**From Alfred Tumusiime.**

Hello Uganda,

I was just seated on my desk and news came in that Rebecca Kadaga is the Speaker of the 9th Parliament.

Congratulations Rebecca, but let’s look at what run across my mind. I started wrestling with several facts until I brought in my P.4 mathematics to help me. I then decided to look at the 375MPs that Rebecca has to moderate and I realized that there is a problem.

When I was in secondary (O’level), each class had 3 streams of about 60-70 students. All i remember was that the total number of students in S.2 was 207. I don’t remember when all the 207 students sat together in any lesson because even when it came to practicals, they would divide us for effecting teaching and learning.

In my life, I have never seen a class of 375 people because even at the university, we were just 33 in the course during our year.

Now let’s look at the 375MPs and the resources available. At least am sure their salaries will not fail to come but what are we paying them for? The first fact is that on a productive day, parliament sessions can run for 8 hours. This is inclusive of 1 hour lunch break. Therefore, the effective time used to debate issues is 7 hours or 420minutes.

The quickest mathematical conclusion before we go very far is that if all the 375 MPs were given a chance to debate a motion without interference, then each MP has only 53.5 Seconds to make point after which he can never get any chance. By the way, this is on condition that the speaker does not interrupt any body and that there is no break between one discussant and another.

Let’s look at the entire year and investigate fully if we have to pay MPs such huge amounts of money. By the way, the problem is not the MPs but their number. In a year of 365 days we have 52 weekends. Therefore, if we deduct 104 days (Saturdays and Sundays), then we have 261 days left for our MPs to debate. However, we have at least 22 public holidays including the last 10days of December when there is no business usually.

We also know that MPs give themselves breaks and there are times when sessions fail to kick off due to lack of quorum and other issues. Let me be very objective and assume that all these breaks and interferences cost parliament only 20 days in a year, then the only effective number of days remaining for parliament to debate is 219.

Therefore using the above ideal situation where parliament uses 7 hours per day, then Madam Speaker has 1,533 hours in a year to apportion to all the 375MPs. This is not politics but its mathematics or you may call it political mathematics.

Therefore if all the 375 MPs kept time in the 219 days available for them and that no one absents him or herself throughout the year and that the Speaker gives each MP equal opportunity to express their point, then an MP has 4.088 hours in a year to represent his constituency.

In a parliament of 375 MPs, an MP can only use 12.75% of his or time. The conclusion from the mathematics above is that an MP will spend 87.24% of his or her time doing nothing. However, this MP will receive 19 million shillings per month, oh my God.

In my dreams, if I was an MP, the first motion I would table to parliament would be that of reducing the number of MPs to at least 80.

Personally, I recommend 1 MP per district. The smaller districts can be combined to their mother districts. However, tabling such a motion is like telling a monkey to burn a forest. Therefore, the common man who is the tax payer should fasten his belt and prepare to sweat plasma as he carries these guys for the next 5 years.

**The writer is an environmentalist**