



Mt Kenya was split into two by two strangers, and Gachagua won

Mwangi Muiruri / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua insists that he is bound by the truth and aspires to remain so in his utterances.

But political pundits are now worried that while it is good for him to remain truthful, it is not clear who will tell him the truth about himself.

Mr Gachagua, 57, has inherited the seat of Mt Kenya kingpin in an abrupt and unexpected feat.

It is the first time the region is getting a political kingpin whose political experience is less than five years as a first-time MP.

Before Mr Gachagua, this position of influence was previously held by Dedan Kimathi (pre-freedom era), Mzee Jomo Kenyatta (1963-1978), Njenga Karume (1978-1992) Kenneth Matiba (1993-1997), Mwai Kibaki (1997-2013) and Uhuru Kenyatta (2013-2022).

Read: Gachagua: I don't regret telling off Uhuru in front of dignitaries

On September 13 at the Kasarani International Sports Centre, Mr Gachagua took his oath as the second most powerful man in Kenya. Before God and man, from 12.53pm to 13.03pm, Mr Gachagua, swore allegiance to his country, raising the Bible high in his right hand with his left on the Constitution held for him by his wife.

While many were yet to come to terms with his phenomenal rise, he was more shocked, as he could not hide his bewilderment when he alighted from his vehicle at the stadium at 11.28am to a rousing welcome from tens of thousands of supporters, who needed a remote control to be muted from wild ululations.

Hypnotised, Mr Gachagua stood rooted, appearing not to know how to behave under such circumstances. But his political and administrative instincts came to his rescue, and he smiled in a manner never witnessed before.

He was to relish a similar moment at 11.53am, when he hugged Dr Ruto into the stadium amid wilder cheers from fans.

It was hard to imagine that this man now being escorted by a dozen security officers to take his oath was the same one arrested at 5am on July 22 last year over corruption allegations and spent the weekend on the hard and cold cement of police cells until Monday, when he was released on a pretrial bond.

He was to detail the arrest as "the most humiliating, where they plucked me from my bed, frog-marched me naked in front of my children so as to take me to Nairobi to humiliate me in the name of politics.

Read: Adios Jayden... Enter Riggy G, Kenya's new meme king

Mr Gachagua jumped the queue to beat accomplished political talents like Laikipia East MP Mwangi Kiunjuri, former National Assembly Speaker Justin Muturi and even Prof Kithure Kindiki.

It is hard to understand how our Mt Kenya people defied President Uhuru Kenyatta in the August 9 General Election", said Jubilee secretary-general Jeremiah Kioni, adding that "we made a mistake that might take time to rectify".

He said that "those of us with a conviction will never abandon the Azimio la Umoja One Kenya Coalition Party aspirations and we shall remain true to that cause".

Mr Kioni's stand is the elephant in Mr Gachaguan's house, said Mt Kenya political analyst Prof Ngugi Njoroge.

Read: Election shows who regional kingmakers are, with Roba the new kid on the block

"Mr Gachagua will have to work for Mt Kenya unity. If Azimio's running mate [Martha] Karua and Mr Kioni's statements of remaining outside the majority formation that voted for Dr William Ruto as President are anything to go by, then Gachagua has a journey to walk in uniting the region, he said.

It "is the first time that the Mountain has been split by two strangers and that in itself is a challenge", said career administrator Mr Joseph Kaguthi.

Mr Gachagua, he added, must remain cognisant that for the first time, the Mountain is not united by one of its own or by a political party based in the region.

"More importantly, it is well for Mr Gachagua to know that for the first time, the Mountain giving Mr Odinga more than 800,000 votes is a major [event] that cannot be wished away," he said.

While Mr Gachagua insists that he and some Mt Kenya rebels including Kandara MP Alice Wahome, Naivasha's Jayne Kihara, Kikuyu's Kimani Ichung'wa, Gatundu South ex-MP Moses Kuria and Kiharu's Ndindi Nyoro whipped the Mountain to vote for Dr Ruto, there are many residents who believe Dr Ruto won acceptance on his own and he would



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have still bagged the region even if he had campaigned alone.

"This is one election where our people behaved in a very new manner. They had followed Dr Ruto on their own and they were the ones who exerted pressure on their politicians to follow them to support him. This time round, they were not herded by their politicians ... it was the other way round," Prof Njoroge said.

But Mr Gachagua believes that Mt Kenya followed him to Dr Ruto, which raises the question that analysts are posing: Would he have succeeded in telling the region not to vote for Dr Ruto if he had attempted it?

Read: Mt Kenya bigwigs who paid the price for sticking with Uhuru

On August 25, Mr Gachagua attempted to answer that question when he attended the swearing-in of Nyeri Governor Mutahi Kahiga.

"You people of Mt Kenya and Nyeri do not know what you have done to me. I will forever remain indebted to you, he said.

I came here to beg you not to shame me as your son in the United Democratic Alliance (UDA) supporting Dr Ruto. I begged you to dress me up with respect so that I could stand boldly in our politics and declare I have the people behind me.

You did not betray me, because you voted for our candidates."

In a speech heavily laden with affectionate emotions, many fearing that Mr Gachagua would break down and wail, he said: "I thank you all from the bottom of my heart for not leaving me naked."

On Sunday night, Mr Gachagua said on KTN that "we in Mt Kenya gave the Dr Ruto presidency about 47 percent of total votes".

Mr Gachagua insisted that the sharing of power will be commensurate with that strength, prompting analysts to ask whether he appreciates that he is a national Deputy President who should be pursuing a national healing and unifying cause than being fixated on a 'power grab' by Mt Kenya.

Mr Kaguthi fears that "such pressures on a sworn-in President that President being the witty fox that is Dr Ruto will not attract negative engagements bound to breed a counter-attack".

He said that "boardroom haggling for power based on rewards should stick away from the public domain as opposed to the current situation when Mr Gachagua is taking every other opportunity to talk of percentages and sharing of power".

While Mt Kenya and the Rift Valley were important in the numbers game, he said, other regions that rejected Mr Odinga and instead became battlegrounds greatly helped Dr Ruto to win in the first round.

"This is an election where every single vote was important. All votes in Dr Ruto's win were important, including the very few he got in Luo Nyanza, Mr Kaguthi said.

He added that we should give Dr Ruto the latitude to form his government without appearing to hold him hostage, in a manner that can lead him to unite the 53 percent votes to block our capture mentality".

Murang'a Council of Elders chairman Rugami Chombou said "we are giving Mr Gachagua and his troops time to simmer and erupt".

He said it is too early to start running to Gachagua's camp when it has not even become clear how he intends to lead Mt Kenya".

He added that "Mt Kenya stands divided along the Kenyatta and Gachagua lines and the first task is to pursue that line that unites the region as well as remaining nationalistic on how to make the nation remain glued together".

The greatest test for Mr Gachagua is how to unite the region, said Nominated MP Sabina Chege.

"It won't be easy ... it might sound populist to say there are no divisions since Dr Ruto's United Democratic Alliance (UDA) swept nearly all seats in the region, Ms Chege told Inooro TV immediately after she was nominated to Parliament, one of only three Jubilee legislators in Mt Kenya.

But the truth of the matter is that the votes that Azimio received, the serious camps that were in Azimio campaigns ... leave us scattered. He must pursue our unity."

Besides Ms Chege, the other two Jubilee lawmakers are David Kiaraho (Olkalou) and Mr Kwenya Thuku (Kinangop).



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Ms Chege said "respect, dialogue and concessions are the only hope for area unity".

Mr Gachagua is the eighth-born in a family of nine. His parents live in Hiriga village, Nyeri County, a walking distance from the Sagana State Lodge. They fought in the Mau Mau and his father built and serviced guns for freedom fighters. Mr Gachagua must have inherited their willpower.

Described by his close allies as a man of raw instincts when it comes to forging alliances, hard to please and who never forgives betrayal and handsomely rewards loyalty, Mr Gachagua is married to Mathira-based Pastor Dorcas Wanjiku and together they have two adult sons.

In 1985, Mr Gachagua joined the University of Nairobi (UoN), graduating with a degree in political science and literature in 1988. At UoN, he was a leader of the Nyeri District University Students Association (Ndusa), and chairman of the Association of Literature Students.

He attended Kabiruini Primary School from 1971 to 1977 before proceeding to Kianyaga High School for his O-levels and A-levels. He underwent paramilitary training at the Administration Police Institute in 1990.

After graduating from university, Mr Gachagua worked at the ministry of home affairs and national heritage before he joined the Administration Police Institute in 1990. After leaving the police college, he was posted to the Office of the President as a district officer cadet, serving between 1991 and 1992.

Mr Gachagua then went on to serve as a district officer in Kakamega, Ng'arua and Laikipia districts. Between 1999 and 2000, he was at the Kenya School of Government, graduating with a diploma in advanced public administration.

Between 2001 and 2006, he was a personal assistant to Mr Kenyatta. From 2007 to 2017, he remained behind the scenes, running his businesses before he contested the Mathira seat in 2017 and won.

End of Mt Kenya was split into two by two strangers, and Gachagua won

Without a trace: Puzzle of missing academic writer, IT consultant and MCAs husband

Steve Otieno / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

When Martin Mungai left his house in Roysambu on June 30 to meet a friend in Ruiru, his family did not know that they would soon be looking for him as a missing person.

The 29-year-old, who made a living from online academic writing, had informed his people, including his mother, about the meeting, and that he would be back in the evening.

However, when his friend called his mother a few hours later asking about Mungai, his mother, Mary Mungai, knew something was wrong.

I told her that Mungai had left Roysambu much earlier and it was puzzling that he had not arrived in Ruiru. When I tried calling him, his phone was off. I sensed something wasn't right. However, I told myself that his phone's battery might have died and calmed myself, Ms Mungai said.

When Mungai failed to show up that night, his mother reported the matter to Kasarani Police Station. The family is yet to get any feedback from police.

Read: Families ask courts to help find abducted relatives

Mungai's phone has never been switched on, its silence adding to the suffering of his family, which has been looking for him since.

How can my son just disappear and no one, not even the police, have been able to find any clue as to his whereabouts? Ms Mungai posed adding, This feeling of helplessness is tormenting me.

Mungai's mysterious disappearance is similar to that of Vincent Owino, 35, an IT consultant who went missing last Tuesday. His family believes he was abducted.

Security guards at his office block in Milimani said five people—two women in hijab and three men—arrived in a white Prado and picked him up last week. The strangers identified themselves as police officers.

They handcuffed Owino, bundled him into their car, and sped off along Rose Avenue. The matter was reported to Kilimani Police Station. His wife, Lisper Murugi, said she can't imagine anyone wanting to harm her husband.

Read: Puzzle as six men vanish without trace

I just want my husband and father of my two children back. How can the police not have anything to tell us when all roads in Milimani have CCTV cameras? she asked. The children are under three.

Mr Owino's sister, Mercy Owuor, said: Our mother fell ill after being told that Vincent is missing. Her condition worsens with every passing day, she said.

James Muthee's family is also in tears. Their son, husband to recently elected Mlango Kubwa Ward Rep Susan Makungu, vanished on July 14.

Witnesses say Muthee was arrested at Kamakis area by six people who identified themselves as police after blocking his car. They bundled him into one of their two vehicles and sped off with him. One of the abductors drove away in Muthee's car.

Read: Families visit mortuaries in search of missing kin

His father, John Mwangi, could not hide his grief as he appealed to the state to intervene.

John is my first child, my first son. I do not know if they have killed him. I don't want to imagine that. All I want is to be told where my son is, he said. His sister, Agnes Mwangi, wondered why police investigations have not yielded new information.

The family has sought the assistance of human rights pressure group Haki Africa. The lobby's Executive Director Hussein Khaleed expressed concern at the lacklustre performance of the police in tracing people who have disappeared.

We call on the new regime, led by President William Ruto, to treat this matter of enforced abductions and disappearances with the urgency it deserves, he said.

End of Without a trace: Puzzle of missing academic writer, IT consultant and MCAs husband



News

Ebola breaks out in Uganda, kills one

Monitor / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Uganda has registered one case of Ebola in the central Mubende District, high-level government officials briefed on the matter said last night.

The announcement of the outbreak, which is considered sensitive due to its likely negative impact on tourism, was made this morning.

"Uganda confirms an outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in Mubende District, Uganda. The confirmed case is a 24 year old male a resident Ngabano village of Madudu Sub County in Mubende District presented with EVD symptoms and later succumbed," the health ministry said.

Health Minister Jane Ruth Aceng was reported to be in New York, and sources said officials first briefed President Museveni.

Senior Ministry of Health staff rushed to Mubende after unknown number of residents succumbed to what was initially reported as a strange illness until yesterdays confirmation.

The Democratic Republic of Congo, which neighbours Uganda to the west, is currently battling an outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease, previously categorised as a hemorrhagic fever.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the disease is transmitted to people from animals and spreads through human-to-human infection.

Uganda has had at least three previous episodes of Ebola Virus Disease, the most deadly being in 2000 that killed hundreds, including its lead treatment specialist, Dr Matthew Lukwiya.

End of Ebola breaks out in Uganda, kills one



Brad Osumo: I am the small fish selling 'Big Fish

Eddy Ashioya / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

He is a busy man. At least that is the impression I get from the Twitter-esque summa cum laude hot shot, I being the underdog writer with a bowl out for a story. I say Twitter because that is where his big break came from. Like an updated Messiah, from retweets and likes, he now feeds multitudes.

He earns his bread by selling fish. He is Osumo Brad, a 29-year-old fishmonger, as he likes to describe himself, doing what God meant him to do setting up The Big Fish Restaurant, a nidus for social intercourse, where the whos-who of the whos-who take their dates on Fridays, when everyone is ready to usher in the weekend just like God meant it to be with a belly full of fish and hands grasping Dutch courage.

Nairobi, it seems, has always had a predilection for fish. Think of the KOsewes, the Mama Oliechs, and now The Big Fish.

Read: Mawimbi Restaurant puts Kenya on global map

Why Big Fish, anyway?

I wanted everyone to know this as the place you go to for the good kind of fish. We want[1]ed to be popular, and famous. His honesty is disarming, in a way that, depending on whom you ask, is either driven by ambition or avarice.

I settle on a Biblical phrase: What you confess you possess.

And speaking of big fish, he recently hosted a star-studded line-up of A-list politicians, including former Prime Minister Raila Odinga and Narc-Kenya party leader Martha Karua. Throw in lawyer-cum-politician Nelson Havi.

Azimio la Umoja presidential aspirant Raila Odinga, his running mate Martha Karua and a host of other leaders at Big Fish restaurant in Nairobi.

Asking him about that moment feels intrusive as he is clearly still swimming in a pool of aggrandisement.

Now, everyone wants to have what Baba had. Can he satisfy the masses?

I think I can, you know. We have almost 40 employees. Cards on the table, I confess I am not a big fan of fish (ahem) but I can be persuaded.

So, why fish? I grew up in Migori. I only came to Nairobi for work, with no success. I decided to cast my net on the other side to see what I could catch. Now, we cook fish for our clients the way we cook fish at home. The work he is speaking about is in line with bio-chemistry, which was his major at the university. There were no jobs and rather than stay at home complaining (on Twitter), he decided to team up with his sister, who was selling fish on the roadside, in some sort of quid quo pro

"I would rather be a small fish in a big pond. You have more challenges and outsmarting them gives you a sense of pride. You approach life with the mentality of an underdog, and who doesn't love an underdog, you know?"

While the sister prepared the meals, Brad became the face of the business. As fate would have it, it was Twitter that would provide the rocket fuel that would launch their dreams.

Quite speedily, one of Nairobi's most popular fish joints became one of its most valuable, too. From their inaugural branch in Roasters, Garden Estate, opened four years ago, they recently opened another on Church Road, Westlands. Have things turned out the way that he expected at 29? I never had expectations. I just knew that I had to have a car and a house. But Big Fish has taken me places. I think of a joke which I am overeager to share with him.

Read: Family's bet on a pizzeria in Kisumu pays off handsomely

You know I could have started this series with other people but my teacher always told me to aim high to go for the Big Fish. He doesn't get it, so I move on. What does he spend his money on? I'm a teetotaler but I spend a lot of my time in the clubs. I don't even buy stuff for myself, you know?

He finishes everything with that verbal tic, you know. I can tell, from his challenges, that he is a different kind of CEO. The ones who lead from the heart. He is an avatar for the new age manager the jeans-wearing, tee-shirt clad honcho.

Brad Osumo, the proprietor of the Big fish restaurant in Westlands carrying plates of fish and ugali on September 15, 2022.

My biggest struggle right now is that everyone is looking to me for guidance. When you have a business, you are like a parent. They all expect you to have deep insights into life. That's the price you pay, you know?



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Success is doing what makes you happy. Its not the money aspect; its internal fulfilment. There are people who start something and stop, but if you are consistent in your activities, there is no sweeter feeling than making it in the end, you know? When it comes to the fishes, he remains an arriviste rather than an aristocrat.

He remembers his last big failure, when he almost walked away from it all.

Actually, he did.

In 2018, business was so bad that he left for the village, swearing never to touch fish again. But the thing with callings is that they are a flea in the ear. He came back and is here for good, channeling all his joie de vivre peppered with reminiscence. When I get the opportunity, I hit him with the question I have been yearning to ask: small fish, big pond, or big fish, small pond?

I would rather be a small fish in a big pond. You have more challenges and outsmarting them gives you a sense of pride. You approach life with the mentality of an underdog, and who doesnt love an underdog, you know? I know.

End of Brad Osumo: I am the small fish selling 'Big Fish



How Uhuru, Ruto spent Sh579 million on travel three months to August elections

John Mutua / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

President William Ruto and his predecessor Uhuru Kenyatta more than doubled the spending on local travel to Sh579 million in the three months to June as campaigns for the August elections picked up momentum.

Although Dr Ruto was the incumbent Deputy President, Mr Kenyatta had thrown his weight behind opposition leader Raila Odinga, triggering a vicious campaign for the top job.

The heightened travel saw spending on trips by the Presidency Dr Ruto and Mr Kenyatta's office-- jump 191.3 percent from Sh198.79 million they spent in the three months to June 2021, the Controller of Budget report shows.

The Sh579 million is equivalent to 66.2 percent of the Sh873.90 million the Presidency spent on trips in the year to June, reflecting the increased travel by the two protagonists as Kenya approached the August 9 General Election.

Read: State saves Sh9.4 billion from scrapped fuel subsidy

The Supreme Court unanimously upheld the election of Dr Ruto as President, rejecting a petition lodged by Mr Odinga and his running mate, Martha Karua, to have the result overturned.

The seven-judge bench said the petitioners failed to prove claims that the vote had been rigged.

Last month, the chairman of the electoral commission, Wafula Chebukati, said Dr Ruto won 50.5 per cent of the vote, while Mr Odinga secured 48.8 per cent. But four out of seven electoral commissioners disowned the results, throwing Dr Ruto's victory into doubt.

The increased travel spending came amid an austerity plan by the Treasury to free up cash for development and essential services such as health and education in a country grappling with high poverty levels.

The budget office data show that the national government splashed Sh20.17 billion on local and foreign travel in the year to June, reflecting a 41.9 percent jump from Sh14.21 billion spent a year earlier.

Government employees are entitled to per diems and other allowances whenever they travel locally on official assignments that include training and seminars.

The data shows that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs tasked with spearheading Kenya's diplomatic ties more than doubled its expenditure on travel to Sh2.44 billion, a 73.2 percent jump from Sh1.402 billion.

Other big spenders were the PSC at Sh2.29 billion, a 42.5 percent jump from Sh1.6 billion, and the Office of the President at Sh957.4 million, a 37.7 percent jump from Sh695 million spent a year earlier.

ALSO READ: Bumpy economic ride for Ruto's first 100 days

Members of Parliament and Senators spent Sh5.73 billion on foreign and local trips in the year under review.

Taxpayers have over the years spent billions of shillings on air tickets and per diems for State officials, especially on trips to expensive destinations in the US and expensive European cities like London, Paris, and Geneva.

Controller of Budget Margaret Nyakango attributed the surge in spending on travel to the lifting of restrictions on social gatherings and local flights, setting the stage for high spending.

Spending on local travel slowed down in 2020 after Kenya banned social gatherings and suspended domestic flights after reporting the first positive case of coronavirus in March of the same year.

The bans had led to a suspension of local training and domestic travel for State officers. The travel restrictions led to a work-from-home shift, denying the top officials the perks.

But the officials have since late last year embarked on increased travel locally, mainly for training. MPs also embarked on early campaigns for the August 9 elections after the easing of the restrictions in July last year.

Read: Ruto's top woes as he takes oath

The spending craze highlights the struggles by the Treasury to cut non-essential travel locally and abroad to free up cash for development.

Treasury Cabinet Secretary Ukur Yatani has since 2018 maintained that all non-core expenditure will be reviewed to ensure the government can make savings and fund its programmes without relying too much on debt.

End of How Uhuru, Ruto spent Sh579 million on travel three months to August elections

MPs seek to be paid more than Court of Appeal judges, want sitting allowance back

David Mwere / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

MPs will be paid more than a judge of the Court of Appeal if the parliamentary leadership manages to push the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC) to reinstate the plenary sitting allowance.

The 416 MPs in the two Houses of Parliament National Assembly (349) and Senate (67) in the 11th and 12th Parliament had been pocketing Sh5,000 in plenary sitting allowance.

However, on July 28, SRC Chairperson Lyn Mengich published a gazette notice abolishing the allowance even as she introduced Sh150,000 in house allowance, setting their monthly pay at Sh710,000 and upgraded their job group. The notice came into force on August 9.

Other than the house allowance, the monthly remuneration for the lawmakers includes Sh426,000 in basic salary and Sh134,000 in salary market adjustment. The monthly pay does not include the allowances they pocket when attending House committee meetings.

Read: Changes that await the new MPs in Parliament

The scrapping of the plenary sitting allowance was so that the MPs monthly pay does not exceed that of Court of Appeal judges, who are superior in the pay grade. But this has not gone down well with the newly inaugurated MPs who are yet to start discharging their mandate.

Yesterday, National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetangula gave the clearest indication that the abolished sitting allowance will be restored. While addressing lawmakers during their induction at a city hotel, Mr Wetangula assured the MPs that they have no reason to worry as he has already initiated talks with SRC.

We live incrementally and not by reduction, Mr Wetangula told the MPs just hours after a meeting with SRC. The Speaker of the National Assembly chairs the Parliamentary Service Commission, which is in charge of the welfare of MPs and parliamentary staff.

We must have an equitable approach where MPs are clearly facilitated to do their work... Comparisons between Parliament and other departments of government have been made and distinctions drawn. I am sure that there will be no scandal, the Speaker said.

Last month, Ms Mengich said that the decision to abolish the Sh5,000 plenary sitting allowance for MPs and Sh3,000 for MCAs will save the taxpayer Sh8.2 billion over five years.

Read: SRC keeps President salary at Sh1.4m, DP Sh1.2m as MPs lose sitting allowances

We looked at the pay of the state officers from an equity and fairness perspective, which is equal pay for work of equal value. It is what we used to evaluate all the jobs and determine relative job worth for all the state officers in the executive and legislature at the national and county levels, the SRC chairperson said.

An MP at the national and county level discharges their role through plenary sittings. If you then are paid an allowance for plenary sitting and you are still getting a full time pay it amounts to double compensation, the SRC boss added.

But yesterday, Mr Wetangula said: Our engagement with the SRC is to remind them that as they go about their constitutional mandate, they should be alive to the fact that issues that are available to members like perks that they have been enjoying in the last parliaments should not be unnecessarily or unreasonably interfered with.

Earlier, the MPs had booed National Assembly Acting Clerk Serah Kioko after she mentioned the SRC chairperson as among those scheduled to make presentations to the MPs during the five-day induction.

The National Assembly has four sittings a week when in session Tuesday afternoon, whole day Wednesday and Thursday afternoon. The Senate sits on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons.

Before the plenary sitting allowance was abolished, an MP would pocket about Sh80,000 assuming that they attended all the plenary sittings in a month. On the other hand, senators would get Sh60,000 in plenary sitting allowance per month if they attended all the sessions in a month.

In the July 28 gazette notice, SRC also capped the committee sitting allowance. The committee chairperson is now entitled to Sh15,000 per sitting up to a maximum of Sh240,000 per month, vice-chairperson Sh12,000 per sitting up to a maximum of Sh192,000 per month and members Sh7,500 per sitting up to a maximum of Sh120,000 per month after tax.



News

MPs seek to be paid more than Court of Appeal judges, want sitting allowance back

David Mwere / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Should the MPs have their way in the push for the return of the plenary sitting allowance, they will earn more than Sh1.2 million per month inclusive of mileage claims in the case of a member who does not chair a House committee, which is more than the Court of Appeal judge. The mileage claim is only enjoyed by members of the National Assembly.

In December 2021, SRC reviewed the salaries of Court of Appeal judges to Sh1,156,108 up from Sh1,122,759.

Mr Wetangula further faulted SRC for limiting the engine capacity of cars the MPs are required to use.

Setting the engine capacity for MPs at no more than 3000cc is not right. You cannot constrain a member in the manner he serves his people who live hundreds of kilometres apart, he said.

End of MPs seek to be paid more than Court of Appeal judges, want sitting allowance back



President Ruto to rally African leaders on climate change

Aggrey Mutambo / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Kenya's President William Ruto will use his maiden trip to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York to rally African peers to raise their voice on the danger of climate change.

Africa is expected to take the biggest hit from climate change.

Dr Ruto is expected in New York on Tuesday afternoon to attend the 77th UN General Assembly. He will be travelling from London where he had attended the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II on Monday.

A tentative programme from the Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that Ruto will meet African heads of state to discuss climate change and its effects, including the ongoing drought in the Horn of Africa and flooding in Sudan.

In his capacity as Coordinator, President Dr Ruto will also chair a meeting of the Conference of African Heads of State on Climate Crisis (CAHOSCC), said a dispatch from the Ministry on Monday.

The 77th UNGA coincides with the worst drought in the Horn of Africa with many countries in the region, including Kenya, are experiencing unprecedented effects in the last forty years.

At the United Nations Headquarters, Kenya will seek to promote its foreign policy at the multilateral system including enhancing participation in the quest for realisation of SDGs and global leadership in emerging issues including climate change.

Dr Ruto is scheduled to address the General Assembly for the first time as Head of State, although he had given a speech here in 2016 then as Deputy President representing President Uhuru Kenyatta.

According to the schedule of speeches publicised by the UN, he will speak in the afternoon on Wednesday just after the Slovenian representative.

US President Joe Biden will kick off the speeches and will be followed by representatives from Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Zambia, Libya and Moldova.

As is tradition, leaders converge in New York every September for the UNGA where they give speeches, hold bilateral meetings and attend mini conferences on issues important to their countries.

This year's UNGA theme is A watershed moment: Transformative solutions to interlocking challenges, under which leaders are expected to discuss the impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the global energy crisis, climate change, and the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In his inauguration speech last week, Dr Ruto promised to place climate change among priority items to deal with.

Among the central concerns of my government will be climate change. In our country, women and men, young people, farmers, workers and local communities suffer the consequences of climate emergency, he said, suggesting he will encourage alternatives to fossil fuels. Africa has the opportunity to lead the world. We have immense potential for renewable energy. Reducing costs of renewable energy technologies make these the most viable energy source. We call on all African states to join us in this journey.

Egypt is due to host the upcoming UN Conference of Parties (COP27) on climate change in November. And African countries have demanded financial backing to pledges meant to lower temperature rise and for technological transfer to help adapt to changes.

At the UN, Kenya is finishing its final year as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council and Dr Ruto is expected to meet with various leaders whose countries sit on the Council.

End of President Ruto to rally African leaders on climate change



News

PSC extends application deadline for PS positions

Ndubi Moturi / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

The government extended application deadline for principal secretaries positions by seven days.

The deadline, which was set to expire on September 20, 2022, has been pushed to September 27, 2022.

According to Public Service Commission CEO Simon Rotich, the extension will offer interested applicants time to submit their applications.

PSC is expected to recommend persons to be appointed to the President who will then nominate candidates for the posts. The names of the candidates will then be forwarded to the Parliament for approval.

Principal Secretaries are usually involved in the coordination and implementation of government projects in State departments. They also oversee the allocation of resources in the counties.

Currently, there are 44 Principal Secretaries serving in different State departments. Their term is expected to lapse immediately after new ones are appointed by President William Ruto.

End of PSC extends application deadline for PS positions



How cash cropping changed fortune for Ghana women

Peter Musa / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Ten years ago, Juliana Zangina would cultivate her small piece of land year-to-year, but never had enough food to feed her family.

Like many African women, she would follow after her husband in their family farm to cultivate crops then wait for the season to dictate how the harvest would be.

Today, Ms Zangina and other women from northern Ghana are well-informed small scale commercial farmers who practice agriculture differently from their forefathers.

It was, however, not until 2012 when it dawned on the women that poverty and hunger would always be with them unless they took the first risk to change from their traditional farming methods.

We formed a group to share our ideas and learned from experts how we could practice more productive agriculture. We realised that agribusiness needed finance to buy inputs such as certified seeds, fertilizer, pest control, and crop management, says Ms Zangina.

The group noted the need to commit more hours on their farms, not only cultivating but also monitoring and evaluating how the crops were doing.

We decided to begin with sorghum for commercial purpose, and later got contracted to supply to the local Guinness Ghana Breweries, explains Ms Zangina.

Also read: Kitui women tear down cultural barrier to beekeeping

That was the beginning of Faranaya, a northern Ghana association of women in agribusiness, and whose meaning is poverty has ended.

From the income, I have been able to educate my children whom before I struggled to. I have also transformed my life as I save part of my earning for other investments in future, adds Ms Zangina.

According to Faranaya group business advisor Patience Anyebo, on average, one-acre of sorghum fetches 2,000 Ghana Cedi (Ksh29, 340) a harvest.

The breakthrough was because the women agreed to form small grassroots groups and we were able to support them with needed resources under the 2SCALE project, which brought on board micro-financers, agronomist and farmer-training services, explained Ms Anyebo during a conference to mark 10 years of agribusiness accomplishment by small scale farmers from Eastern and Western Africa, held at a Nairobi hotel early this year.

The meeting was organised by the 2SCALE Program, which is funded by the Netherlands Government to support micro, small and medium enterprises in agribusiness and agri-processing sectors in Eastern and Western Africa.

Female sorghum farmers from Garu District, Upper East Ghana during a training on Aflasafe application for the control of aflatoxin in sorghum produce.

The meeting heard that northern Ghanaian men were afraid of taking the risk to engage in commercial sorghum farming, but are nevertheless happy it employs them in the women-led value chain processing system. Some as supervisors in the farms, which the women have consolidated to optimise production.

More men participate in mechanised cultivation, spraying and during harvesting. Part of the harvested sorghum is fortified into seeds and the residual converted into fertilizer, animal feed and bio fuel.

During the two-day benchmarking event, speakers lamented the half-heartedness of big financial institutions to support small agribusinesses citing risks, yet they financed similar-size entrepreneurs in other sectors.

Ruth Kinoti, Managing Director and CEO of Shalem Investments Limited, a manufacturer of assorted flour products in Meru County, says scaling up a small business to a medium level one and beyond, faces many bottlenecks, particularly due to lack of tailor-made financial programs modelled particularly for transitional entrepreneurs.

Established financial institutions view agribusiness start-ups as a fairly risky venture compared to other non-agriculture ones.

If you are not careful and do not engage a financial advisor, you will likely find yourself burning your fingers in the process of up-scaling your business, she cautions.

We need to address financing models as a serious gap challenge that is going to reverse achievements of many would-be



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multi-national manufacturers, currently trying to transform their level of manufacturing, Ms Kinoti adds.

Despite the challenges involved, experts believe that agribusiness small scale farmers and agri-processors hold the key to Africa's food production and nutrition and also of alleviating rural population from poverty.

Considering that the burden of having an empty plate resonates more with the women than men, it makes better sense to empower the woman of Africa to produce more and make a better yield for the increasing population.

Henk Van Duijn, chair of the 2SCALE Supervisory Board says Africa has a big burden ahead of feeding 1.5 billion mouths by 2025. This is before this population increases to four billion by the turn of the century, according to United Nations population estimates.

Anyone looking at this will think that Africa might not be able to feed herself. No, Africa is capable of feeding itself. For this to happen, the continent must stop relying on aid to support its agriculture and instead focus on integrated inter-support business model that interconnects the small-scale farmer at the grassroots with the value chain manufacturer and the consumer market, says Mr Van Duijn.

Albin Hubscher, President and CEO of the International Fertiliser Development Centre explains that Africa needs to stop the conversion of forest and grazing land into agriculture not only to reduce climate change problem, but also to improve soil health and fertility within the existing agricultural land.

Use of fertiliser, organic or inorganic, is only meaningful if we consistently improve soil health by bringing carbon back into depleted soils to help retain moisture and close ecological yield gaps, in the end putting money into the farmers pocket, Mr Hubscher concludes.

End of How cash cropping changed fortune for Ghana women



Counties

Shock as prominent Embu businessman shot in night ambush

George Munene / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

A prominent businessman is fighting for his life in hospital after he was shot and wounded by gangsters in Thumari, Embu County.

Geoffrey Mwangi was travelling home from Embu town at around 9m on Monday after closing his business when five suspected gangsters aboard a pickup truck struck.

Read: Mt Kenya was split into two by two strangers, and Gachagua won

They blocked his car and sprayed it with bullets, leaving him with serious injuries in an attack that sent shock waves across the area.

The gangsters then escaped, leaving Mr Mwangi unconscious in his car.

A friend who was with him in the car escaped unhurt.

Mr Mwangi was rushed to Embu Referral Hospital with injuries in his neck and hands and bullets lodged in his body.

He was later transferred to Nairobi for specialised treatment after his condition worsened.

Embu West sub-county police boss Julius Kyumbule said they were pursuing the gangsters.

Embu Teaching and Referral Hospital where a prominent businessman Geoffrey Mwangi was taken after he was shot and wounded by gangsters at Thumari.

He said the motive of the attack could not be immediately established.

Commenced investigations

"The gangsters left without stealing anything from the trader and we have commenced investigations to establish why the victim was shot," he said.

Traders condemned the attack and called on the police to investigate the shooting.

"We want to know those who attacked our colleagues and the reasons behind it," Mr Kanyi Maina said.

They lamented that security has deteriorated in the area and accused police of sleeping on the job.

Also read: Brad Osumo: I am the small fish selling 'Big Fish

The traders demanded the arrest and prosecution of the wrongdoers, saying the attack was of grave concern.

"Crime is on the rise in the area and the police are not doing anything about it," Mr Maina added.

John Mate, the chairman of the Embu branch of the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, called on the police to beef up security.

"Everyone is living in fear following the invasion of the region by criminals. Shops have been raided and property looted. The situation is serious and security officers should wake up and do their job," he said.

The traders warned that investors may flee the area because of insecurity.

End of Shock as prominent Embu businessman shot in night ambush



Counties

Nairobi crime map: City residents at the mercy of miscreants

Nyaboga Kiage / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

In the British series *Midsomer Murders*, directed by Anthony Horowitz and Douglas Watkinson, it is all about several mystery murders that take place in a crime-infested town in the county of Midsomer.

Every episode has a high number of body counts and when they are discovered, police go out promising to find out who is behind the deaths, in vain.

But it is clear that the culprit is not a serial killer and the person doing it succeeds in compounding their crimes as they go on with the killing ways.

It is reminiscent of the way many young people have been killed across Nairobi and their bodies dumped in rivers or forests.

And just like in the TV series, the police have not managed to get to the bottom of the cases that leave families in pain and the public shocked, wondering who might be the next target.

Interestingly, most of the victims whose bodies are found dumped in various parts of the country usually have criminal records.

When Mr Samuel Mugo Mugota was shot dead on Mirema Drive in Roysambu, Nairobi County, police said they were investigating the killing, which was captured on a video that made the rounds on social media. He was shot six times by unknown assailants but his killers have not been arrested.

Samuel Mugo Mugota who was shot six times by unknown assailant in Mirema, Kasarani.

A few weeks later, the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) boss revealed that Mr Mugota, whom they linked to a series of robberies in the city, was a wanted man and had several cases in court.

According to the police, Mr Mugota was a suspected criminal who led a secret life and he was probably killed by his fellow gangsters over a business deal gone sour.

To back their execution theory, detectives said that nothing was stolen from his car. A laptop, five mobile phones and nine identity cards were found in his Honda CRV.

Just like in Mr Mugotas case, three weeks ago, four men disappeared from Kasarani in Nairobi, only for their bodies to be found dumped in different parts of the country.

Read: Miracle babies preacher Deya has case to answer

The bodies of Fred Obare, Frank Obegi, Moses Nyachae and Elijah Omeka were found in Kijabe forest and Magadi amid claims that they were involved in a cash and cryptocurrency scam.

Will one day get justice

Police said they were investigating the matter but they have not said what they uncovered, with the mens families hoping that they will one day get justice.

Police records and data from other agencies show that Nairobi had the highest number of reported crimes, including murder, in the past three years.

Research by the Nation on the number of crimes reported across the country compared with Nairobi shows that a person is more likely to become a victim of crime in the city.

Other counties that have recorded a large number of crimes are Kiambu and Meru, and the cases increased especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Data from the 2021 Kenya Economic Survey showed that the three counties accounted for over a quarter of the 81,272 crimes reported in the last year.

Nairobi topped the list, recording a total of 6,686 crimes, followed by Kiambu (5,715) and Meru (5,032 cases).

Nairobi City police command station accounted for the highest number of persons reported to have committed crime at 8.5 percent, Kiambu and Meru at 6.7 percent and 6.1 percent, the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) said in the report.

A report from the National Police Service reveals that in the last five years, Nairobi residents reported criminal cases to police stations as follows: in 2017, a total of 7,434 cases; in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021, the cases were 7,128, 8,246, 5,844, 6,686, respectively.



Counties

Nairobi crime map: City residents at the mercy of miscreants

Nyaboga Kiage / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

It has also emerged that the majority of the cases are reported by men.

The total number of people reported to have committed homicide went up by 9.3 percent from 2,494 cases in 2020 to 2,726 cases in 2021, the report said.

A person is more likely to be robbed, mugged, raped or killed in Nairobi than in any other part of the country.

Also read: Farm-hand suspected to have murdered his employer in Ngong

Research conducted in 2021 by the National Crime Research Centre, a government body that keeps data and records on crime rates, showed that mugging topped the list of crimes in the country.

Muggings accounted for 68.8 percent of crimes in Nairobi compared with the national percentage of 19.1. Second on the list for the city was theft (54.9 percent), while the national average was 40.4 percent.

A person is more likely to be robbed, mugged, raped or killed in Nairobi than in any other part of the country.

Robbery with violence

Third on the list is burglary and break-ins, which recorded 51.1 percent in Nairobi, compared with 42 percent nationally.

Robbery with violence and possession of narcotic drugs came in fourth and fifth, recorded 30.2 and 30.1 in the city.

Robbery without violence was sixth (30.2 percent), compared with 10.6 percent nationally.

The seventh, eighth and ninth positions were taken by murder (13 percent), assault causing bodily harm (9.8 percent) and rape (9.7 percent).

Other crimes reported in the city included drunkenness (5 percent) and disorderly conduct (4.9 percent), and gender-based violence (4.5 percent).

The high crime rate in the city and fears that one may be attacked or robbed were cited in a survey conducted by Numbeo, which ranks countries by various strata.

Most Nairobi residents fear walking alone at night.

Also read: British national loses Sh4 million in Nairobi

Other crimes listed by the organisation include assault, armed robbery, vandalism and theft.

The others are muggings and car break-ins.

Various forms of crime

Security experts say various forms of crime increased, especially after the Covid-19 period.

The rate of crime is high in Nairobi because many people usually flock there to find jobs and earn an income, said Mr Kevin Moenga, a security analyst based in the city.

He said that the high number of people in the city was a contributing factor to the increase in crime.

Most people also lost jobs during the Covid-19 pandemic and this saw many engage in deals or crimes that can see them survive until they get other jobs, he said.

Crimes like mugging, he said, are on the increase because perpetrators do not need to use force or weapons.

He also said that when courts release offenders on bond, they go back to society and continue committing crimes as their cases drag on.

A study conducted by Dr John Ndikaru of the Technical University of Kenya (TUK) shows that controlling crime is a big problem.

Kenya has shown a marked increase in the contemporary years in the occurrences of lawbreaking and violations. The rate is alarming and has attained an epidemic proportion, he said.

He said most of the crimes happen in major towns, especially Nairobi.

When crimes are not reported to the police, victims may not be able to get necessary services to cope. Offenders may go scot-free, and law [enforcement] and community resources may be misdirected due to a lack of precise information about local crime complications, he said.

Dr Ndikaru said that the common motivations for reporting a crime include punishing the offender and discouraging potential offenders.



Counties

Nairobi crime map: City residents at the mercy of miscreants

Nyaboga Kiage / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

End of Nairobi crime map: City residents at the mercy of miscreants



Counties

River Yala: Dumped bodies back as six men, woman retrieved from water

Kassim Adinasi / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Yala Sub-County Hospital administrators have called on families with missing relatives to visit its morgue to find out whether they are among seven unidentified bodies lying there.

The bodies of six males and one female were retrieved from the River Yala in the past two months.

Medical superintendent Bruno Okal said the bodies were collected from different spots in the river.

We call upon members of the public to visit and establish whether their missing kin are among the bodies. Three of the bodies were retrieved from water while four were found along the banks, according to the police who brought them, Dr Okal said.

He added: The hospital administration is making this call in order to ease the strain that is currently experienced in the facility. We can only handle a maximum of 16 bodies. Secondly, relatives of the deceased persons should give them a decent send-off.

Some of the seven bodies had begun decomposing, just like 32 others retrieved from the same river in January.

Our mortuary is relatively small. Bodies retrieved from water are often in bad shape and require specialised handling our facility is strained beyond limit, he added.

Of those retrieved in January, 13 were positively identified by relatives through DNA analysis and were subsequently collected and buried.

At the time, the news of unclaimed bodies retrieved from the River Yala and piled up at the Yala hospital mortuary shocked the country, with media reports suggesting that they were extrajudicial killings possibly carried out by state security agencies.

In an earlier interview, Mr Nicholas Okero, who helped the police retrieve bodies from the river, said some bodies were stuffed in sacks before being discarded into the river.

Some had deep cuts and their faces [were] totally disfigured. Some bodies had also stayed in water for long and [had] begun decomposing, Mr Okero said.

He also said some had their faces tied with polythene bags and their hands tied to their backs.

He speculated that some of those bodies might have been dumped upstream and driven downstream by currents to the Ndanu falls, where they were found.

Government chief pathologist Johansen Oduor, who led the postmortem examinations on the 32 bodies, said at the time that some of them were skeletal.

He said others had disfigured faces and could not be identified unless through DNA sampling.

Police spokesman Bruno Shioso said the police would investigate what led to their deaths.

As the police, we shall leave no stone unturned. All the bodies will be identified and we shall ensure justice is served. We shall arrest all the perpetrators and bring them to face the law, he said.

End of River Yala: Dumped bodies back as six men, woman retrieved from water



Counties

Protests as aspirants barred from Homa Bay Speaker race

George Odiwuor / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Several aspirants for the Homa Bay County Assembly Speakers position have protested being locked out of the race in a scheme they claim is meant to favour a preferred individual.

Six candidates will battle it out for the seat after they met all the requirements enumerated in a newspaper advertisement last week.

One of the requirements was to have all applications in by 9.30am on Monday for clearance ahead of voting on Wednesday.

Now those locked out claim the information about the deadline and other requirements were deliberately made available late.

Assembly Clerk Faith Apuko rejected the papers of aspirants who submitted their papers even one minute after the deadline.

The strict deadline prevented seven people from submitting their documents.

The seven had last week notified the House of their interest in contesting the Speakers seat and collected nomination forms.

Ms Zilper Opapo and Polycup Otieno, who were among those locked out, said they had invested time holding meetings with MCAs to sell their agenda hoping they would be elected Speaker.

They castigated the process as fraudulent.

"We had one day, Friday, to do everything. Unfortunately, some of the requirements could only be [met] if we had more time," Ms Opapo said.

Another requirement was that applicants had to get clearance from the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC).

Ms Opapo said that is where the problem started.

Short notice

At the IEBC office, contenders were asked to get clearance from the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) office located in Kisii town.

She said the advert for the position should have been made a week earlier to allow interested individuals to get their credentials ready.

Ms Apuko advertised the Speaker's position on Thursday, with applicants saying they had only one day, Friday, to gather their documents.

"Government offices close during weekends. I tried my best to get clearance on Friday but I could not do everything as required, so I had to push everything to Monday," Ms Opapo said.

She added: "I continued with the process on Monday and was a few minutes late. I was told I am locked out."

Ms Opapo was the only female applicant.

She argued that her absence from the contest violates her freedom to vie for an elective position.

"The entire leadership of the county will not have regional balance as some regions are overrepresented," she claimed.

The former Homa Bay municipal board chairperson said some of the regions in the county have at least two elected leaders while others like Homa Bay Town, where she hails from, has its MP as the only political leader.

Mr Otieno said he was disappointed when he was told he could not proceed to the ballot after the House failed to provide him with all information about clearance.

It is as if there is a preferred candidate among those cleared. That is why some of us were locked out, he said.

The six who were cleared included John Apollo, the chief of protocol in Homa Bay County government; former Central Karachuonyo MCA Julius Gaya; and Fredrick Gaya, the director of Youth Empowerment Bridge Organization (YEBO) Africa.

Former Gwasssi North MCA Evans Marieba, Innocent Masara and Pascal Odhiambo also presented their papers on time.



Counties

Protests as aspirants barred from Homa Bay Speaker race

George Odiwuor / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

End of Protests as aspirants barred from Homa Bay Speaker race



Counties

How Legio Maria church decided to build own hospital

Rushdie Oudia / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Three years ago, a group of young people from the Legion Maria of African Mission Church ventured into uncharted waters.

They decided to ask the church's leadership to build a hospital.

The idea was inspired by the hospitalisation of Pope Raphael Otieno Adika at M.P. Shah Hospital in Nairobi.

The project's strategic manager George William said: We decided to construct a mission hospital and that is why we went on and hired a consultant to do a feasibility study so that we could build a facility like no other.

And on Saturday last week, they kick-started the journey by laying the foundation stone for St Marys Legion Maria Mission Hospital in a colourful ceremony presided over by Pope Adika.

For a long time, people believed that Legion Maria adherents did not go to hospital or seek medical care and that instead they depended on prayers or spiritual water for healing, earning them the tag of a cult.

They have also been accused by authorities of preventing their children from going to school and not allowing them to get modern medical care and some vaccines.

Read: River Yala: Dumped bodies back as six men, woman retrieved from water

To debunk the myth, the church is building a Sh200 million Level Four hospital in Marera, Kisumu West, where members of the church and non-members can get medical care.

The project has four phases and will take three years to complete, said Mr Paul Opondo, the contractor working with Cilneod Kenya Limited.

The hospital will be a three-storey 70-bed building, but in the first phase, they are putting up a community health centre, Mr Opondo said.

This will be a simple structure to roll out the project comprising a pharmacy, consultancy room, waiting area and examination rooms, he said.

The second phase will be setting up an outpatient hospital, female and male wards, a pharmacy and a restaurant. In the third phase, they will set up an accidents and emergency unit and maternity and paediatrics wards, and dental, optical and gynaecology units.

Last phase

In the last phase, they will set up a radiology unit, including X-ray, cardiology, MRI, CT Scan and laundry sections.

The issue of health is important for the church and the public, said Archbishop Peter Onyango Abuto, the Legion Maria administrative secretary.

This is an issue that made our founder father brush shoulders with the colonialists, who felt that we were against everything their administration was pushing, Archbishop Abuto said.

We had instances where people were concerned that patients could be removed from hospitals in order to attend church and be healed through prayer.

The church has been fighting off claims that its members do not go to hospital when they fall ill.

Church leaders insist that the founder, Simeo Melkio Ondeto, himself was treated in hospital when he was allegedly poisoned.

Also read: Poor sanitation at Homa Bay key fish market sparks disease fear

He is said to have been at the forefront teaching people suffering from HIV and syphilis that they had to go to hospital for treatment.

Pope Timothy Atila is also said to have gone to hospital often and even died in a health facility, as did Pope Chiaji Lawrence.

We know that we are prayerful, but there are diseases that no matter how prayerful we are, require physicians. What the Pope is doing today is making it clear that we support health institutions, and that is why we are building this hospital in line with vision 2030 and the Big Four agenda, Archbishop Abuto said.

He said they were impressed with M.P. Shah Hospital, which they said occupies a small space but offers excellent services.



Counties

How Legio Maria church decided to build own hospital

Rushdie Oudia / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

The project started with a contribution of Sh8 million from congregants, but church leaders plan to work with the county government and like-minded non-governmental organisations to raise more money to complete it.

They are starting small but will complete the project and change the public's perception of the church, said Bishop Wycliffe Nyaperah of Lugari, the director of youth affairs.

This was the brainchild of the youth in this church. We are only fulfilling the prophecy of our founding father, who believed that it was the coming generations who would build this church, Bishop Nyaperah said.

The project is good for the community, said Pope Adika.

With time, the project will pick up, I am very certain. Many people will be brought here for treatment, he said.

He asked national government officials to ensure the project is protected.

He also hinted that the church may go further and build a home for orphans in future.

The area chiefs and the ward administrator asked the contractor to hire locals for unskilled jobs.

The church also asked the county government to include the hospital in the technical working group so that they can benefit from initiatives surrounding health.

End of How Legio Maria church decided to build own hospital



Counties

Do not scrap CBC, enhance it, private teachers, university dons plead

Winnie Atieno / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Education professionals have urged President William Ruto not to scrap the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) but instead strengthen it and train all teachers to understand it.

President Ruto established an education reform task force last week to collect the views of Kenyans on the new curriculum. His administration announced plans to review CBC as it moves to address concerns raised by stakeholders.

But educationists from the private sector urged Dr Ruto to tap into the knowledge of educationists at universities to enhance the capacity of teachers who will deliver the curriculum.

Scrapping CBC will be catastrophic for Kenya as globally people are choosing outcome-based education that is equivalent to the CBC that Kenya is implementing, said Dr Jane Rarieya, the dean of the Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development.

We take our children to train them for the world of work in the future. Employers are crying out that we are developing universities and churning out students who are not competent and cannot meet the demands of work today, Dr Rarieya said.

So why scrap the CBC? We need people who can lead the training of CBC and really and genuinely understand what it is, its demand and what teachers require in the classroom.

Headteachers, she said, are lost on how to implement CBC and that this hinders the implementation of the education system. She added that teachers have a poor understanding of the curriculum.

She cited recent cases where learners were asked to go to school with chickens and others were instructed to swim in the soil, saying such theatrics are unnecessary.

People have not discovered the beauty of CBC. It means developing competencies within learners. But our headteachers do not know how to lead the learning that comes out of CBC, their roles and how to support the teachers to do that, she said.

There's a total lack of comprehension on how to implement and interpret the curriculum.

But she said the Aga Khan University programme will help school managers overcome CBC challenges and further expose them to pedagogical methods of encouraging active learning.

This will get rid of these funny things learners are learning under the education system, Dr Rarieya added.

The Aga Khan University in Dar es Salaam has launched a two-year diploma programme in leadership targeting headteachers in Kenya. Some 30 headteachers from Kilifi and Mombasa have been selected for it.

The programme is through blended learning. It is significant because during the pandemic, schools were shut down because people did not know how to implement learning. But this programme will help school managers develop skills to teach and learn online, she said.

Dr Rarieya spoke during the launch of the Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) and the Aga Khan University Institute for Education Development Eastern Africa diploma in education leadership and management training at the Kenya School of Government in Mombasa.

She said the skills teachers are trying to develop in learners will enable them to be critical thinkers and problem solvers.

This learning can be done anywhere under a tree or within the walls of a school. But these ridiculous things we are seeing [are] a real problem, she said.

I would not scrap CBC just because currently it is being implemented by a majority of people who do not understand it.

Dr Rarieya said the problem facing Kenyan schools in implementing CBC is lack of understanding of the curriculum and how to interpret it. She urged universities and colleges to train teachers on how to interpret and implement the curriculum.

Other stakeholders also urged President Ruto to retain CBC, including Mr George Gitonga, the director of Fairfield Academy and the assistant secretary of the Kenya Private Schools Association (KPSA) Coast region chapter.

CBC should be improved to be less costly to parents. The government should rethink the issue of children being taken to junior secondary schools. The big issue is the impact on the child, Mr Gitonga said.



Counties

Do not scrap CBC, enhance it, private teachers, university dons plead

Winnie Atieno / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

End of Do not scrap CBC, enhance it, private teachers, university dons plead



Counties

Activist wants four nominees to Meru assembly quashed

David Muchui / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

An activist has filed a constitutional petition seeking to have nominations to the Meru County Assembly under the marginalised group category quashed.

Mr Salesio Thuranira filed the case against the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) at the Meru High Court and the matter was certified urgent.

Mr Thuranira argues that people with disabilities have been left out and the youth are over-represented in the assembly. The assembly has 24 nominated members, with 20 coming in under the gender top-up list.

Four others Benson Kiriinya, Catherine Kamathi, Kenneth Maingi and Edith Make were nominated by the Devolution Empowerment Party (DEP), United Democratic Alliance (UDA), Jubilee and the Party of National Unity (PNU), respectively. They were nominated to represent the youth and marginalised groups.

"Marginalised group means people who because of laws or practices are disadvantaged by discrimination on one or more grounds in Article 27(4) of the Constitution ... " Mr Thuranira argues.

Constitutional provision

He adds that the IEBC breached constitutional provisions against discrimination and the Persons with Disabilities Act and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Mr Thuranira says people with disabilities comprise a sizeable portion of the Meru population and 'cannot be wished away'.

"The declaration of persons elected as MCAs of Meru County by the respondent contains a good number of youthful elected persons hence this group has good representation and does not warrant more top up through nomination of marginalised persons," he states.

He wants the High Court to prohibit the Meru County Assembly clerk from inducting and swearing in the four MCAs nominated under the marginalised category.

Gazette notice

He also wants the IEBC to publish a corrective gazette notice to declare a new list of special seats, including males and females with disabilities.

The matter will be heard on Tuesday afternoon, ahead of the swearing-in of Meru MCAs planned for Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the Meru County Assembly is regarded to have recorded one of the highest number of the youthful members with most of those who were inducted on Monday being under 35 years.

The assembly public communication director Mercy Kubai said the MCAs were inducted ahead of their swearing in on Wednesday.

Assembly clerk Jacob Kirari said the third Assembly will have 69 members comprising 45 elected and 24 nominated MCAs.

Chamber operations

"The new members were taken through the chamber operations to familiarize with Parliamentary procedures and were also facilitated to register for various services and facilities available including medical insurance, car loan and mortgages," the clerk said.

Out of the 45 elected MCAs, only one is female representing Kirua- Naari ward. This is a decline from the two elected female MCAs in the second Assembly and five in the first Assembly.

Out of the 24 nominated MCAs two will represent the youth while two others will represent the marginalized and special interests. Another 20 MCAs have been nominated to fill the gender gap.

Seventeen MCAs have made a comeback from the second Assembly, nine having been re-elected and eight nominated for the third or second time.

Five members have served in the first, second and third Assemblies where two are elected members and three are nominated.

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End of Activist wants four nominees to Meru assembly quashed



Counties

Murang'a security accused of abetting deadly alcoholism culture

Mwangi Muiruri / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Some security officers and local government officials have been blamed for the alcoholism crisis in Murang'a, with claims that law enforcers are corrupted with bribes to turn a blind eye to brewers and sellers.

Some officers from the National Police Service, administrators and the county licensing and enforcement departments are said to be fuelling the drinking culture.

One former police officer said the drinking crisis "has become so good at preserving the dead and killing the living".

Mr Hillary Kung'u, from Kirere village, who was sacked in 2004 over alcoholism, said chemicals used in preserving bodies in mortuaries are the same ones used to make illegal brews.

In 2015, Mr Kung'u temporarily lost his eyesight after he took a brew that ended up killing seven of his village mates.

"We are losing generations to alcoholism. Families are breaking up, youths won't find families, our people cannot save and hospital and burial bills [are overwhelming] us," said Federation for African Women Educationists in Murang'a official Cecilia Gitu.

She said the proliferation of bars, illegal brewing dens and failure to enforce the law on alcoholic beverages are to blame.

"The crisis is an open wound that is publicly bleeding as our security watch," she said.

Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organisation chair Nyambura Ngugi said nearly all of us are affected".

September 11, 2022 at 5:54am inside a Murang'a town bar where the seller and her customers are asleep drunk.

"It must be made very clear to the authorities that it is no longer acceptable for reckless alcoholic drinks enterprises that defy the rule of law" to continue operating, she said.

Joseph Kibugi, who champions the rights of boys in Muranga through the Kibugi wa Ihii Foundation, says alcoholism and drug abuse contributes to violence.

"Leaders are to blame ... in their entirety. As a result, alcoholism has deprived boys of their future, he said.

Alcoholics cannot sustain marriages ... They cannot hold onto jobs and eventually this affects productivity and the countrys wealth."

Some police officers collect bribes to allow bars to operate outside the law and let illicit brewers continue with their business, making alcohol easily accessible, said Murang'a Youth Action Group chairman Mr Warui Gitau said.

There have been complaints that security officers collect protection money from bar owners and illicit brew dealers to look the other way.

Drinkers can be seen trooping into bars and other drinking dens as soon as they wake up, some carrying household items to exchange for intoxicants.

Mr Gitau said it is common to see intoxicated people at any time of the day and night because "there are bars that operate for 24 hours".

When the public complains about bars flouting the law and playing loud music deep into the night, police officers respond with random swoops that lead to more corruption, with those arrested said to buy their freedom soon after they are seized.

"We want to see the county government that is responsible for licensing bars behave responsibly. We want to see the government doing something tangible to bring down runaway alcoholism in Murang'a County," Ms Gitu said.

Mr Gitau recalled that the Mwangi wa Iria administration had formed a special enforcement unit in 2014 to crack down on bars flouting the law.

"The team had started well and was getting somewhere, until it was also sucked into the culture of ineptitude and faded away. It is no longer felt in the county," he said.

Murang'a Deputy Governor Stephen Munania told Nation.Africa that there is an alcoholism crisis in Muranga.

One region

"We have a problem that needs to be dealt with," he said.

Mr Munania, 29, said the problem differs from one region to another.



Counties

Murang'a security accused of abetting deadly alcoholism culture

Mwangi Muiruri / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

"Areas that have more unemployed people record more [drinkers]. We have a lower rate of alcoholism in the tea zones, where most residents are largely engaged in tea picking. The alcoholism problem is more ingrained in the lower zones, where poverty levels are high," he said.

He lamented that the "availability of alcohol has kept the youth and unemployed in perpetual drunkenness by patronising illicit and cheap liquor dens".

He said the county government will implement proper licensing mechanisms anchored in existing laws.

Mr Munania added that "tackling alcoholism among the population will require a broader mindset than just insisting on enforcing the law.

Governor Irungu Kang'atas government, he said, has committed to providing economic assistance to residents by offering better agribusiness returns, technical and vocational training and more support for poor families.

Invest resources

"For serious cases, we will invest resources in rehabilitation efforts through our healthcare facilities," Mr Munania said.

When County Commissioner Karuku Ngumo launched a peace forum in Kangema sub-county last month, he said "many of these challenges only require the resolve of citizens to fight them".

He said society should actively participate in the fight against alcoholism and other vices by exerting pressure on the government and the alcohol dealers.

Mr Ngumo said residents should report to the police or other security agents any incident that undermines security.

Report to us those who are behind those illegal activities. There is a safe digital way of reporting to us all those officers and civilians exposing you to any form of threats, he said.

When those reports reach us, we always act. Those junior officers might be doing things that are not known to us but when you address them to us, action is always taken to correct the situation."

He urged residents to stop complaining and instead be part of the solution. You are the ones who know the criminals troubling you. Give us the information through the security toll-free number, that is 988.

The number receives security reports on Safaricom-registered SIM cards. The sender starts the message with the name of the county followed by the sub-county, village and the security tip in brief.

The message circulates to the Interior ministry and it instantly duplicates itself to all senior county security heads, who in turn send it to ground teams.

All this happens within less than one minute, triggering real-time response.

End of Murang'a security accused of abetting deadly alcoholism culture



Counties

Kwale PWDs decry being left out in county assembly nominations

Siago Cece / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

People with disabilities in Kwale have decried what they call underrepresentation in the county assembly.

They claimed they failed again to have one of their own nominated to the county assembly this year, saying they are discriminated against.

Speaking in Kwale town, John Mutiso said being left out means they will not enjoy the benefits earmarked for them by the county.

We are disappointed that in the nominations list of members of the county assembly, none of us is there and this is unconstitutional, Mr Mutiso said.

The special-interest group has threatened to go to court in a bid to prevent the swearing-in of MCAs scheduled for Wednesday.

Most nominations are just based on politics and parties are selecting the people loyal to them, leaving us behind. If that continues, who is going to fight for our rights? he asked.

Victoria Mutisya, another PWD, said Kwale County had lagged behind in the representation of people like her when other counties ensured they had a PWD either in the assembly or holding an office in the county government.

We feel left out in Kwale because, for the last 10 years, we feel we have not benefited from devolution, leave alone the national government, she said.

Among the benefits PWDs are supposed to get from counties are priorities in the awarding of tenders and access to revolving funds.

They also want to get financial aid to acquire wheelchairs, hearing aids, crutches and white canes for those who are blind.

Lilian Kanini, a PWD, said that not having any of these advantages makes them feel left out.

If we had one or two people representing us, they would help in the passing of bills to laws that favour us in many ways. But this has never happened, Ms Kanini said.

Kwale MCAs will be sworn in and start sittings on September 21.

They include legislators nominated by major parties like the Orange Democratic Movement and United Democratic Movement.

After being sworn in, they will vet County Executive Committee members nominated by Governor Fatuma Achani.

End of Kwale PWDs decry being left out in county assembly nominations



Counties

Farm-hand suspected to have murdered his employer in Ngong

Stanley Ngotho / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Detectives have launched a manhunt for a middle aged farm-hand who is alleged to have murdered his 58-year-old boss in Kibiko area, Ngong on Monday afternoon.

The woman who lives in Nairobi with her family is said to have visited their expansive piece of land along Ole Sena road in Kibiko in the morning.

Around noon, the woman is said to have sent an alarming message to her husband saying "I am dying."

After frantic efforts to get his wife on phone, the husband who was in Nairobi by then alerted his neighbours who rushed to the farm to find out what was happening.

A neighbour told Nation that at first they searched the entire land but they could not find the woman though her vehicle, a Toyota voxy, was parked next to the family's incomplete bungalow.

The neighbour said they found the woman's body in one of the rooms where the farm-hand lived. The farm-hand has been identified as Kelvin.

"We found her with a rope on her neck. The rope was tied to the bed. Her legs and arms were also tied with a rope. It was a horrifying scene," she said.

Also read: Miracle babies preacher Deya has case to answer

The woman's phone which has been switched is still missing.

"The farmhand was an introvert. We don't know much about him. We did not hear any distress call from the woman,," said a neighbour.

Kibiko Location Chief James Kariuki said the woman is known in the area as she usually visits the land accompanied by her husband.

He further told Nation the farm-hand is suspected to have taken away his boss' phone after committing the heinous crime. It was not clear if money or any other personal valuables were stolen.

"Immediately I received the distress call, I rushed to the scene. We suspect the farm-hand killed her boss but we did not establish the motive of the killing," said Mr Kariuki.

In the evening, a somber mood engulfed the farm as the husband and relatives tried to come to terms with what had transpired.

The body was moved to Montezuma Mortuary.

End of Farm-hand suspected to have murdered his employer in Ngong



Poor sanitation at Homa Bay key fish market sparks disease fear

George Odiwuor / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Any food inspector or public health officer would recommend closure of Pier market in Homa Bay town.

The market, popularly known for selling fish, is nowhere close to meeting food safety standards. Its state exposes traders and consumers to the risk of food poisoning as water used to wash the fish is sourced directly from Lake Victoria, which is also the dump site for fish waste and raw sewerage from the market.

Fish traders said it has been long, more than a year, since they last used clean water from the taps to prepare fish.

Read: Rotting from the deep: The tragedy that is Lake Victoria

We've been using water directly from the lake even though it's dirty and produces a foul smell. We have no option because the county government has failed to supply the commodity, Ms Elizabeth Otieno, a fish trader, says.

Marabou stork

When the Nation visited the beach where the market is located, the area was filled with all manner of waste, attracting hordes of marabou stork, flies and other scavenging creatures.

County public health officer John Kabasa said he is not aware that the market is dirty.

I'll visit the place and assess it for myself. As far as I'm concerned, there's water supplied to the market for traders, he says.

According to Ms Otieno, the only government officers they see are revenue collectors. It's as if we have been neglected by the government. We have been paying taxes hoping for better services but were yet to see the benefits of paying taxes, she says.

Wooden racks

In 2018, the National Government Affirmative Action Fund, under the leadership of Gladys Wanga, spent Sh8 million to build an integrated fish market at the beach.

Ms Wanga, who was then serving as the County Woman Representative, oversaw the building of the shaded structure and counter tops for hygienic preparation of the fish. A cold storage facility was also set up at the market for fish traders. The works, however, did not include waste management and water provision.

Over the years, the number of traders has increased and the market cannot accommodate them all.

Some traders now sell their fish from wooden racks at the edge of the lake, where all the waste is deposited.

The environment around the market is unhealthy for traders and the public, Ms Otieno says.

Read: Lake faces ecological disaster, warn experts

In addition, there are no toilet facilities, compelling sellers and buyers to relieve themselves in the open around the market.

Disease outbreak

According to Ms Mary Mbago, the market used to be cleaned by youths working under the Kazi Mtaani programme.

Since the cleaning exercise was suspended, no one has ever cleaned this market. It's just a matter of time before a disease outbreak is reported, she said.

She cautioned traders against using water directly from the lake, saying it's likely to lead to diarrhoeal diseases, among other ailments.

End of Poor sanitation at Homa Bay key fish market sparks disease fear



Bankелеle: Who owns government officials Tweets?

Bankелеle / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

In the last few days, Interior Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang'i appears to have taken down his verified Twitter account and this has sparked some debate on if it contained information that he should have retained and handed over to be preserved with the National Archives.

Last week, State House had an online transition from President Uhuru Kenyatta to President William Ruto with the profile picture changing to the new President on the day he took the oath of office. The new President's account is still a work in process, changing its tone, subject and authorship. A tweet was put up announcing an about-turn in diplomacy between Morocco and Western Sahara that was later pulled down.

While some commentators and bloggers are deleting tweets created in the heat of the election season, people who serve in government, and who put up content on their official handles, should not have that luxury.

Twitter represents a good source of information as government departments and ministries are not good at maintaining websites. You can search a Twitter timeline and see breaking news and note official events that happened, but which do not appear on the organization's websites.

Matiang'i's tenure as CS had three phases; first from April 2013 to November 2015, when he was the CS for ICT, then at the Education Ministry to January 2018. President Kenyatta appointed him to the Interior Ministry in 2017 when Joseph Ole Nkaisery passed away and held that role until now. Also in January 2019, he was appointed as Chairman of the National Development Cabinet Committee.

Matiang'i joined Twitter in April 2013 and ran his verified account until sometime in September 2022. With a tool like Internet Archive "Wayback Machine," you can observe his tweets on different topics like digital migration, securing national examinations and police reforms and see an evolution of writing styles. It was certainly Matiang'i's Twitter account, but it also represents an in-built archive of his decade heading important dockets in the government. He sent 1,800 tweets, averaging one per day and had 1.3 million followers at the end.

His earlier tweets at the ICT and Education ministries were in a personal style and you feel that he was the one in charge of his account, sending tweets about his daily activities as he also responded to issues raised such as negotiations on teacher salaries, protecting journalists and calling out untruths about leaders.

Later, as Cabinet Secretary for the Interior, his tweets were more comprehensive. You sense that they were done by a professional team capturing his daily activities as the CS, articulating government policies, with multiple pictures, and extracts of his speeches, as they happen, and tying in with activities at other agencies like the National Police Service. The Interior Ministry's Twitter account would have similar content, and the same message, but in a different style, not merely re-tweeting each other, likely by a different author with a more official style for the government.

In exiting from Twitter, CS Matiang'i may be following his boss, President Kenyatta who in March 2019 disconnected from his verified Twitter that had 3.6 million followers as well as other platforms. While State House said it was because of unauthorised access to the account, in later years the President would say it was for peace of mind from the online noise and useless abuse.

But, these days, Twitter has more tools to protect its celebrated authors. He could have made his account private or chosen to filter feedback by blocking users or only allowing people he named to reply.

Finally deactivating a Twitter account makes the account go invisible to readers, but it might not be deleted and remains available only to him as the author. He may have taken his account down to have a break, or for some quiet time perhaps to write a book in peace, by using his Twitter timeline as a good research source. With 1.3 million followers, Matiang'i's verified account will be a useful medium as he shifts to a new life phase or career.

End of Bankелеle: Who owns government officials Tweets?



Blogs-opinion

Learn to eat well, but not our money

Macharia Gaitho / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

It is, indeed, great that President William Ruto recognises the dire need for lessons in etiquette around his dinner table. We do recall that in the early years of Independence, Jeans School, in Kabete, the present-day Kenya School of Government, developed such a programme for wives of the emerging African elite.

After nearly 60 years, we have a whole crop of leaders, and not just their spouses, who still need to be trained on how to handle a fork and knife.

That viral video of Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua stuffing cake into his mouth on Inauguration Day obviously was an eye-opener for President Ruto. The DP and other rustic elected leaders aside, we also boast that hustlers and Mama Mboga will be an integral part of the government. Those of wanting social skills will not be admitted to the high table before undergoing a crash course on how to conduct themselves like the hated dynasties.

We have to hope, however, that the curriculum at Kabete will not be limited to table manners, which knife, fork, spoon and glass to use with each course, and how not to drink from the finger bowl or pile the dessert on top of the main dish.

Overflowing plates

The training programme must also encompass gluttony. The Kenya Kwanza leaders around President Ruto must learn not to fill their plates to overflowing levels. Beyond that, they must also learn that grabbing public resources is a criminal offence.

Even before the Cabinet is appointed, we are seeing fellows openly casting covetous glances at the public purse.

The energy parastatals seem to be a particular target for those eyeing lucrative tenders, as is the giant transport, public works and infrastructure sector, which denizens around former President Uhuru Kenyatta had converted into personal piggy banks.

Fellows in the new regime are making all the right noises about dealing decisively with State Capture and the crony capitalism that was the hallmark of the Jubilee government. However, it is all too evident that, for many of them, it is not about ending corruption, but about it being their turn to eat. Again.

All that noise about the blatant corruption all too evident around the family and close confidants of the former president is driven by self-interest. Were not seeing genuine moral outrage about grand corruption at the heart of government but outrage that they were kept off the feeding trough that was the exclusive preserve of a few.

Campaign rhetoric

Those fellows claiming that they were targeted for investigations and prosecution are not saying that they did not steal, but that others who also stole were left untouched.

From campaign rhetoric that now seems to be government policy, we have a genuine fear that a whole crop of politicians under investigation or already indicted for corruption, assault, murder and other serious criminal offences will employ political muscle to have the charges dropped.

We heard just the other day Mr Gachagua warn the police against harassing governors and other elected leaders who were being investigated for corruption.

Director of Criminal Investigations George Kinoti may, indeed, have gone overboard with his theatrics and seeming over-enthusiasm on some investigations. But that cannot provide justification for any policy that makes one law for elected leaders and another for ordinary citizens.

Kenya Kwanza sycophants

Mr Kinoti, an object of hate for Kenya Kwanza sycophants, will presumably be one of the first public officers to be ejected by the new regime. But his successor will be a total and abject failure if they accept that their brief is to turn a blind eye to crime by those who claim that they are close to the President.

One of President Ruto's first executive orders was to grant financial autonomy to the Inspector-General of the National Police Service. Mr Hilary Mutyambai is now the accounting officer rather than some principal secretary in the Office of the President.

That looks like a well-meaning order on the principle that financial autonomy also translates to operational autonomy. The police service is now empowered to operate independently and properly insulated from directions by any other



Blogs-opinion

Learn to eat well, but not our money

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power or authority.

That other power or authority that the Constitution and laws bar from interfering with the police starts from the President downwards.

It, therefore, makes it nonsense for President Ruto to grant the police autonomy but, before the ink is dry on the executive order, Deputy President Gachagua is countermanding it with irregular roadside decrees purporting to place elected leaders above the law.

It must be made clear that leaders don't have a licence to eat public resources.

; www.gaitho.co.ke. @MachariaGaitho

End of Learn to eat well, but not our money



Africa

Death toll from Lassa fever rises to 171 in Nigeria

XINHUA / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Abuja,

The death toll of Lassa fever in Nigeria this year has risen to 171 despite measures by the government to reduce infections across the country, the Nigeria Centers for Disease Control (NCDC) has said.

In its latest Lassa fever situation report, the NCDC says there have been a total of 917 confirmed cases, with 6,660 suspected cases recorded since January 1.

In the week from September 5 to 11 alone, eight new confirmed cases and one death were recorded.

So far, the countrys 25 states have recorded at least one confirmed case across 102 out of the 774 local government areas, the public health agency said in a report dated September 18.

With the death toll rising to 171, the NCDC said the case fatality rate was 18.6 percent, lower than that for the same period last year, which was 23.3 percent.

The agency said the predominant age group affected is 21-30 years, with the male-to-female ratio for confirmed cases being 1:0.8.

According to the World Health Organization, Lassa fever is an acute viral hemorrhagic illness caused by the Lassa virus, a member of the arenavirus family of viruses.

Humans usually become infected with the virus through exposure to food or household items contaminated with urine or faeces of infected mastomys rats.

The disease is endemic in the rodent population in parts of West Africa.

In some cases, Lassa fever has similar symptoms to malaria, appearing between one and three weeks after exposure to the virus.

In mild cases, the disease causes fever, fatigue, weakness, and headache.

The NCDC said it remained committed to supporting state public health teams to achieve the goal of reducing the fevers case fatality rate to a single digit.

The disease control agency said it is currently distributing medical response commodities to states and treatment centres as part of measures to control the spread of the disease.

End of Death toll from Lassa fever rises to 171 in Nigeria



Africa

UN report warns of crimes against humanity in Ethiopia

AFP / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

UN investigators say they believe Ethiopia's government is behind ongoing crimes against humanity in Tigray, and warn the resumption of the conflict there increased the risk of "further atrocity crimes".

In its first report, the Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia on Monday said it had found evidence of widespread violations by all sides since fighting erupted in the northern Tigray region in November 2020.

The commission, created by the UN Human Rights Council last December and made up of three independent rights experts, said it had "reasonable grounds to believe that, in several instances, these violations amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity".

The experts listed a long line of horrific violations, from extrajudicial killings to intentional starvation and rape and sexual violence perpetrated on a "staggering scale".

Read: Ethiopia conflict taking a toll on women, girls

And they highlighted in particular the situation in Tigray, where the government and its allies have denied around six million people access to basic services, including the internet and banking, for more than a year.

Severe restrictions on humanitarian access have left 90 percent of the region's population in dire need of assistance.

The report said there were "reasonable grounds to believe that the Federal Government and allied regional State governments have committed and continue to commit the crimes against humanity of persecution on ethnic grounds and other inhumane acts".

They were "intentionally causing great suffering or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health based on their ongoing denial and obstruction of humanitarian assistance to Tigray", the report said.

In a statement, commission chair Kaari Betty Murungi described the humanitarian crisis in Tigray as "shocking, both in terms of scale and duration".

"The widespread denial and obstruction of access to basic services, food, healthcare, and humanitarian assistance is having a devastating impact on the civilian population," she said.

She condemned likely crimes against humanity and warned that the government appeared to be "using starvation as a method of warfare".

Murungi called on the government to "immediately restore basic services and ensure full and unfettered humanitarian access".

She also urged Tigrayan forces to "ensure that humanitarian agencies are able to operate without impediment".

Since war broke out in November 2020, thousands have died, and many more have been forced to flee their homes as the conflict expanded from Tigray to the neighbouring regions of Amhara and Afar.

A truce in March had raised hopes for a peaceful resolution of the war, but those were dashed when combat resumed last month.

"With a resumption of hostilities in northern Ethiopia, there is a very real risk of further civilian suffering and further atrocity crimes," Murungi warned.

Even before the fighting resumed, the experts said they had found evidence that rape and sexual violence had been perpetrated on a "staggering scale" since the conflict erupted, especially targeting Tigrayan women and girls.

An earlier joint investigation by the UN rights office and Ethiopia's Human Rights Commission determined that possible war crimes and crimes against humanity had been committed by all sides.

Tigrayan authorities welcomed the report, with a spokesman telling AFP they had "always maintained" that Ethiopia's government was responsible for crimes against humanity in the region.

Monday's report meanwhile also found reasonable grounds to believe that Tigrayan forces had committed war crimes, including large-scale killings of Amhara civilians, rape and sexual violence.

The experts voiced alarm at their findings, which they said "reflect profound polarisation and hatred along ethnic lines in Ethiopia".

"This has created a disturbing cycle of extreme violence and retribution, which raises the imminent threat of further and more pronounced atrocity crimes," their report warned.



Africa

UN report warns of crimes against humanity in Ethiopia

AFP / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

The report, due to be presented to the rights council on September 22, made a number of recommendations, including that all parties to the conflict "immediately cease hostilities and violations... including those that might amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity".

It calls on the UN rights office to ensure "full monitoring" of the situation in Ethiopia, and urges the Ethiopian government, its Eritrean ally and authorities in Tigray to investigate and bring all perpetrators of abuses to justice

End of UN report warns of crimes against humanity in Ethiopia



Africa

How many ants are on Earth? 20 quadrillion, study says

AFP / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

There are at least 20 quadrillion ants on Earth, according to a new study that says even that staggering figure likely underestimates the total population of the insects, which are an essential part of ecosystems around the world.

Determining the global population of ants is important for measuring the consequences of changes to their habitat -- including those caused by climate change.

Ants play a significant role, dispersing seeds, hosting organisms and serving as either predators or prey.

Some studies have already attempted to estimate the global ant population, but they resulted in a far smaller number than 20 quadrillion, which is 20 million billion.

For this new attempt -- published Monday in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) -- researchers analyzed 465 studies that measured the number of ants locally in the field.

The hundreds of studies used two standardized techniques: setting traps that captured ants passing by during a certain period of time, or analyzing the number of ants on a given patch of leaves on the ground.

While surveys have been carried out on all continents, some major regions had little or no data, including central Africa and Asia.

This is why "the true abundance of ants globally is likely to be considerably higher" than estimated, the study says. "It is of utmost importance that we fill these remaining gaps to achieve a comprehensive picture of insect diversity."

There are more than 15,700 named species and subspecies of ants that are found all over the planet, and probably an equal number that have yet to be described.

But nearly two-thirds of them are found in only two types of ecosystems: tropical forests and savannahs.

Based on the estimated number of ants, their total global biomass is thought to be 12 megatons of dry carbon -- more than that of wild birds and mammals combined, and 20 percent of that of humans.

In the future, researchers plan to study the environmental factors influencing population density of the tiny creatures.

End of How many ants are on Earth? 20 quadrillion, study says



Africa

Equatorial Guinea abolishes death penalty

AFP / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Equatorial Guinea, one of the world's most authoritarian countries, has abolished the death penalty, state television announced on Monday citing a new law signed by President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo.

Capital punishment was "totally abolished" in the oil-rich central African nation after the president signed a new penal code, shared on Twitter by the vice president.

The last official execution in the small country was carried out in 2014, according to Amnesty International, but international NGOs and the United Nations regularly accuse the regime of forced disappearances, arbitrary detention and torture.

The death penalty remains legal in more than 30 African countries, although only around half have executed people in recent years.

"I am writing in capitals to seal this unique moment: 'EQUATORIAL GUINEA HAS ABOLISHED THE DEATH PENALTY'," tweeted Vice President Teodoro Nguema Obiang Mangue, one of the head of state's sons and viewed as his likely successor.

A journalist on state television called the event "historic for our country" in a brief announcement at the end of a news programme.

The measure will come into force in the 90 days following its publication in the official state journal and was approved in advance by parliament, where all but one of the 100 MPs represent the ruling party.

President Obiang, 80, has spent more than 43 years in power, a world record when excluding monarchies.

Equatorial Guinea possesses significant oil and gas resources, but the vast majority of its 1.3 million inhabitants live below the poverty line, according to the World Bank.

End of Equatorial Guinea abolishes death penalty



Sports

Nick Mwendwa, FKF officials return to Kandanda House

Ruth Arege / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Nick Mwendwa, FKF officials return to Kandanda House

Football Kenya Federation President Nick Mwendwa on Tuesday led other officials of the body to the Goal Project, Kandanda House at Kasarani, over 10 months after they were kicked out by Sports Cabinet Secretary Amina Mohamed.

Mwendwa led FKF Vice President Doris Petra, Secretary General Barry Otieno FKF's Head of Integrity Michael Kamure among others to the facility which had been locked after their unceremonious removal from office.

Together with other FKF National Executive Members, Mwendwa was hounded out of office on November 11, 2021 by Sports CS Amina Mohamed after an audit on the federations accounts alleged misuse of funds.

Having been charged in court with four counts of fraud, Mwendwa - in a November 29 letter addressed to FKF NEC - said he had transferred his functions to his deputy Petra as he sought to clear his name.

Mohamed appointed a FKF Caretaker Committee for an initial six-month tenure before it mutated into the Transition Committee. Amina extended the Transition Committee's term for two months on August 16.

It is not yet clear the fate of the Committee as FKF plans to return to office.

Mwendwa was arrested on several occasions and charged with fraud, but the case was withdrawn under Section 87 of the Penal Code on July 6.

The Director of Public Prosecutions would then charge Mwendwa afresh at Kiambu Law Courts a day later, but the FKF boss would obtain a court order from the High Court to stop any fresh charges against him.

Mwendwa on September 9 wrote to Fifa President Gianni Infantino informing him that he was ready to go back to office after he has stepped aside to deal with his cases.

Lady Justice Esther Maina fixed September 21 as the day of ruling on whether the fresh charges filed against Mwendwa are legal and constitutional.

Reference is made to my letter dated November 29, 2021 with regard to the interim transfer of my powers and responsibilities as FKF President to the FKF Vice president.

In this regard, following the withdrawal of charges by the Director of Public Prosecution on July 8, 2022, I hereby wish to inform your good office that I have resumed my duties as the FKF president, with immediate effect, in accordance with Article 42 of the FKF constitution (2017), said Mwendwa in the letter to Infantino.

The country is serving a suspension imposed by Fifa on February 24 for government interference.

Fifa's conditions before lifting the suspension were for the government to return the running of the sport to FKF and the Goal Project offices to be re-opened.

It remains to be seen if the world football governing body will now lift the suspension in the coming days.

End of Nick Mwendwa, FKF officials return to Kandanda House



Four presidents later, Kipchoge not limited, seeks Berlin encore

Elias Makori / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Eliud Kipchoges international running career has transcended four Kenyan presidents.

When he finished fifth in the junior race at the 2002 IAAF World Cross Country Championships at the Leopardstown Racecourse in Dublin, Ireland, the late Daniel arap Moi was president.

Kipchoges pro career has run astride Mwai Kibakis and Uhuru Kenyattas combined 20-year rule, the distance running G.O.A.T. having launched his marathon career during the late President Kibakis regime and shattering the world marathon record in President Kenyattas final term.

In fact, when Kipchoge made his international debut in Dublin, his teammate in the Global Sports Communication stable, womens metric mile superstar Faith Chepngetich Kipyegon, was an eight-year-old child!

Kipchoges longevity, focus and determination are legendary.

Only Kenenisa Bekele, Ethiopias distance running legend, has stretched his world-class athletics career so long, having won the junior global cross country title in 2001, shattering the world junior 3,000 metres title in August the same year (7:30.69), and most recently finishing third in the Great North Run just a week ago behind Ugandas Jacob Kiplimo and Selemon Barega of Ethiopia.

NN Running Club

Bekeles junior record was subsequently broken three-and-a-half years later by Kenyas Augustine Choge (7:28.78).

Interestingly, Choge, 37, is also still active and, like Kipchoge, Chepngetich and Bekele, also a member of the Jos Hermens-led, Nijmegen (Netherlands) based Global Sports Communication and NN Running Club.

Last year, Choge, who, like Kipchoge, started off as a track specialist, finished 17th overall in the New York City Marathon in a personal best 2:20:53.

Ethiopias Gebre-egziabher Gebremariam, Kenyas Abel Cheruiyot, Ugandas Boniface Kiprop and Kenyas Thomas Kiplitan, who finished ahead of Kipchoge in Dublin 2002, are now long retired from elite athletics.

And now with William Ruto as Kenyas fifth president, Kipchoge, 37, is still going strong and headed for another assault on the world marathon record when he lines up for Sundays Berlin Marathon, seeking to improve on the current record of two hours, one minute and 39 seconds which he set on the same, fast, pancake-flat Berlin course four years ago in 2018.

Sundays race will be a repeat of the rain-affected 2017 edition when Kipchoge (2:03:32), then targeting the world record, was pushed all the way by Ethiopian rookie Guye Adola who clocked the fastest ever time by a debutant (2:03:46).

Adola, winner last year in Berlin, will once again be Kipchoges main challenger in a race the Kenyan legend will be running in the improved version Nike Air Zoom Alphafly NEXT% 2.

These rocket ships are made to help shave precious time off your personal records without surrendering the foundation you need to go the full distance.

Enjoy the greatest energy return of all our racing shoes while you chase your personal bests, reads Nikes review of the latest shoe that retails at about \$317 (approximately Sh38,000 in current exchange rates).

Indeed, as Kipchoges mantra goes, no human is limited. We hope he will slice some digits off the 2:01:39 on Sunday.

How I wish the increasing number of drug cheats in Kenyan athletics could follow the path The Boss Man Kipchoge has charted, and also train hard, win easy, rather than opt for performance-enhancing short-cuts.

As Kipchoge often says, Only the disciplined ones in life are free and anyone can do whatever they want. All they need is to believe!

All the best Eliud! We believe and well be rooting for you on Sunday!

Makori is the Managing Editor (Sports) at Nation Media Group.

Career achievements:

2002 World Cross Country Championships U20 race, 5th;

2003 World Cross Country Championships U20 race, 1st;

2003 World Championships 5,000m, 1st;



Sports

Four presidents later, Kipchoge not limited, seeks Berlin encore

Elias Makori / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

2004 World Cross Country Championships senior race, 4th;

2004 Athens Olympic Games 5,000m, 3rd;

2005 World Cross Country Championships senior race, 5th;

2005 World Championships 5,000m, 4th;

2006 World Indoor Championships 3000m, 3rd;

2007 World Championships 5,000m, 2nd;

2008 Beijing Olympic Games 5,000m, 2nd;

2009 World Championships 5,000m, 5th;

2011 World Championships 5,000m, 7th;

2012 World Half Marathon Championships 6th;

2016 Rio Olympic Games marathon, 1st;

2021 Tokyo Olympic Games marathon, 1st;

Marathon career:

1st, 2:05:30 Hamburg, April 2013;

2nd, 2:04:05 Berlin, September 2013;

1st, 2:05:00 Rotterdam, April 2014;

1st, 2:04:11 Chicago, October 2014;

1st, 2:04:42 London, April 2015;

1st, 2:04:00 Berlin, September 2015;

1st, 2:03:05 London, April 2016;

1st, 2:08:44 Rio (Olympics), August 2016;

1st, 2:03:32 Berlin, September 2017;

1st, 2:04:17 London, April 2018;

1st, 2:01:39 Berlin, September 2018;

1st, 2:02:37 London, April 2019;

8th, 2:06:49 London, October 2020;

1st, 2:04:40 Enschede, April 2021;

1st, 2:08:38 Tokyo (Olympics), August 2022;

1st, 2:01:39 Tokyo, March 2022

End of Four presidents later, Kipchoge not limited, seeks Berlin encore



Amwari banking on Mozzart Bet support to tackle Mombasa Rally

Abdul Sidi / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

With Mozzart Bet Kenya on board as his main sponsors, Issa Amwari is looking for a good result in next months Mombasa Rally.

Im encouraged with the support I am getting from Mozzart Bet Kenya to help me and my team compete in the KNRC events. Im thankful and looking forward to the Mombasa Rally, Amwari told Nation Sport.

The Mombasa Motor Club round of the 2022 Kenya Breweries Limited-sponsored Kenya National Rally Championship will take place on October 15 and 16.

Amwari, whose best result so far is fourth place in the Eldoret Rally, has a new navigator after Job Njiru retired from the competition recently.

The Mitsubishi Lancer Evo10 driver is now co-driven by Edward Njoroge. Amwari won the 2019 Division Two Championship title in one of his major recent achievements.

* * * *

The remaining events of the 2022 Kenya National Rally Championship calendar are: Mombasa Motor Club (October 16-16), Rally Sports Club (November 5-6) and Sikh Union Club (November 26-27).

The remaining African Rally Championship rounds are: Rwanda Rally (September 24-25), Zambia Rally (October 22-23) and Rally of South Africa (November 19-20).

Other calendar events include the National Autocross Championship: Rallye Sports Club (November 5-6), Sikh Union Club (November 26-27), Mombasa Motor Club (October 15-16) and Nanyuki Rally Group (September 10-11).

The Kenya National Karting Championship rounds are: Rift Valley Motor Sports Club (October 1-2 and November 12-13) and Kenya Motor Sports Club (October 29-30).

The Kenya Rally Raid Championship events are: Vintage Classic Car of Kenya (September 10-11) and Rift Valley Motor Sports (October 29-30).

* * * *

Safety is paramount in the sport of rallying. Mid-Point Monitors (MPMs) physically monitor the passage of cars at their allocated points and keep a record of each passing car.

In the event that the electronic tracking system goes on the blink the MPMs are the headquarters eyes and ears on the stage.

At rally speeds, a car will pass an MPM point every five to seven minutes, meaning the Clerk of Course and the Safety Officer can respond appropriately to a situation within minutes of a report of a missing competitor.

Getting all the correct resources in place means planning and the use of a competent Stage Commander.

* * * *

Did you know that...

As a Kenya Motor Sports Federation license holder, one is liable to a massive fine or suspension for going against the Rules on Competitor Conduct or using media for negative publicity?

End of Amwari banking on Mozzart Bet support to tackle Mombasa Rally



New IFC podcast promotes women in Africas renewable energy sector

Unknown Author / UnKnown Date

With renewable energy forecast to play a growing role in Africa's energy future, IFC has launched a new podcast series to promote the role of women in the sector as senior executives, engineers and thought leaders.

In the She Powers Africa podcast, host Terryanne Chebet, an entrepreneur and media specialist, speaks with leading women in Africa's renewable energy space to light the path for the next generation of African women leaders into the dynamic sector.

The first three episodes feature Jennifer Boca, Head of Environmental, Social and Governance at Lekela Power; Olaedo Osoka, CEO of Daystar Power in West Africa; and Carol Koech, the Country President for Schneider East Africa.

This engaging podcast is ideal for women interested in working in the renewable energy sector and also for anyone concerned about climate change in Africa and curious about the practical solutions. Renewable energy is Africa's energy future and ensuring more women are part of that future will enhance the sectors success," said Anne Kabugi, IFC's Regional Gender Lead for Africa.

By 2040, renewable energy could account for more than 60 percent of new electricity generation in sub-Saharan Africa, excluding South Africa, according to the Africa Energy Outlook 2019 from the International Energy Agency.

But, despite the sector's importance, women lag behind men in leadership and technical jobs in the renewable energy sector and represent just one third of the renewable energy workforce in Africa, according to research conducted by IFC on womens participation in Africa.s renewable energy sector.

The podcast is produced by IFC's Energy2Equal programme and its Women in Renewable Energy in Africa Network (W-REA), which both aim to enhance women's participation in the renewable energy sector.

Listen in.

End of New IFC podcast promotes women in Africas renewable energy sector



EMTECH to pilot a US CBDC in The Digital Dollar Project Sandbox Programme

Unknown Author / UnKnown Date

EMTECH, a first-of-its-kind central banking infrastructure provider, has announced it will take part in the recently introduced Technical Sandbox Programme by The Digital Dollar Project to explore the new possibilities of a US Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) the digital dollar.

As one of the four announced technical vendors, EMTECH will bring its unique API-First and Energy Efficient CBDC Platform to test various use cases for cross-border payments.

The firm is joining a high-profile group of former US regulators and financial services experts. This initiative marks the next step in our effort to convene the private and public sector in a symbiotic exploration of a central bank digital currency in the US, said Jennifer Lassiter, executive director of The Digital Dollar Project.

EMTECH's Founder and CEO, Carmelle Cadet, is a former Global Business and Finance Leader at IBM. In 2021, she was invited by the US Congressional Financial Services Committee to testify on whether the US dollar should be digital. A market leader in central banking infrastructure, EMTECH's mission is to leverage technology to enable access to inclusive and resilient financial ecosystems. It's exciting to be part of the Digital Dollar Project Sandbox, and we are looking forward to collaborating with the federal government, policymakers, and private sector organisations to pilot CBDC options that encompass retail or wholesale models for cross-border payment use cases, said Mrs Cadet.

In her testimony, she highlighted the firm's vision and focus on helping central banks to build modern digital cash infrastructure using blockchain and distributed ledger technology (DLT). A consistent recommendation to the White House and the Congressional Committee is the use of a regulatory sandbox to enable faster and safer innovation from and with the private sector.

The current ecosystem for cross-border payments is a complex nightmare for financial service providers to navigate. EMTECH's CBDC Platform, with its API-First approach and high-performance DLT, is a more modern design that we're excited to bring to the Technical Sandbox Programme, said Tabor Wells, Chief Technology Officer at EMTECH.

Earlier this year, the firm announced its partnership with Hedera Hashgraph to build an energy-efficient CBDC to support its newly announced GREEN CBDC Framework, which is designed to help central banks unlock unprecedented value in deploying a CBDC. A key pillar of the framework is reducing the carbon footprint of financial services, while also limiting energy demand from fragile power structures. You can learn more about the GREEN CBDC Framework at greencbdc.com and emtech.com.

Read more about the technical sandbox in DDP's Press Release.

About EMTECH

EMTECH is building the next generation of central banking Infrastructure to drive inclusive and resilient financial markets. The company provides software solutions and services to connect central banks, other regulators, and financial services providers, in a user and developer-friendly way.

EMTECH's API-First platforms power regulatory data exchange, currency issuance, and currency movement in financial markets. It is a diverse global firm that makes financial ecosystems inclusive and resilient by design. For more information, visit www.emtech.com.

End of EMTECH to pilot a US CBDC in The Digital Dollar Project Sandbox Programme

Unknown Author / UnKnown Date

By Evans Ongwae

Kenya performed well in cushioning its citizens against Covid-19 economic shocks, but could have done better. This is the overall scorecard by UN Women, following a study. In particular, the report stresses the importance of ensuring that adopted economic stimulus and recovery packages are gender responsive and address the gender equity gaps.

Titled, *Engendering Fiscal Stimulus Packages and Recovery Efforts Adopted in Response to the Covid-19 Health and Economic Crises*, the report states: Compared to African countries, efforts by Kenya to cushion and promote recovery of citizens and businesses during Covid-19 through Economic Stimulus packages are commendable. However, UN Women points out that the country could have achieved more had it made those fiscal and monetary measures more gender-responsive.

The study is a gender-responsive assessment of the fiscal and economic stimulus package adopted in response to Covid-19 in Kenya. It provides vital recommendations for engendering government measures in response to crises as well as for economic recovery now and in the future. It pinpoints where the governments stimulus packages fell short, and offers suggestions on how to make economic stimulus packages more responsive to the needs of women, men, boys, and girls.

Engendering economic stimulus packages means taking into account the experiences and specific needs of women, men, girls, and boys, as well as the underlying causes of vulnerabilities, including gender gaps or inequalities, gender relationships, power structures, social norms, and leadership. These should count in both the design and implementation of the stimulus measures, the report states.

During the launch of the report last month jointly with Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Public Service and Gender, Prof Margaret Kobia, the UN Women Kenya Representative Anna Mutavati, reiterated the importance of gender data in ensuring women and girls were not left behind in the development agenda.

We know that gender equality and womens empowerment are prerequisites for strong institutions, stable communities, and economies. Evidence from all around the world shows that investing in womens economic empowerment sets a direct path towards gender equality, inclusive economic growth, and wealth creation.

The UN Women study compared Kenyas response with what South Africa and Nigeria did. It recommends some lessons for Kenya to pick from the responses of the two Sub-Saharan African nations.

Consideration of the needs of women, men, boys, and girls in the design and implementation of the economic stimulus packages enhances economic and social inclusion and prospects of achievement of outcomes of cushioning against the shocks as well as recovery from the Covid-19 pandemics, the report offers.

The study is anchored on UN Womens commitment to supporting government efforts that contribute to womens livelihoods and their access to social protection, healthcare, infrastructure, food, and housing, among other sectors that the government has prioritised.

The analysis focused on economic stimulus packages implemented during the financial year 2020/2021. These include cash transfers to vulnerable families; National Hygiene Programme or the Youth Employment Programme; support to the educational sector; support to small and medium-sized enterprises liquidity; support to the construction sector; support to the health sector; support to the agricultural sector; support to the tourism sector; support to the environment; and support to the manufacturing sector.

An important underlying factor in response to and adaptability to changes in times of pandemics and crises is the feminisation of poverty, the UN Women analysis notes.

The study found that women, more than men, were deprived of social economic participation, information, and nutrition, and were generally multi-dimensionally poor. This is a key salient pathway in which gender contributes to disproportionately negative impacts of Covid-19. Women are also, more than men, involved with caregiving activities, including caring for the children, the sick, the elderly, and persons with severe disabilities.

Gender inequalities cause women and men to respond and adjust to pandemics and crises differently. Disasters and pandemics such as Covid-19 disproportionately and negatively affect women and girls when compared to men and boys, because of gender segregation in most economic activities, which is further reinforced by gender inequalities.



Unknown Author / UnKnown Date

Moreover, there has been an increase in gender-based violence, more specifically violence against women and girls.

Following the study, UN Women suggests that in times of crises, such as those comparable to the Covid-19 pandemic, Kenya could:

Consider expanding the sector coverage (of its stimulus package) for better economic recovery outcomes. This includes extending support to sectors such as housing, energy, and transport infrastructure. Temporarily expand social protection coverage during pandemics, through special programmes to reach previously uncovered beneficiaries. Consider extending social protection to practitioners in early childhood development, small-scale farmers and teachers, as well as those in creative, cultural, and sports sectors. Increase the amounts of cash transfers per recipient, for all the existing beneficiaries. Consider establishing a social relief from distress grant for caregivers, aimed at reducing increased unpaid care work during pandemics. Consider targeting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in all sectors of the economy, and not only in certain selected sectors. Consider implementing an unemployment insurance fund and compensation fund for health practitioners, and provide a temporary employee relief scheme for domestic workers. Consider enforcing the Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO) provisions, or even increasing the proportion reserved for women businesses. Implement special support to survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) and also, in partnership with civil society, establish a mechanism for linking them to shelter houses. This would address some of the challenges related to increased GBV during pandemics.

Overall, the analysis showed that the size of Kenyas provisions regarding various fiscal measures is small, measured by the size of the issues the specific measures target.

End of UN Women to Kenya: You did well in cushioning citizens against Covid-19 economic shocks, but



Digital payments ignite a new era of hope for SMEs in Kenya

Unknown Author / UnKnown Date

By Shehryar Ali, East Africa Country Manager, Mastercard

Its no secret that the pandemic was especially tough on small and medium enterprises (SMEs), particularly the many small cash-based businesses that operate in the informal sector. These businesses are the lifeblood of economies, and the fact that they couldnt generate incomes or apply for micro-loans to stay afloat, had a knock-on effect on everything, from employment to general community wellbeing.

In Kenya, SMEs account for 80 percent of jobs. In 2021 alone, an estimated 22 million jobs in Africa were lost, pushing more people into poverty. Its a devastating cycle that can only be broken with multiple actions technology and partnerships being chief among them as this challenge cannot be tackled through a single approach.

This challenging period did not have many silver linings, but one outcome that will have a positive impact on SMEs going forward is the increased rate of digitisation.

During times of limited mobility, more small businesses realised the necessity of selling online and getting paid digitally. This helped to boost cash flow without having to exclusively depend on the much harder and more arduous journey that cash entails to change hands.

The value of light

When I think about the economic strife experienced by so many cash-based SMEs during the pandemic, but also the fortunate acceleration of digitisation, I am reminded of the old Kanga saying: The value of light is noticed when night falls.

By now, the case for digital transformation is well established. Access to digital tools, associated training, credit, and resources, are key, not only to the growth of SMEs, but also integral to their survival. Ensuring that these smaller businesses have access to and benefit from the digital economy, is something that Mastercard is very passionate about.

SMEs are recognising the practical benefits of digitisation in day-to-day operations, as opposed to viewing it as a long-term project for the future. Data shows that 41 percent of SMEs that implemented digitalisation initiatives had stronger revenue growth in 2020 than non-adopters. Thats not the only benefit. Going digital better insulates SMEs against economic shocks, as they can tap into the global economy, reach a wider market, and accept cross-border payments.

Furthermore, as more consumers adopt and use a variety of electronic payments, this two-way digital adoption offers increased benefits for both the business and customers. People do not want to be stuck in a cash economy, which effectively leaves them locked out of many economic activities. They want access to a variety of financial services, and more retail choices.

A digital economy that continues to expand

With every passing day, the digital economy is increasingly becoming the economy. That is why digital inclusion is so critical. We all benefit when more people are connected to the digital economy.

At Mastercard, weve made it both our business strategy and our social responsibility to ensure that people and organisations have access to networks, tools and solutions that could help them reach their full potential and achieve financial security. We have pledged to bring one billion people and 50 million micro and small businesses into the digital economy by 2025, with a direct focus on providing 25 million women entrepreneurs with the solutions they need to grow their business. So how do we do it?

Solutions that support small business resilience

Access to credit is one way, and its something we do with data. Digitalisation of SME operations brings the benefit of generating this helpful data. This same data enables financial institutions to make more informed decisions about extending credit one of the key challenges for small businesses. A digitised record of transactions enables more small businesses to be brought into the financial mainstream, with access to finance solutions that can support their growth.

A great example of Mastercards Track Micro Credit Programme, fuelled by digital transaction data from the beneficiaries themselves, can be seen in Kenyas Jaza Duka initiative. Designed for micro merchants, this inclusive credit ecosystem gives small shop owners short-term credit and digital payment capabilities to help them build their creditworthiness and stock their shelves without having to rely solely on cash. Digitisation is empowering these small



Digital payments ignite a new era of hope for SMEs in Kenya

Unknown Author / UnKnown Date

businesses to reach their true potential.

Collaboration brings scale, and wider inclusion

Partnerships are also crucial to ensure scale and impact. Just like Jaza Duka was originally launched with the help of Unilever, KCB and Mastercard, it was further scaled in partnership with Kasha this year. Another 5,000 MSMEs now have access to Jaza Duka through Kasha, a purpose-driven digital retail and distribution platform focused on providing women with affordable health and wellbeing products.

In addition, many of these newly included small businesses are run by women entrepreneurs, who are among Africa's most formidable, but also most marginalised, business owners. So, this is truly inclusion in action, on two key fronts.

Kasha has a long legacy of collaboration with Mastercard, having joined our Start Path engagement programme for start-ups in 2019. We've also invested in the e-commerce platform, and it's great to see this new chapter making such a positive impact on even more businesses.

The journey continues. At Mastercard, we're leveraging our technology, innovation, and solutions beyond payments to help small and medium enterprises get paid, get capital and get digital safely and securely wherever they are. We are dedicated to enabling businesses to survive and thrive stronger than before. This is how we are Empowering Every Business. Everywhere.

End of Digital payments ignite a new era of hope for SMEs in Kenya