do the work, that one is straightforward, one needs to give a refund. The remedies would be in the contract itself. I am not in a position to tell exactly what happens to those contractors. But I know if one takes money for work which one has not carried out, that one should not be rocket science. One has to refund the money according to what the contract says the person has to do at the time of signing of the contract.

I am always visiting project sites. I can tell him that this weekend while he is relaxing at home, I would be on the road somewhere—Not Jacobu but somewhere else. I would get there one day.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Member, this weekend we have a post-budget workshop—[*Laughter*]  
—Yes Hon Nitiwul?

**Mr Dominic Bingab Aduna Nititwul:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, I know that the rules are very clear on the Question and the fact that it should be Constituency specific because of the nature of the Question. But I want to really support the Minister for Roads and Highways. I think there is something that should be very clear in his mind. Even though this Minority Side, the previous Government, stopped

the road tolls because we did not want to burden people with the Electronic Levy (e-Levy) and road tolls at the same time—There is nobody from this Side who is against road tolls. I am also saying that the previous Minister, Mr Asenso-Boakye, actually brought the electronic road tolls from us and the Cabinet adopted it, so please go ahead.

I think he should broaden it beyond the ordinary or normal road tolls. Otherwise, trust me, we cannot fix our roads. I know that if one goes to South Africa, one can just pass through without a stop, that beep sound comes and people pay. If he does not do that across all the major roads in the whole country, he would not be able to fix a single road. In four years' time, the roads would even deteriorate and become worse.

My question is, when he is bringing it? When? Because he should do it. Trust me, if he does not do it, he would have problems—

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Nitiwul, the question does not relate to the Question numbered 59, but I would allow the Minister for Roads and Highways to provide an answer.

**Mr Agbodza:** Mr Speaker, I want to take the opportunity to highly commend my Colleague for the position he has taken and take same to pay tribute to one of our former Colleagues, Hon Aduomi. On the issue of our road funding, I remember very well that in

those days, we were struggling to improve the accruals to the road fund, he was the Ranking Member and he supported the call for the increase in how much fuel levy goes into the road fund. That is why we moved from the annual GHC250 million to GHC1.2 billion at the time. The road toll is coming back. We sent a concept note to the Ministry of Finance. They have given us approval. The technical works are being done, and we are going full electronics. We do not intend to build any physical tolls on any road. Then, all the challenges people talk about as how do we collect the money and everything? I jokingly said, if President John Dramani Mahama were to say that everybody in Ghana should get a phone number, registered on mobile money to receive GHC1,000 today, everybody would be able to get it.

It is the same way we are going to be able to implement the road toll. We would select the most efficient technology that makes sure that it is fair and accruals are safe and easy for everybody to pay. Whatever we collect goes only to funding of roads and not into a Consolidated Fund where somebody would decide whether to give us the money for roads or not. It has to be entirely for road-related expenditure. I would come to the House with that.

I want to thank my Colleagues—*[Interruption]*—When? We are hoping that by April, thereabout, we should be going for RFP, a request for a proposal,

both technical and financial, so that we can go ahead with it.

Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, Leadership?

Hon Members, we have come to the end of Question time. On behalf of the House and on my own behalf, I thank the Minister for Roads and Highways for attending upon the House to answer Questions. Hon Minister, you are discharged.

Hon Members, the item numbered 9, Statements. Leadership, is there any indication? Yes, Hon Deputy Minority Leader?

**Ms Appiagyei:** Yes, Hon Speaker, with your permission, I think we should take two from each Side. Today is Friday, and tomorrow we would have to prepare and come here.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Very well. We would take two Statements with two contributions from each Side.

**Ms Appiagyei:** Yes, thank you.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members—

**Mr Richard Acheampong** — *rose* —

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Yes, Hon Acheampong?

**Mr Acheampong:** Mr Speaker, I have no difficulty agreeing with the Deputy Minority Leader, but if we can reduce the contributors, we can take three on each Side, because we have lots of Statements with you. Tomorrow, we are starting the post-budget workshop, next week is Budget debate and after that we would be receiving the Annual Estimates. We do not have time on our side to deal with the backlog of Statements that you have. So, we can take three from each Side and limit the number of contributors—

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, let us remind ourselves that the post-budget workshop is commencing tomorrow. We would be here tomorrow that is Saturday, then on Sunday and possibly on Monday. We are coming here. So, if the proposal is that we take two Statements and two contributors each to a Statement, I believe it is in good faith and we should go by it.

**Mr Acheampong:** Mr Speaker, there is no difficulty about it.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, we have admitted a Statement on Ghana's cocoa production and the global chocolate industry, in the name of Hon Nana Osei-Adjei, the Member of Parliament for New Juabeng North Constituency. Hon Member, you have the floor.

Hon Members, in his absence, we also have a Statement by the Member of Parliament for Daffiama/Bussie/Issa

Constituency, on the urgent need for rehabilitation, reconstruction of the Wa-Bole-Techiman Road. Hon Member, you have the floor.

## STATEMENT

### **The Urgent Need for Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of the Wa-Bole-Techiman Road**

**Dr Sebastian Ngmenenso Sandaare (NDC — Daffiama/bussie/Issa):** Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to make this Statement in an effort to bring urgent attention to the state of the Wa-Bole-Techiman Road and its implications on commuters particularly the good people of the Upper West and Savannah regions.

Mr Speaker, the importance of good road network to the economic growth of these regions and the country at large cannot be overemphasised. Particularly, for regions which do not have alternative means of transportation, road transportation is a critical artery to their economies, enabling access to markets, boosting tourism, creating access to jobs and educational opportunities, as well as enabling access to healthcare and other essential services. Ultimately, a good road network provides the opportunity to stimulate economic growth and social progress in these regions and the country at large.

Mr Speaker, one such important road network with enormous economic and social benefit to the people in these two regions and Ghana at large is the Wa-Bole-Techiman Road. It is an N12 trans-ECOWAS road that links the Upper West and Savannah Regions to the Southern part of Ghana and neighbouring Burkina Faso.

Mr Speaker it is sad to state that, the road is very deplorable beyond description to the extent that, the social and economic benefits of a good road network are lost on the people. The deplorable condition of the road continues to pose severe challenges and hardships to commuters and communities along it.

The road is characterised by large and deep potholes, weak culverts and completely dusty as all the coal is removed.

1.29 p.m.

Mr Speaker, the implications are innumerable. The safety and security of commuters is greatly compromised as they are subjects of frequent and indiscriminate armed robbery attacks, and with some unfortunate situations resulting in deaths.

Mr Speaker, most worrying is the spate of accidents solely attributable to the bad road network. Common occurrences include bursting of vehicle tyres and vehicle collisions in drivers' attempt to dodge potholes among others.

Mr Speaker, the cumulative effect is that the road is unsafe in all regards and extremely tortuously long. A journey which would naturally take less than 12 hours from Accra to Wa takes an average of 18 hours to 20 hours or more now. Worse is that, transport owners including the State Transport Company (STC) have started avoiding and even abandoning the road to the detriment of communities around that stretch.

Mr Speaker, even though the importance of keeping this road in good shape is not lost on government, the neglect of the road for close to a decade without maintenance has left the entire road network in its present deplorable state. Even though Chiefs, commuters, drivers and Members of Parliament from the two regions from both Sides of the political divide have made several appeals to past governments to fix the road, the situation has not changed as the condition of the road continues to deteriorate with each passing day. And although the immediate past regime announced the award of a portion of the road to a contractor before it exited power, the contractor is yet to commence work on site.

Also, the bad road network has a significant toll on the health of commuters and settlers. The long sitting hours poses severe health challenges to the passengers. Respiratory diseases are equally rising among communities along the road due to the daily inhalation of dust. Patient transport is equally negatively impacted with



reports of deterioration of medical conditions of patients who are referred to the Upper West Regional Hospital and beyond.

Mr Speaker, the road, if not urgently attended to, will continue to slow down economic and social activities. Cost of transport, prices of goods and services, access to markets, tourism and investments drive will further take a nosedive.

In conclusion, fixing this road as soon as possible will allow for easier movement of goods and services to markets, and facilitating trade to boost economic growth. It will reduce vehicular wear and tear, leading to lower transportation costs for passengers, businesses and commuters while enabling faster delivery times and improved supply chains, enhancing overall productivity and by extension, attract more businesses and investments to a region. This will help create jobs in these regions for the unemployed youth. It will further boost tourism and reduce the negative impacts cited supra such as accidents, robbery, and deaths along the road.

Mr Speaker, my position is therefore to appeal the President of the Republic through the Minister responsible for Roads and Highways to, as a matter of urgency, cause the immediate rehabilitation and reconstruction of the road.

Thank you once again, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Thank you very much, Hon Sandaare. Yes, Hon Peter Lanchene Toobu?

**Supt Rtd Peter Lanchene Toobu (NDC — Wa West):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to contribute to the Statement ably made by the Member of Parliament for the Daffiama/Bussie/Issa Constituency, Hon Sebastian Ngmenenso Sandaare.

Mr Speaker, speaking about the road from Techiman to Wa requires a bit of energy to stand in Parliament and speak because all of us on that stretch, as we sit here, constituents are threatening that if that road is not fixed, we should not even come home. Drivers are threatening that if that road is not fixed, they will abandon the road.

Mr Speaker, VIP buses from Wa to Accra used to take nine hours but today, VIP uses 18 to 20 hours. State Transport Company (STC) buses are using between 20 to 22 hours because STC prefers to use the bypass between Sawla and Fufulso and cut across to Techiman, abandoning the Sawla-Techiman portion of this road.

It is quite sad to realise that a journey of nine hours is becoming a journey of 18 hours. Mr Speaker, if we believe that time is money, we are wasting nine additional hours for the same stretch of road. What is more important and very sad is the fact that the spate of accidents on that road because of the bad nature of the road threatens lives and properties.

I am happy to announce, Mr Speaker, that as we cry about armed robbery on that road because of the bad nature of the road, H. E. President John Dramani Mahama has infused some fresh energy into the Ghana Police Service by appointing a new Inspector General of Police (IGP). We will call upon him as well that, before the road is fixed, Government should endeavour to ensure that patrols on that road are maintained at a very high level so that security can be guaranteed.

Mr Speaker, in conclusion, this is a road that passes through the hometown of a former Prime Minister, Mr Kofi Abrefa Busia from Wenchi. It is also a road that passes through the hometown of the current President, Mr John Dramani Mahama, Bole; so, it is an important road.

Apart from that, this is a road that leads to Burkina Faso. We know that in the near future, we will be talking about a rail line from Tema to Ouagadougou. But until that is done, let us have a better road to be able to enjoy transport home and back.

I am so grateful, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Dominic Nitiwul?

**Mr Dominic Bingab Aduna Nitiwul (NPP — Bimbilla):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me support my Colleague who brought the attention of

the country and the House—And I am happy that the Minister for Roads and Highways is here to listen to the Statement by my Colleague.

Mr Speaker, the bad nature of this road was highlighted in the last quarter of 2024. It is the reason the government had to look for resources and got the Ministry of Finance to issue a commencement for a portion of that road that was awarded. It is really a very terrible road that is leading to a regional capital.

Mr Speaker, if that road is not done, it will mean that the Upper West will be cut off from having any good road to the Upper East. This is because from the Bolgatanga side and from the Wenchi side, the road is not good. If the road is not good and we do not have any other road, it means the entire region does not have any motorable road to that region. We are not even talking about roads within the region, but the main road to the region; that is how bad it is, and so I am happy that the Minister for Roads and Highways is here.

I believe the Minister for Roads and Highways should take serious notice of the plea of the Member and see what he can do to ensure that, at least, the road is motorable. When this matter came up in the previous Cabinet and we were discussing it, some of us were of the view that we should even quickly go there and do spot improvement to, at least, allow it to be motorable for some time. But then we were told that it is so

bad that if we want to even do spot improvement, it will not help, so it needs real construction. So, the whole country needs to support them.

1.39 p.m.

We cannot have a situation where a whole region cannot have an access road; a tarred road to the Region in 21st century Ghana. I think it is wrong.

I will support the Member and say that if we are going to have a situation where people cannot move, when there are security issues, even when we have a whole barracks there, the officer cannot move properly. It does not speak well of us when the police and people who are travelling cannot move properly because of bad roads. And worse still, it is at the border where terrorism threats are coming towards us. And these are places we should find ways of ensuring are good, so that we can reinforce if there is a problem. We cannot have a situation where Upper East and Upper West have bad roads. It is not something that the country should really look at as a second option.

It is not good for Wenchi through Bole, Sawla to Wa, to have the sort of roads they have. I have used that road several times, Mr Speaker. Even with 4x4 cars, people are going to suffer. I can imagine the market women who are using this road just to make ends meet. They are not using 4x4 Land Cruisers, they are not using Nissan Patrols, and they are not using modern day cars.

They are using the old cars that our people use. I can imagine how they suffer. I can imagine people sitting for 10 hours to move on a road that they could have used two hours to travel on. If patients are referred to a bigger hospital and for some reason, they do not have money to get onto an aircraft or maybe an aircraft is not coming that day, because in place like Wa, it does not come regularly, and the patient has to be moved to Kumasi or Accra, I can imagine how bad it would be. I can imagine that pregnant a woman has to move on this type of road. We are going to kill the person. So, I think the Minister for Roads and Highways should pay attention to this road and look at how he will be able to ensure that at least, it is made motorable.

There are many difficulties that he is going to face, that is true, especially with roads. But I also think that there are some roads that he should prioritise and this should be one of them. He should make them a priority and ensure that within this year, he begins to at least allow the people to enjoy some good roads. Otherwise, it will be sad to have a situation where the entire Region does not have any motorable roads that they can move on. It is not a very good thing.

I want to thank the maker of the Statement for bringing it to our attention. As I said, the nature of the road came especially in the last quarter when the rains destroyed most parts of the roads, not just the one leading to Wa. Even with the roads outside Wa, the

rains destroyed a lot of it, and if we allow rainy season to come again, the roads will even get worse. So, if we can do something before the rain starts to come, then it will be good for all of us as a country.

Mr Speaker, with this, I want to support the call of the Hon Member that we should prioritise these roads as one of the first roads that the Minister for Roads and Highways will deal with. Even though all of us have roads in our constituencies that are not complete; I still want to support the maker of the Statement and say that we need to do this for the sake of all of us as a country.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Thank you.

Hon Member, you have the floor.

**Mr Anthony Mwinkaara Sumah (NDC — Nadowli/Kaleo):** Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Statement made by the Member of Parliament for Daffiama/Bussie/Issa. As an MP from the Upper West Region, I think he has done a good job for all of us. It is been a challenge for all of us and we are all facing the threats. At a point, our constituents think that we are not doing enough to get this road constructed. I want to thank my Colleagues that have also commented on the Statement, particularly, the former Minister for Defence, for siding with us and then

indicating the need for the Minister to take urgent action.

Probably, a few illustrations will demonstrate the challenge. If one is leaving Accra with the State Transport at 4 p.m. to Wa, the earliest time one can get to Wa is 2 p.m. the next day. The State Transport will get to Techiman. Instead of the State Transport going straight to Wenchi, Bamboi and continuing, it will divert straight to Kintampo, then up to Fulfuso and come back to Damango, and to Sawla before one can go to Wa, a regional capital.

Mr Speaker, Wa was the youngest regional capital before the creation of these other regions and we know the challenge. We were already struggling to catch up with development with the other regions. Added with this challenge now, I do not think the people of the Upper West and then the communities and constituencies along that route deserve this treatment.

In fact, on one occasion, I said that if we cannot work on the road, then let us take off the bitumen so that we have a rough road and the people can move easily. The implications are so many, especially on the tourism potential of the region. I will make an illustration. The Continental Body for Credit Union was due to hold a programme in the Upper West Region in Jirapa, which is the birthplace of credit unions in Africa. They were celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary. So this programme was going to host 34 African countries, four

European countries and the United States of America. The participants were from all these countries. And they had chosen Jirapa to host this programme because that was the birthplace of the credit unions in Africa. The organisers went by flight from Accra to Wa, and then got to Jirapa. They inspected Royal Cosy Hills Safari Resort, popularly called Jirapa Dubai. They were very satisfied with the conditions there but they decided to come by road to Kumasi to pay a courtesy call on the Asantehene. It took them 12 hours from Wa to Kumasi. The programme was going to host 2,000 members. As I speak, Mr Speaker, we have lost the opportunity to host the programme. There are a lot of tourist sites these people could have taken advantage of, and then our communities would have benefited economically from their visit. We have lost that potential. We have lost that opportunity.

Most of us listen to *Citi Heritage Caravan*. When they were questioned why they have never been to Upper West, they said they were worried about the security of the people. They could not gamble with their lives going on that road. That is the road we use every time. It has affected every sphere of our lives, even we MPs. If I want to get to my constituency and I leave now, I would probably get there tomorrow in the afternoon. I have burst my tyre on that road several times.

Mr Speaker, security concerns — In this House, I had the opportunity and a

very sad duty to contribute to a Statement regarding a colleague who passed; my schoolmate, the Late Richard Badombia, a lawyer who was shot dead on that road. So, the situation is quite bad.

I do understand the passion of the Minister for Roads and Highways and I think he can do something to salvage the situation. He would be writing his name in history if he is able to do something about that road. It is so terrible. I mean, it is not anything to talk about. We do not have to make such requests, demands and permissions for that road to be worked on. That road links to Burkina Faso, several regions and several constituencies. Imagine someone who has to go to Bole, Sawla or before Sawla, he has to go by STC. The STC is going to cut off Bole. He would not get a chance. He has to get another means to get to Bole or Sawla.

Mr Speaker, we are pleading with the Hon Minister. We know and we are aware of the efforts. I do remember when the former President went to Wa, he told the Wa-Naa that he was going to do that road as a parting gift for the people of Upper West. Our understanding is that some awards have been made. The reality is that there is nothing happening on that road. So, we are making this special plea today on behalf of the good people of the Upper West Region and all the constituencies, Bole, Sawla-Tuna-Kalba, up to Wenchi, that please do something about our roads.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Member, conclude.

**Mr Sumah:** Mr Speaker, we are confident that the Minister can do something and he will do something about it.

Thank you very much.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Matthew Nyindam?

Hon Members, we agreed to take two each.

**Mr Matthew Nyindam (NPP — Kpandai):** Mr Speaker, thank you once again for giving me the opportunity to also contribute to support my good friend who ably made these Statements.

Mr Speaker, it is an undeniable fact that if that road is constructed, the economic benefits are enormous. It will open up the Upper West Region, and link it to the Brong-Ahafo Region. Travelling will be much easier.

1.49 p.m.

Mr Speaker, I am surprised to even hear from my Friend who just spoke that, now, it is not possible to travel from Techiman through Wenchi to Upper West Region. You have to come, drive to Kintampo Road to Fofoso and link this way.

Mr Speaker, I am happy the Minister for Roads and Highways is here. Even traveling from Techiman through

Wenchi to Wa is hours. Even if one is using a Land Cruiser, by the time one gets to Wa, one will be too exhausted. We all have bad roads, just like the former Minister for Defence has said and the Minister of Roads and Highways has reiterated on this Floor.

But some problems are bigger than others. It is of late that African World Airline or, I think, Passion Air, fly from Accra to Upper West Region, but how many people have the ability, Mr Speaker, to use this? It is not possible. So, we all want to urge the Minister for Roads and Highways, as soon as practicable, to listen to the call of the maker of the Statement, and there are so many constituencies on that road, and I am sure that if it is done, it is going to help.

Obviously, armed robbers are also strategic. They will look at where the roads are very bad and where cars or vehicles will slow down, and they will obviously launch attack at that particular spot, and people lose their lives and the little incomes that they have made. The market women, especially, suffer; they lose a lot of money. So, we all want to urge the Minister for Roads and Highways to quickly—We know things are difficult, but it is doable. He should, please, come to the aid, and then at the end of the day, just like he said, his name will be written in the “Guinness Books” of Upper West Region.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. [*Hear! Hear!*]

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Hon Nyindam.

Hon Minister for Roads and Highways, any comment?

**Mr Agbodza:** Mr Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Statement made by my Colleague, Dr Sandaare.

Mr Speaker, I travelled the country extensively. The last time I did that was during the 2024 election. It is true that you could get to parts of the country and you wonder whether that is still within the boundaries of Ghana and whether the people living in those areas also feel they are benefiting from the efforts of the country. I agree with Hon Nyindam that we have a lot of problems, but some are bigger. The particular road my Colleague is talking about, we refer to, in some circles, as the Western Corridor roads because it comes right from Elubo to Hamile. It is very strategic because if you consider the fact that when you are getting to the south—That is a road if you are coming from Hamile, you can use to get to Takoradi easily.

So, if you were to be talking about agriculture and, indeed, we know that some parts of agriculture produced from Côte d'Ivoire can easily come through at the middle somewhere and come down, and there are mining potentials of our country along that route. So, that is not a mistake that even the Western Corridor railway is supposed to be tailored along the same route.

Mr Speaker, with the horror stories on driving on that road, you should only try it, and you see that it is something we should have done like yesterday. The total length of that road from, maybe, Elubo to Hamile will be slightly over 670 kilometres and, on average, without even dualising it, if we were to just do double surfacing and other things at roughly US\$1 million per kilometre and add interchanges and others, it could be easily more than US\$1.2 billion. But it is an investment because the values we derive from that are more than that.

It is true that, as the former Minister for Defence, my Colleague, said, somewhere last year, a decision was taken to award a section on contract, but those who ply the road know that, as we speak, there is not much going on because, without saying much, no funding was made available for that because the same contractor who is supposed to be doing this is also asked to do something somewhere where he has invested money, and he is not being paid, so, even that one is also, let me use the word, abandoned.

Now, the section he is referring to, that is Techiman, we refer to as Techiman-Sawla-Wa; it is not about President Busia or President Mahama. It is just a road that ought to be done. The section from Techiman-Sawla-Wa is also more than 320 kilometres. What is in the contract is just over 100 kilometres, so there are gaps that needed to be closed. In my mind, we still need about half a US\$500 million to be able

to do a lot of work on it, but Mr Speaker, it has to be done. The President has instructed that to be part of what he calls the Big Push—So the Techiman-Sawla-Wa is part of the Big Push, which we are putting together.

His point is that it must be fully designed and costed, so there is no knee-jerk reaction by just asking a contractor to go and start because we have got too many examples of that. I just gave you an example of this. Accra-Kumasi is a double direction, single lane road. We want to dualise, so we want to build a bypass. The bypass is GHC1.9 billion, and when I was there the last time, when I got to the Ministry and they presented me with a variation order of US\$1.7 billion, and I asked how can we can have a project of US\$1.9 billion and we want a variation of US\$1.7 billion.

What is the justification for it? Did you start it in the night or did you not know what you were doing? What they told me was that they started the project by flying a drone over the alignment, and the contractor said when they got to the site, they realised that they could not see the drone image because there were *galamsey* and things under there. There were valleys and, by the time they actually prepared the land and everything, the money was finished. That is why they needed US\$1.7 billion extra.

As we speak, that is not even resolved. In fact, so all the investment we have done on the Kumasi bypass, not

a single of the lot is fit for purpose today. None of them can be used. Meanwhile, the money is finished. The closest is over 90 per cent; it is in the middle of somewhere, so it is not even connected to the main Kumasi Road. That is not a prudent way of using money, and it is a knee-jerk reaction, in terms of—*[Interruption]*—Let us do something. I am telling you; I am not talking about politics—*[Interruption]*—I am talking about a situation where, in the quest to address a need—The need is to dualise Accra-Kumasi. But in the process, it must still be done properly. Because, today, not a single one of all the seven projects that have been awarded is usable. Meanwhile, the money allocated is largely spent. Do you understand? I am saying that the lot that is—

**Ms Appiagyei — rose —**

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Minister for Roads and Highways, the Hon Deputy Minority Leader has been on her feet for some time.

**Deputy Minority Leader (Ms Patricia Appiagyei):** Thank you Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, we all heard the Statement that was made on the Floor, and it had nothing to do with the dualisation of Accra-Kumasi Road. I wonder why the Minister has taken that tangent and expressly mentioned that he is not doing politics. It is very clear. Hon Minister, you have to speak to the issue and, please, stop deviating from that.



Mr Speaker, I would like to crave your indulgence and ask the Minister to speak to the issue.

Thank you.

1.59 p.m.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Nitiwul, the point of order has been raised, and once a point of order has been raised, it is for the Minister to take note, and then conclude. So, is it a point of order against a point of order?

**Mr Nitiwul:** Yes, Mr Speaker, I am raising a point of order.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** A point of order against a point of order?

**Mr Nitiwul:** No, a point of order against what he said.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Please, one point of order suffices.

**Mr Nitiwul:** Mr Speaker, it is in the interest of the nation.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Please, one point of order suffices.

Hon Minister, conclude.

**Mr Agbodza:** In fact, my Colleague, the respected Deputy Minority Leader, asked what the nexus is. I am saying that 90 per cent of the problem of roads in this country is about money. So, the way we apply the scarce

resources we have is critical. I cited the bypasses on the Accra-Kumasi Road because I have not seen a worse situation than that. A worse situation in the sense that when one wants to address a situation, and in their lack of preparation, they have to spend that way. And at the end of the day, after spending the money, not a single section of the bypass is fit for purpose— They said it is not what? Unless they do not understand it —[*Interruption*—Mr Speaker, can they allow me to just go on? It is misleading the House? That what?

Mr Speaker, the former Minister for Defence said he has got information; allow him to give the information.

**Mr Nitiwul:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, the Hon Member is misleading the House. I cannot sit here and not tell the House, and possibly the country, the truth. I sat in Cabinet when the former Minister for Roads brought this contract to Cabinet.

Mr Speaker, the contract was brought to Cabinet, the designs were brought, it was debated, and the amounts were attached to it. The contractors signed for roads that were designed, the amounts that were given, and said they could do the work. If today, those contractors are asking for variation, the Minister should hold them responsible. Because there were designs to the roads. I was there, I saw it in

Cabinet, we debated it because we needed to vary resources from another contract to that particular contract, and he knows where we varied it from.

So the money was there, the roads were designed, and the contractors signed to it and said they could do these roads at a certain price. If today, a new Government has come and the contractors say that they will not be able to do it, they should find a way of asking those contractors questions. That is how contracts are done. They should ask them. Because the contractors are not looking for variation, they are looking for—Because one cannot do vibration more than 15 per cent. That is not a variation. That is a new contract altogether; it is a redesign. So if the contractors are looking for variation, then do not give them more than 15 per cent. That is variation, that is what the law says.

But to say that there was no design is not true. There was design on the roads, and those contracts were awarded. I saw them, and we can bring him the designs. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Agbodza:** Mr Speaker, let my Colleagues just relax. I said this is an issue that as a Minister for Roads, I am ready to escalate for a full-scale investigation. Just to let him know, the contract is a design and build contract, so he would not have seen a design at the time in Cabinet. Because the contractors got to start the design when they started the job.

So what he saw at Cabinet can never be a design, because it is a design and build contract. There was no design at the time they were contracting. That is the whole essence of design and build.

Mr Speaker, let us not—

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Minister, I think you have responded to—Hon Nitiwul, you had your turn. I intend to recognise Hon Anyimadu-Antwi.

**Mr Kwame Anyimadu-Antwi:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, with respect, I would want to draw your attention to Order 93(5). Mr Speaker, it says, “A Member may comment on the statement for a period not exceeding five minutes, and comment shall not provoke debate.” Because the Minister for Roads is here, and he was invited to contribute. Whether he had any comment on that, his comment should not be more than five minutes, and should not provoke debate; it is rather the opposite. And that is why our Leader, the Second Deputy Minority Leader, was trying to draw his attention.

Being a Senior Member of the House, Mr Speaker, I pray that my Brother takes cue and then wind up on this.

Thank you.

**Mr Agbodza:** Mr Speaker, I believe my Colleague who made a Statement expected me to make a contribution, and a valuable contribution, because the issue at stake is a very serious one.

Mr Speaker, I said the nexus of this is that I see a lot of resources spent on roads which do not derive the needed value to Ghanaians. My Colleague, the former Minister for Defence, made comments that if the road was not designed, why was it contracted? Because there are various forms of contracting. In the particular case of design and build, that is why it is called design and build. The responsibility of design is on the contractor. So, for instance, when the motorway contract came here, we all remember that all we did was to have a financing agreement. The contractor now goes to do the design.

Mr Speaker, it is important to note that the road we are talking about is very critical. What brought me to this point is that I said because of the examples we have, where we have spent money and those roads could not be completed, President Mahama insists that the project under Big Push be fully designed and costed. So that no one turns around and brings us a variation which is more than 100 per cent of the cost of a project, which is totally ridiculous to start with, and I agree.

How does one award a project for GH¢1.9 billion and then have a GH¢1.7 billion variations to it? I do not know

what was presented to his Cabinet, but I can say the variation did not come in 2025. The variations were prepared for his Government to approve, and they did not. The easiest thing I could have done is to let us hold those contractors to the contracts they have signed. They will say I told them in meetings that they signed up to do this project at a particular price. Why are they bringing variations sometimes more than 100 per cent?

The Ministry itself did not make this comment to me alone. When we went for pre-budget hearing, they repeated the same comment in front of the Minister for Finance that the reason for the variation is because they only flew a drone over the alignment. We did not know there were *galamsey* pits and everything under it. I am telling you!

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Minister, conclude.

**Mr Agbodza:** In conclusion, Mr Speaker, the road my Colleague is talking about is captured under President Mahama's Big Push. It is going to be very expensive, but it is very necessary. I would love to say that tomorrow morning, I will encourage President Mahama to go and put a contractor on it. That is why I brought up the issue that what the Minister for Defence said, by saying that they have awarded a section to a contractor in 2024. That contractor is even not on site. It is even a design and build. But the way to do it is to fully package the

project and find the money for it, and that is exactly what we are going to do.

Mr Speaker, I am not saying it is President Akufo-Addo who has actually signed a contract. Sometimes, as politicians, we take blame for things we should not take blame for. It is civil servants who actually carried out the work and put a contract document together. Why are politicians taking credit or blame for things we are not responsible for?

Mr Speaker, they may feel— In fact,

2.09 p.m.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Minister, conclude.

**Mr Agbodza:** Mr Speaker, let me conclude. The effect of what I am saying is that I will be very happy if the Minority Side feels uncomfortable about what I am saying. It will help the Majority Side not to repeat the same thing that they did. — *[Interruption]* — That is the effect of what I am trying to say, because if today, a Colleague have got 11 projects in his constituency, and all of them have been abandoned, meanwhile we have spent almost GH¢1.9 billion on a project which is not useful, and they tell me that it is not necessary to talk about it? I will talk about it, so that the Majority Side does not repeat the same problems that they have caused. So, let me repeat. Mr

Speaker, let it be on record that when Mr Nitiwul said that he saw a full design and cost of the bypasses— *[Interruption]* — he said they brought him a design.

I am telling the Hon Member that whatever he saw could not have been the design, because it is a design and build; the design will be done on site.

Mr Speaker, I want to encourage my Colleague, we are going to do that project, so that the Western Corridor Road will be done, but we will only start it when we do full design and costing, and if that is the case, I will never come to this House and say anything which is not—

Thank you for the opportunity.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, there is another Statement standing in the name of Mr Kwame Anyimadu-Antwi, Member of Parliament for Asante Akim Central on the death and destruction of houses, shops and other properties caused by the fire outbreak and explosion at Odumase in Asante Akim Central.

**Mr Frank Annoh-Dompreh:** Mr Speaker, I have been trying to catch your eye. Mr Speaker, if for nothing at all, I am in Leadership.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** I was reading this particular Statement, so I could not see you.

**Mr Annoh-Dompreh:** Mr Speaker, I stood up four times and the practice in this House has been that any time any person in the Front Bench gets up, at least you listen to them.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** You have the floor.

**Mr Annoh-Dompreh:** If it is the case that you would not listen to me, fine, but at least I am in Leadership and you should grant me that deference, at least listen to me.

### **Death and Destruction of Houses and Properties by Fire Outbreak and Explosion at Odumase, Asante Akim Central.**

**Mr Kwame Anyimadu-Antwi (NPP—Asante Akim Central):** Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to make this brief Statement on the mishappenings; the death and destruction of property within Asante Akim Central.

Mr Speaker, on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2025, between the hours of 18:30 and 19:00, Asante Akim Central experienced an unfortunate—

**Mr Ricketts-Hagan:** Mr Speaker, I was requesting for copies of the Statement, because we do not have copies of the Statement. So, if we could be furnished with copies of the Statement, please.

**Some Hon Members—** *rose* —

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, order! Hon Members, resume your seats. Mr Anyimadu-Antwi, you have the floor.

**Mr Anyimadu-Antwi:** On the 5<sup>th</sup> of March, 2025, between the hours of 18:30 and 19:00, Asante Akim Central experienced an unfortunate fire outbreak and explosion that were close to the Appiatse incidence on 20<sup>th</sup> of January, 2022.

The cause of the fire started with lightning and thunderstorm. The lightning struck a shop at Odumase Zongo which caught fire. There were other shops adjourned to this particular shop and the fire extended to these other shops. Unfortunately, there were in these shops, the presence of high-pressure vessels, and other high combustibles. The fire burnt rapidly as the high combustibles exploded rapidly to the nearby houses and since the houses contained high pressure vessels, it resulted in adding to the flames that had engulfed the town.

A good Samaritan invited the Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS) which is cited about 300 meters from the place of the disaster. The GNFS was there on time at exactly 19:08 hours, and were preparing to mount a fight of the fire. A young man benevolently informed the Fire Service Personnel to reverse the vehicle to safety. While the young man was leading the fire appliance to reverse to safety, there was another explosion

that hit the fire appliance with registration number WRT FS 318. In the process, the innocent young man was hit by the explosion and dismembered.

He was rushed to the hospital but died that evening at the hospital. The vehicle of the GNFS was severely damaged and five (5) personnel of the GNFS including the pump operator were severely injured. The crew of the GNFS were therefore overpowered by the events and quickly invited personnel of the GNFS from Ejisu to fight the fire.

Three lives were lost on that day; Vincent Opoku aged 18, died at the Asante Akim Central Hospital, Florence Boakye aged 58, also lost her life, and Akwasi Mintah aged 25, also lost his life. His charred body was found next to the burnt shops thereafter.

A fourth person, named Rabiule Suleman aged 18, who was also hit by the explosion and rushed to the Agogo Presbyterian Hospital and was later transferred to the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (KATH) also died on the 10th of March, 2025.

Eleven members including the five (5) firefighters were severely injured. About thirty (30) domestic institutional and commercial buildings as well as other properties were totally or partially destroyed.

Some of the injured persons are in critical condition at KATH.

Mr Speaker, we are grateful to the Ashanti Regional Minister, the Ashanti North Regional Police Commander, the Regional Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Mineral's Commission as well as the National Security and major stakeholders who have visited the scene and helped investigate and sympathise with the affected.

The shop owners that had explosives were invited by the Police and investigations are ongoing. I believe the law shall take its course.

Mr Speaker, the firefighters are also receiving medical attention at various hospitals.

2.19 p.m.

Mr Speaker, I now call on the Government, members of the public, philanthropists, and organisations to turn to Asante Akim Central and assist the affected people at Odumase.

It is my prayer that the law enforcement agencies would investigate and recommend the handling of explosives within Odumase, Asante Akim in general, that is the Constituency, as well as the rest of the country, to prevent future occurrence of this unfortunate incident.

May the souls of the innocent that have departed rest in perfect peace.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Hon Member for Asante Akim.

Yes, Hon Zanetor?

**Dr Zanetor Agyeman-Rawlings (NDC — Klottey Korle):** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

It is Zanetor.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Statement made by our Hon Colleague.

The incidence of fires occurring in our communities across our constituencies and markets is becoming all too common. And, Mr Speaker, it is starting to cause great concern to all of us, especially given the level of damage, the death toll, and the effect to livelihoods to our constituents.

I would like to take the opportunity to offer my condolences to the families of the bereaved, as well as wish a speedy recovery to the personnel and other persons who played their role in bringing the fire under control.

Mr Speaker, there is a need for urgent retooling of the Ghana National Fire Service. Time and time again, when they come before the Committee on Defense and Interior, the budgets that they require in order to be able to fulfill their mandate and protect our citizens and properties is never up to the level that is required. And time and again,

they face problems in even accessing some of the places where there are fires, because certain rules and regulations are not adhered to when it comes to the building of certain structures.

Mr Speaker, the illegal electricity connections that are also made are key to what is happening in our various markets, as well as the fact that sometimes the fire hydrants are not accessible to the Ghana National Fire Service.

Mr Speaker, if we indeed are to see a change in the trend that we keep seeing, then there has to be an all-of-Government and all-of-sector approach to how these issues are approached. I do add my voice to the maker of this Statement with regards to what has to be done as a matter of urgency to actually curb this incident of fires.

Mr Speaker, in 2020, there was a similar incident that happened in my Constituency, in the Novotel market, after which promises were made for this market to be reconstructed. As we speak today, this market has still not been reconstructed. The most recent incident of a market under fire was with the Kantamanto market, and we have seen what happened, the level of destruction. Mr Speaker, this has to be looked at. All our markets have to be made really friendly to those there. There have to be regular fire drills. People in communities must know what to do when there is a fire. There has to be compulsory installation of fire

extinguishers. Even here in Parliament, Mr Speaker, we do not know the fire drills because we are not taken through them. We are not clear on what the exit strategy should be in the case of an emergency.

Mr Speaker, as a nation, we need to take more seriously what to do in the event of these occurrences. It is all well and good not to put the systems in place until something goes wrong, until people die, until people's lives are damaged, or people are injured. We keep coming back to the Floor and lamenting about these issues, but we are not addressing them.

I really appeal to our Minister for the Interior to really take a close look at what is being done in terms of supporting the Ghana National Fire Service, and the local government with regards to what happens at the level of the Assembly, so that they are empowered to do what is right, and not to take some kind of favoritism approaches as to who is going to be asked to abide by the law and who is allowed to get away with infringing on the rules and regulations regarding building and access.

Mr Speaker, I hope that given the tragedy of what is being brought on the Floor today, we shall use this as a springboard to do what is right across the country to provide more security in terms of prevention of fires and how we address these emergencies in our various communities.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Ntim Fordjour?

**Rev John Ntim Fordjour (NPP — Assin South):** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I rise to support the Statement and to commend the maker of the Statement, the Hon Member for Asante Akim Central, a very respected Member of Parliament, and to join my Colleagues in extending sincere condolences and sympathies to the families of the lives that have sadly been lost through this tragic incident, and also to signal our sympathies for the speedy recovery of the personnel of the Ghana National Fire Service, as well as some residents of Odumase who are currently recovering at the various hospitals.

Mr Speaker, with this Statement, we understand that the 5<sup>th</sup> of March was a sad day for Odumase, and indeed a sad day for Ghana. The nature and the scale of disaster is one that cannot be overemphasised. We have seen a similar scale of disaster of this nature in this country. We saw one happening at Appiatse so sadly in 2022, where about 17 lives were lost in that instance. In this particular incident, we are told that currently, some five persons have sadly lost their lives and others are in critical conditions. Properties have also been razed down in explosion. But the properties and stores may be reconstructed, but the lives lost cannot be recovered.



So, it is important that as this is brought to the fore, we follow up keenly, with lessons drawn from it scaled up across the country to be on the preventive side to ensure that the regulations regarding the storage and sale of explosives are well enforced across the country, and we do not wait for another incident of this nature to reoccur.

But Ghana has demonstrated, Mr Speaker, to be a state of empathy, a state that sympathises with its citizens whenever such incidents occur. Reference is made to the Appiatse incident where the state led efforts in reconstructing the entire village and restoring livelihood to the community. The same example was demonstrated a few days ago when in the 2025 Budget which was read by the Minister for Finance, we found expression in that same Budget, an allocation of GH¢242 million to supporting victims of the Akosombo Dam Spillage. Same was also seen in the allocation of GH¢200 million to support the victims of the tidal waves affecting communities in Ketu South.

These are very commendable budgetary allocations. Equally deserving are the people of Odumase. It is my appeal that the state, consistent with that same sympathy, would allocate a commensurate budgetary allocation emergency fund of its kind to support restoring livelihood to those who have lost their properties and to even support the personnel of the Ghana National Fire

Service who are currently pending recovery, who may never be able to return to work again, and to restoring the equipment that were destroyed in the process.

But just as my Hon Colleague who earlier spoke has indicated, the Ghana National Fire Service, a time has come, more than ever before, that a complete retooling, befitting of a state as Ghana is done, to ensure that in every district we have the right equipment and fire tender available to be able to fight such incidents promptly, as and when they happen. It took the support of the Ghana National Fire Service Station from Ejisu to travel all the way to support when the Fire Service at Odumase were overpowered.

So, with these few words, Mr Speaker, consistent with the rules of this House, may I invite you to refer this Statement further to the Committee on Defence and Interior and jointly with the Committee on Finance to follow up on the investigations and subsequent support that the State could give in supporting the victims of this sad incident.

I thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Member for Guan Constituency.

**Mr Fred Kwesi Agbenyo (NDC — Guan):** Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this particular Statement.

Let me start off by thanking the maker of the Statement and also add my voice in sympathising with those who are injured and also to the bereaved families who have lost their families as a result of this fire outbreak.

Mr Speaker, fire outbreaks have created a lot of problems for people in this country, and I would like to focus especially on our markets. Recently, we heard about how fire that raided the Kantamanto Market. I drove past there a week after the incident only to realise that they were rebuilding the place again.

2.29 p.m.

The same people working over there were not there when the incident occurred, have gone back, contracted their own carpenters, and they are putting up structures again. Meanwhile, we all know the difficulty at that particular market. The access route is a major problem. To even access water hydrants becomes a problem. Anytime there is a problem over there, access for the Ghana National Fire Service personnel is a problem. I would have thought that, with what has happened right now, at least, we would get experts to come and demarcate the place very well and put up the structure in such a way that when a similar incident occurs in the future, we would be able to mitigate the effect that we normally see.

Unfortunately, we have allowed the situation to continue. We do not pray it happens next time, but if it happens

again, we will return to radio and television stations and then to the floor of the House to lament and complain. Meanwhile, we are not putting in place the measures that we are supposed to have, to curtail this from happening. It is important that we pay a particular attention to it.

Our markets are simply too crowded. We do not create access routes. When we are putting up markets and we know that the place is always very congested, at least, experts should be there. We should know demarcated places for water hydrants and places that the personnel of the Ghana National Fire Service can move through when there is a problem.

From the Statement that was made by the Hon Member, I am wondering why we keep explosives in our homes and shops. I think that the Ghana National Fire Service would need to intensify education on these things. The way and manner in which we keep these things, even with cylinders that we use in our houses—When one goes to some homes, the cylinders are kept in the kitchen. So, when there is a problem, one does not even know how to run out of the problem.

I am sure we can educate the people, so that they can keep the cylinders outside of the kitchen by perforating a hole through the wall into the kitchen. So, that when there is a problem, the cylinder is in an open place with a lot of air, so that it does not trap the people in the kitchen.

Mr Speaker, one of the concerns I have has to do with what is happening recently that anytime one puts up a house, it has to be guarded with burglar proofs. Some way, somehow, all of us are now living in cages. In our houses, there are burglar proofs on windows, the entrance and almost everywhere. So, when there is fire, one does not even know where to exit from, from the house.

In some other jurisdictions—We are so scared of armed robberies, and we do not care about our safety when it comes to fire, among others. I do not know what we can do about it. We need to go back and look at the security architecture. Everybody who travels around does not see a similar thing. Doors are open, and they do not even close them. But because we are so scared of armed robberies, we have put these metal barricades all over on our windows, doors and so on. So, anytime there is a problem, we do not even know where to run to.

Mr Speaker, I think that we really need to sit down and find out how we can manage these fire issues. Before the rain started, it would interest one to know the number of farms that were consumed by fire: cocoa farms, plantain farms and others. Anytime we get into harmattan, people who tap palm wine and indulge in other farming activities, before we realise, set the entire place ablaze and burn down people's properties. Recently, in my constituency, in a town called Likpe Kukurantumi, I

think some people were chasing a rat and they set someone's farm ablaze. Before we realised, the farm was on fire and it even entered into the community and burnt down houses of people.

Mr Speaker, this fire issue is a very serious issue. We need to set up a Committee to find a lasting solution to it, especially the first one I spoke about regarding the markets. How do we control fires in the markets? How do we check the houses that we are putting up these days with the whole place being barricaded with these metal pillars among others? So that we can, at least, place some safety nets when there is a fire outbreak?

Mr Speaker, once again, let me really commiserate with the people who lost their lives and their families and pray that Government moves in quickly and see how we can give them some support and comfort.

Mr Speaker, thank you. [*Hear! Hear!*]

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Dominic Nitiwul, let us hear you.

**Mr Dominic Binagab Aduna Nitiwul (NPP — Bimbilla):** Mr Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity to contribute to this Statement.

Mr Speaker, it is a sad Statement. It is a sad Statement in the sense that three people lost their lives on that day. They

were very young people with a middle-aged woman whom, I still believe, would have had something to contribute to society. The Hon Member just said that in his constituency, 11 other people, including five firefighting officers were severely injured and about 30 institutional and commercial buildings as well as domestic buildings were destroyed.

It is very similar to what happened at Appiatse, where Government had to set up a committee to totally rebuild the place for the people. I just hope that the current Government would take this matter up and do a similar thing for the constituents of my good Friend, Hon Kwame Anyimadu-Antwi, to give the people some respite and relief. I can imagine the difficulties that the people are facing: that they wake up and through no fault of theirs, they have no place to sleep and have lost everything. School kids have lost their certificates. People who were working have lost virtually everything and are left with nothing other than what they are wearing.

Mr Speaker, if one has gone through such a traumatic situation, then one would understand that it is very traumatic. It is something that one would not wish even their worst enemy to go through: that he wakes up and has nothing other than what he is wearing. He has no money, no assets, no life and no record; the person has virtually nothing. That is what some of these people are facing today. To the extent that people have lost their lives—

Mr Speaker, why did we not learn from what happened in the past at Appiatse, and allow for a similar thing to happen? That we are keeping explosives not in a confined environment, but in our houses and in our shops? Why is that possible? How is this even possible? I remember when the Appiatse explosion happened, we took a deliberate decision that all explosives, especially for the mining companies, should be traceable from the ports, through the storage and to the user. It should all be traceable, so that we can trace and know exactly where each explosive is.

Mr Speaker, explosives are not just used for mining. Explosives can be used for many other things that can be very detrimental to you and me in terms of security. Because somebody can take an explosive and make an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) out of it, and create chaos in this country. I am a bit worried that explosives are still being kept as if they are normal commodities; they are not. They are a security threat, and we should be worried about it.

Mr Speaker, the other matter that this Statement raises is very important. How do we plan our settlements to the extent that when one house catches fire, then we have 30 houses all razed down? A structure or a kiosk catches fire and about 30 houses are razed down? The personnel of the Ghana National Fire Service are having difficulty accessing the place. Even in reversing, somebody gets injured and they also get injured in

the process. What vehicles are they using? I know that there have been attempts to resource the Ghana National Fire Service. I think the major overhaul happened between 2013 and 2014. I still think that the Ghana National Fire Service needs a lot of capital injection to encourage them to have, at least, good equipment to help us; one can never tell.

I want to support the contribution made by Hon Zanetor. All she was asking is, even as Members of Parliament, how many of us have fire extinguishers in our offices? How many? If there is a fire today in our offices, how many of us would have fire extinguishers to be able to put it out in our own offices, not to talk of in our cars? In our cars, maybe, because of the police, we may have. But how about in our offices? Do we have them even in our homes?

2.39 p.m.

Even if we have it, do we even know how to use it? It is important for us as Ghanaians to be able to do things and know what can save our lives and property. Because for a lot of people, if they had some of these equipment, they would have been able to save themselves.

In those days, our people used to have communal spirit. So, when a house is burning, one would see everybody fetching water and running there to quench it. But that communal spirit is virtually disappearing because of

mistrust. And that is the reason people are building wall around their houses. Walls that are higher than even the building itself and they themselves are trapped in that prison they call a wall. Because when, God forbid, a thief enters their house through the gate and locks the gate, they are dead because nobody can see them or that building. Nobody can see what is happening inside them and many people have died because of that. It is because the communal spirit is gone.

Because I do know that in those days, if a person attacks a Ghanaian's house, several people would rush to find out. But today, when somebody shouts in their houses, the first thing is to go and lock the gates. That is the sort of society we live in. The first instinct of one's neighbour is to lock his gates and close his windows because he does not want to get involved.

But in those days, it was not like that. In the days of our forefathers, our grandfathers, they would rush to find out what is happening to assist their neighbour. Today, it is totally different.

So, Mr Speaker, there are several things that this Statement teaches us and that is why I want to support a call by the Hon Member that he should refer this Statement to the appropriate Committee. This is so that they would take it up, especially the Committee on Defence and Interior, and investigate it. This is because it seems to me that we have not learnt from what happened in

the past. Because if we had learned, then the storage of explosives would not have been in their kiosk. Then the way the Ghana Fire Service themselves even responded would not have been, even though we want to thank them and praise them for their response.

Even the people at Asante Akim South and Konongo, were getting injured, and those in Ejisu had to rush to come. Of course, there was a small distance and because of traffic, sometimes, their response time is a bit slow. But Mr Speaker, it tells us that we did not learn what happened after the Appiatse explosion. To the extent that an explosion happens and now we have a similar situation on our hands. Are we going to allow a third situation to happen before we would be able to learn? No, we should not allow that.

So, if the Committee investigated it, of course it was not a parliamentary committee — I expect that Parliament should set up their own Committee on this one, investigate it and make recommendations that will stick and work and allow the Executive to implement those recommendations so that we do not have a similar situation.

Mr Speaker, Kantamanto, as the Hon Member said, it just happened recently where fire at just one place, razed down virtually everything. The way our markets are planned and the way things and our buildings are —this does not happen in the French countries.

A person cannot build a house in the French-speaking countries unless certain

things are put in place. Utilities, including water, access to roads, the designs of the places are done before a person comes to build. But unfortunately, ours is not like that. Because people sell land illegally, they will sell to one person and say “build” and when someone is coming, the workers will run away then another person will sell the land so, the whole place is not planned.

I had the privilege of using a lot of quarters and I know that if a person was to fly over Accra, he would see that a lot of the roads have dead ends. The road goes and there is a dead end because somebody has built across it and has blocked it because the person has power. So, when there is a problem, it is difficult for the Ghana Fire Service to access the place. They are building in waterways, Mr Speaker, and very soon, during the rainy season, we will face it.

People have gone to build in waterways and have built block roads and one would know that this has been demarcated for road but a powerful person or whatever will go and build — I use the words “powerful person” because Mr Speaker, unfortunately, they are not able to break down these houses. If one was to go to Weija area, they have virtually taken over and built on all the waterways. So, one would see thousands of houses sitting in water if they fly a helicopter over Accra, whenever it rains; houses upon houses — Who are the owners? Did they get permission to build? How did they

build? What sort of society are we building? So, this Statement is loaded with a lot of things that we should do, Mr Speaker, and these are the things that should concern us as Members of Parliament.

I want to sympathise with Mr Anyimadu-Antwi, my Hon Friend, his constituents, all those who lost their lives and we will see how we can support them to be able to survive. At least in the meantime, to get food to eat, National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO) should be able to go there and find something. That is why I would say, as part of it, the committee should look at how they can support NADMO because unfortunately, they are not resourced enough to be able to rush in and help the people and do what they need to do.

Unfortunately, Mr Speaker, we are getting into the rainy season, worse of this will happen. I am not praying for it, but it is true that we are going to have worse situations than this. Tidal waves were somewhere in the Volta region. It was across the whole coast. Because of environmental changes, the nature of our society is changing. Things we used not to see before are happening. We have virtually cut down all the trees, so we are having difficulties all over as a country. So, Mr Speaker, I want to call and support the fact that we support the people; they are our own people. Today, they are helpless, we should find a way of getting Government to at least support them.

Government has been supporting other countries who fall in disaster. So, the Member is bringing this to the attention of Government to at least find a way of supporting the people, so that they can get something to live on.

I thank you, Mr Speaker, and may the souls of the innocent who have departed this earth rest in perfect peace. Till we meet again, but not when I am 90 years.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Thank you very much. Leadership, any comment on the Statement?

**Deputy Minority Leader (Ms Patricia Appiagyei):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think all issues have been expressed out here, but this is just to remind you that there was a plea that it should be referred to a Committee on Defence and Interior to look at it. Thank you.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Very well. My worry is that the maker of the Statement is telling us that the law enforcement agencies should investigate the matter.

Hon Richard Acheampong?

**Mr Anyimadu-Antwi** — *rose* —

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Anyimadu-Antwi, I am just making reference to the second but last paragraph of your Statement. Hon Richard Acheampong?

**Second Deputy Majority Whip (Mr Richard Acheampong):** Mr Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity. Let me also join Colleagues to extend my condolences to our friends who lost their lives through this tragic accident, and those who sustained various injuries. It is my prayer that God will grant them a speedy recovery, so that they will come back and do whatever they are supposed to do for their communities.

Mr Speaker, Members have raised a lot of issues, referring to what happened in Appiatse. The point is, are we learning lessons from all these things? So, the issue will happen, we will comment on it then we will go to sleep. This Statement will be referred to a Committee, they will generate a report, they will task Government, NADMO and Ghana National Fire Service to intervene. What about we the citizens? What lessons are we drawing from all these things?

Mr Speaker, one would see a truck carrying highly inflammable products involved in an accident. People would rush to the scene to syphon fuel from this vehicle and by the end of the day, some will get burnt. We have seen it several times. So, what is happening to us? When driving through Konongo, because it is a mining community, one would see all these things over there; people are selling them.

We have the security agencies, regulatory authorities, what are they

doing to save this situation, Mr Speaker? We live in a country where somebody can just walk to a shop and buy an acid and explosives, without any check. We expose ourselves into all these things, we come back and it is like a talk show, we lament our needs and that ends it. The very people that we are trying to support are not ready to change their lifestyle.

So, we have a very big challenge on our hands, Mr Speaker. Ghana Fire Service is not well tooled up. Let us give them the needed resources so that they can also work according to time. According to the Statements, they were there on time but the question is, the gentleman who was trying to aid them and who was trying to direct the vehicle, was he a trained firefighter? He is not.

2.49 p.m.

That is not his field. Trained officers have arrived, they are going to do their work and he was there to direct where they should park their vehicles. At the end of the day, he has lost his life. There is no insurance cover for him. But for the officers, at least there is an insurance cover for them. The former Minister for Defence said the communal spirit is almost gone. He was trying to also rejuvenate that, to let people see that he was also supporting to fight the fire. But at the end of the day, he is gone.

I am not saying we should mind our business, but sometimes we should



allow the experts to do their work. So, Hon Member—*[Interruption]*— he was trying to save the situation but at the end of the day, what happened? Because he was not an expert; he was not trained to do that job. But the one who called the Fire Service did what was expected of him. Because he placed the call, the Fire Service officers also came on time but the gentleman who was at the scene trying to direct the truck or supporting them has also lost his life.

My condolences to the bereaved family and I do not know Mr Speaker's final ruling on this matter—Even if the Statement is referred to the Committee, a Report will be generated, resources will be made available to the affected families or the victims, but we should do proper education. But if we are educating somebody and the person is not ready to take the education, it is like we are wasting our resources. Because we are not ready to be educated and we do not value our lives, people see danger coming but will say, I will either die or survive. We cannot gamble with our life. They know they sell explosives, they know there is no mechanisms in case of any fire outbreak to deal with the matter but because they are making good money out of it, nobody cares about the consequences. Here we are talking about the same issues.

Mr Speaker, our state institutions should also help us, give us the needed education. The state must also invest more into this, especially the security

agencies, Fire Service, so that whenever there are issues like this, they can also at least attend to those issues and deal with it, so that at least when we are going to sleep, we know that in case of any issue, there is somebody there to rescue us.

Mr Speaker, I thank you very much for the opportunity.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, let me add my voice to the Statement ably made by Mr Kwame Anyimadu-Antwi, Member of Parliament for the area under reference, and also extend my deepest condolences to the bereaved families of the five who lost their lives in the incident. I wish those who are injured and receiving treatment at hospital, a very speedy recovery. Hon Members, similar Statements were made in the past. It is either referred to a committee or transmitted to the sector Minister, but the question is do we follow up to ensure that whatever recommendations the Committee is coming out with are implemented, or to ensure whether the sector Minister has really carried out investigation into the matter and the needful is done?

Hon Members, your guess is as good as mine. On this occasion, I want to direct that the Statement be transmitted to the Minister for the Interior to ensure that proper investigation is conducted into this matter. If anybody is found culpable, the law must take its own course.

Hon Members, the Fire Service is under the Minister for the Interior. If there is a need to retool the Fire Service, it will rest on the shoulder of the Minister for the Interior. Therefore, let the Statement be transmitted to the Minister for the Interior for thorough investigation, and to the Fire Service, the general public should be educated about the handling of explosives in this country.

Hon Members, I accordingly direct.

Hon Members, time for Statement has ended.

Deputy Majority Leader, any indication?

**Deputy Majority Leader (Mr George Kweku Ricketts-Hagan):** Yes, Mr Speaker tomorrow we are starting a workshop, and it is going to be a long weekend. So, I suggest that we bring proceedings to a close for today, and be back here tomorrow for the workshop.

Mr Speaker, thank you.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Deputy Minority Leader?

**Deputy Minority Leader (Ms Patricia Appiagyei):** Mr Speaker, I would add my voice to the earlier suggestion made by the Deputy Majority Leader for us to adjourn. Thank you.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, before adjourning the House, let me once again remind ourselves that tomorrow, the Post-Budget Workshop is commencing, and we are all supposed to be here in our numbers for the exercise. Hon Members are hereby kindly informed that for the purposes of registration for the programme, when we are coming, we should come along with our identity cards.

Hon Members, the Motion for adjournment has been moved and seconded.

*Question put and Motion agreed to*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

*The House was accordingly adjourned at 3:00 p.m. till Tuesday 18th March, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. in the forenoon.*

