

PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE

Thursday, 6th August, 2026

The Senate met at Half-past Two o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS

(THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE *in the Chair*)

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE

VISITOR IN THE PRESIDENT OF SENATE'S GALLERY

THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE: I wish to recognise the presence in the President of the Senate's Gallery, of Mr. Tibanko Simon Peter, the Principal Systems Administrator from the Parliament of Uganda who is on a benchmark visit to the Parliament of Zimbabwe. You are most welcome Sir - [HON. MEMBERS: *Hear, hear.*] -

APOLOGIES RECEIVED FROM MINISTERS

THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE: I have a list of Hon. Ministers who have tendered apologies and they are as follows: Hon. Gen. Rtd. Dr. C. G. D. N. Chiwenga, Vice President; Hon. Col.

Rtd. K. C. D. Mohadi; Hon. B. Rwodzi, Minister of Tourism and Hospitality Industry; Hon. Prof. Dr. Murwira, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade; Hon. Soda, Minister of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services; Hon. Shava, Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development; Hon. Haritatos, Minister of Lands and Rural Development; Hon. Jesaya, Deputy Minister of Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture; Hon. Sanyatwe, Deputy Minister of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage; Hon. Marupi, Deputy Minister of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services; Hon. F. Moyo, Deputy Minister of Mines and Mining Development; Hon. Zhou Tsitsi, Deputy Minister of Lands and Rural Development.

In the Senate today, I would like to welcome Hon. Mhona, Minister of Transport and Infrastructural Development; Hon. Z. Ziyambi, Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs; Hon. T. Moyo, Minister of Primary and Secondary Education; and Hon. Makwiranzou, Deputy Minister of Mines and Mining Development.

SWITCHING OFF OF CELLPHONES

THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE: Please switch off your phones or put them on silent.

Before we go to Oral Questions without Notice, I want to apologise to Hon. Tawengwa, the Minister of Provincial Affairs and Devolution for Harare Metropolitan Province. It was not intentional. I would like to recognise the presence of Hon. Tawengwa.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

***HON. SEN. ZINDI:** Thank you Mr. President. My question is directed to the Deputy Minister of Mines, Hon. Makwiranzou. I wanted to ask about the Ministry's plans regarding the issue of mining at Christmas Pass, particularly in connection with people who are mining gold. We asked that question previously and were told those people would be stopped. People living in that area are now afraid that if a cyclone occurs, they will be in great danger. Now a trench, about 5 to 10 kilometres has been dug and if that trench is filled with water from the mountain, the water can wash away all the houses, including a school called Christ Hill which has a primary and secondary school. What measures are there to stop such activities? Thank you.

***THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF MINES AND MINING
DEVELOPMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR OIL AND GAS
RESEARCH AND OTHER STRATEGIC MINERALS
EXPLORATION (HON. ENG. MAKWIRANZOU):** Thank you Mr.

President. Yes, that question was previously asked. We sent some inspectors to go and inspect to assess the dangers associated with those activities that are being done. The results were that there was no risk but they are doing what is called heap leaching, which is not permissible in our country. We sent them letters so that they will not continue doing such activities, that is, heap leaching and digging some pits which are about 20 metres deep.

***HON. SEN. ZINDI:** Thank you for giving me another opportunity. I now want to hear from the Minister. What happens and what measures are taken after people are lawfully warned and they continue doing so? Right now, as we are here in Parliament debating, these people are mining. I also want to link this with those who are mining in Marlborough. They are doing so in town and they were

stopped from doing that but they are continuing to do so. What then is supposed to be done? I thank you.

***HON. ENG. MAKWIRANZOU:** Thank you very much Mr President. What happens is that after sending our inspectors to a place where there is a challenge, they will then be asked to give an interdict. They will then tell the police officers that they have interdicted them from mining due to such and such reasons. That is why I said I gave an instruction but we are now waiting to hear the outcome. We sent the police officers to go there but I also want to tell Hon. Senator Zindi that mostly we were together with EMA. We already informed EMA and they proceeded there. We are going to inform them again that those people are not listening to the law. We are going to go there with EMA and the police.

I also want to say, Mr. President, that Hon. Senator Zindi has talked about the issue that is happening in Marlborough. We approached the relevant authorities. My Permanent Secretary and the Deputy Minister went there to assess or to see what is being done. Indeed, they realised that mining activities are being done, which we call urban

mining. We do not allow urban mining unless it is allowed by the local authority. We went there together with the police. Right now, we are waiting for the police to interdict those people. I thank you.

THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE: Minister, may you stop such activities with immediate effect. I do not think that it is a good thing for people to be mining in urban areas.

+HON. SEN. S. MOYO: Thank you Mr President. My question is directed to the Minister of Transport and Infrastructural Development, Hon. Mhona. Every time the Minister comes to this august House and we clap hands for him for the good job, which is quite commendable. My question is, looking at the state of roads, our highways are in a deplorable state because of trucking companies. We note that the Ministry is busy patching these roads. The roads are in a dilapidated state. As a nation, we want to know when and how these roads are going to be rehabilitated. In Matabeleland, in Plumtree, Matopo and other areas, there were road construction works but these have been stalled. What is the way forward, Hon. Minister?

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT (HON. MHONA): Thank you Mr. President. Let me also thank Hon. Sen. Moyo for that very important question, which I concur that, yes, some projects had stalled. I am glad to say, in particular, the Matopo section that he was talking about, we have resumed work in some sections with full throttle. Just in the coming weeks, all contractors will have mobilised. He has raised a very pertinent question about the overloads, trucks damaging our roads, which is again an appeal, especially to the mining communities. Instead of complying, some of the mining companies have resorted to travelling at midnight so that they avoid our usual checkpoints.

We have upped our game again in the Ministry where we are also going to be having shifts for our VID officers so that we man our roads 24/7. This is contrary to the good practice, Mr President Sir, where we anticipate and expect transporters to comply with the required quantities whenever they use our roads. The ideal and long-term solution is that we are going to mandate those trucks, especially those mining companies so that they transport their goods through the railway line. In that regard,

we are also inviting the private sector to partake in the exercise of making sure that we have the rolling stock on our railway line so that we transport our goods through the railway line. Therefore, we then lessen the burden on our roads to the railway line. I am happy that once again, it is not only roads in Matabeleland that he has talked about but countrywide on some of the projects that were stalled; it is also good to apprise this very august House that we now have a framework for funding our infrastructure, which has been approved.

I want to thank the Second Republic and the wise leadership of His Excellency, Dr. Emmerson Mnangagwa, that we now have a framework for funding our roads besides the fiscals while we are waiting for budgets. It will take time and we know our road network. Now, we have an infrastructure funding model in place and coming in one or two weeks, we will be tapping into that fund where we have mobilised funding through banks and we will be funding those stalled projects. So, you will see a change, especially in those projects that were stalled, where we are going to accelerate road rehabilitation programmes again. I thank you Mr. President.

HON. SEN. MLOTSHWA: My supplementary question will still be on the roads. We realise that the roads that have been completed are deteriorating. What measures is the Minister using to hold contractors accountable for the substandard work that would have been done? Thank you.

HON. MHONA: Let me also thank Hon. Senator Mlotshwa for the question. In the National Assembly, I once responded to a similar question where I was saying, I think with the preview of this, it is also important that we take Hon. Senators through how road construction is done because we have got a certain number of us, especially in this Senate, where at times if a road is done, overseal, it is like a new road, laying tar on top of an existing structure. So, you find that in some cases, potholes are prone to actually come out on weak sections. When we talk of road reconstruction, it means reconstructing a road from scratch or it could be an earth road. So those categories are very important such that whenever you see a road deteriorate, you must tel: if it is a new road, it is supposed to last for 20 years. What they need to do is routine maintenance after every five years but a reseal, it means a road in some

sections will be weak and you see potholes mushrooming. So, to a layperson, it is like shoddy work.

To answer her question, Hon. Madam Senator, it is also good we take our contractors to account that there is a defects liability clause in our contracts so that if it deteriorates before the agreed time, you are supposed to redo the work. In most cases, where you see contractors starting to do shoddy work, we do not pay until we certify that the work has been done. So, this is to allay your fears that at times we pay and then we have to follow the contractor. It is the other way round; if you see shoddy work being done, the contractor is not paid until we certify that the work has been done accordingly. I thank you.

HON. SEN. GOTORA: Thank you Mr. President for allowing me to join this debate on roads. There was a day I was traveling from Bulawayo to Victoria Falls. On the road, just after Hwange Town, there were twelve 30-tonne lorries after the other, bumper to bumper, moving on the newly-constructed road from Hwange to Victoria Falls. Are we sure Minister, that these lorries are 30 tonnes because the way I looked at them, they were carrying lithium. I do not know what type of lithium

it was from Dete. I suspected that these were not 30 tonnes on the road but there could have been 50 or more tonnes on those lorries. Why are we not having weighbridges on these roads so that we know exactly what is moving on our roads? To come up with new railway system may take time but I think coming up with weighbridges, particularly on sections where we know heavy trucks will travel, I think it will help us to maintain our roads in a good state. Thank you.

HON. MHONA: Thank you Mr. President Sir and also thank Hon Sen. Gatora. I am sure like what I alluded to earlier on, that yes, it calls for the whole of society again, and the moral standing where at times indicate that, especially along that corridor, where truckers had resorted to moving during awkward times but we have a weighbridge at Hwange where we were manning; we just need to make sure that it is manned 24/7. In addition to that, Mr. President, we are adding more weighbridges and we have already tendered, we have awarded and you see new weighbridges along very strategic sections of our roads. We will be having those so that we address such concerns as raised by Hon. Sen. Gatora. In some cases, the infrastructure, the railway line is there

already. So, it is again to appeal to the mining communities to say, let us then divert our traffic to the railway line and in some cases, it is deliberate where people have got their own reasons for not wanting to divert traffic to the railway line. In terms of doing business, some companies were owning those trucks, making sure that they carry excess loads on those trucks, bypassing some of the manned sections but we are addressing some of these concerns. I thank you.

***HON. SEN. KUPFUMA:** My question is directed to the Minister of Transport and Infrastructural Development. I believe I once asked about NRZ and I am asking for the second time. The employees for NRZ are not getting salaries. I think from October 2025 year till maybe May 2026, they received their salaries once. When they get their salaries, if you look at their salaries, they are very little. It once happened previously, from 2010 coming to 2022 or so, people were not getting paid. They were being paid after three months and they were paid half salaries. When the Bond was introduced, instead of giving them their back pay, I do not know what exactly they did but they gave people 40 000 Bond, which was not equivalent to their money. The

money that they were supposed to get was supposed to be enough to buy a stand, or if someone had bought a stand before, he or she was supposed to be in a position to construct and finish a proper house on that stand. People had some queries when it was said that the general manager who was there previously left office and someone assumed duty. They were being promised that this new appointee was going to be given money by the government and give people their money. Some people resigned and some were promised that there were going to be some increments once the NRZ had a few employees. So, my question is, what measures are being put in place for these people to get their salaries because it is very difficult for a grown-up man to be going out of the house every day coming back with nothing to show to the family?

THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE: Thank you Hon. Sen. May you learn to ask short questions and not to ask very long questions.

***THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT (HON. MHONA):** Thank you Mr. President and thank you Hon. Senator for that very important

question and it is indeed a sad question. The policy of the Government is that every worker is supposed to be paid. If they are not paid, there must be an agreement to say when they are going to be paid. She raised an issue of NRZ, which I think I should respond to. I think it is best to have proper research so that we know how many months were not paid. Also, as the Ministry of Transport, due to the coming of Mutapa Investment, it is now the one that is in charge of NRZ. We are mainly focusing on the policy. If it is a policy for people to be paid, that is then our jurisdiction. If it is the issue of salaries, it has to be dealt with by another department. I thank you.

HON. SEN. NCUBE: Thank you Mr. President. My question is directed to the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education. In terms of Heritage-Based Education 5.0, what aspects of it are pertinent to youth empowerment and employment creation?

THE MINISTER OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION (HON. T. MOYO): Thank you Mr. President. I wish to thank the Hon. Senator Ncube for such a pertinent question. His question is on youth empowerment and employment creation. We are

implementing the Heritage Based Curriculum under the 5.0 philosophy model. The five pillars are teaching, research, contribution to community development, innovation and industrialisation. We are inculcating values and skills in our learners so they can solve societal challenges. They should have critical thinking skills. They should think outside the box without that box. Our learners are supposed to address any challenges that they meet in their schools, villages, rural areas and urban areas.

One of the major aspects of the Heritage-Based Curriculum is the issue of TVET, technical and vocational education and training where we inculcate life skills. We want all our schools to implement TVET so that learners are equipped with life skills such as electrical engineering, motor mechanics, civil engineering, bricklaying, carpentry and many other skills. We have several schools that are already implementing TVET. We now have primary schools that are now technical schools. A good example is Kuredza Technical Government Primary School where learners at a very young age are equipped with these competencies. We have students at a high school in Bulawayo at St. Columbus, where

learners from Form 1 study motor mechanics. By the time they get to Form 2 and Form 3, they can fix motor mechanical challenges and motorists would prefer not to go to well-established garages. They go to high school learners because the prices are low. We have several schools doing computer engineering. Students write HEXCO exams in Form 2. Electrical engineering students go to Fletcher; girls in Form 2 write electrical engineering programmes. By the time they are in Form 3, they are already Class 2, Class 3 holders of electrical engineering certificates. Any electrical challenges faced in their homes and schools, they can fix them.

Education is important. That is why our President, Dr. E. D. Mnangagwa said education that does not produce goods and services for our people is useless and that is why Nelson Mandela had to say, “education is the most powerful weapon that can change our communities”. That is why we have aligned the Heritage-Based Curriculum with the national trajectory, the national vision of the President, of having an empowered upper-middle-income status by 2030. To achieve that, it can be attained through education. Learners

who finish O-Level and A-Level may not decide to go to university, but will be self-equipped and self-employed. You can look at somebody who is now a Class 2 motor mechanic, Class 1 electrical engineer, that person can be self-employed and may not want to seek employment. That is the relevance of education. That is why the African Union Commission on Education has recommended that in 2027, the rest of Africa should follow the footsteps of Zimbabwe, of having the Heritage-Based Curriculum. I submit.

***HON. SEN. MUNZVERENGWI:** I would like to thank the Minister for responding and giving the explanation. What you said is very good, but are you looking at the gap that is there between the learners in rural areas and the learners in towns or urban areas? If you go to the rural schools, you find that some classrooms are no longer conducive for learners. They are now outdated classrooms and there is no electricity. What it means is that all the programmes that you are talking about might fail to reach those pupils. What plans do you have for the children in Binga, Mudzi or Chikombedzi to be able to get equal

opportunities with others so that we will have doctors and pilots coming from those places? I thank you Mr. President.

***HON. T. MOYO:** I thank you Mr. President and I also want to thank Hon. Sen. Munzverengwi for her supplementary question. Our President, Dr. E. D. Mnangagwa is known by his words, his mantra of leaving no one and no place behind. Yes, there was a gap in that learners from towns were in a better position to get equipment to use in schools. At the same time, those in rural areas were being left behind.

As we speak, many measures are being put in place to cover that gap. Firstly, I would like to thank the President of our nation, Dr. E.D. Mnangagwa. He gave us some Starlink gadgets. We distributed 8 000 to those schools that were not connected to Wi-Fi. Those that had Wi-Fi were given 3 500. If we add the 8 000, we will have 11 500, meaning to say, when we reach December this year, there will be no school in the country that will not have Wi-Fi, solar energy and national electricity grid.

Moving forward, we signed the MOU and we encouraged the MPs countrywide, no matter which political parties they are from; we asked

them to submit the names of those schools. As we are speaking right now, I have a list with 1 100 schools and we are targeting to reach out to 1 350 schools, meaning to say, if there are other places, whether in Mashonaland East or any of the places mentioned by Hon. Sen.

Munzverengwi which are being left behind, submit the names of those schools so that we have adequate funds such that when we reach next year, there will be no satellite schools anymore.

We have a lot of money, so that by next year, there will not be any satellite schools. Every school will have electricity. We have an ambitious programme and we are looking forward to buying a laptop and a tablet for each pupil, then we will build some renovation hubs. The fund is there. So, the issue of us having that gap was now a thing of the past. Where we are going right now, we are talking about building our nation. I thank you.

THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE: Thank you Hon. Minister. I hope those ambitions and dreams become reality because you are really aiming very high.

HON. SEN. MATIBIRI: Thank you very much Mr. President.

Thank you Hon. Minister for that exciting news around the developments in our education sector. My question still centres around how Education 5.0 is responding to the aspirations and visions of our country, namely to make Zimbabwe an upper-middle-income society by 2030. Given the high teacher-pupil ratio prevalent in many of Zimbabwe's schools, in particular Government schools, how feasible is the valuation of the acquisition of these critical skills that are necessary to transform our society, for instance, the acquisition of critical thinking skills? Thank you.

HON. T. MOYO: Hon. President of Senate, I wish to thank Hon. Sen. Matibiri for his question. In fact, he has asked what I had responded to when the first questioner asked the question on how we are going to realise an upper-middle-income society in Zimbabwe. As I said earlier, education is a driver, an enabler of economic growth and development. When you talk of an upper-middle-income society, we envision a Zimbabwe where the per capita consumption, the per capita income which we can find by calculating the gross domestic product by the total

population, we envision that the per capita consumption should be hovering around 7 000. For us to get to that point, it can only be achieved through the power of education. Education will equip our learners who have critical thinking skills because we have the resources. What I promise is not a pipe dream. We are going to implement building new schools, building innovation hubs, ICT hubs, starting in September. By the time the second and third term will be opening, we will be implementing all those new developments.

We are going to build new schools and improve existing ones. We do refurbishments and renovations because we have aligned the Heritage-Based Curriculum with the national vision, for us to have new developments, economic developments, that can only be done through the power of education because it has a transformative and positive impact in terms of the livelihoods of our people. We can only develop this country through the power of education because we want universities to do some innovations and primary and secondary schools to come up with patterns. These will give them support in the form of starter packs so that they do not remain designs, but they become real

innovations which will develop our country, Zimbabwe. That is why we have our learners; they always exhibit these innovations so that they do not remain prototypes.

We have quite a few students in Zimbabwe; we have one student from Manicaland, Musikavanhu Constituency who invented a vehicle. People may think we are lying, but we are telling the truth. We have students who have discovered irrigation infrastructure using their small farms. A student in Matoranhembe in the rural areas in Mashonaland West discovered that irrigation infrastructure can send some codes. Irrigation infrastructure located in Chinhoyi, 120 kilometres from here, can send commands through his phone and can send some signals; say, tap A can irrigate plot D and that happens. Water would ooze out automatically because of the power of innovation and that would change our livelihoods because these are innovations.

As I said, we want our learners to think big, to dream of a better Zimbabwe and that can only be changed through education. In that way, we can realise the vision of the President earlier than 2030, I submit.

THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE: Thank you.

Also in the Chamber, Hon. Prof. Mavima, Minister of National Housing and Social Amenities and his Deputy, Hon. M. Ncube. Welcome Ministers.

HON. SEN. ZINDI: Thank you Mr. President. I just want to make a follow-up on the response by the Hon. Minister, of innovations that he has informed this House about these pupils or students. Is there a policy on follow-up to fund such innovations so as to replicate and enable farmers to use such innovations? For example, the irrigation that he has just mentioned. I thank you.

HON. T. MOYO: Thank you Hon. President. I wish to thank Hon. Zindi for the question. Just three months ago, the Cabinet approved that 3% of the GDP of Zimbabwe will finance research and innovation. Innovation is one of the five pillars of Heritage-Based Education 5.0. So, it means funding will be extended to students who come to introduce those innovations that are important. In that regard, there is support going to be given to students and it will cascade to farmers, miners, to everyone. I submit.

HON. SEN. NGWENA: Thank you Mr. President. My question is directed to the Minister of Transport and Infrastructural Development. How is the Ministry addressing the increasing number of road traffic accidents and what road safety programmes are being implemented?

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT (HON. MHONA): Thank you Mr. President. Let me also thank Hon. Sen. Ngwena for that very important question which is also disturbing. On several occasions, I have been in this august House saying and appealing to the people of Zimbabwe that as we embark on a journey, we must take cognisance of the fact that we are not the only users of a particular road. Other road users must be respected. We have noted that the attitude of our motorists is disturbing. In terms of a UN Report that we received, about 94 percent of accidents are attributed to human error.

As much as we have our awareness programmes through the Traffic Safety Council of Zimbabwe and I am again inviting this august House tomorrow, it will be just a few kilometers from this point towards Mazowe where we are launching our campaign for the Heroes holidays,

appealing again to the people of Zimbabwe to say we must respect one another and make sure that we observe our rules when it comes to driving. Even though we have been advocating for this for years, we continue to see our numbers disturbing. Where we were talking of five per day, now we are talking of seven to eight per day. These are fatalities that we record on the spot. What about those that would die as a result of road traffic accidents thereafter? So, it is quite disturbing Mr. President. I agree that we have been calling but it calls for a whole-of-society approach where we must be responsible.

We have among us our Minister of Home Affairs and often we refer to our police force or the V.I.D. However, the issue at hand transcends these titles. We urgently call for a change in attitude while driving. Each time we hit the road, we face uncertainty about what might happen next. This situation is ongoing and we find ourselves in a cycle of blame.

We must address these challenges collectively, fostering a culture of responsibility and awareness on our roads. Only then can we hope to make a meaningful change.

Indeed, it is evident that regardless of how well someone is trained, behavioural changes driven by various factors are contributing to the rise in accidents. This is particularly concerning with public service vehicles. Why do we see instances of overloading? Why do drivers exceed the restricted speed limits? This situation compels us as legislators, to take collective ownership of the issue. It is not enough to point fingers at specific departments or ministries. We must all acknowledge our roles in fostering a culture of safety and responsibility on the roads. Only through shared accountability can we hope to address these challenges effectively.

+HON. SEN. RITTA NDLOVU: Thank you Mr. President. My supplementary question addresses a pressing concern regarding the accidents we are witnessing and their causes. I am particularly worried about the significant volume of livestock traffic along our highways. What measures does the government plan to implement to prevent cattle from roaming on the roads?

While wire fences are sometimes erected, it is common for villagers to leave gates open, which exacerbates the problem.

Specifically, between Shangani and Bulawayo, we encounter numerous cattle, yet there are no such issues between Shangani and Harare. This discrepancy highlights a critical challenge contributing to accidents along the Bulawayo-Harare Road. I urge the Government to consider effective strategies to manage livestock movement and enhance road safety in these areas.

HON. MHONA: Thank you Mr. President. Let me also thank Hon. Sen. Ndlovu for that question which is disturbing again. We took a deliberate approach to fence our corridors but people went to vandalise and steal at night. Again, the kind of people we are as a nation is also disturbing. Where we are supposed to safeguard our infrastructure, you see people destroying our infrastructure. You have seen that wherever we do that, there is also legislation in place, which has been there since time immemorial, to say you must not allow your cattle to stray. If they do stray, a particular RDC or local authority in that jurisdiction must confiscate the stray animals and auction them. So, it is very clear. You normally see that farmers run away if there is an accident caused by stray cattle. They know that there is a law in place. We also appeal again

to our people to say, why do you allow your cattle to stray, especially at night? One, you actually cause losses in terms of our asset base, individuals and dangers to motorists.

Indeed, this brings us back to the importance of raising awareness among our people about taking responsibility for their cattle. While drivers must exercise caution, it is equally crucial that we protect our infrastructure. Currently, we are making progress with the Shurugwi-Mhandamabwe Road where we have successfully implemented fencing. We are nearing completion of the fencing from Mhandamabwe to Chivi as well. We have engaged with the local villagers, emphasizing that this infrastructure belongs to all of us. Together, we have established committees to manage and protect the fences.

This is an appeal for continued collaboration. As we construct new roads, we must incorporate provisions for fencing. This model we are adopting is essential as we cannot simply erect fences only to have them vandalised or stolen. We must work together to safeguard our investments in infrastructure.

***HON. SEN. GOTORA:** Thank you Mr. President for according me this opportunity. My question is directed to the Minister of Home Affairs. The law stated by the Minister of Transport and Infrastructural Development on stray animals is already in place. I want to know from the Minister of Home Affairs how many cattle owners have been arrested up to now because their cattle had crossed the road and caused some fatal accidents. Are there cattle owners who are being arrested because this is not a new issue? We are aware that the fences are being stolen, but after the cattle strayed, crossed the roads and caused some accidents, are there any people being arrested?

THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE: We do not expect the Minister to give you a figure just like that. Are there people being arrested for negligence in terms of allowing their lives to roam freely? Are those cattle being impounded? Are people being arrested? I think that is a fair question.

HON. SEN. GOTORA: Thank you Mr. President, for correcting my question. That is what I really wanted to ask.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND CULTURAL

HERITAGE (HON. KAZEMBE): Thank you Mr. President Sir and thank you also for coming to my rescue. Surely, there was no way I was going to know the number of people who have been arrested just offhand. However, in any case, if the Hon. Senator still wants such numbers, it would be better to put that question in writing and I will get the correct official figures from the police. Nevertheless, having said that Mr. President, I would like to assure the Hon. Senator that everyone who commits a crime is arrested in this country for as long as the crime is known, reported or observed. No one is above or below.

As to how many have been arrested, that is a bit too technical for my very small brain but I promise to bring the answer should the august House require the answer. I so submit.

Questions With Notice were interrupted by the **HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE** *in terms of Standing Order Number 67.*

HON. SEN. MLOTSHWA: Thank you Mr. President of Senate Sir, I move that the time for questions Without Notice be extended by 30 minutes.

HON. SEN. CHAPFUDZA: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

***HON. SEN. MAKAMBA:** Thank you Mr. President. Could Hon. Minister Mhona provide us with an update on the Mukumbura Highway? Earlier this year, Hon. Minister Mhona and the Hon. Minister of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage indicated that the Government was in the process of installing cameras. I would like to know the current status of that initiative.

***THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT (HON. MHONA):** Thank you Mr. President. I want to thank Hon. Sen. Makamba for that question. I am going to respond to the first question. I will leave the second part to my counterpart, the Hon. Minister of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage who is going to address the issue of cameras.

I want to thank the Hon. Senator because that question is quite important. I am happy to say that in the past few weeks, we went with our contractor who was tasked with installing the cameras and we also visited the border post between Zimbabwe and Mozambique on the

Mukumbura Highway which is under rehabilitation. We have just around 26 kilometers left for us to complete that project. The project was funded and nothing can delay us.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE (HON. KAZEMBE): I want to thank Hon. Senator Makamba for that question. Indeed, we promised cameras and we are in the process of installing such cameras. When you get into the CBD in Harare, the cameras are in place. Most intersections have cameras now.

Let me take this opportunity, Mr. President, to inform the residents of Zimbabwe that the cameras are already being effective and they are capturing crimes that are being committed. Now, we are waiting for the conversation between the police, the Treasury and TelOne in terms of allocation of funds. For that to happen, it is important to have that process, which is ongoing.

However, these cameras are already in operation and we have video evidence for those who cross red robots and those who drive whilst calling or using their cell phones. Offenders are going to be prosecuted because the evidence is there. It is in place. So, I want to

inform the nation that members of this august House should look around in town. They will see the cameras. This is phase one but we are going to take this project to Mutare and other cities. I thank you.

HON. SEN. CHAPFUDZA: Supplementary question.

THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE: Yes, proceed.

***HON. SEN. CHAPFUDZA:** I would like to thank you Mr. President. I want the Hon. Minister to make it clear to us regarding the issues of the cameras because sometimes they do not work properly; the robots and the streetlights do not work correctly. Are the cameras also going to rectify this because these things are not working properly?

Sometimes because of high traffic, police are there to assist. Sometimes the police will be the ones controlling traffic. So, are cameras also going to capture all this?

***HON. KAZEMBE:** Thank you Mr. President. I would like to thank the Hon. Senator for this pertinent question, which is an additional question. He mentioned that sometimes the streetlights and the traffic lights will not change. What the camera will do is capture that the robot

was red for quite a long time but you had not paid heed to it. However, the good thing about it is that we are working together with the other departments and the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructural Development and the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works. They are working together with the City of Harare so that these can complement each other because the traffic lights must work properly. They had also mentioned the issue of the police who will be controlling traffic.

They had said that sometimes the police officer will just say pass while the robot is red. There is also what we call evaluation. The system will see that you have committed a crime but there will be someone who will be authenticating all this because sometimes you will not have committed a crime whilst the system says you have committed a crime and there will be a video as evidence to show that you have committed this type of crime.

It is not like you are supposed to go to jail because you have the right to defend yourself and say that you did not commit this offence. You then have to go to the courts and there will be a video as evidence

to show that and the video will be played. You also have the video on your cell phone.

In short, Mr. President, this technology is very good and advanced because it cannot be cheated. It shows exactly what you did on that day. It does not have corruption. Thank you.

***HON. SEN. KATUMBA:** My question is directed to the Minister of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage. I would like to understand from the Minister of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage, because we are having questions from many people and you are failing to answer the questions. They are saying that police officers are arresting people for driving a Class 4 vehicle whilst they have a Class 2 licence, may the Hon. Minister clarify to us?

***THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE (HON. KAZEMBE):** Thank you Mr. President. I have not heard of this issue but I will go and investigate and bring back the response. I thank you.

+HON. SEN. RICHARD NDLOVU: I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Local Government and Public Works. We

have raised questions several times but he is rarely in the House. This is not a new question; we have raised the question before. The Mahwatshu family is quite surprised about the chieftainship, which is not ending. Matabeleland South sent representatives to engage the Mahwatshu family five years ago. They engaged the family and asked several questions but there was no closure pertaining to the issue. Now, the issue has taken a long time before there is any response pertaining to the chieftainship in the same area. There is a creation of a chief in the same area, so we want to know what is happening because the Mahwatshu family needs closure pertaining to the issue. I thank you.

THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE: Hon. Sen. Ndlovu that is not a policy question. It is a specific question but if the Hon. Minister is conversant with that, I will give you the opportunity. However, if you want to go and find out, it is perfectly in order because that is not policy at all.

THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS (HON. GARWE): Thank you very much Hon. Deputy President of Senate. This is a very specific question which needs a lot of

research. I request that the Hon. Senator puts it in writing then we take it accordingly. I thank you.

⁺HON. SEN. MLILO: Thank you Mr. President for this opportunity. My question is directed to the Minister of Local Government and Public Works. We have rainy seasons when it rains a lot; water flushes into our houses in our old residences. Then when we engage council, they say there are some trenches, old trenches that were dug long back, which have now closed up. What is the Government policy in digging new trenches so that water cannot get into the houses? I thank you.

HON. GARWE: Thank you Mr. President. Again, this is a very specific question. It refers to a specific location or a specific city or town. I request that the Hon. Senator put it in writing so that we narrow down on that specific area where it is happening.

THE TEMPORARY PRESIDENT OF SENATE (HON. SEN. KAMBIZI): Hon. Senator Mlilo, you are advised to put that in writing so that the Minister can bring a proper answer.

HON. SEN. MUPANDE: Thank you Hon. President, for this opportunity to ask my question briefly. My question is directed to the Minister of Transport. We celebrated when we realised that there was work that started in Bulawayo, Victoria Falls but as of now, there is a standstill. We now suffer on our backs because the road is so bad. We expect the rains any time from now, yet there is no work that is being done on that road. I want to hear from the Minister.

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT (HON. MHONA): Thank you Mr. President Sir. Let me thank Hon. Sen. Mupande for that very emotional question and indeed, it is a countrywide talk about Bulawayo-Victoria Falls Road. If you remember very well, we started on that road from Beitbridge to Bulawayo, Bulawayo to Victoria Falls on a triple P arrangement which we are still pursuing. It was found that it is imperative to address the concerns of that road. Eight contractors were awarded in terms of the tender. Each contractor has about a 50-kilometre stretch, to be precise, 51 kilometres. We resumed work mid last year and

we continued in the beginning of this year; we have done about 57 or so. In the last two weeks, we have opened 14 kilometres.

This is a 440-kilometre road network. The way we are going to be attending now is to attend to damaged sections. The type of model that we have adopted is not like we are reconstructing through the entire road network but we are doing what we call chip and spray, where you find that it will move much faster than what we are doing at Raleigh Bay Bridge. So, I want to assure again Hon. Mupande, that yes indeed, the project had stalled, not necessarily that the contractors demobilised, but they were on a go-slow, to be precise.

Some contractors have resumed but in the next fortnight, you will see that all the eight contractors will be fully mobilised against the issues to do with funding, which I normally say Mr. President, in most jurisdictions when you pose questions to us as ministers, you must take us to account to what you have given us as the august House, to say we gave you money for this road, why are you not rehabilitating the road? But, you find that in most cases, we go beyond that to think outside the box so that we fund, besides what you give us in this august House; if

you go to the *Blue Book* and see what was allocated, it is not even enough to rehabilitate that road.

So, this is another reason again, why we need to continue thinking about how we can mobilise funding. I am happy that now we have a solution and you see that section is going to be covered. We are also looking closely at the road from Cross Dete to Binga, Hon. Mupande. So, it is no longer going to be that road only; it will be Cross Dete to Binga and from Binga to Karoi where we are inviting the private sector so that they participate in that entire road network. These are some of the initiatives that we are doing, but yes, I do agree the project is sold. You will be very happy very soon where we have accelerated mobilisation again. Thank you Mr. President.

+HON. SEN. M. NDLOVU: My question is directed to the Minister of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage. May I know who is responsible for taking care of the shrines of the war veterans in the provinces? In addition, what is the Government doing to take care of those shrines? Thank you.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND CULTURAL

HERITAGE (HON. KAZEMBE): Thank you Mr. President. I would like to thank the Hon. Senator for the question. In terms of everyday maintenance, their shrines are taken care of by the Minister of State for Provincial Affairs. However, during National Heroes Day, normally there is a budget provided from Central Government for particular events related to the commemorations. Generally, they are under the Minister of State for Provincial Affairs. Thank you.

HON. SEN. ZINDI: Thank you Mr. President. Is the Minister informing this House that there is a budget that is appropriated through the Resident Minister in order to take care of provincial heroes' acres in this country? Thank you.

HON. KAZEMBE: Thank you Mr. President. I believe there is that budget because as a Ministry, we are responsible for the National Shrine. That one falls under our purview, but maybe the Minister of Local Government and Public Works can assist. I submit.

THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND

PUBLIC WORKS (HON. GARWE): Thank you Hon. Senate

President. We do not have any budget from the Minister of Local Government and Public Works specifically for that. What we have is that whenever we are conducting independent celebrations in specific provinces and districts, there is an allocation to deal with such issues. As we speak right now, we have such for Mwenezi District, which is going to be allocated, not to the Minister of State but through Home Affairs. Thank you Mr. President.

+HON. SEN. M. NDLOVU: Supplementary Hon. President, there is no one taking care of the graves of our comrades of this nation. Widows are the ones cleaning and clearing the grass on the graves of their husbands.

THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE: Thank you very much Hon. Sen. Ndlovu. Although it is not a question, I think the Hon. Minister has taken note, unless he has a comment.

HON. KAZEMBE: Thank you Mr. President. Yes, I have taken note, but as a Ministry, we are equally concerned and have raised this issue with the Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion. We believe that there will be a specific budget

line provided for this particular noble cause. Otherwise, I have taken note and I will also escalate it to my colleague Minister so that a budget line is provided. I submit.

***HON. SEN. CHIEF CHIKWAKA:** Thank you Mr. President.

Allow me to ask this question to the Minister of Local Government and Public Works. It is my pleasure to applaud the commendable work done in the Second Republic and the mantra that we are not leaving anyone or any place behind. I would want to hear from the Hon. Minister what Government initiative they have pertaining to the issue that our traditional chiefs are supposed to carry out their duties in places meant for them and not in the councils or under the trees. What initiative do they have pertaining to the issue of the illegal settlements because as I am saying, we have difficulties, we are failing to control illegal settlements? What initiatives do you have so that you can assist us in our traditional courts? Thank you.

THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS (HON. GARWE): Let me thank you Hon. President Speaker and Hon. Sen. Chief Chikwaka for the question he has asked. I would

like this Senate House to know that we sat down last month in order to start the programme of building traditional courts so that our chiefs can be able to try matters from the districts where they are coming from. We also want to build offices which will be used by Members of Parliament in the Lower House and the Senators in the districts and also to build community halls in the districts. When we are constructing all these structures, we will also build an Empower Bank and a Women's Bank in those places. We are also going to build a Presidential library, which will contain a lot of stuff that is happening in the country from 1980 up to the present day.

It will be focused on the history of the liberation struggle. This is not just on paper, but it is a programme, which already started a few weeks ago. Some people were chosen to construct them and they had gone around the country. The Ministry was doing what is called scoping and they were shown the local boards and the places where these structures are supposed to be constructed. This is a successful programme. We are starting to build traditional courts for the chiefs from the districts where they are coming from.

The second issue he has raised is very painful, of people selling land illegally, including the village heads under chiefs who are here. We encourage our chiefs to tell the village heads not to sell land because the villagers are selling land illegally. We also want to stop the land barons from selling land illegally and to stop the *Sabhuku* deals. We expect the chiefs, together with the Ministry of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage and others, to work together to stop the illegal settlement because they are making traditional chiefs' land look like towns. The issue of Goromonzi, Chinamhora, Domboshava and Seke, they are no longer villages but are now towns. People are buying land from people who are in towns.

I would like to know again Hon. President, last month we had a problem in Harare South at Greystone. The farm which was allocated to some people to be able to secure loans from banks so that they would be able to buy seed and fertilisers to assist our young farmers who are in the rural areas or in the resettlement areas, this place was sold by people who were coming from Harare. They sold the land and we removed the people from there, but we had a challenge from people who were now

staying there. They were asking us why we were doing this. There is also another issue which concerns a very influential person and that person was encouraging us not to demolish houses if they are already built. If we allow that, the whole country is going to become an informal settlement. We do not encourage our leaders to sell land illegally and build illegal structures. This is a country with laws, which is being led very well. As citizens, we must abide by the laws. Thank you.

***HON. SEN. CHIKWAKA:** Thank you Mr. President. I would like to thank the response, which was given by the Minister. My supplementary question is, as chiefs, how can we assist our village heads who are doing this? We relieved them of their duties because they were committing crimes. We made papers which we submitted to the office of the DDC and the DDC is supposed to submit them to the province and then to the office of the Minister. At the moment, I do not know of chiefs and village heads we have stopped and those who are still being paid by the Government, yet we have new traditional heads installed who follow the laws and abide by them. I would like to know what we

can do because we removed the village heads who were not paying heed to the laws but they are getting paid. What should we do Hon. President?

***THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS (HON. GARWE):** Thank you Hon. Member. May you write and avail to us the names of the traditional village heads who were stopped from operating but are continuing to get remuneration from the Government. Thank you.

***HON. SEN. HUNGWE:** Thank you Hon. President of the Senate. My supplementary question is, I heard what he has said. However, the country must have laws but we are seeing their local authorities leaving people to construct infrastructure. Can they stop that from happening? They leave people constructing a house and they stay there for five years and then the local authorities come and demolish those houses. Do you not see that we are causing other people to die? Maybe that is the only money that someone put into building that house a everyone desires to have his own place. Yes, there are crooks, but sometimes people also want to have a place where they can stay with their family. Why does the Government or the local boards leave people

to construct or build these houses? You will be shocked by some of the houses, which are being demolished, and sometimes people will have stayed there for five or fifteen years. We even have war veterans who have been staying there for a long time, in conditions that evoke pity and concern. Is it possible for the Government, together with its local board, to stop these people from constructing houses? Thank you. -[HON.

MEMBERS: *Hear, hear.*]- The applauding shows that this is a popular supplementary. Thank you Mr. President.

***HON. GARWE:** I would like to thank Hon. Sen. Hungwe for the issue that she had raised. This House would like to know the places where people are staying illegally. We have a regularisation policy. What was happening was that crooks were selling land to people and they would say, hurry up and construct your houses so that they can be regularised. The places in which people have been staying for fifteen years in Harare East, are places which are being regularised. The other places which are mushrooming are not going to be regularised. To buy illegally and construct structures illegally is not legal. Whether you are not stopped by the local authority, you cannot go and continue stealing

because no police officer has come to arrest you. You are going to be apprehended. Thank you.

*Questions Without Notice were interrupted by **THE HON.***

DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE *in terms of Standing Order Number 67.*

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE
BUDGET COST FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY LEGACY
PROJECTS

10. **HON. SEN. MLOTSHWA** asked the Minister of Local Government and Public Works to apprise the Senate on the following:
- a. How many workers were engaged under the Rural Infrastructure Development Agency (RIDA) and other Government programmes, to undertake infrastructure projects associated with the 2026 Independence Day legacy projects in Maphisa, Matobo District;
 - b. What amount was budgeted for labour costs and workers' remuneration under those projects;
 - c. To state whether all workers who participated in the construction work and rehabilitation of schools, clinics, police bases and other public

facilities have been paid in full; if not, how much is outstanding and how many workers are affected;

THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS (HON. GARWE): The Minister of Local Government and Public Works and the Rural Infrastructure Development Agency Leader engaged a total of 7 757 casual workers for the construction of the stadium, 40 science laboratories and various infrastructure developments at my primary and secondary schools. The Ministers of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training; Health and Child Care; Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture; Tourism and Hospitality Industry; Primary and Secondary Education and Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage, implemented their respective projects through private contractors. Accordingly, information relating to the number of workers directly engaged by these private contractors is held by the respective contracting entities.

Our response on Part B: A total budget of 140 million Zimbabwe Gold was availed by Treasury to meet labour costs associated with the implementation of legacy projects in Maphisa. To date, an amount of 70

178 216 Zimbabwe Gold has been disbursed, leaving an outstanding balance of 70.75 million Zimbabwe Gold. Consequently, 7 757 workers received payment for work undertaken up to April 2026. However, construction activities continued beyond April 2026 to complete the outstanding works. As the remaining funds have not yet been released by Treasury, 513 workers are still awaiting outstanding payment for services rendered during this period.

Lastly, not all workers engaged in the construction and rehabilitation of schools, clinics, police bases and other public facilities have been paid in full. For the reasons I mentioned in the second question, although the Independence Day celebrations have since concluded, several legacy projects have continued beyond the commemorations. However, the outstanding budget has not yet been released by Treasury, preventing us from clearing the wages for the remaining 513 workers. I thank you

NUMBER OF OPERATIONAL INLAND ANTI-SMUGGLING CHECKPOINTS

12. **HON. SEN. MLOTSHWA** asked the Minister of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage to inform the House how many inland anti-smuggling checkpoints are currently operational nationwide and what criteria is used in determining their location and deployment?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE (HON. KAZEMBE): My apologies, Mr. President, I was not aware of that question, so I do not have the answer to it. I will bring the response to the House.

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS TO QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

MEASURES ON THE PROTECTION OF LIVELIHOODS OF AFFECTED COMMUNITIES

6. **HON. SEN. ADV. K.I.PHULU** asked the Minister of Mines and Mining Development to inform the House of the practical measures and consultation procedures in place to ensure that communities in communal areas are adequately consulted before mining claims are pegged on homesteads, agricultural fields and grazing lands and to further explain how the rights and livelihoods of affected communities are being protected.

THE MINISTER OF MINES AND MINING

DEVELOPMENT (HON. KAMBAMURA): The protections available to communal communities today rest on four pillars of the Mines and Minerals Act (Chapter 21:051)

First, ground closed by statute. Section 31 places certain ground beyond the reach of any prospecting licence, special grant or exclusive prospecting order. No pegging may take place within 450 metres of a principal homestead, within 90 metres of any building or permanent improvement of prescribed value, or of any cattle dip tank or spray race; upon any land under cultivation or within 15 metres of it, or within the surveyed limits of any village or township and a fifty-metre belt beyond. Section 30 defines "land under cultivation" in the farmer's favour, covering land merely cleared or ploughed for crop land already reaped for a further three years, orchards and planted grass leys for six years, so a field lying fallow in rotation remains protected.

Second, consent and notice. Section 31(1) (h) prohibits prospecting on any communal land occupied as a village without the written consent of the Rural District Council and section 31(1) (g) (ii) requires the

occupier's written consent where the portion does not exceed one hundred hectares, Section 38 obliges every prospector, before exercising any right on Communal Land, to give written notice to the Rural District Council; failure to do so is a criminal offence. Section 39 prohibits pegging between six in the evening and six in the morning and pegging done in those hours confers no rights whatsoever. Beyond the Act, no project may commence without an Environmental Impact Assessment certificate under the Environmental Management Act [Chapter 20:27], the assessment process itself carrying a duty of consultation with affected communities.

Third, registration does not displace the farmer. Section 179 preserves the right of the occupier of land on which a registered location is situated to graze stock upon and cultivate its surface, so far as this does not interfere with the proper working of the mine. Sections 180 to 188 provide for approved cultivation schemes and for annual payments in respect of registered locations, with the Rural District Council recognised as the responsible authority for communal land.

Fourth, adjudication and compensation. Disputes as to whether land is open to prospecting go to the Administrative Court under section 32. For alluvial, riverbed and open-cast chromite workings, sections 222 to 227 entitle the Rural

District Council to apply to the Mining Affairs Board for an order governing the manner, conditions and rehabilitation of working and to appeal to the Administrative Court. Section 362 allows a farmer to elect that a dispute with a miner be heard by the provincial magistrate and section 34(11) preserves the right to recover damages at law for injury sustained through mining operations.

These provisions are enforceable but were drafted for a different Zimbabwe: notice runs to the council and not to the household and section 38(7) provides that a pegging is not invalidated merely because notice was never given. It is these deficiencies that the Mines and Minerals Amendment Bill is designed to close. In the interim, Government is enforcing the existing prohibitions, using the section 35 power to reserve sensitive areas against pegging and prosecuting failures to notify.

ESTABLISHMENT OF TRANSPARENT, LAWFUL AND UNIFORM
FRAMEWORK FOR THE RESTORATION, RESUSCITATION AND
CREATION OF CHIEFTAINSHIPS

11. **HON. SEN. ADV. PHULU** asked the Minister of Local Government and Public Works to advise on the following: noting that section 283 of the Constitution provides for the appointment, removal, restoration and resuscitation of traditional leaders to be regulated by an Act of Parliament and that the Government has confirmed its policy of restoring chieftainships and accepted that legislation would be desirable; yet the Traditional Leaders' Act [Chapter 29:17] does not prescribe any statutory procedure for restoration or resuscitation:

- a. Under what statutory authority the Ministry is presently restoring, reviving or creating chieftainships in the absence of legislation specifically regarding that constitutional function;
- b. How many chieftainships have been restored, resuscitated or newly created since the coming into force of the Constitution;

- c. What criteria and procedures are presently being applied in determining such claims;
- d. Whether Government accepts that the absence of a statutory framework creates uncertainty and exposes decisions on traditional leadership to legal challenge and;
- e. When Government intends to introduce legislation to Parliament establishing a transparent, lawful and uniform framework for the restoration, resuscitation and creation of chieftainships as contemplated by Section 283 of the Constitution.

THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS (HON. GARWE): My response to the above questions is as follows:

- a. The following provisions provide the statutory authority under which the Ministry is restoring, reviving or creating chieftainships. Section 283 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No. 20 (Act 2023) provides that: An Act of Parliament must provide for the following, in accordance with the prevailing culture, customs, traditions and practices of the communities concerned –

- The appointment, suspension, succession and removal of tradition leaders;
- The creation and resuscitation of chieftainships

Section 1 provides that ...subject to subsection (2), the President shall appoint chiefs to preside over communities inhabiting communal land and resettlement areas. In appointing a chief in terms of subsection (1), the President shall give consideration to:

- The prevailing customary principles of succession, if any, applicable to the community over which the chief is to preside and
- The administrative needs of the communities in the area concerned in the interests of good governance.

Section 29 of the Traditional Leaders Act provides for placing of communities on resettlement land under authority of chief.

Subsection (1) provides that... After consultation with the rural district council and the chief of the area concerned the Minister may, by notice in the Gazette, declare that any area of settlement

land shall fall under the authority of such chief as he may specify in the notice...

- b. Fifty-five chieftainships have been established since the coming into force of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act, 2013.
- c. Clan members submit their claims backed by historical evidence. The Ministry establishes the authenticity, the administrative need and the interests of good governance and when satisfied makes a recommendation to His Excellency the President for approval.
- d. A Statutory framework already exists provided through both the Constitution and the Traditional Leaders' Act Chapter 29:17 and decisions on traditional leadership are not greatly affected. Any gaps that may exist are being addressed in the alignment process.
- e. The alignment of the Traditional Leaders Act, which is the principal Act referred to in the Constitution is now at an advanced stage.

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE (HON. KAZEMBE): I move that Orders of the Day, Numbers 1 to 22 be stood over until Order of the Day Number 23 has been dealt with.

Motion put and agreed to.

SECOND READING

BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS CRIMES BILL [H. B. 9A, 2025]

Twenty-third Order read: Second Reading: Biological Weapons and Toxin Weapons Crimes Bill [H. B. 9A, 2025].

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE (HON. KAZEMBE): Mr. President, I rise to present the Second Reading Speech of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Crimes Bill [H. B. 9A, 2025]. This Bill presents a historic opportunity for Zimbabwe to fully domesticate and give legal effect to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) of 10th April 1972 to which Zimbabwe acceded to on 5th November 1990. The Convention categorically prohibits the development, production, stockpiling, acquisition, retention

and deployment of biological agents, toxins and weapons as instruments of warfare.

Mr. President of Senate Sir, the Ministry of Defence currently administers the Chemical Weapons (Prohibition) Act [Chapter 11:18] which domesticated the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1998 and outlawed chemical agents as weapons of war. Given the deep technical and legal commonalities between these two regimes, this Bill seeks to harmonise our national oversight. It consolidates administration under a single, unified National Advisory Committee, optimising regulatory resources and eliminating institutional fragmentation.

Furthermore, the Bill recognises and preserves the complementary roles of existing institutions. It expressly recognises the Environmental Management Agency (EMA) established under the Environmental Management Act [Chapter 20:27]. Under Clause 14, inspectors and analysts will be drawn from EMA, health bodies and other specialised State institutions to prevent, detect and investigate offences. This collaborative framework ensures that enforcement builds directly upon

established domestic expertise, promoting seamless inter-agency coordination.

Mr. President, biological weapons consist of disease-causing organisms or toxins deliberately deployed to harm humans, animals or plants. The Statutory framework strictly regulates dangerous pathogens, including pathogenic bacteria, viruses and naturally occurring toxins. Our own history and contemporary public health landscape underscore the devastating potential of these agents.

Anthrax, for instance, is a deadly bacterial agent that was weaponised during the liberation struggle to decimate cattle populations in rural communities. Decades later, Zimbabwe continues to battle sporadic anthrax outbreaks directly linked to that historical contamination.

Another example Mr. President, is the infestation commonly known as *matekenya*. This debilitating infestation caused severe physical suffering amongst our freedom fighters and remains a persistent public health concern in several districts. Lastly, high-consequence pathogens like smallpox and Ebola carry the potential for catastrophic loss of life

whilst deadly toxins such as ricin can be easily processed and weaponised to sabotage livestock and human populations alike. Mr. President Sir, allow me now to highlight the core legislative pillars of this Bill.

Clause 4 criminalises the development, production, manufacture, possession, stockpiling, acquisition, retention, importation, exportation, re-exportation, transportation, transit, trans-shipment, transfer or use of prohibited biological agents and toxins. The clause prescribes stringent penalties, including mandatory imprisonment of not less than ten years and substantial fines for individuals and corporate entities.

Clause 5 designates the Secretary responsible for Defence as the responsible authority for the administration of the Act. The secretary will be assisted by the expanded National Advisory Committee established under the Chemical Weapons Framework, ensuring scientific, technical and strategic continuity.

Clause 6 establishes a transparent licencing framework for biological agents and toxins intended strictly for curative, protective, diagnostic research or other peaceful purposes. This guarantees that our

medical professionals, agricultural scientists and academic researchers are protected and regulated rather than criminalised.

Clause 18 provides for the extraterritorial application of the Act, enabling Zimbabwean courts to exercise jurisdiction over specified offences committed outside Zimbabwe where, at the time of the alleged offence, the person was a citizen of or domiciled in Zimbabwe or was otherwise amenable to the jurisdiction of Zimbabwe.

Clause 3 introduces consequential amendments to the Chemical Weapons (Prohibition) Act [Chapter 11:18]. These amendments will broaden the mandate of the National Advisory Committee to include oversight of biological agents and toxins. The Committee's composition will be expanded to include expertise from relevant ministries and specialised institutions in the fields of Defence, Foreign Affairs, Health, Environment, Higher and Tertiary Education, Bio-Security and Industrial Sciences.

Mr. President Sir, the enactment of this Bill will anchor four critical national benefits. First, global corporation, it unlocks full compliance with Article X of the Biological Weapons Convention

(BWC), enabling Zimbabwe to seamlessly access global scientific knowledge, technology, technical assistance and equipment for peaceful epidemiological and emergency responses.

Secondly, enhanced defense capacity, the Bill will strengthen national security by criminalising activities associated with biological weapons, including their development, possession, financing and use. It will significantly enhance Zimbabwe's capacity to detect, prevent and respond to biological and toxin-related threats.

Thirdly, emergency preparedness, the Bill strengthens the national biosafety and biosecurity standards, directly improving our emergency preparedness for laboratory incidents, environmental contamination and natural disease outbreaks.

Lastly, the Bill establishes a transparent, regulated environment that safeguards responsible scientific research, ensuring that advanced biotechnology is utilised exclusively for peaceful, therapeutic and economic progress.

Mr. President Sir, the benefits arising from this legislation are substantial. Above all, the Bill safeguards human life, protects our

livestock and agricultural economy, preserves environmental integrity and shields our national security. Furthermore, it cements Zimbabwe's standing as a responsible, rule-of-law-abiding member of the international community. In light of the foregoing, I commend the Biological and Toxin Weapons Crimes Bill [H. B. 9A, 2025] to this august House and respectfully urge Hon. Members to support its passage. I, therefore, move that the Bill be read a second time.

HON. S. MOYO: Thank you Mr. President of Senate Sir, for giving me this opportunity. I rise today to speak on the report before this Senate on the Biological and Toxin Weapons Crimes Bill. I speak as an Hon. Senator for Matabeleland South. Speak for the farmers, the headers, the traditional healers and the ordinary families of Bulilima, Gwanda, Beitbridge and Plumtree who sent me to this Senate.

Mr. President Sir, what the Bill does: It stops Zimbabwe from developing, making, keeping, moving or using dangerous biological agents, toxins and biological weapons.

It brings into our law two old international agreements: the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention and the 1925 Geneva Protocol. These

agreements ban germ warfare and poison gas. Zimbabwe already signed them as a nation among nations.

It creates a licence system. Anyone who wants to keep or use a biological agent or toxin for a good reason such as medicine, farming or research, must first get a licence from the Secretary of Defence called the 'responsible authority' in the Bill.

It creates heavy punishment. Anyone caught with an unlicensed biological agent or with a biological weapon faces a minimum of ten years in prison or a heavy fine or both. A company can be fined up to five times the highest court fine. It gives inspectors powers to enter homes and businesses, questioning people, search and seize property. In some cases, they may do this without a warrant. It creates a chain of appeal, first to the Minister, then to the review board and then to the administration court. It also amends the Chemical Weapons Act to widen the power of the National Authorities' Advisory Committee.

Mr. President, on the surface, this looks like a good Bill. No honest Zimbabwean wants germ weapons in our country. We support Zimbabwe honouring its international promises but the details tell a

different story. When I read this Bill carefully on behalf of the people of Matebeleland South, I found red flags that this House cannot ignore. The first one, red flag number one, a Bill written in a hurry. Mr. President, a law that can send an innocent person to prison for 10 years must be written with great care. Yes, this document is full of mistakes.

Clause 4 speaks only of ‘imprisonment’. Clause 9 speaks only of ‘as fine’ instead of ‘a fine’. Clause 15 lists two different paragraphs; both mark the paragraphs (g). Clause 15 (9) even references itself. Subsection (9), which cannot be correct Mr. President, if we the lawmakers cannot get the small words right, how can we expect the villages in Gwanda to understand exactly what is the law demands of them?

Red flag two: 10 years minimum, no mercy for ordinary people. Mr. President, Clause 4 says that anyone processing an unlicensed biological agent or toxin, even if it is a very small amount, must go to prison for no less than 10 years. Ten years; the court is not even allowed to suspend a single day of that sentence Mr. President. Now, Hon. Members, think about our people in the provinces like Matebeleland

South; we are cattle people. We keep kraals, we use dip chemicals, vaccines and herbal medicine handed down from our grandparents for our cattle and for our own bodies. The Bill defines 'biological agents or toxins' so widely that it includes 'any substance suspected to be' one.

Suspected, Mr. President, not proven, suspected.

If a rural inspector acting on his suspicion alone finds an unlicensed herbal remedy or a veterinary substance in your homestead in Bulilima, must our grandmother face 10 years in prison with no discretion left to the judge? Yes, Clause 4 (2) offers a small defence but the burden falls on the accused person to prove their innocence, not on the State to prove guilt. Our people, men of whom cannot read the *Government Gazette*, must now hire a lawyer they cannot afford or risk 10 years behind bars. Mr. President, that is not justice. That is a trap set for the poor and the unaware.

Red flag number three: nowhere in this Bill do I see a serious plan to teach our people in our own languages, Ndebele, Kalanga, Tonga, Venda and the 16 languages, what counts as a biological agent, what needs a licence and what the penalties are? Clause 30 gives people only

12 months after the law starts to licence what they already lawfully possessed. Twelve months for a law that most villages will never even hear about, written in legal English they were never taught. We cannot legislate in the dark for people who deserve light.

Red flag four: this Bill hands too much power to a single office. The Secretary for Defence decides who gets a licence. He decides who loses one. His inspectors may enter a home without a warrant if they simply believe there is a danger. Then Clause 27 shields the responsible authority, the State and every inspector from being sued unless the harmed citizen can prove ‘bad faith’ or ‘negligence’. That is a very high wall for any ordinary citizen to climb. We have seen again and again in this very Chamber how power without accountability is abused in our country. This Bill risks repeating that same story.

A red flag five: a heavy bureaucracy the State cannot afford. Mr. President, the Bill creates a national register, a National Authority Advisory Committee with more than a dozen members drawn from many ministries, a mix of inspectors and analysts, a review board appointed through the National Biotechnology Authority and an appeal

route through the Administrative Court. This is a heavy structure. Yet this Government cannot keep our rural clinics stocked with the basic medicine. Bulilima Rural District Council still struggles to deliver clean water to its own people. Where will the money come from, the scientists and the labs come from to run this new biosecurity machine? Are we building another paper law, strong in the Government *Gazette* but silent on the ground in Plumtree and Beitbridge and the whole of Zimbabwe?

A red flag number six: the real rules are left for later behind closed doors. Mr. President, unlike the Chemical Weapons Act which lists exact chemicals and quantities, this Bill does not clearly list which biological agents are covered or in what amounts. Clause 28 leaves this to the Minister to decide later, by regulation. This means we are being asked today to improve 10-year prison terms of law whose real boundaries will only be drawn tomorrow by the Minister alone without returning to the House. Mr. President, that is not how good law is made.

What we ask for the House and the Minister to do, that is the suggestion to the Hon. Minister, Mr. President, we are not against Zimbabwe honouring the Biological Weapons Convention. We are not

against banning germ weapons. Our concern is how this Bill will land on the shoulders of the ordinary Zimbabweans, especially our rural people who did not draft this law and will not easily understand it. We therefore propose the following, Hon. Minister.

First, correct every drafting error before this Bill becomes law. A law that deprives a person of their freedom for 10 years must be written without errors. Give our courts real discretion. A judicial officer, not a rigid formula, should decide the fair sentence for a first-time low-risk offender who meant no harm. Move the burden of proof. Where the amount found is small and clearly for household, farming or medicinal use, the State should carry the heavy duty of proving criminal intent, not the poor village.

Fund and run a nationwide education campaign in all 16 of our languages before the 12-month grace period even begins to run so that no citizen is punished for a law they never had a fair chance to learn. Publish a clear, specific list of covered agents and quantities in the Bill itself or in a schedule debated by this House, rather than leaving this entirely to future regulation. Strengthen the right of citizens to seek

redress when officials misuse those new, searched and seized powers, instead of shielding the State so heavily from liability.

Match this new law with the real resources for our Ministry of Health, our Environmental Management Agency and our rural clinics before we criminalise our own people for gaps that the State itself has failed to close.

Mr. President, the people of Matabeleland South did not send me to this House to rubber-stamp laws that sound good in this House in Harare but bite hard in Bulilima. They sent me to ask the hard question, to read the fine print and to make sure that in the name of fighting biological weapons, we do not end up criminalising our own grandmothers, cattle farmers and traditional healers. Let us fix this Bill before we pass it. Let us protect our nation from biological threats without turning our own poor and rural people into the first victims of this law. Thank you Mr. President.

HON. SEN. NCUBE: Thank you Mr. President and again, the Minister of Home Affairs for bringing this Bill to this House. My understanding of this Bill is that it prohibits the development,

manufacture and stockpiling of biological weapons, which are harmful to the citizens in terms of biosecurity. It also criminalises the possession and acquisition of such biological weapons and it prevents organisations , which may be inimical to this country to bring in such biological weapons and toxins for the purposes of harming the citizens, not for curative purposes.

Mr. President, what I was going to ask the Minister is where, particularly for inspection purposes and microbiologists, have we been in a position to train experts along those lines because this is not just to criminalise a herbalist who is doing their trade. It is for biosecurity and for the security of the country. It essentially places Zimbabwe at par with other countries so that there is no import of weapons of a biological nature like anthrax. We have seen this happening in other countries, maybe a portion of Gaza. It is essentially against the Geneva Convention. Therefore, it is supposed to be criminalised in this country.

In terms of such biological weapons, I think the Minister was very clear about anthrax bacteria. Some of these were used during the liberation struggle. They were not used for curative. The idea was to

decimate. It is debilitating once it touches your skin and you live with it for a long time until it kills you. Of course, there are specific medicines which have been scientifically developed to fight some of these, where they happen naturally because they can also happen naturally. The Bill does not prohibit legitimate medicinal or veterinary scientific research. Instead, it distinguishes between peaceful and hostile uses by requiring appropriate authorisation and licencing. It is the procedure of licencing, which we need clarity on.

Why should something which is being used for hostile purposes be licenced? Maybe, some of these researched viruses could also be used in a good way. That is why they may need licencing but we need experts in terms of regular inspections. The Bill enhances Zimbabwe's cooperation with other countries in terms of preventing biological terrorism and bioweapons proliferation, which is important as a country. This is something which we should support as Senators. It is not to micromanage a small herbalist living in Tsholotsho. Not at all. I think it is a misinterpretation of the Bill. That is my understanding Mr. President. Thank you very much.

THE TEMPORARY PRESIDENT OF SENATE (HON. SEN. KAMBIZI): Thank you Hon. Senator Ncube. You will agree with me Hon. Members that this Bill is an important one that we cannot just rush through today. I feel we need more time to debate it extensively. On that note, with the powers vested in me, I will recognise Hon. Minister Kazembe to adjourn the debate.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE (HON. KAZEMBE): Mr. President, I move that the debate do now adjourn.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Tuesday, 1st September, 2026.

On the motion of **THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE (HON. KAZEMBE)**, *the House adjourned at Eleven Minutes to Five o'clock p. m. until Tuesday, 1st September, 2026.*