

YOU'RE TOO OLD TO HAVE HIV: POLICIES PROPOSED TO END STIGMA AMONG ELDERLY



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diagnosis late, for HIV

HIV/Aids has been traditionally seen as a disease of younger people. However, many older adults do become newly infected with the virus. The advent of modern ARVs also allows individuals to live into old age. Older adults living with HIV are now reporting being doubly stigmatised, as they are branded by both age as well as HIV status. Dr Gichuki Kariuki, chair of the just-ended Maisha HIV conference said there is now a need to develop and scale up new prevention ways targeting various populations to enhance existing prevention interventions. We need to design and implement strategies for reduction of stigma against older people living with HIV while promoting dignity and compassion, he said in a summary of key proceedings. Dr Kariuki is also the Health CEC for Nyandarua County. At least 27 per cent of Kenyans living with HIV are old above 50 years and while some have lived with HIV for many years, others are infected recently. Speakers at the conference said old people are stigmatised by

the community and health workers. "I was asked what I was thinking getting HIV at 70 years," a 73-year-old man who got the virus three years ago said. Most studies on HIV-related stigma in Kenya focus on young adults but stigma studies from other countries

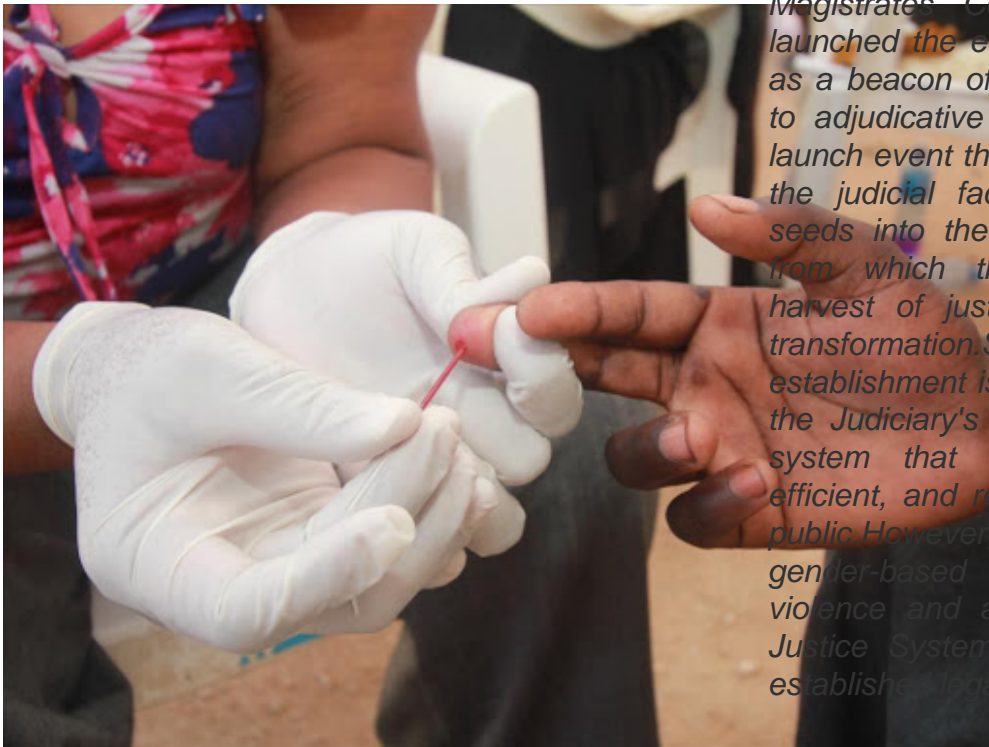
say older adults reported they were ashamed of their illness and some lost friends as a result of their illness. Dr Lazarus Momanyi, a medical doctor currently working with the National Aids and STI Control Programme (Nascop), said because of stigma, many old people seek diagnosis late, for HIV and for other co-morbidities. There's an assumption older people aren't acquiring HIV, or are not having sex. So we plan for young people not forgetting old people have risks. When they are diagnosed it's late with very low immunity, he said. The seventh Maisha Conference, which took place in Mombasa, provided a platform for policymakers, scientists, communities and partners to share knowledge and insights gained over almost four decades of the HIV

response. Most new HIV infections in Kenya are among people aged 15-24, with the incidence reducing with age. However, most people living with HIV are now above 35 years old. Momanyi said 68 per cent of all Kenyans on HIV treatment are aged above 35 years. An estimated 883,694 of the 1.4 million people living with HIV are aged between 35 and 74 years, many of them diagnosed in their younger years, he said. Public Health PS Mary Muthoni, who closed the meeting, said Kenya recorded a reduction of new HIV infections by 78 per cent in the last ten years. The HIV response in Kenya is a great example of how multiple sectors working together can be effective, she said. The core principles of a single coordinating authority, a harmonised country strategy, and a comprehensive national monitoring and evaluation framework have synergistically fostered unwavering dedication and collaborative accountability," she said. "This response is truly impressive and shows how other important health issues can also

be tackled successfully. While celebrating these achievements is important, our true joy lies in witnessing people living with HIV lead long and healthy lives. We acknowledge the collective efforts that have brought us here. Dr Jude Otogo, the executive director for the non-profit Regional Centre on Healthy Ageing,

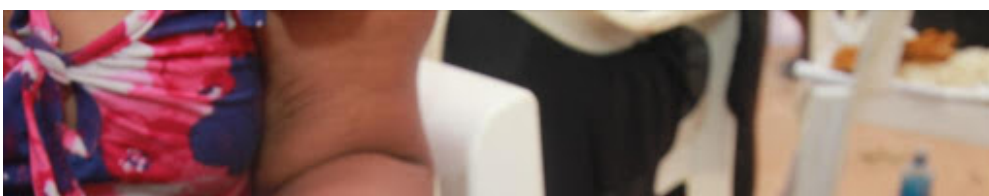
said HIV in old age also predisposes people to non-communicable diseases. He said Kenya is poorly prepared to tackle NCDs in old people living with HIV. WHO has guidelines for the management of healthcare for older persons (50 years plus). As a country, we haven't prepared to effectively manage the challenge of HIV and the population that is ageing. We should adopt the WHO integrated care guidelines for ageing persons, he said. He said most old people with HIV also suffer from pill burden (polypharmacy) using more than five different drugs a day. Some of the drugs alleviate side-effects of ARVs. Many are also taking drugs for comorbidities such as arthritis and diabetes, he said.

CJ KOOME OPENS FIRST HIGH COURT IN NYANDARUA



Chief Justice Martha Koome has presided over the opening of a new court building, the Ol-Kalou Law Courts complex, which will house the high court in Nyandarua, Environment and Land Court and a Magistrates' Court. She at the same time launched the e-filing system, which will serve as a beacon of justice, enabling easy access to adjudicative services. Speaking during the launch event the Chief Justice said in erecting the judicial facility, the people are sowing seeds into the fertile ground of Nyandarua, from which they anticipate an abundant harvest of justice, fairness, and communal transformation. She added that this establishment is also in perfect alignment with the Judiciary's vision of a people-centred justice system that is accessible, cost-effective, efficient, and responsive to the needs of the public. However, she warned against settling gender-based violence and sexual related violence and abuse through the Alternative Justice System. She said that it is only the established legal

GOVERNMENT TO HIRE EXTRA STATE COUNSELS AMID CASH CRUNCH



Amid the challenges, the department has promised to deliver and deal with hundreds of legal cases and legislative drafting.

Mose at the same time

noted the rising cases across the country of advocate complaints either due to failure or delay to remit clients cash. The Attorney-General chambers and the Department of Justice have announced plans to hire more state counsels to address the current shortage in the department. Despite financial constraints facing the office, the department said it was keen to address the shortage as it was affecting service delivery. Amid the challenges, the department has promised to deliver and deal with hundreds of legal cases and legislative drafting. This came as senior officers in the department signed their 2023-24 performance contracts in Naivasha in a ceremony graced by Solicitor-General Shadrack Mose. According to Mose, the State Law Office was one of the busiest departments of the government in terms of legislative drafting. He admitted that the department faced an acute shortage of staff but was quick to note that this would not hamper service delivery. Mose said that the government was addressing the shortage with a view of hiring more State counsels to address the legal and legislative issues. The shortage

has been caused by budgetary constraints but we are working with the national government to address it, he said. Addressing the press at the sidelines of the event in Morendat Gas Institute, the Solicitor-General challenged the head of departments to deliver. We have enough state counsels to appear in courts despite the shortage and we shall make sure we meet our targets as set in the performance contract, he said. Mose at the same time noted

the rising cases across the country of advocate complaints either due to failure or delay to remit clients cash. These complaints which are there have been dealt with by the commission on advocate complaints and tens of clients have benefitted from this, he said. He lauded the top leadership for their role in service delivery noting that the department was ranked second out of the 24 government ministries in the last financial year. During the ceremony, the Solicitor-General challenged the finance department to move with urgency and deal with the rising

RAY OF HOPE: KINDIKI MOVES TO CUT PASSPORT CARTELS AT NYAYO HOUSE



Kenyans applying for passports can now cheer up after Interior CS Kithure Kindiki moved to crush corruption cartels at Nyayo House. For the last two days, the CS has camped at the Immigration offices where he has declared it a crime scene and torture chamber for those seeking the crucial travel document. We will clean up this place from corruption cartels on anyone asking for bribes here. We will arrest and prosecute them, Kindiki said when he made an impromptu visit to the place. We have already made some arrests and I want to make it clear that this space is not available for corruption. During the visit, the CS listened for the painful ordeal of ordinary Kenyans who have been forced to wait for several months to secure the documents if they cannot pay the bribe. Kenyans, security officers and immigration officers working here who are doing a good job and really I applaud them to continue being patriotic Kenyans. However, the public cannot be complaining if there must be a few among

seeking the crucial travel document.

g us who are soiling our name, he said. The problem has been compounded by the frequent breakdown of passport printing machines and the lack of printing papers. We have had two problems; technology and production. Then there was corruption that is facilitated by brokers, the CS said. The few

officers who are colluding with brokers to demand bribes from applicants of passports and other vital documents will be dealt with firmly. On Thursday, the CS disclosed the backlog had reduced from about 58,000 a fortnight ago to 44,000. The backlog of 44,000 applications, Kindiki said, will be resolved within 14 days and all subsequent applications will be processed expeditiously. On Friday, the CS turned to Nyayo House where he hinted at the state's plan to have Kenyans get their passports within 12 hours of application. Our dream as a ministry is to have a one-day service. You apply in the morning and get the passport in the evening, he told journalists. The CS disclosed the war on corruption cartels will

be extended to the regional immigration offices where Kenyans have complained of extortion and delays. On Thursday, Kindiki said that no person will be allowed to hang around Nyayo House. The long story is this; we are committed to completing the journey we have started. Although there is progress, we are not yet there. The changes will be permanent, he said. In addition, access to the premises where vital security documents are processed will only be granted to applicants with the necessary documents and staff members. Kindiki urged applicants to be cautious when seeking services to avoid being duped. He said that no applicant should give any money to facilitate faster processing and issuance of passports. The Interior CS said the Immigration Department will receive up to Sh1.3 billion in appropriation aid beginning the financial year 2023-24. The money will enable the acquisition of new equipment, including printers, and revamp the department's infrastructure to offer better services to citizens

BODA BODA RIDERS START CHAMA, RAISE SH350,000 FOR SCHOOL FEES



They came up with the idea because they never

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The group secretary

Lucy Omollo said they
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A group of boda boda riders in Ndhiwa have raised Sh350,000 to support the education of their children as schools reopen for the third term. The Canaan Boda Boda Self-Help Group came up with the idea to spread the burden of looking for school fees. The riders hail from South Kabuoch ward, Ndhiwa constituency. The group which started in 2020 as a self-help group wanted to change the perception that they have to seek financial assistance from politicians to support their children's education. The group chairman Joseph Odhiambo said they came up with the idea because they never wanted their children to stay home with them due lack of fees as schools reopen. We wanted to help and relieve each other of the burden of paying school fees alone. The idea has now made us not to beg politicians to pay for our children's school fees, Odhiambo said. The group has 99 members and each contributed at least Sh3,000. Some were solicited from their friends. Odhiambo said they managed to raise Sh350,000 which

WHY ELECTRIC MOTORCYCLES WILL MAKE OUR ROADS SAFER RUTO

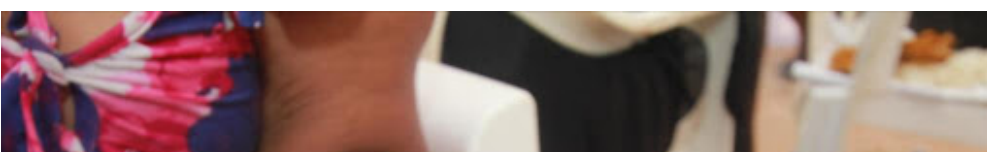


The bikes, which will

retail at Sh150,000,
have been
manufactured by Spiro,
an electric motorcycle
manufacturer with a
presence in Togo,
Benin, Rwanda.
According to Spiro, the
e-boda bodas are only
charged once at night.

President William Ruto says electric motorcycles will make Kenyan roads safer as he launched the bikes in Mombasa on Friday. Speaking during the launch of electric motorcycles at Mama Ngina Waterfront Park, Ruto said the speed of the electric motorcycles will be controlled from somewhere else to avoid over speeding thus help reduce road accidents. "It cannot overspeed because the speed can be controlled from somewhere else. Even if you have a reckless rider, they will not have the luxury to ride this mode of a vehicle at a speed that is dangerous and makes the whole enterprise a big expense on our health," he said. He added that electric motorcycles cannot be stolen since they can be traced and immobilised. "The E-mobility sector that we have now brought in place is that these motorcycles will have traceability. If somebody tries to steal, it can be switched off," he said. The President acknowledged that motorcycles have been a menace on the roads for being involved in avoidable accidents

BABY CALEB ODANGA, 7, DIES AFTER THREE WEEKS IN COMA



Doctors explained to the family that their son had no realistic chance of survival and no medical interventions would reverse his condition. According to the family, the doctors explained to them the severity of the

damage caused to their son's brain. Baby Caleb Odanga, a 7-year-old boy who fell from a merry-go-round swing while on a school trip has died. Baby Caleb was fighting for his life at the Kenyatta University Teaching and Referral Hospital Intensive Care Unit where tubes and machines were helping him stay alive. He suffered a traumatic brain injury and was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). "A golden heart stopped beating and Baby Caleb went to be with the Lord, It is such an immense grief for the family and we do not know how we shall cop from here," his father Mwangi Odanga said. Caroline Maina, Caleb's mother said she has been camping at the hospital waiting for her son to recover. "Since August 8, it has been hard for me because Caleb is my only child," she said. Doctors explained to the family that their son had no realistic chance of survival and no medical interventions would reverse his condition. The medics advised the family to pull the life support on their son, but the family hung onto hope that their baby wou

MOMBASA LEADERS OPPOSE OIL REFINERY TAKEOVER BY KPC



The Star has learnt that
MPs Omar Mwinyi,
Rashid Bedzimba and
Mombasa Senator
Mohamed Faki, are
opposed to the
take-over.

The proposed

acquisition of KPRL by

Some Mombasa leaders have reservations about the acquisition of Kenya Petroleum Refinery Limited by Kenya Pipeline Company. The Star has learnt that Changamwe MP Omar Mwinyi, where the refinery is located, Kisumu's Rashid Bedzimba and Mombasa Senator Mohamed Faki, are opposed to the takeover. Instead, they want the government to pump in about Sh7 billion that is required to revive the refinery and upgrade the systems in it to make KPRL more efficient. On Wednesday, Energy CS Davis Chirchir announced that the acquisition will be by transfer of shares as opposed to transfer of business, a model advised by Price Waterhouse Coopers, an audit firm contracted to study and advise all the best takeover options. The Cabinet had approved the takeover on July 18. Speaking at a press conference at Mombasa Governor Abdulswamad Nassirs office, Chirchir allayed fears that the acquisition of the KPRL by KPC will lead to job losses for any staff of the two parastatals. Chirchir said instead, there will be

more job opportunities for the people of Mombasa, where the refinery's 370-acre land is located strategically, close to the sea. Nobody is losing any job. We had PWC doing a study to confirm which is the best acquisition option and we've zeroed in on the acquisition by transfer of shares as opposed to

transfer of business which would have had many challenges, Chirchir said. The refinery closed down in 2014 due to challenges of yield shift, with the product being refined not matching planned output, thus not making any profit. Chirchir said KPRL is a prime asset that should be put to good use. KPC, according to the CS, has a strong balance sheet of Sh150 billion which will revive activities at the defunct KPRL. But Omar, Bedzimba, Faki and Chagamwe MCA Bernard Ogutu said the acquisition of KPRL by KPC is in bad faith. The Mombasa politicians, CS Chirchir, Governor Nassir, and MCA Fadhili Makarani (Port Reitz) were in a meeting at the county chief's office that took almost five hours over the mat

ter. When they emerged to address the press, Mwinyi, Bedzimba, Faki and Ogutu did not show up for the press conference, signalling a disagreement. Speaking to the Star on the phone, Mwinyi said they went to the meeting to listen to what CS Chirchir had to say. We have reservations. We are waiting for the documents the CS said he will avail to us to explain more about what is going on, Mwinyi said. The Chagamwe MP said the refinery was doing well before government functionaries developed an interest in the oil business and worked to kill the refinery so their businesses could grow. At that time, we were told KPRL required Sh5 billion for an upgrade and an investor was brought in on condition they will upgrade it. However, the investor milked it dry before running away. We were left alone, Omar said. The best thing would have been to commission an independent research to determine the best way the facility can be used. The Chagamwe legislator said PWC would only have been biased towards the g

overnment, which contracted them in the first place. Whoever pays the piper calls the tune, he said. He said he failed to understand why the government chose to keep quiet for all those years amidst their calls to upgrade the facility. By the time they decided to acquire the KPRL, it means they had an intention in future to take loans using the assets of KPRL as security. Why dont they allow KPRL themselves to take a loan and do the upgrade

they need? Mwinyi posed. He said the government should have leased the facility instead of taking it over. They are hellbent on doing what they want to do whether we like it or not. They want to set us up with staged public participation as a by the way, the MP said. Meanwhile, we are looking at other openings that are available to us then we will make a decision. Joining them at the press conference would have made us look like we are party to the process. MCA Ogutu said as representatives of the people, they were never involved in the decision-making pro

cess from the beginning. Calling us today was to try to make us rubber stamp their decisions and that does not sit right with us, he noted. He said since their decisions had not been sorted from the onset, any decision they make now will not count. The way they started it, let them continue with it, Ogutu said. The essence of public participation, he noted, is for all involved to be heard. CS Chirchir said KPC will still have to make a decision on which business model to adopt after taking over the KPRL facility. They will tell us whether they will go the refinery way, whether storage or bring other investors because an asset of 370 acres is such a big asset, Chirchir said. He said the national government will work with the Mombasa County government to revamp the KPRL assets. The KPRL has 45 storage tanks, which have a capacity of 484 million litres, 254 million of which are designated for refined goods and the remaining 233 million litres for crude oil. With the acquisition, Kenya will have in

finite storage room for petroleum products, utilising the new Kipevu Oil Terminal 2. Kenya, with its strategic location, hopes to double the capacity of handling transit petroleum products from 35,000 tonnes to attract Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi to begin using Mombasa as their petroleum product supplier since it will be cheaper than Dar es Salaam. Governor Nassir said Mombasa people should benefit from the rejuvenation of the KPRL facility when the master plan is ready. The people of Mombasa should also benefit from the CSR (Corporate Social

Responsibility) that KPC will undertake, Nassir said. Already, the county has worked with KPC to refurbish the Port Reitz Hospital but Nassir said more has to be done for the hospital. At the same time, the county will give written delegated powers to the engineers at KPC to enable them to remove bottlenecks when it comes to urban planning. This will enable the county to synchronise its urban planning for the whole county with the KPC plans when setting

up oil pipelines, water pipelines and other necessary infrastructure. It has been a nightmare in the past. When we were doing Kibarani, there was a problem. The road took so long because no one knew what should pass where," Nassir said. So, as the custodian of urban planning, we will be in charge of that. The governor said the new master plan for the KPRL which will now be under KPC will include social amenities like schools and hospitals built on the 370 acres of land which the refinery sits on and which will be redesigned. After the meeting, the CS and his team went to talk to the KPRL staff to assure them they were in safe hands. The KPRL staff have been working with the KPC staff through a lease agreement where the KPC was using the KPRL tanks, which were rehabilitated. Chirchir said the government wants to accelerate the use of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) as a transitional fuel to mitigate the challenges of climate change by reducing the use of wood fuel. Kenya will host the Africa CI

SOIL ACIDITY DENYING BUNGOMA FARMERS GOOD YIELDS EXPERTS



Experts argued that if every farmer knows the status of his soil then it will help boost their yield

production by a huge percentage.

Mariera lauded OCP Africa for training soil experts who will be distributed in Bungoma

to continue with soil Agricultural experts in Bungoma are now attributing acidic soils to low yields in long and short planting seasons. Western and Nyanza regions benefited from a three-day soil testing campaign, aimed at increasing agricultural productivity in the regions after research indicated that most farmers were not taking soil testing seriously. Experts argued that if every farmer knows the status of his soil then it will help boost their yield production by a huge percentage. Speaking at Mabanga Agricultural Training College (ATC) on Thursday during the release of the report after the three-day soil testing drive, Bungoma County Agricultural director Fredrick Wotia lauded the partners for coming together to ensure that the soil testing awareness is spread in many counties. We are here today not just to launch the soil testing campaign but to also strategise and ensure that we attain our countrys national food security goal because when every farmer knows their soil status they are able to choose w

isely on the type of crops to grow and at what time, Wotia said. Wotia noted that there has been low harvesting in the region for a very long time attributing it to the lack of soil testing among farmers. As a county, we have been trying to provide farm inputs for our farmers within Bungoma but because most of them don't know the soil status they end up getting devastating produce, he said. With the partnership, Wotia maintains that this will be an eye-opener for the farmers to test their soils

and determine the type of seeds and crops to plant. He pointed out that since 2014, a test that was conducted by experts indicated that the region's soil is acidic and contributes to low crop yields. Soil remains the major medium for crop production, if we don't have productive soils then achieving national food security will not be an easy task, he said. He, however, called on the farmers to come out in large numbers to unveil soil samples for testing at the Mabanga Agricultural Training College adding

that the lab truck will also go around the county to test soils from the villages. He also noted that the county has also had extension officers in the wards who are going around to create awareness about soil testing and the procedures. Soil testing has a procedure of which our extension officers are going around to educate our farmers, he said. Michael Mariera, programmes coordinator, Kenya Crops and Dairy Market System (KCDMS) said that 240 samples of soil that were taken from different parts of Bungoma were tested during the three days rapid soil testing exercises noting that almost half of the soil showed acidic status. After the rapid soil testing exercise we found that the soils are acidic and we need more partners to come and educate our farmers on how to deal with the situation or else farmers will continue getting poor yields, he said. In addition, Mariera lauded OCP Africa for training soil experts who will be distributed in Bungoma to continue with soil testing in villages for

free. OCP in partnership with the Bungoma County government unveiled a mobile soil PH testing clinic that is currently moving around villages to test soil, Mariera noted. Judy Odongo, deputy chief of party for USAID Kenya Crops and Dairy Markets Systems Activity said that the exercise is geared towards increasing the agricultural production in the regions where the exercise has been initiated. She argues that her organisation's partnership with the County government Department of Agriculture is to promote the use of better soil management systems adding that it supports mitigating the shortage of

fertiliser in Kenya. Odongo said that the campaign came after experts carried out research and realised that most farmers manage their soil poorly. She further said that soils are an important component in crop production and they should be catered for with absolute dedication. She noted most soils in Nyanza and Western are both acidic and alkaline which is not good for crop production that is why

READY FOR ACTION! ATPU TRAINED ON MOBILE TACTICAL OPERATIONS



The Directorate of Criminal Investigations said the training is timely

because the country is actively battling existential terror threats and violent extremism. According to the DCI, ERT's operational capabilities have been

Anti-Terrorism Police Unit's Emergency Response Team has undergone training on mobile tactical operations. The training involved skillful tactical manoeuvres on motorbikes to counter suspects. The Directorate of Criminal Investigations said the training is timely because the country is actively battling existential terror threats and violent extremism. "The war against terrorism has today received a major boost following the successful completion of a rigorous mobile tactical operations training offered to Anti-Terrorism Police Unit's Emergency Response Team (ERT)," DCI said in a statement.

majorly bolstered to achieve high precision and effectiveness.