



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



Ali Robas UDM files lawsuit to leave Raila Odinga's Azimio coalition

Justus Ochieng' / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

The United Democratic Movement (UDM) party has filed a lawsuit whose outcome could settle the supremacy battle between President William Ruto's Kenya Kwanza Alliance and Mr Raila Odinga's Azimio la Umoja One Kenya Coalition Party in Parliament once and for all.

UDM, which is led by Mandera Senator Ali Roba and has eight MPs, is furious at the advisory by the Registrar of Political Parties lumping it among Azimio member parties yet it has allied itself with the ruling coalition.

A dispute over which coalition has the most MPs to be designated the majority side in the National Assembly is raging, with both sides laying claim to the majority leaders post, for which Kenya Kwanza has named Kikuyu MP Kimani Ichungwah (United Democratic Alliance) while Azimio has picked Ugunja MP Opiyo Wandayi (Orange Democratic Movement).

The leader of the majority party is the second in rank in the National Assembly after the Speaker, with the leader of the minority party the third in the pecking order.

Coerced to sign

UDM, a party the former Mandera governor leads, and which was the first to switch to President Ruto's camp after the elections, does not want to be associated with Azimio, claiming it was coerced to sign a pre-election coalition deal in the run-up to last month's poll in which Mr Odinga backed by then President Uhuru Kenyatta faced off with the then Deputy President Ruto.

Following the outcome of the August 9 General Election, and in compliance with pre-election coalition agreements filed with the Registrar of Political Parties, Azimio has a majority 173 MPs over Kenya Kwanza's 164 members in the National Assembly. The other 12 MPs in the 349-member House are independents who are not considered for the purposes of assigning the majority side.

Read: Ruto goes for regional kingpins in strategy to weaken Azimio

But, as it stands and following Ruto's poaching of members from parties that want to flee Mr Odinga's coalition, Kenya Kwanza has a majority of 175 MPs against Azimio's 162, which means a decision on UDM membership will settle the dispute.

UDM insists it has signed a post-election coalition deal with Kenya Kwanza, citing its constitutional right to free association, which it says supersedes the deal with Azimio that was secured through blackmail.

But the advisory by Registrar of Political Parties Anne Nderitu informing Parliament of UDM's statutory connection to Azimio has compelled the party to seek the courts' interpretation, given that the law bars a party from being a member of more than one coalition.

Read: UDM legislators protest Registrar's move linking them to Azimio

The registrar issued Azimio, which comprised 26 fully registered political parties, according to its coalition agreement, with a certificate of full registration on April 21.

The only recourse to sever ties with Azimio is through the exit clause stipulated in the agreement, which, however, will require UDM to wait for three months after the elections to trigger, which would see Azimio recognised as the majority side.

UDM, through Lunga Lunga MP Mr Mangale Chiforomodo, has moved to court to challenge this restrictive timeline. According to court papers seen by the Nation, the petitioner is aggrieved that a provision of the Azimio agreement that a constituent political party may not withdraw from the coalition within three months after the General Election is incompatible with the Constitution.

Kiraitu, Roba were forced to stay in Azimio - Ruto

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Article 22 of the Azimio coalition agreement states that a party may withdraw from the agreement upon giving 90 days notice to the Azimio Council of its decision to withdraw from the coalition.

It adds that no party may withdraw from the coalition six months before the August 9, 2022 General Election or within three months after the date of the poll.



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It violates my constitutional rights and the people I represent as guaranteed under Articles 36 and 38 as read with Article 24 of the Constitution, states the petitioner. Article 36 of the Constitution is on freedom of association, Article 38 stipulates political rights while Article 24 spells out limitation of rights and fundamental freedoms.

The battle for majority is crucial for the two coalitions since the majority side essentially takes control of the House.

The membership of each committee reflects the relative majorities of the seats held by each of the parliamentary parties in the National Assembly.

National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetangula will be called upon to arbitrate the dispute.

The 11 UDM legislators, among them eight members of the National Assembly and three senators, have protested their association with Azimio, urging the Speaker to recognise them as Kenya Kwanza members.

They insist that they belong to President Ruto's Kenya Kwanza Alliance pursuant to a post-election agreement signed between UDM and the President's coalition.

Read: You will lose your seat, Jubilee warns MPs eyeing shift to Ruto camp

It is, indeed, baffling that, despite the post-election coalition agreement that was signed between our party and the Kenya Kwanza coalition under the Political Parties Act, 2011, the Registrar of Political Parties knowingly disregarded the law and has unlawfully associated ourselves and indeed our party with a non-existent coalition agreement with the Azimio Coalition, they said in the letter dated September 16.

The legislators are Mr Roba, Senators Mohamed Abbas (Wajir) and Mariam Omar as well as National Assembly members Bashir Abdullahi (Mandera North), Hassan Maalim (Banisa), Haro Abdul (Mandera South), and Mangale Chiforomodo (Lungalunga). The others are Yusuf Haji (Mandera West), Joseph Lekuton (Laisamis), Umulkheir Kassim (Mandera County) and Sulekha Harun (nominated).

Read: MP risks it all by leaving Azimio for Ruto alliance

The legislators noted that Article 38 of the Constitution recognises political rights including the freedom to make political choices.

They also pointed out that the Constitution guarantees freedom of association under Article 36.

Misrepresentation

These two fundamental rights cannot be negated by the alleged misrepresentation of facts and law by the Registrar of Political Parties, which seeks to place us in a coalition agreement that we are not party to.

We therefore protest against such actions and note that Article 10 of the Constitution, which outlines the national values and principles of governance, behoves upon you, honourable Speaker, in making any decision affecting the members of the House in particular the members of the UDM party, to make such decisions in a manner that promotes and advances the rule of law, good governance and human rights.

The legislators insisted that any continued association with Azimio is not only contrary to the Political Parties Act, 2011 but also Articles 10, 36 and 38 of the constitution.

Read: Cracks emerge in Azimio over House leadership

Yesterday, impeccable sources at the registrar's office told the Nation that, as per their records, UDM still remains a bona fide member of the Azimio coalition.

They have not triggered any exit clauses of the Azimio coalition and, therefore, according to our records, they are still members of the coalition, the source revealed.

We go with what is in the records and, until now, they have not been able to conclude this matter, the source added.

But UDM Secretary-General David Ohito insisted that the office of the registrar was aware of the move by the party to exit Azimio.

We have done so and she has copies of our letters. We haven't even seen the Azimio documents whose last page they gave us to sign. So we don't know what we are exiting from, Mr Ohito said.

We disown that relationship and coalition in the strongest terms possible and regret having associated with them in the past, he added.



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He said the party through Mr Chiforomodo had already filed a constitutional petition before Mombasa High court, dissociating with Azimio coalition.

But Azimio Secretary-General Junet Mohamed maintained that UDM is still part of the coalition pursuant to their signing of the pre-election agreement which is still binding.

Read: Kenya Kwanza picks Kimani Ichung'wah, Aaron Cheruiyot for top House leadership posts

We also communicated to the registrar, who informed us that, according to her records, UDM is still a member of Azimio coalition, Mr Junet told the Nation.

President Ruto picked Mr Ichungwah as the National Assembly Majority Leader with Kilifi Norths Owen Baya as deputy.

South Mugirango MP Sylvanus Osoro is designated Majority Whip and will be deputised by Marsabit Woman representative Naomi Waqo.

In the Senate, the President rewarded his close ally and Kericho Senator Aaron Cheruiyot by naming him as the Senate Majority Leader. Ms Tabitha Karanja (Nakuru) will be his deputy.

Kakamega Senator Boni Khalwale was picked as the Senate Majority Whip, with Samburu Senator Steve Lelegwe deputising him. The President handed all the House leadership positions to members of his UDA.

Majority Leader

Azimio, on the other hand, named Mr Wandayi Majority Leader in the National Assembly, with Kathiani MP Robert Mbui (Wiper) as his deputy.

Mr Mohammed was named Chief Whip and nominated MP Sabina Chege (Jubilee) the deputy whip.

In the Senate, Azimio picked Kilifi Senator Stewart Madzayo (ODM) as the Minority Leader with Kitui Senator Enoch Wambua (Wiper) as the deputy.

Isiolo Senator Fatuma Dhulo (Jubilee) has been picked as the Senate Minority Whip and will be deputised by Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna (ODM).

End of Ali Robas UDM files lawsuit to leave Raila Odinga's Azimio coalition



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



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



We found love in a hopeless place...the rehab | Nation

Unknown Author / UnKnown Date

By Kalume Kazungu

As teenagers, living on Lamu Island, Babli Shee Athman, 26, and Khadija Mohamed Shebwana, 30, chose the wrong path of drugs and alcoholism. Excessive drinking and indulgence in heroin, cocaine and bhang became a lifestyle that cemented their relationship with fellow drug users.

And for more than 15 years, the lovebirds have been battling addiction, often finding it difficult to separate reality from fantasy.

But their salvation came in form of a residential treatment centre at the Lamu King Fahd County Hospital. It was while confined at the centre that the embers of love first sparked and interestingly, greatly helped shape their lives.

Read more: [We found love in a hopeless place...the rehab](#)

End of We found love in a hopeless place...the rehab | Nation



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



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

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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

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



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;



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



Sports

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



Life-and-style

We found love in a hopeless place...the rehab

Kalume Kazungu / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Love brewed at the rehab

The deep scars on their hands are a testimony of the sad tale of drug addiction, but then theres a silver lining; love brewed in the confines of a rehabilitation centre.

As teenagers, living on Lamu Island, Babli Shee Athman, 26, and Khadija Mohamed Shebwana, 30, chose the wrong path of drugs and alcoholism. Excessive drinking and indulgence in heroin, cocaine and bhang became a lifestyle that cemented their relationship with fellow drug users.

And for more than 15 years, the lovebirds have been battling addiction, often finding it difficult to separate reality from fantasy.

But their salvation came in form of a residential treatment centre at the Lamu King Fahd County Hospital. It was while confined at the centre that the embers of love first sparked and interestingly, greatly helped shape their lives.

While many people are likely to view romantic partnerships between drug-using couples as dysfunctional, unstable, utilitarian and often violent, theirs radiates positivity, even as they continue with their recovery journey. The duo have enrolled in a Medically Assisted Therapy (Mat) unit at the King Fahd County Hospital.

The centre was established in March 2021 through a partnership between the county government of Lamu and the Muslim Education and Welfare Association (Mewa) with a key objective to rehabilitate drug addicts by administering methadone, a narcotic pain reliever thats taken orally. Counselling services are also offered.

So far the Lamu Mat centre has registered more than 300 drug addicts from across the archipelago, who report to the clinic daily for their dose of methadone thats key in their journey to reform.

Among the registered members are Shee and his wife Khadija.

In an interview with Lifestyle, they disclosed how they met at the Mat Clinic and started a whirlwind romance that morphed into a union.

The two are a common sight on the narrow Lamu streets.

Shee narrates that since he welcomed his wife Khadija into his heart, there has been a great improvement in their lives, adding that their relationship has made him focus more on the positive side of life, unlike before.

We met in March last year. Both of us had gone to receive methadone. Thats the time I felt I am so much in love with her. I didnt hesitate to open up my feelings to Khadija and she accepted my proposal, Shee says.

He recalls that the days before he met Khadija, his life was at its worst. He would even sell his clothes, including boxers, and use the proceeds to buy a sachet of heroin, cocaine or any hard drugs, locally known as unga (flour), and bhang.

I was dirty then. I used to walk around the streets of Lamu while almost naked. But I am a happy man now and Kahdija has greatly contributed to this. Every time I think about stealing or doing something bad, Khadija intervenes and talks me out of it. She always tells me that she isnt willing to see me die and leave her as a widow in the streets, Shee offers.

He started using heroin, cocaine and bhang at the age of 10.

Born in a family of 10 siblings, he says poverty and peer pressure led him to the wayward life consuming drugs.

I can confidently say that as of now, there is nothing I havent seen or done because of drugs. Thats why I decided to change my life for the better. I would be dead if I continued with my old ways, says Shee.

According to his brother Ali Athman, Shees journey of reformation can be attributed to Allah (God). Ali noted that prior to his recovery, family members, including himself, did not want to see Shee close to them.

We used to think he wanted to steal or harm us. So, we shut our doors every time we saw him near our compounds. But today, Shee is a good man. He has totally changed and does not consume any drugs. We love him and his wife Khadija. They come home daily and we welcome them, says Athman.

As for Khadija, she says choosing her husband was the best decision she made.

She had been in prostitution to raise money for hard drugs, but thats now in the past. She credits her relationship with Shee for saving her from the twilight business and other immoral lifestyles she had adopted.



Life-and-style

We found love in a hopeless place...the rehab

Kalume Kazungu / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

The couples love has blossomed to that of caring for each other, just like the way stable, non-drug-using partners do.

Khadija says that were it not for her husband, she would have ended up dead, raped, in jail, or with a bad disease.

She admits that Mr Shee has also helped her think differently about intimate relationships.

I am in love with him. I am totally in love with everything he does for me. I chose him since he is a fellow recovering drug user. He understands me, you know. Shee is always there for me. Were there for each other during our ups and downs, she offers.

Khadijas mother, Zulekha Mohamed confirmed that her second-born daughter had indeed changed her life for the better. According to Zulekha, 10 years ago, Khadija was not someone to be trusted.

We used to fear her as a family. Her life of drugs really discouraged me and I spent most of the time praying that one day, Allah will change her. We tried our best as a family but we couldnt change Khadijas life, said Zulekha.

She added: I am happy that my daughter has recovered from drugs and even has a husband. Thats a big plus for her. We can now trust her. I have allowed her to visit my home since she doesnt steal anymore. Sometimes, she is entrusted with children to walk with in town, just like any other normal human being. I love her like the rest of my children.

The couple state with no ambiguity the feelings they have for each other, and the ways in which people around them support their relationship.

If I were alone in this journey of rehabilitation, I would have fully reverted to the life of hard-drug consumption. But since I am married, I always operate, knowing very well that I am somebodys wife, says Khadija.

Shee discloses that they had already made future plans, including getting children and a permanent home.

Were planning to have four children and a good home for this family. We used to sleep in barazas and rickety, old boats and dhows in the Indian Ocean. But since we met, weve been able to rent a small store that we call our home. We dont have bedding but we pray that one day, we shall get some, Shee disclosed.

The two have one appeal to the national and county governments, leaders and well-wishers out there: to secure him a job that can sustain their livelihoods as the little wages they make is not enough.

Were focused on ensuring we fully recover from drugs. We want to be a role model to the society of drug users that they can reform if they have the zeal and determination, says Khadija.

But at the same time, were worried about how we will sustain our life without a job. The lack of employment might force us to turn to drugs again. We need help, she added.

The optimistic lovebirds believe that there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Overcoming addiction wasnt easy. We had to make hard decisions. We became choosy with the kind of friends to have and stopped going to places we previously frequented. That alone is enough rehabilitation. We even changed our way of thinking and perception about the world, says Khadija.

After stopping drugs, Shee knew right from the beginning that if he didn't create a new life, then all the factors that brought him to his addiction would easily catch up with him again.

I singled out friends who were supportive after quitting drugs. One such friend is my wife Khadija who I respect so much. Through her support and guidance, I am here as a reformed addict. For the last two years, I havent abused heroin or any other substance, he says.

Juma Mwamvyoga, the Lamu Mat clinic addiction counsellor confirmed that the two are one of the success stories at the clinic since they are on the right track, completely having left the life of hard drug consumption.

Mwamvyoga says the Mat clinic only gives a chance to heroin addicts like them to slowly be weaned off the hard stuff at a pace that slowly gives their brain the chance to periodically adjust to the lack of heroin, with methadone as a medical substitute for opioids.

According to Mwamvyoga, methadone is one of the components used to help alleviate opioid cravings and ease withdrawal symptoms with minimal risk of tolerance and compulsive opioid use.

Theirs is one of our success stories. They are active methadone treatment followers who have strictly adhered to therapy at the facility. and are now on the right path to full reformation, said the counsellor.



Life-and-style

We found love in a hopeless place...the rehab

Kalume Kazungu / Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Lamu Mat Clinic Monitoring and Evaluation Officer Abdulkadir Ahmed Jeneby said recovering addicts who are also referred to as clients or patients, said the daily dosage of methadone has to be religiously taken for a period of between one and a half to two years so as to be able to completely subdue the addiction.

He explains that the major objective of the clinic is to induce harm reduction through promoting the health and dignity of those impacted by drug use.

Once an addict shows interest in therapy, they undergo at least five psycho-social sessions about the programme where they are taught about the entire Mat process, the side effects and changes expected to the body once treatment starts, said Jeneby.

For the two, life can only get better.

End of We found love in a hopeless place...the rehab



New IFC podcast promotes women in Africa's 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 sector's 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 women's 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 Africa's 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.

EMTECHs 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, EMTECHs mission is to leverage technology to enable access to inclusive and resilient financial ecosystems. Its 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 firms 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. EMTECHs CBDC Platform, with its API-First approach and high-performance DLT, is a more modern design that were 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 DDPs 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.

EMTECHs 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