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will also ease the collection of financial intelligence, which

Americas for help in intelligence gathering.
Olupot said cheques and cash

He said the Finance System Bill will be presented to Cabinet in the next two weeks.

and Tanzania less than \$10m each annually.

Smuggled sugar destabilising market, prices

By Samuel Balagadde,
Jackson Kitara
and Samuel Sanya

Parliament has been asked to investigate reports of sugar smuggled and dumped onto the Ugandan market, which is allegedly destabilising the industry and subsequently the market and prices.

The complaint was made by one of the sugar investors, Amina Hersi, to the parliamentary committee on tourism, trade and industry. The committee members were on a visit to Hersi's Atiak Sugar Factory construction site in Amuru district to do due diligence for the government bailout.

The \$17.7m (about sh63.7b) bailout to Hersi was announced by finance minister Matiya Kasaija recently to buoy the project that had stalled over financial constraints. The bailout is a combination of soft loans and equity.

Hersi said the problems surrounding the sugar industry, including abnormally high sugar prices and shortages, are engineered by a group of people for selfish interests. They import and repackage sugar to hoodwink the market.

She asked that the Sugar Bill 2016 be expedited to punish those engaged in malpractice, including smuggling.

Hersi said a lot needs to be done to bring sanity to the sugar industry through levelled ground for competition.

She pleaded for outgrowers, saying the current 50km radius exclusive area for a sugar mill should be reduced to 30km so that outgrowers are not exploited.

However, former East African Legislative Assembly speaker, Dan Kidega, blamed the low sugarcane production for the wars among sugar milling companies and the high sugar prices.

Alex Ruhunda, (Fort Portal

BETWEEN THE LINES:

■ An investor, Amina Hersi, said the problems surrounding the sugar industry, including abnormally high sugar prices and shortages, are engineered by a group of people for selfish interests.

Municipality) the chairperson for the committee, noted that more government support is needed to support Horyal Investments Holding Company for Atiak Sugar Factory in Northern region.

The sugar project, sitting on 25,000 acres of land, has been welcomed by the local leaders and residents, who view it as a big mitigation to poverty in the area. Currently, the milling plant at the factory is under construction and some sugarcane is ready for harvest while more is being planted.

Outgrowers in the surrounding districts have also been engaged, according to Hersi.

Ruhunda advised the Government to construct a bridge over river in the area that has cut off part of the sugarcane plantations, making it impossible to cross.

The area MP, Anthony Akol, said the project is expected to boost incomes in the Acholi sub-region, through job creation and direct supply of sugarcane to the factory.

Norbert Mao, the Democratic Party president, said all leaders in Acholi sub-region are in support of the project and is already giving result.

The sugarcane outgrowers, under Atiak Sugar Plantation Out Growers Co-operative Society Ltd, asked Parliament to address the challenges that are crippling the sugar industry in the proposed law.

Uganda has 23 registered sugar companies according to the trade ministry data.