Revealed: How top CS, PS and Raila aide bungled Azimio's election plan

Mercy Simiyu | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

As the bitter blame game rages within the Azimio One Kenya coalition on the reasons its presidential candidate was defeated, one official who worked closely with agents, who were deployed at polling stations, has spoken out on how the process was bungled.

The official claims the agents had been identified, given a down payment and trained, ready for deployment, only for a top official in the coalition to present a new list of agents on the eve of election day. And that was how things began to go awry, adding to a string of failures that once again undermined Mr Raila Odingas State House bid. The official, who sought anonymity, spoke to Mercy Simiyu

I was among the county liaison officers and I worked with the Azimio Secretariat. We had 57 people in charge of the election and they were to manage agents across the country. We have 47 counties, but big counties like Nairobi and Kakamega required two or three people managing the election there.

We had a good programme for the agents, money was available for them. We had structures. Actually, for the chief agents, we employed lawyers to be the constituency and county chief agents. We had 290 lawyers as constituency chief agents and 47 lawyers as county chief agents, and we had the polling agents.

Read: Raila sets 2024 deadline to reform IEBC, Judiciary ahead of 2027 polls

Unlike the previous elections, this time we were more organised and we covered a lot of ground during the campaigns more than we did in 2017. The messaging was good, and, generally, the management of the campaign was okay.

But many things transpired because it is a scenario where our candidate was working with the President. And Azimio had many parties 26.

Initially, we had an office in Lavington, then three days to elections, we were offered another office in Westlands the entire third floor of the office block by one of the Presidents closest aides. It was the best office, with good equipment.

We had a good programme before it backfired. We trained the agents and prepared them on how to handle the elections. We even made the down payment of Sh1,500, and we were to pay them Sh5,000 each.

Top officials

But on the eve of the elections, one of the top officials, a close ally of Mr Odinga, messed up the agents plan. It was a scenario where you have trained people, lets say 1,500 in a constituency, then he comes and asks how did you find these people?.

Then he gives you a different list and says Work with these people; and it is hours to the election, you dont know who they are, you dont know where they came from and then you are being instructed to send the letters to people who are not trained.

We messed up with the agents. He (the Odinga ally) did not misappropriate the money, because he was not handling the money for the agents, but he came with a different list and instructed us to use that list, yet we had four hours to opening of the polling stations.

How would we have started sending those letters? How were we to train the newcomers?

Read: After bruising Supreme Court defeat, Raila re-emerges to face political foes

In the end, the agents were changed at 2am and there was not enough time to ensure all the logistics were in place, including having their introductory letters ready and accreditation as agents.

As a consequence, on election day, we did not have presidential agents in some areas, including Kisii, Kajiado, Narok, some counties in North-Eastern and Coast. How do you start calling 1,000 people to start going to those constituencies?

(A Nation analysis of the results posted on the electoral commissions portal confirms this. For instance, Form 34A from Chepkisa Primary Schools stream 1 in Emurua Dikirr constituency in Narok is only signed by a UDA agent. Here, Raila got four votes, Mwaure Waihiga had one, and William Ruto had 285 of the 290 valid votes cast.)

Read: Chebukati, two commissioners were bidding before the elections, says Tuju

We did not have agents because of those issues. People are saying we did not pay agents. In this scenario, whom were we going to pay? You have two lists the trained and the untrained.

So, in the morning, the ones we trained reported to their respective polling centres but were not allowed to access polling

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stations because they did not have letters of appointment. So getting Form 34As became a problem because we did not have agents.

State House

We worked with a Cabinet secretary. The team from State House spent time at the command centre our office in Lavington. Two days to election, you would find the two, the CS and a PS, staying up to 3am.

We asked them how safe we were but they said kila kitu kiko sawa (everything is okay).

They even said we had a parallel tallying system but they never showed it to us.

They only promised us we would win the election.

For me, Raila was lied to and misled by these people. When I asked him Mzee, is everything okay? he would say everything is under control. The PS and the CS gave Mzee false hope. We lost because of our ignorance.

Read: Junet did not squander Azimio agents cash, says Raila

Raila tried in this election, but he was let down by his closest allies and maybe he also relaxed, thinking the government would play a big role in this election. I asked the PS, when the results were about to be declared at Bomas, on whose instructions the police officers were working.

He said everything was under control and if you have government goodwill all indications are that it should work in your favour.

They were there physically but their hearts were elsewhere. After the results were announced, they all disappeared. Only the CS came once.

Even one of Railas closest advisers, the only thing he kept saying was pima suti (make yourself a suit, ostensibly, for Mr Odingas swearing-in), the official concluded.

End of Revealed: How top CS, PS and Raila aide bungled Azimio's election plan

Uhuru, Michuki and Gumo cleared Arror, Kimwarer dams, court told

Joseph Wangui | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Three cabinet ministers in the then President Mwai Kibakis administration gave nod to the Kerio Valley Development Authority for construction of Kimwarer and Arror multipurpose dams in 2008 and 2009, the anti-corruption court heard yesterday.

The advertisement for the construction work and issuance of the contract to Itialian firm, CMC di Ravenna-Itinera Joint Ventures, was authorised by the KVDA, the court further heard.

Ms Charity Mui, an official at KVDA, said a concept paper for the two botched projects was signed by cabinet ministers Fred Gumo, John Michuki and Uhuru Kenyatta. At the time they were serving in the Grand Coalition Government headed by President Mwai Kibaki.

The court heard that Mr Gumo being the Minister of Regional Development Authorities at the time, signed the concept paper on December 1, 2008 while Mr Michuki (former Minister Finance) signed it on December 3, 2008.

Read: Ruto: I'll build Kimwarer, Arror dams

Also read: Sh63b Arror, Kimwarer dams haunt Rift leaders ahead of polls

The paper was also signed by Deputy Prime Minister Uhuru Kenyatta on August 4, 2009 authorizing KVDA to continue with the planned construction of the dams.

At the time he was the Minister for Finance. He is now the immediate former President.

Ms Mui told Chief Magistrate Lawrence Mugambi that there was a Cabinet memorandum by the Minister of Regional Development Authorities prepared for development of programs and projects in the region.

She was testifying as a Prosecution witness in the Sh63 billion graft trial of former National Treasury Cabinet Secretary Henry Rotich, former managing director of KVDA David Kimosop and seven others.

They include former Chief Economist Kennedy Nyakundi, former National Environment Management Authority Managing Director Geoffrey Wahungu, Kennedy Nyakundi (chief economist, Treasury), Jackson Njau Kinyanjui (director of resource mobilization, Treasury) and Titus Muriithi (the inspector-general of State corporations).

Read: Italian firm contracted to build Itare dam fights tax demand

Also read: Kenya defaults on Sh5bn Arror, Kimwarer dams loans

They are charged with conspiracy to defraud the Government of Kenya of USD 501,829,769.43 (Sh56,360,501,604.99) for the development of Arror and Kimwarer multi-purpose dam projects.

It is alleged that the accused persons committed the offences between December 19, 2014, and July 22, 2019 by improperly securing a commercial loan under the guise that it was a government-to-government agreement and in the process made the Kenyan government liable as a financier and borrower.

They are also accused of single sourcing an insurance policy and causing the government to lose Euros 42,088,198 (Sh5.56 billion at the current exchange rates).

Mr Rotich, who was replaced in July 2016 after serving in the finance docket since 2013, is battling 18 criminal charges in connection with tenders for the construction of the dams.

Two projects

The Prosecution witness served as a secretary to KVDA Adhoc Technical and Evaluation Tendering Committee that evaluated tender documents in respect to the two projects. She was also a procurement officer at KVDA. Kimwarer dam was to cost Sh22.2 while Arror was to cost Sh28.3 billion.

Ms Mui told court that according to the Cabinet documents the projects were initiated under the Vision 2030 and the implementation had been extended for eight years.

She said after the Cabinet endorsed the plans KVDA placed advertisemnets in the local daily newspapers on December 19, 2014 inviting interested bidders to construct the dams.

Although the prosecution allege that the accused persons conspired to float tenders for the two projects and awarded CMC di Ravenna-Itinera Joint Ventures the contract, Ms Mui said no bidder was prejudiced and that the process was fairly competitive.

She said the procurement committee evaluated the bids and awarded the tender to the Itialian contractor.

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However, Ms Mui was pressed by defence lawyer Katwa Kigen to explain why the Prosecution dropped her from the list of the accused persons and made her a witness following a plea-bargain agreement.

The court heard that after she offered to be a witness her suspension from work at KVDA was lifted, she was reinstated and was paid her accrued salaries.

The DPP did not ask me to give them an affidavit to be a witness. I sat with my lawyer when I was one of the accused persons, went through the documentation given by the Prosecution and my lawyer and I were convinced that all those charges on me were not true, she stated.

That is when we wrote to the DPP explaining my part where I participated in the tender and in their response I was asked to put in form of an affidavit, said Ms Mui.

Asked why the DPP accepted her offer and rejected a similar one by Mr Kimosop, the witness said she was not aware. Ms Mui is the first prosecution witness in the trial.

The prosecution led by Special Prosecutor and Senior Counsel Taib Ali Taib has lined up 32 witnesses to prove the case.

The DPP had initially charged 24 individuals in relation to the scandal but has since terminated charges against 15, among them Former Treasury Principal Secretary Kamau Thugge and his former East Africa Community counterpart Susan Koech, after they agreed to be prosecution witnesses. The hearing continues.

End of Uhuru, Michuki and Gumo cleared Arror, Kimwarer dams, court told

David Mwere | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

The National Treasury incurred Sh54.68 billion in unbudgeted public expenditure towards the end of President Uhuru Kenyattas term.

This raised questions about the fiscal discipline of a country that is grappling with liquidity issues and a huge public debt, on a day when MPs accused the National Treasury of overstepping its mandate in the budget-making process.

The expenditure worsened the issue of pending bills, making the budget deficit a moving target.

The National Treasury now expects the National Assembly to regularise the expenditure post facto.

Of the amount incurred, Sh23.1 billion has already been disbursed to the various government ministries and state departments, with the balance in the pipeline.

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

A document presented by the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) to the MPs during their induction at a city hotel shows the National Treasury has already prepared supplementary estimates I for the 2022/23 financial year to be regularised by the National Assembly in line with Article 223 of the Constitution.

National Treasury Cabinet Secretary Ukur Yatani.

The supplementary estimates will be among the first issues to be dealt with by the 13th Parliament when it starts its sittings in the coming days, notwithstanding that it is barely three months since the 2022/23 budget was appropriated by the National Assembly.

The expenditure is therefore over and above the Sh3.33 trillion budget that was passed by Parliament in June this year.

This means the government will have to look for more funds to finance the extra budget, further stretching the countrys public debt that is projected to hit Sh9.4 trillion by June next year.

The countrys public debt stands at Sh8.7 trillion.

Expenditure has not been explained

The document by the PBO, which advises Parliament and its committees on fiscal matters, shows the Ministry of Petroleum and Mining has been allocated an extra Sh16.6 billion for fuel price stabilisation, State Department for Infrastructure Sh11.35 for road construction, State Department for Basic Education Sh8.2 billion for the Kenya primary and secondary education and National Treasury Sh6.1 billion to finance Telkom Kenya, whose expenditure has not been explained.

There was also Sh4.5 billion for the State Department for Crop Development and Agriculture Research for the maize flour subsidy, Ministry of Defence Sh3.5 billion for the construction of a research hospital and Sh3.77 billion to the Office of the President, whose expenditure has not been explained.

Also read: How Legio Maria church decided to build own hospital

The ministries and state departments that have already received the funds include the Ministry of Defence (Sh2.2 billion), National Treasury (Sh6.1 billion), State Department for Infrastructure (Sh9.5 billion), State Department for Crop Development and Agricultural Research (Sh4.5 billion) and Executive Office of the President Sh810 million.

Further, Sh420 million has been allocated to the Ministry of Health for donor-funded projects, Sh139 million to the State Department for University Education for donor-funded projects and Sh125 million to the State Department for Interior for security operations.

On Tuesday, MPs David Mwalika (Kitui Rural), John Kiarie (Dagoreti South) and Shakeel Shabbir (Kisumu Town East) accused the National Treasury of violating the Constitution and turning lawmakers into rubber-stamps.

Paying salaries

The National Treasury has misused the spirit of the supplementary budget to the extent of even paying salaries, said Mr Mwalika as he suggested a legislative mechanism to tame the National Treasurys abuse of the Constitution.

The fact that the items budgeted for in the supplementary budget were not in the budget for the current financial year distorts the budget preparation.

What is emerging is that Kenya has a budgeting problem. By doing this, the National Treasury is showcasing how it has become opaque on a matter that should have a huge input from Kenyans, said Mr Kiarie.

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Article 223 of the Constitution stipulates that the national government may spend money that has not been appropriated by Parliament and seek post-facto approval within two months of the first withdrawal on condition that the amount budgeted is insufficient.

Also read: Raila man carries the day in Kisumu after brief scare

The expenditure must, however, not exceed 10 percent of the appropriated sums.

The government can also spend if a need has arisen for expenditure for a purpose for which no amount was appropriated by the National Assembly.

That need may be a natural disaster like floods, drought, a pandemic like Covid-19 or an emergency that cannot wait for Parliament to appropriate resources.

Foreign financing

The current budget has a deficit of more than Sh846 billion that is to be financed through local and in foreign financing.

This includes Sh120 billion that was to be financed through Euro Bond that was however abandoned for domestic borrowing after the National Treasury realised that at 12 per cent, the repayment interest was so high for the country to procure the loan.

The higher interest rate was attributed to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, which has affected the global economy.

But what happens if the National Assembly declines to approve the money already in the hope of a post facto approval by MPs?

As the budget-making House since the 2010 Constitution came into force, members of the National Assembly are yet to shoot down a supplementary budget.

This is definitely an area that requires legislative intervention. We cannot continue abusing the Constitution like this. It has to stop, Mr Mwalika noted.

Although the Constitution and the Public Finance Management (PFM) Act give MPs the powers to make the budget, the country has always ended up with the executive budget largely because of how the numbers in the House have played out.

End of Where did the money go? How Uhuru regime spent Sh55 billion in last days of administration

AFP | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Forty-seven people in the northern US state of Minnesota have been charged in connection with a $240 million (Sh30 billion) Covid relief fraud scheme, officials said Tuesday.

"Today's indictments describe an egregious plot to steal public funds meant to care for children in need in what amounts to the largest pandemic relief fraud scheme yet," FBI Director Christopher Wray said.

The Justice Department alleged that the defendants diverted tens of millions of dollars disbursed under the Federal Child Nutrition Program to feed needy children during the Covid pandemic.

Read: Kenyan sisters who scammed American taxpayers out of millions

Also Read: How members of Kenyan family stole Sh2bn from taxpayers in US

Among those charged is Aimee Bock, 41, the founder and executive director of Feeding Our Future, a non-profit organisation that was a sponsor of the Federal Child Nutrition Program.

"Feeding Our Future employees recruited individuals and entities to open Federal Child Nutrition Program sites throughout the state of Minnesota," the Justice Department said in a statement.

"These sites, created and operated by the defendants and others, fraudulently claimed to be serving meals to thousands of children a day," it said.

Instead, they submitted false invoices and fraudulent meal count sheets using fake names of children.

Read: How Kenyan in Sh2.5bn fraud was lured by FBI

Also Read: Wash-wash paradise: Where fraudsters thrive, roam freely

According to the Justice Department, Feeding Our Future claimed to have opened more than 250 sites throughout the state of Minnesota during the pandemic.

"The defendants used the proceeds of their fraudulent scheme to purchase luxury vehicles, residential and commercial real estate in Minnesota as well as property in Ohio and Kentucky, real estate in Kenya and Turkey, and to fund international travel," the department said.

The defendants face an array of charges ranging from wire fraud to federal programs bribery to money laundering.

The following defendants are named in the United States v. Aimee Marie Bock, et al. indictment:

Aimee Marie Bock, 41, of Apple Valley, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit federal programs bribery, federal programs bribery. Bock was the founder and executive director of Feeding Our Future. Bock oversaw the $240 million fraud scheme carried out by sites under Feeding Our Futures sponsorship.

Abdikerm Abdelahi Eidleh, 39, of Burnsville, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit federal programs bribery, federal programs bribery, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Eidleh was an employee of Feeding Our Future who solicited and received bribes and kickbacks from individuals and sites under the sponsorship of Feeding Our Future. Eidleh also created his own fraudulent sites.

Salim Ahmed Said, 33, of Plymouth, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit federal programs bribery, federal programs bribery, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Said was an owner and operator of Safari Restaurant, a site that received more than $16 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Abdulkadir Nur Salah, 36, of Columbia Heights, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit federal programs bribery, federal programs bribery, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Abdulkadir Salah was an owner and operator of Safari Restaurant, a site that received more than $16 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Ahmed Sharif Omar-Hashim, 39, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit federal programs bribery, federal programs bribery, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Omar-Hashim created a company called Olive Management Inc., a site that received approximately $5 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Abdi Nur Salah, 34, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Abdi Salah registered Stigma-Free International, a non-profit entity used to carry out the scheme with sites throughout Minnesota, including in Willmar, Mankato, St. Cloud, Waite Park, and St. Paul.

Abdihakim Ali Ahmed, 36, of Apple Valley, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit federal programs bribery, federal programs bribery, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Abdihakim Ahmed created ASA Limited LLC, a site that received approximately $5 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Ahmed Mohamed Artan, 37, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit federal programs bribery, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Artan registered Stigma-Free International, a non-profit entity used to carry out the scheme with sites throughout Minnesota, including in Willmar, Mankato, St. Cloud, Waite Park, and St. Paul.

Abdikadir Ainanshe Mohamud, 30, of Fridley, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit federal programs bribery, federal programs bribery, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Mohamud ran the Stigma-Free Willmar site. This site claimed to have served approximately 1.6 million meals and received more than $4 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Abdinasir Mahamed Abshir, 30, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit federal programs bribery, federal programs bribery, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Abdinasir Abshir ran the Stigma-Free Mankato site. This site claimed to have served more than 1.6 million meals and received approximately $5 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Asad Mohamed Abshir, 32, of Mankato, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Asad Abshir ran the Stigma-Free Mankato site. This site claimed to have served more than 1.6 million meals and received approximately $5 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Hamdi Hussein Omar, 26, of St. Paul, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, and conspiracy to commit money laundering. Omar ran the Stigma-Free Waite Park site. This site claimed to have served more than 500,000 meals and received more than $1 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Ahmed Abdullahi Ghedi, 32, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, federal programs bribery, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Ghedi created ASA Limited LLC, a site that received approximately $5 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Abdirahman Mohamud Ahmed, 54, of Columbus, Ohio, is charged with conspiracy to commit money laundering and money laundering. Abdirahman Ahmed was an owner and operator of Safari Restaurant, a site that received more than $16 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

The following defendants are named in the United States v. Abdiaziz Shafii Farah, et al. indictment:

Abdiaziz Shafii Farah, 33, of Savage, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit federal programs bribery, federal programs bribery, conspiracy to commit money laundering, money laundering, and false statements in a passport application. Abdiaziz Farah was an owner and operator of Empire Cuisine and Market LLC, a for-profit restaurant that participated in the scheme as a site, as a vendor for other sites, and as an entity to launder fraudulent proceeds. Empire Cuisine and Market and other affiliated sites received more than $28 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Mohamed Jama Ismail, 49, of Savage, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Ismail was an owner and operator of Empire Cuisine and Market LLC, a for-profit restaurant that participated in the scheme as a site, as a vendor for other sites, and as an entity to launder fraudulent proceeds. Empire Cuisine and Market and other affiliated sites received more than $28 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Mahad Ibrahim, 46, of Lewis Center, Ohio, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Ibrahim was the president and owner of ThinkTechAct Foundation, a

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Minnesota non-profit organization that also operated under the name Mind Foundry Learning Foundation. ThinkTechAct and Mind Foundry created dozens of sites throughout Minnesota, including in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Bloomington, Burnsville, Faribault, Owatonna, Shakopee, Circle Pines, and Willmar. ThinkTechAct received more than $18 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Abdimajid Mohamed Nur, 21, of Shakopee, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Abdimajid Nur created Nur Consulting LLC to receive and launder Federal Child Nutrition Program funds from Empire Cuisine and Market, ThinkTechAct, and other entities involved in the scheme.

Said Shafii Farah, 40, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit federal programs bribery, federal programs bribery, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Said Farah, the brother of Abdiaziz Farah, was an owner of Bushra Wholesalers LLC, a shell company used to launder fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Abdiwahab Maalim Aftin, 32, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Aftin was an owner of Bushra Wholesalers LLC, a shell company used to launder fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Mukhtar Mohamed Shariff, 31, of Bloomington, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit federal programs bribery, federal programs bribery, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Shariff was the chief executive officer of Afrique Hospitality Group, a shell company used to fraudulent obtain and launder Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Hayat Mohamed Nur, 25, of Eden Prairie, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, and money laundering. Hayat Nur, the sister of Abdimajid Nur, participated in the scheme by creating and submitting fraudulent meal count sheets, attendance rosters, and invoices.

The following defendants are named in the United States v. Qamar Ahmed Hassan, et al. indictment:

Qamar Ahmed Hassan, 53, of Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, money laundering, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Hassan was the owner and operator of S & S Catering Inc., a for-profit restaurant and catering business that participated in the scheme as a distribution site and as a vendor for other sites. S & S Catering received more than $18 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Sahra Mohamed Nur, 61, of Saint Anthony, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Nur ran a site called Academy For Youth Excellence that used S & S Catering as a vendor.

Abdiwahab Ahmed Mohamud, 32, of Brooklyn Park, Minnesota is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Mohamud ran a site called Academy For Youth Excellence that used S & S Catering as a vendor.

Filsan Mumin Hassan, 28, of Brooklyn Park, Minnesota is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Hassan ran a site called Youth Higher Educational Achievement that falsely claimed to serve up to 4,300 meals a day.

Guhaad Hashi Said, 46, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, and conspiracy to commit money laundering. Hashi ran a site under the name Advance Youth Athletic Development that falsely claimed to serve up to 5,000 meals a day.

Abdullahe Nur Jesow, 62, of Columbia Heights, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Jesow ran a site called Academy For Youth Excellence that used S & S Catering as a vendor.

Abdul Abubakar Ali, 40, of St. Paul, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, and conspiracy to commit money laundering. Abdul Ali ran a site called Youth Inventors Lab that falsely claimed to have served a total of approximately 1.5 million meals in a seven-month period.

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Yusuf Bashir Ali, 40, of Vadnais Heights, Minnesota is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, and conspiracy to commit money laundering. Yusuf Ali ran a site called Youth Inventors Lab that falsely claimed to have served a total of approximately 1.5 million meals in a seven-month period.

The following defendants are named in the United States v. Haji Osman Salad, et al. indictment:

Haji Osman Salad, 32, of St. Anthony, Minnesota, is charged with wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Salad was the principal of Hajis Kitchen and received approximately $11.6 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Fahad Nur, 38, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, is charged with wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Nur was the principal of The Produce LLC, a vendor and purported food supplier who received more than $5 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Anab Artan Awad, 52, of Plymouth, Minnesota, is charged with wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Awad was the president of Multiple Community Services, MCA. Awad claimed more than $11 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Sharmarke Issa, 40, of Edina, Minnesota, is charged with wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Issa created a company called Minnesotas Somali Community and was the manager of Wacan Restaurant LLC. Issa fraudulently caused MDE to pay out more than $7.4 million in Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Farhiya Mohamud, 63, of Bloomington, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Mohamud was the principal and CEO of Dua Supplies and Distribution Inc., a shell company that laundered millions of dollars of fraudulently obtained Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

The following defendants are named in the United States v. Liban Yasin Alishire, et al. indictment:

Liban Yasin Alishire, 42, of Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit federal programs bribery, federal programs bribery, and money laundering. Alishire was the president and owner of Community Enhancement Services, Inc., a company located in the JigJiga Business Center in Minneapolis. Community Enhancement Services was a cultural mall owned and operated by Alishire and co-defendant Khadar Jigre Adan. Community Enhancement Services received more than $1.6 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Ahmed Yasin Ali, 57, of Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, and money laundering. Ali created a second program site, run by Lake Street Kitchen, and located in the JigJiga Business Center in Minneapolis.

Khadar Jigre Adan, 59, of Lakeville, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, and money laundering. Adan was the CEO of Lake Street Kitchen, which was a program site located in the JigJiga Business Center in Minneapolis.

The following defendants are named in the United States v. Sharmake Jama, et al. indictment:

Sharmake Jama, 34, of Rochester, Minnesota, is charged with wire fraud, federal programs bribery, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Sharmake Jama was a principal of Brava Restaurant and Café LLC. Brava Restaurant received approximately $4.3 million in fraudulent Federal Child Nutrition Program funds.

Ayan Jama, 43, of Rochester, Minnesota is charged with wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and money laundering. Ayan Jama was a principal of Brava Restaurant and Café LLC. Ayan Jama also created shell companies to launder fraudulent proceeds.

Asha Jama, 39, of Lakeville, Minnesota is charged with conspiracy to commit money laundering and money laundering. Asha Jama worked for Brava Restaurant and created shell companies to launder fraudulent proceeds.

Fartun Jama, 35, of Rosemount, Minnesota is charged with conspiracy to commit money laundering and money laundering. Fartun Jama worked for Brava Restaurant and created shell companies to launder fraudulent proceeds.

Mustafa Jama, 45, of Rochester, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit money laundering and money laundering. Mustafa Jama worked for Brava Restaurant and created shell companies to launder fraudulent proceeds.

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Zamzam Jama, 48, of Rochester, Minnesota, is charged with conspiracy to commit money laundering and money laundering. Zamzam Jama worked for Brava Restaurant and created shell companies to launder fraudulent proceeds.

Criminal informations:

Bekam Addissu Merdassa, 39, of Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota, is charged with one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud.

Hadith Yusuf Ahmed, 34, of Eden Prairie, Minnesota, is charged with one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud.

Hanna Marekegn, 40, of Edina, Minnesota, is charged with one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud.

End of US charges 47 for using Sh30bn Covid relief fund to buy luxury cars, property in Kenya

Sh100m Kericho airstrip tender scam suspect charged with fraud

Joseph Openda | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

A construction company director was charged on Tuesday with fraud in a Sh100 million Kericho airport tender scam.

Jonathan Rono, the owner and director of Jemororan Construction Limited, appeared before Chief Magistrate Bildad Ochieng and was charged with five counts related to fraud and forgery.

The offence was allegedly committed at the Kericho County government offices between March 27 and April 13, 2018.

Court documents show that Mr Rono misrepresented facts on a registration certificate from the National Construction Authority to a tender evaluation committee on April 13, 2018 to influence the awarding of a contract to upgrade the Kerenga airstrip.

Mr Rono allegedly forged the certificate in order to get a Sh14,993,542 tender for routine maintenance of the airstrip.

He is also accused of forging a completion certificate for a Sh12,398,198 tender for routine maintenance of the Kenyatta stage-Kayamba Primary School road in Njoro sub-county in the same period.

He allegedly forged another completion certificate for a Sh114,199,800 tender to improve and gravel the Keekorok Lodge-Mara River road, purporting it to be a genuine certificate issued by Narok County.

Mr Rono is also accused of forging another completion certificate for a Sh13,995,869 for grading and murraming the Kichwa-Shauri Yako Dispensary road in Menengai West, Rongai, in Nakuru County.

He pleaded not guilty to all the charges and was released on a Sh5 million bond or an alternative cash bail of Sh2 million.

Mr Rono was arrested on Monday in Tarakonik village, Njoro, by sleuths from the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission following an arrest warrant issued by the Kericho court two months ago.

The EACC started investigating the case following complaints that the airstrip tender procurement process was marred by corruption.

At least six other people have been charged in court in connection with the scandal.

They are David Rono (a director at Jemororan), Joash Chirchir (county engineer), Nelson Ngétich (county procurement officer), John Mibei (county surveyor), Everlyne Morogo (county accountant) and Geoffrey Komen (government surveyor).

They are out on a surety bond of Sh200,000 each.

End of Sh100m Kericho airstrip tender scam suspect charged with fraud

St Pauls University students win Sh120 million prize for business innovation

David Muchunguh | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

A team of students from St Pauls University last night won the global finals of the 2022 Hult Prize for their business innovation.

Competing in the finals as Eco-Bana Ltd, the students beat five other finalists and were awarded $1 million (Sh120 million) to boost their business.

Eco-bana Ltd is a start-up that makes biodegradable sanitary pads using banana fibre. The idea aims to stop plastic manufacturing by providing biodegradable sanitary pads to end period poverty.

The team comprises Lennox Omondi, Keylie Muthoni, Dullah Shiltone and Brian Ndungu. The event was held during the Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting in New York City, US. Former US President Bill Clinton delivered the keynote address.

The Hult 2022 Prize was such a joyful celebration of innovation and sustainability in business. All our finalists did incredible pitches today, but there could only be one winner. Huge congratulations to Eco-Bana Ltd, Hult Business School said in a tweet.

Muthoni, however, did not make it to New York due a visa hitch.

With $1 million, we're confident that we will be the best and become number one producers of biodegradable sanitary towels in Kenya and East Africa, Mr Omondi told Daily Nation in an interview before they left for the finals.

He doubles up as the chief technical officer of the company. He is a third year student of mass communication, public relations and marketing.

Today, at exactly 1.58 pm New York time, Eco-Bana is here to ask for one million dollars to make our dreams come true. We predict to sell more than three million pads, generating over $50 million and employ more than 2,000 people by 2024, Mr Ndungu said during their pitch.

The company has already introduced the product in the market and plans to expand to the Egyptian market have started.

Mr Omondi revealed that for mass production, they need heavy duty machines which are costly.

Muthoni is the chief operations officer, while Shiltone and Ndungu work as the chief financial officer and the marketing officer respectively. The students entered into the final after winning the regional summit in May in Johannesburg and emerging position two in the Global Accelerator in Boston, Massachusetts in August.

We're a team with a mind for business and a heart for the world. Well continue creating sustainable enterprises that will shape the future of the sanitary towels industry that will drive entrepreneurship growth, Mr Omondi said.

The five other finalists are Breer from Hong Kong, Savvy Engineers from Pakistan, Openversum from Switzerland, Cooseii from Taiwan and Flexie from Australia. The six teams are the winners of each of the regional summits.

At the point where I was founding the company, I had difficulties balancing with my studies. With proper guidance from my mentor, I've learnt how to balance by creating a weekly study plan and a work plan. That way, Im able to know when I have to leave the office and go to class or do my assignments and still get to be with my friends and team mates, Mr Omondi said.

His goal is to study for a masters degree at the University of Oxford.

End of St Pauls University students win Sh120 million prize for business innovation

Nyeri court moves suit by man claiming to be Kibakis son to Nairobi

Mercy Mwende | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

An application by a man claiming to be former President Mwai Kibakis biological son has been moved to Nairobi.

Nyeri High Court Judge Florence Muchemi said Mr Jacob Ochollas plea, which had sought to have Mr Kibakis family disclose his estate, has been overtaken by events because the children have accepted probate by filing a succession suit at the High Courts Family Division in Milimani, Nairobi.

Currently, the citees in the suit Judy Kibaki, Jimmy Kibaki, David Kagai and Anthony Githinji have done what Mr Ocholla wanted them to do, said the judge.

She directed that the matter be heard instead at the Nairobi High Court because Mr Ocholla has filed a response to the succession suit in Nairobi.

Also read:Man gets custody of child despite protests about unpaid dowry

During the session yesterday, Mr Ochollas lawyer, Omoke Morara, requested to have the matter stayed in Nyeri, saying that in his reply to the succession suit in Nairobi, he requested the court to transfer the case to Nyeri.

But Justice Muchemi ruled that even if the matter were moved to Nyeri, it would still be enjoined with Mr Ochollas succession suit.

Therefore, staying the matter by giving it another mention date will not serve any useful purpose as it is already before another court, said the judge.

In her orders last month, Justice Muchemi directed Mr Kibakis family to file a response to Mr Ochollas application within 21 days.

But during Mondays session, the Kibaki familys lawyer, George Ndungu, told the court that the family had not replied to the application because it has a similar succession suit in Nairobi.

Lawyer Ndungu requested the court to withdraw the matter, arguing that the issues raised by Mr Ocholla would be addressed by the Milimani court.

In the suit, the 62-year-old Mr Ocholla demands to know if the former Head of State bequeathed to him any part of his wealth.

Compel the family

He had requested the court to compel the family to recognise him as the firstborn son of Kenyas third President and to give him an equal share of the departed patriarchs wealth.

Born in Kaloleni, Nairobi, in July 1960, Mr Ocholla told the court that Hillary Ocholla, whom he knew as his father, died on January 28, 1981, and that is when his mother told him that he had been adopted.

In court documents, he expressed fears that he might be left out in the succession process, adding that his attempts to contact Mr Kibakis children had failed.

End of Nyeri court moves suit by man claiming to be Kibakis son to Nairobi

Truck drivers demand end to Northern Corridor murders

Winnie Atieno | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

When Gabriel Chengo bid farewell to his family at their Miritini home in Mombasa and set off in his truck to transport cargo to Uganda, his wife had no idea that it would be the last time she would see him alive.

The 40-year-old truck driver had told his wife that he did not want to make the trip because his employer had not paid some of his dues. However, being his familys sole breadwinner, he decided to get the job done and sort out the problem at a later date. So around 9pm he set off, only for his body to be found a few hours later inside the truck parked at Manyatta area.

By the time the 31-year-old decided to call her in-laws to find out if they had heard from him, photos of her husbands body were doing the rounds on social media.

Preliminary police investigations indicated that the assailants had used her husbands clothes to tie him up and cover his face. His belt was used to strangle him. A post-mortem examination indicated that Chengo had died from stab wounds and strangulation.

Gabriel Chengo, a truck driver who was found murdered and his body left in his truck on Thursday last week near Manyatta along the Mombasa-Nairobi Highway.

The Chengo family is the latest to suffer the devastating effects of highway robbery along the Northern Corridor, which some now term a death trap for truck drivers.

Four other drivers have been killed in the same manner in the past two months, findings corroborated by Kenya Transporters Association (KTA) data.

Geoffrey Mwangemis truck was diverted on 17/7/2022 and found murdered in Kilibasi. Mohamed Mohamed of Awale Transporters was killed and truck left in Maungu on 7/7/2022. Francis Opondo was killed on 28/8/2022 ... Absirizack Abdullahi, working with Awale Transporters, was killed on 2/3/2022... states a report by KTA.

Taita-Taveta County Police Commandant Patrick Okeri insisted that his officers had contained highway robberies along the important transport route. The Northern Corridor is an important transport route for Kenya, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan, and Uganda and covers 12,707km.

Through collaboration, we have managed to boost security. Last year, when one truck driver was killed, we arrested three suspects whose cases are ongoing in court. We always conduct patrols, and mount roadblocks and checks for vehicles, he said. He acknowledged insecurity was a problem and that the Maili Kubwa area has become a dumping site for bodies.

We caution drivers to stop picking up unauthorised passengers and encourage them to stop at safe places, he added.

KTA Chairman Newton Wangoo complained that security was deteriorating along the highway and said the area between Mariakani and Mtito Andei is particularly dangerous.

Drivers complained that the special Northern Corridor Police Unit was not effective. Some of them accused the officers of demanding bribes and even committing the robberies themselves.

Our drivers are being murdered along the corridor and no action is being taken, said Kenya Long Distance Truck Drivers and Allied Workers Union chair David Masinde.

Police know who these people are. We are issuing a seven-day ultimatum. By Thursday next week if you wont have arrested the culprits, we wont drive anything in the name of a lorry. This is a strike notice, said the unions general secretary, Nicholas Wambua.

End of Truck drivers demand end to Northern Corridor murders

Farhiya Hussein | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Governor Abdulswamad Nassirs administration will not embark on new county projects until the ones his predecessor Hassan Joho started are completed.

The governor has also promised to clear the Sh4.2 billion pending bills after an audit is completed. He made the announcement after meeting with County Executive Committee members and Chief Officers on Monday.

Ive directed that there be a temporary suspension of new projects until we have a substantive way forward on the completion of old projects and [have resolved] the issue of pending bills, the county boss said.

I shall continue with the work started by Mr Joho and rectify [where necessary]. We will be learning from his legacy, Mr Nassir added.

The Joho administration had prioritised health and education. Among the projects he launched were putting up Level Four hospitals and early childhood development and education centres.

Mr Nassir said he will rely on an audit report to determine unpaid debts and the number of employees in the county to weed out ghost workers.

Accrued debts

He promised to settle accrued debtsstanding at Sh4.29 billion according to a February 2022 Controller of Budget reportbut only if the demands are genuine.

Ill prioritise pending bills starting with the ones that have not been paid in the past eight or nine years, Mr Nassir said.

The governor also announced a freeze on hiring new staff. Instead, he said, casual workers will get permanent and pensionable status while the rank and file of permanent staff will be promoted to motivate them.

On salary delays, Mr Nassir said he will negotiate with financial institutions for overdrafts in case of delayed disbursements from the National Treasury.

The success of my administration will rely on the well-being of our esteemed workers. I cant do it alone and thats why its my topmost agenda to ensure we have a good working relationship with each worker, he said.

Mr Nassir added: Your input shall be invaluable in this and Ill do my part to ensure youre well treated including through timely payment of salaries and regular remittance of your statutory deductions.

Garbage menace

The governor assured residents that he would deal with the garbage menace. He said he had assigned my deputy Francis Thoya the responsibility of supervising a Rapid Results Initiative programme aimed at clearing garbage from the streets of Mombasa City with immediate effect.

A team is in place is to ensure street and market lights work within seven days, he added.

End of Ill protect Hassan Joho legacy, Governor Nassir says on Mombasa Countys growth plan

3.5 million Kenyans face starvation due to drought

Barnabas Bii | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

An estimated one million children below five years and more than 100,000 pregnant and lactating women need urgent treatment for malnutrition.

This as more than 3.5 million Kenyans face starvation due to acute food shortage caused by drought-induced crop failure.

National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) and Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) statistics show that the number of children faced with acute malnutrition increased from 884,464 in August to 942,000 this month.

At the same time, pregnant and lactating women in need of treatment for severe famine stands at 134,000, up from 115,727 last month.

Read: Somali refugees flee to Kenya as drought, malnutrition cases rise

More than 10 counties, mainly in Northern Kenya, are at the alarm stage with thousands of families facing starvation in urgent need of support.

According to KRCSs latest report, some 80,000 families in West Pokot risk starving as do another 100,000 households in Turkana County.

Women carrying firewood walk past a carcass of a cow in Loiyangalani, which is the worst affected by the prolonged drought, in Marsabit, northern Kenya, on July 12, 2022. . Four consecutive seasons have witnessed poor rains, leaving millions of drought-stricken people in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia facing starvation.

KRCS Manager in charge of North Rift Esther Chege yesterday said they have embarked on providing vitamin A supplements, deworming children and promoting appropriate child feeding practices.

Some 8,000 children and 5,365 mothers in Turkana County face severe malnutrition.

Were partnering with Usaid, Ministry of Health and the county government in provision of healthcare for those suffering malnutrition, especially children and the aged, she said.

They are also rehabilitating water points to check the outbreak of waterborne diseases.

We are working to save lives and build resilience in the most vulnerable communities, Ms Chege added.

She disclosed that the agency has distributed foodstuff to households and issued drought resistant seedssorghum, finger millet and green gramsto families in affected areas. It has also carried out destocking.

Read: Tana children struggle to survive as drought persists

In Turkana, Ms Chege said, 103,000 households risk severe starvation with Turkana East, Turkana North, Kibish and Loima sub-counties hard hit.

More than 30,000 residents have had to cross to Katido and Kaboong districts in Uganda in search for food, and pasture and water for their animals.

A NDMA report indicates that families in arid and semi-arid lands (Asals) in 23 counties are faced with food shortages and inadequate pasture and water for their animals.

Another report by Health ministry, Kenya Food Security Steering Group and Early Warning Systems Network in May points at families in crisis in Samburu, Marsabit, Isiolo, and Garissa.

Read: Tharaka residents cry out for relief food after crop failure

Mandera and Wajir are also in urgent need of humanitarian aid due undernourishment.

Leaders from the affected counties have petitioned the government to undertake humanitarian interventions to avert calamities as witnessed in previous droughts.

The families have experienced difficulties in getting relief food and normal supply needs to be restored to avert further tragedy, Ekiru Lobuel from Kibish Sub-county said.

Several counties in Northern Kenya region hard hit by drought are to benefit from funds to be coordinated by NDMA to reduce the impact of malnutrition among children.

The government has disbursed Sh1.1 billion to cushion poor and vulnerable families in Turkana, Wajir, Mandera and

3.5 million Kenyans face starvation due to drought

Barnabas Bii | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Garissa counties from the effects of the drought.

The money is to be channelled through the Hunger Safety Net Programme.

End of 3.5 million Kenyans face starvation due to drought

Day of high drama as confusion, chaos mar polls to pick Speakers

Nation Team | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Former county ministers and ex-lawmakers were among those elected Speakers as some county assemblies resumed sessions after the August General Election.

After the swearing-in of new members, the election of Speaker was the next order of business for the regional Houses that reconvened yesterday, among them Machakos, Turkana, Kisumu, Kericho, Trans Nzoia, Isiolo and Nyamira.

In Kisumu, it took the last-minute intervention of Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) leader Raila Odinga for the partys candidate, Mr Elisha Jack Oraro, to clinch the Speakers seat. Mr Oraro won narrowly, warding off a spirited fight by Mr Samuel Ongow. He garnered 25 votes against Mr Ongows 22 in a duel that was decided in a second round of voting. The first round saw Mr Oraro get 24 votes against Mr Ongows 23.

For the position of Deputy Speaker, only two candidates Mr Vincent Odhiambo Obuya and Mrs Nereah Akoth Okombo competed, with the latter carrying the day with 24 votes against 23 for Mr Obuya.

The other contestants, Mr Kenneth Amondi and Mr James Kounah Ochieng, got no votes.

Read: Ex-Kericho Finance executive elected county assembly Speaker

Others elected Speaker were Directorate of Criminal Investigators boss George Kinotis executive advisor Mohammed Roba (Isiolo), former Manga MCA Enock Okero (Nyamira), former Finance Executive Andrew Wanyonyi (Trans Nzoia), lawyer Ms Anne Kiusya (Machakos) and former Finance Executive Patrick Mutai (Kericho). Mr Oraro was the Speaker of the last assembly, a house that impeached his two predecessors.

The oath-taking ceremony in Kisumu was interrupted for more than 25 minutes after assembly Clerk Owen Ojuok stood to make a communication to the House, which was said to be aimed at stopping the swearing in of about 11 nominated MCAs. One of the MCAs snatched a document that the clerk had in his hands before being wrestled down by colleagues.

Chaos rocks Kisumu County Assembly after clerk halts MCAs' swearing-in

Chaos rocks Kisumu County Assembly after clerk halts MCAs' swearing-in

When sanity was restored, the exercise went on smoothly with all the 47 MCAs voting. On Monday, however, almost half of the newly elected MCAs boycotted a meeting attended by Mr Odinga, in defiance of the ODM leader, who wanted the legislators to rally behind Mr Oraro.

Only 24 elected MCAs attended a dinner held at the Grand Royal Swiss Hotel, as the others allied to Mr Ongow skipped it, the result of serious lobbying that could have embarrassed Mr Odinga if MCAs from his Kisumu backyard had rejected his candidate of choice.

Read: Raila man carries the day in Kisumu after brief scare

In Siaya, Mr George Okode was elected as the Speaker for the third time. The pioneer head of the legislative wing of the Siaya County Government outfoxed his main rival, lawyer Evans Oruenjo, to secure the seat. The latter got a paltry two votes against Mr Okodes 38. Mr Okode was first elected Speaker in 2013 and has won another five years, making him the longest serving county assembly Speaker in Luo Nyanza.

For three months, Mr Okode acted as Siaya governor in 2014 after a High Court sitting in Kisumu nullified the election of Mr Cornel Rasanga in a petition filed by Mr William Oduol, the current Deputy Governor.

In his maiden speech after the landslide victory, Mr Okode lauded the MCAs for not letting intimidation from certain quarters to influence their decision to vote for him.

I am aware there were temptations, pressure and attempts to influence you but you stood firm on your ground. The third assembly ... will resist any external influence and be in charge of her own destiny, he said.

In Homa Bay, several aspirants for the assembly Speaker position protested at being locked out of the race in a scheme, they claimed, was meant to favour their rival.

Only former Central Karachuonyo MCA Julius Gaya and former Gwassi North MCA Evance Mariba were cleared to vie in elections slated for today out of those who had presented their papers by Monday morning.

Assembly Clerk Faith Apuko said the other four did not meet all the requirements. One of the applicants has filed a lawsuit but is yet to get a court order.

Day of high drama as confusion, chaos mar polls to pick Speakers

Nation Team | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

The others did not meet all the requirements despite submitting their names on time. They are, therefore, disqualified, she said, adding that some did not attach relevant documents on their application forms.

One of the requirements was for one to be proposed by an MCA. The applicant should also have someone seconding him or her, which some applicants did not do, the clerk said.

The six who had been cleared were Mr John Apollo, the chief of protocol in county government; former Central Karachuonyo MCA Julius Gaya; Youth Empowerment Bridge Organization Africa director Fredrick Gaya, Mr Mariba, Mr Innocent Masara and Mr Pascal Odhiambo.

Those locked out claim the information about the deadline and other requirements were deliberately made available late. Ms Apuko rejected the applications of aspirants who submitted their papers even a minute after the deadline.

The strict deadline prevented seven people from submitting their documents. They had last week notified the House of their interest and collected nomination forms.

Ms Zilper Opapo and Polycup Otieno, who were among those locked out, said they had invested their 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.

Mr Apollo also protested the move and threatened to go to court.

He was yet to get a court order by yesterday evening to suspend the election of the assembly Speaker.

Reporting by Rushdie Oudia, George Odiwuor and Kassim Adinasi

End of Day of high drama as confusion, chaos mar polls to pick Speakers

Let Ruto be ruthless with cartels

Kennedy Chesoli | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

I never, for a moment, doubted that William Ruto would be the fifth President of Kenya. Signs of his decisive victorybar shenanigans from his predecessorwere everywhere. Betting against Dr Ruto was simply a fools errand, as many have regrettably come to learn.

The man has never lost a battle in his entire political career. When he first arrived on the political scene in 1997, he did so in style: He trounced Reuben Chesire, one of President Daniel arap Mois long-standing allies, in a defeat that sent shock waves across the country. He would then go on overcoming obstacles, overpowering opponents and scaling the political ladder.

I penned several pieces explaining why President Uhuru Kenyatta and his candidate, Raila Odinga, could not possibly imperil Dr Rutos political aspirations.

As with millions of fellow Kenyans, I couldnt be happier with a Ruto presidency. He has the markings of a great leader. His background and humble beginnings, centred around the Church, and reliance on the government and public institutions for education, healthcare, recreational and later employment, would no doubt inform his efforts at reforming and shaping the public and civil service sectors.

The terror and era of rent-seeking cartels that had hijacked the government is over. President Ruto has signalled, rather powerfully, his intention to keep the promises he made to the Kenyan people.

Financial autonomy

In his first five days in office, he initiated the process that would free the port from cartels and liberate its operations. He also moved to swear in judges whose promotion had been set aside by the previous regime on frivolous grounds and gave the National Police Service financial autonomy and accountability. He also terminated costly and inefficient fuel subsidies that had diverted immense public resources to a small number of individuals.

These are big, bold and praiseworthy achievementsundertaken well before the Cabinet is constituted. But the President also faces significant challenges, given financial impropriety and blatant diversion of public funds that has been afoot since early 2018.

Not only are state coffers nearly empty but the outgoing President also left behind staggering bills of more than Sh500 billion! The countrys sovereign debt has also grown out of shape with repayments expected to consume the lions share of the tax revenue. Unless efforts to mobilise resources domestically are scaled up, there wont be sufficient funds to support economic recovery and offer families relief against the rising cost of living.

The Kenya Kwanza manifestoThe Plansets out a great vision and outlines practical pathways for addressing many of our socioeconomic challenges. More importantly, the President has stressed that dealing with state capture, dismantling cartels, fighting corruption and sealing tax evasion loopholes are key in realising development finance as well as liberating and putting the country on a sustainable path of growth and development.

He should go further and put in motion a mechanism for recovering stolen assets, including billions of taxpayers funds that are held in secret offshore accounts. Its imperative that government bureaucrats and functionaries who aided and abetted these vices be removed and their positions offered to men and women of integrity. Also, those who supported, excused or justified fraudulent schemes such as Huduma Namba, BBI and the Covid scam must be excluded from this hustler government.

Economic pain

There are no quick fixes to the Kenyatta-created mess. Clean-up will take time. Also, the economic pain is likely to get worse before things get better. Ending market-distorting fuel subsidies may, in the short run, push prices upwards but liberating the sector from the stranglehold of cartels would create competition and efficiencyboth of which could eventually contribute to stable and low prices.

The President must also defeat cartels who enrich themselves by importing and dumping (at times poisonous) sugar in the country, impeding local production. The government must leverage the strong domestic sugar demand by creating policies and interventions that would create jobs, revitalise sugarcane growing and jump-start the scores of moribund and decaying mills, including Mumias Sugar Company.

President Ruto is a tenacious, hardworking go-getter. He embodies the dreams and aspirations of millions of Kenyans

Let Ruto be ruthless with cartels

Kennedy Chesoli | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

born in poverty with little or no opportunities to excel. He is an accomplished politician with a knack for solving problems by seeking solutions outside the proverbial box.

Given the freshness that he brings to the Presidency, its important that the country and its development partners support Dr Ruto in his efforts to create opportunities for all. But as he strives to build on the positive strides made by his predecessor, President Ruto must be quick in rejecting and undoing actions and policies that harmed our nation.

In dealing with the cartels, the President should be ruthless.

Mr Chesoli is a New York-based development economist and global policy expert.

End of Let Ruto be ruthless with cartels

Ruto is on right track of mentoring new crop of young political leaders

Njeri Rugene | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

One of the issues that appears to be close to the heart of President William Ruto as his Kenya Kwanza administration gets down to work is the need and importance of political mentorship.

In his address in Nairobi to the first caucus of the coalitions freshly elected leaders on August 17, the then-President-elect singled out mentorship of the new younger leaders, particularly those elected to both Houses of Parliament.

Dr Ruto was categorical that, together with his deputy Rigathi Gachagua, party leaders and other officials in the coalition, the leadership will be intentional in mentoring the younger politicians to make successful leaders out of them. In addition, doing so would mean growth of solid leadership when the older ones leave the political space, particularly within Kenya Kwanza Alliance.

The success of any leadership, he reasoned, is in mentorship of the youth into better leaders. Pointing out that the coalitions leadership believes in that principle of leadership, he told the grouping: My deputy and I have agreed that when our time to leave comes, we will [have mentored] other people into better leaders to make sure we have proper transition in our Kenya Kwanza formation.

Mentorship

He added: We undertake that we will do that for the people, the leaders in our Kenya Kwanza formation alongside the other leaders [who joined the alliance after elections].

It is a message that President Ruto would repeat and dwell on at length at the Kenya Kwanza parliamentary groups two-day working meeting in Naivasha last week. This is an indication that his leadership is serious about the mentorship of the youth for better leadership and governance.

There is room for progress in as far as election of more young people, particularly to Parliament and county assemblies, is concerned. However, the August 9 general election brought with it an unprecedented number of elected politicians within the age 35 youth bracket and a bigger number below 40.

They include 24-year-old Bomet Woman Representative Linet Chepkorir Toto, her Kirinyaga and Lamu colleagues, respectively, Njeri Maina, 28, and Muthoni Marubu, 30, and Nyandarua Senator John Methu, 31, and Elgeyo Marakwet Governor Wesly Rotich, 34.

Mentorship of the countrys younger leaders is the way to go for the nations future and stability. It is more sound when the nations top leadership undertake to make it part of the agenda and focus. In a country where gender balancerepresentation of women, in particularis still wanting, mentorship of younger women politicians is an excellent way of not only attracting more of them to the space but also sustain the numbers and grow many others to positions of leadership.

Women leaders

Quite a few women leaders in the current structure have indicated that mentorship saw them rise to their positions. They include Governor Cecily Mbarire, the youthful first female Embu County boss who first joined the National Assembly as a nominated MP after serving as a university student leader. The former Runyenyes MP has in the past singled out veteran politician and trailblazer Phoebe Asiyo and former Kitui Governor Charity Ngilu as among her political mentors.

With the big number of younger female politicians in the country in Parliament and at the county assemblies and governments, including nominated ones, it is fundamental that the older ones, particularly, as well as womens rights organisations and related interest groups, give much attention to mentorship of younger women political leaders.

Notably, the Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (Kewopa), which draws its membership from women legislators from the National Assembly and the Senate, runs a leadership and mentorship programme that includes a peer mentorship with older female politicians guiding the younger ones.

The programme is a great way to start off the 13th Parliament with its unprecedented numbers of young women. It will come in handy as a vehicle to carry out the crucial mission.

Ms Rugene, a consulting editor, is the founder of the Womans Newsroom Foundation.

End of Ruto is on right track of mentoring new crop of young political leaders

Ethiopia rejects UN report on Tigray, terms it 'rubbish' and 'mockery'

AFP | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Ethiopia on Tuesday rejected a report by UN investigators that accused Addis Ababa of possible ongoing crimes against humanity in its war-torn Tigray region, including using starvation as a weapon.

The Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia said it had found evidence of widespread violations by all sides since fighting erupted in Tigray nearly two years ago.

This included the government of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, a Nobel laureate, and its allies who were "intentionally causing great suffering" by denying aid to Tigray, a region of six million.

Kaari Betty Murungi, one of the commission's three independent rights experts, and its chair, said the denial of food, medicine and basic services was "having a devastating impact on the civilian population".

"We have reasonable grounds to believe it amounts to a crime against humanity," she said on Monday following the release of the report, the commission's first.

"We also have reasonable grounds to believe that the Federal Government is using starvation as a method of warfare."

Ethiopia's permanent representative to the UN in Geneva, Zenebe Kebede, said the commission was "politically motivated" and their conclusions were "self-contradictory and biased".

"There is not any single evidence that shows the government of Ethiopia used humanitarian aid as an instrument of war," the envoy told AFP, describing the report as "a mockery" and "rubbish".

"Therefore we have no other option but to reject this report."

He said investigators had ignored atrocities by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), which ruled Ethiopia for decades before Abiy come to power in 2018, and which Addis Ababa considers a terrorist group.

Fighting between government forces and their allies and rebels led by the TPLF reignited in August after a five-month lull.

The return to the battlefield comes as diplomatic efforts intensify to try and peacefully resolve the nearly two-year war in Africa's second-most populous country.

Authorities in Tigray announced this month they were ready to participate in talks mediated by the African Union (AU), removing an obstacle to negotiations with Abiy's government.

But fighting has only escalated in the weeks since, with air strikes pounding Tigray and Ethiopia's ally Eritrea crossing the border to join the fight against the rebels.

On Tuesday, the TPLF accused Eritrean forces of launching a "full scale offensive" across northern Ethiopia, where heavy combat has been reported on multiple fronts in recent weeks.

AFP was not able to independently verify the claims. Access to northern Ethiopia is severely restricted and Tigray has been under a communications blackout for more than a year.

Mike Hammer, the US special envoy to the region who just returned from 11 days in Ethiopia, said Washington "had been tracking Eritrean troop movements across the border".

"They're extremely concerning and we condemn it," Hammer told reporters on Tuesday.

"The presence of Eritrean troops in Ethiopia only serves to complicate matters, and inflame an already tragic situation."

Eritrean troops supported Ethiopian forces in the early stages of the war when Abiy sent soldiers into Tigray to unseat the TPLF, accusing the group of attacking federal army camps.

Last week, Eritrean authorities issued a general call for mobilisation.

End of Ethiopia rejects UN report on Tigray, terms it 'rubbish' and 'mockery'

COP27: Inside Africa's increasingly clean energy record

Bird Story Agency | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

By comparison with the rest of the world, African states tread lightly, responsible for just 3.3% of global carbon emissions eight times less than Asia, Europe and North America. Each. In the words of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, it is the least responsible but pays the highest price.

And while drought and floods and their attendant griefs will (and should) make a story at Cop-27, theres one report card where the continent shines.

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation's 2022 Forum Report, called The Road to Cop-27, shows that three in four countries have met their requirements to submit their Nationally Determined Contributions plan to cut emissions - even if these are low.

Photo credit: Bird

There is still a challenge to align these with national development plans, the report has found, but the continent has displayed more political will to cut emissions than many countries in other regions.

There is also a much higher accession rate to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 13 which deals with a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) - in Africa compared to North America or the EU.

The Forum Report shows that clean energy provision is improving. But there are still 600 million people on our continent without a reliable and efficient source of energy, so the road is long.

Still, the Foundation spotlights a steady rise in public investment in renewable forms of energy by African states, where between 2010 and 2019, it tripled from US$ 13.4 billion to US$ 47.0 billion.

The report finds that 22 African countries use renewables as their main electricity source, with eight generating over 90 per cent of their power from renewable sources.

These are: Central African Republic (96.3 per cent), DR Congo (98.9 per cent), Eswatini (99.8 per cent), Ethiopia (100.0 per cent), Lesotho (99.9 per cent), Mozambique (95.4 per cent), Namibia (91.0 per cent) and Uganda (97.7 per cent).

According to the International Energy Associations Africa Energy Outlook 2022 report, clean energy will account for a significant part of generating capacity additions by 2030.

"Solar PV leads the way, with 125 GW of capacity to be added between 2021 and 2030, over 40 per cent of total capacity additions," the Energy Outlook report states.

Photo credit: Bird

Currently, Africas abundant sunshine provides only one per cent of the worlds installed solar photovoltaic (PV) capacity, despite being home to 60 per cent of the best solar resources globally.

"Of the top 20 per cent of solar sites globally, Africa is home to around 60 per cent of them by land area... the projected average rate of solar PV capacity additions is roughly equal to that of India in recent years," the global energy association finds in its Sustainable Africa Scenario.

"Renewables, including solar, wind, hydropower and geothermal account for over 80 per cent of new power generation capacity to 2030 in the Sustainable Africa Scenario." This scenario sketches an optimal energy solution.

Solar PV, already the cheapest source of power in many parts of the continent, should win out over other energy sources continentwide by 2030, says the IEA. There are blobs of optimism everywhere.

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation reports that in Namibia, almost one-fifth of electricity (19.1 per cent) is generated through solar, the fourth highest share globally.

In Kenya, geothermal energy accounts for almost half (46.0 per cent) of electricity generation, more than any other country in the world.

Meanwhile, 21 of the 52 countries using hydropower as the primary source of electricity are African.

But in the 22 African countries that use renewables as their primary source of electricity, access to electricity remains limited, with only Gabon having over 90 percent access to electricity.

In 16 of the 22 countries, more than half the population still lack electricity, highlighting both an energy landscape of deep need but also one of enormous potential.

In June 2020, finance giant, Goldman Sachs projected in a report entitled Carbonomics that spending for renewable power projects in 2021 will surpass upstream oil and gas for the first time in history.

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The Mo Ibrahim Foundation report shows South Africa, Ethiopia, Egypt, Morocco and Kenya are building clean energy economies that will attract billions of dollars in investment over the next decade. Investments by domestic and global businesses are being made in renewable and low-carbon infrastructure. Rwanda wants to generate 60 percent of its energy needs from renewables come 2030.

Six African countries Egypt, Kenya, Mauritania, Morocco, Namibia, and South Africa launched the African Green Hydrogen Alliance in May 2022, to promote the production of hydrogen using clean energy.

The gas is a potential replacement for natural gas and European countries are investing heavily in future production in parts of Africa where clean energy sources are also abundant.

The alliance plans to foster collaboration between its founding members to advance green hydrogen development in their respective countries.

The challenge of distribution networks, however, remains. For every US$10 invested in the African energy sector since 2015, just over US$1 went on transmission and distribution.

More than a decade ago, at COP15, developed nations decided to commit to a goal of jointly mobilizing US$100 billion a year by 2020 to address the needs of developing countries. In 2020, just over US$80 billion was raised.

At the United Nations earlier in 2022, US President Joe Biden announced America would increase its international climate finance contribution to US$ 11.4 billion per year by 2024 to help developing nations fend off the worst impacts of global warming.

This, together with Europes need to build an alternative energy source, may see investments into clean energy surge on the clean continent.

End of COP27: Inside Africa's increasingly clean energy record

Zambia road crash kills 23 church women

AFP | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Twenty-three women members of a Zambian church died when their speeding vehicle ran off the road in the north of the country, police said.

They were riding in a truck heading for Nsumbu, 780 kilometres north of the capital Lusaka, for a church conference.

"Seventeen people died on the spot while six others died upon reaching Nsumbu clinic," police spokesman Rae Hamoonga said in a statement, adding 27 others were injured.

Police blamed the driver for excessive speed saying he failed to negotiate a curve and lost control of the truck which eventually overturned.

Deadly traffic accidents are common in Zambia due to the poor state of the roads and bad driving.

End of Zambia road crash kills 23 church women

Vienna star Chepkurui now targets Berlin glory

Bernard Rotich | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Two-time Vienna Marathon champion Vibian Chepkurui has set her sights firmly on successfully graduating to the World Marathon Majors and claiming the Berlin title this Sunday.

Chepkurui, who trains in Iten, Elgeyo Marakwet County, has been preparing for the Berlin Marathon for the last three months and is confident of a good outing on the streets of Germanys political capital.

Kenya will be seeking to recapture the title that Ethiopia bagged in the last two editions with Gotytom Gebreslase having won last year while Ashete Bekere bagged victory in 2019.

The last Kenyan athlete to win the race was Gladys Cherono who ran a course record two hours, 18 minutes and 11 seconds in 2018. Cherono has since retired from elite running.

My target in Berlin is to run my personal best from 2:20:59 to 2:18 and I believe if the weather conditions will allow, I will be able to hit the target, Chepkurui, who is managed by Ikaika Sports Management, told Nation Sport at her home.

She said that after running well in this years Vienna Marathon in April where she clocked a course record, she is confident of an impressive race in her first major marathon.

End of Vienna star Chepkurui now targets Berlin glory

Kenya seemingly excelled in cricket in the 1990s and 2000s by accident

Charles Nyende | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

It was considered the greatest upset in cricket history then when Kenya stunned the mighty West Indies in the 1996 Cricket World Cup co-hosted by India and Pakistan.Any genuine Kenyan cricket fan will be familiar with the Indian town, Pune, where that upset of seismic proportions took place on February 29.

West Indies were two-time world champions and three-time finalists, while tiny Kenya were making their maiden World Cup appearance and had not even acquired ODI status.

In that great West Indies team were, Brian Lara, considered the best batsman of his generation, Roger Harper, and the fearsome pace bowlers Ian Bishop, Curtly Ambrose and Courtney Walsh.

Kenya, batting first were scuttled on 166 runs and then went on to bowl out the Caribbean inhabitants for 93 for a 73 runs famous victory to announce their entry to the world of elite cricket.

In that team were flamboyant Maurice Odumbe, who was named man of the match, mean seamer Martin Suji, prolific batsman Steve Tikolo, deadly spinner Asif Karim, formidable all-rounder Thomas Odoyo, swashbuckling Kennedy Otieno, solid Hitesh Modi, Dipak Chudasama, Tariq Iqbal, Rajap Ali and Tito Odumbe.

The core of this team, that got ODI status soon after the 1996 World Cup, went on to ruffle the established order whenever they got a chance to play with the big boys.

Twice, Kenya beat giants India in ODI encounters, by 69 runs at Roop Singh Stadium, Gwalior on May 28, 1998 and by 70 runs on October 17, 2001 at St George's Park, Port Elizabeth in South Africa.

Kenyas best cricket moments undoubtedly came at the 2003 World Cup that we co-hosted with South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Kenya became the first non-Test playing nation to reach the semi-final, famously beating Sri Lanka in Nairobi together with Canada, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe in the process.

Knocking at Test status

The country was once ranked 10th in ODI and knocking on the door of Test status before things started steadily going south.

The ODI status was lost in 2014 seemingly for good.

Late last month and early this month, I watched Kenya, now placed 30th in the ICC Twenty Rankings, thumped 3-2 by Nepal in Nairobi in a five-match T20 series and then whitewashed 3-0 by the South Asians in a three-match ODI series.

I was horrified to see minnows Tanzania chase down Kenyas 155 in their ACA T20 Cup Finals match to eventually win by four wickets at Willowmoore Park, Benoni, in South Africa on Saturday.

Kenya, at one time the best cricket playing nation in Africa after Test playing South Africa, is now fodder for cricket midgets the likes of, and this is no slight to them, our neigbours Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda.

To be frank, and I will admit I am clouded by misty recollection of a glorious past, I saw a team lacking in comparable, skill, guile and purpose of the yesteryear side.

How is it that we have sunk to this depth where our peers are Malawi, Nigeria, Ghana, Mozambique?

Was it an accident that formed that achieving team of the 1990s and early 2000s?Interestingly, a majority of the, particularly African players of that generation, picked up the game of cricket by chance.

It has been written of how, for instance, the Tikolos, Odumbes and Sujis, born and bred in Park Road, Nairobi, used to go watch cricket at the neighbouring Sir Ali Muslim Club.

Like young animals learning through imprinting, they would then try out batting and bowling on the estate alleys or at the cricket club, whenever permitted.

You can say they did not go through a national, established development structure.Cricket was mainly a Nairobi and Mombasa affair, and that has not changed much to date.

While others, once considered elite sports in Kenya such as rugby are now, thanks to concerted development programmes, as common as the peoples sport football, and are played in virtually all schools, cricket is still not part of the official Kenya Secondary School Games annual calendar.

Is this not a travesty for a sport that once held so much promise in this country?

Kenya seemingly excelled in cricket in the 1990s and 2000s by accident

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Startling revelation

Former captain Karim, who retired after the 1999 World Cup only to make a comeback, in an interview with espncricinfo.com in 2014 made a startling revelation:When they called me in December 2002, there were some problems in the Kenyan team.

It is not an easy team to handle. You have Asians, Indians and Africans. Among the Indians and Asians, you have Hindus and Muslims, and among the Africans, you have 42 different tribes. To mix the team, it is very unique.

I retired after the 1999 World Cup because of all the politics. I knew there was going to be a huge problem because of leadership and the pressures of international cricket.

Is that still the case with the motley of personalities in the Kenya team?

Would it be the reason why several of Kenyas former top players are now coaching outside the country?

Kenya's got talent, obviously, but it has not been adequately reared and harvested.It is an irony that a game that previously brought much joy and pride to Kenyans is now a source of anguish and consternation. Like football.

End of Kenya seemingly excelled in cricket in the 1990s and 2000s by accident

Ngong this Sunday will be a petrolheads paradise

Peter Njenga | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

The Concours d Elegance car show celebrates its 50th anniversary on Sunday at the Ngong Racecourse in Nairobi.

It is in one of the biggest family outing in Kenya's social sporting scenes.

Unlike in the recent past, spectators will have a chance to view vintage and rally cars of a bygone era up close and personal according to the event organiser Bob Dewar.

Of particular interest will be the entry of mean rally machines that raced on the romanticised Kenyan roads during the Safari Rally of yore.

Tanzanian enthusiast Navraaj Singh Hans has entered a 1990 Lancia Delta Integrale rally car replica.

This awesome model won three WRC Safari Rally editions under the hands of Italys Miki Massimo Biasion and Finlands Juha Kankkunen in 1988, 89 and 91 respectively.

It is a super machine which will please the eyes of any petrolhead, thus the need to be at the Ngong Racecourse on Sunday.

This car has been voted as the most successful make in the World Rally Championship (WRC) history by rally fans in the world although the Italian manufacturer no longer competes in the championship.

Aslam Khan, a frequent competitor in Kenyan classic events, has dusted and cleaned his 1968 Porsche 911 while Minti Sport will display a 1980 Datsun PA 10 to complete in the rally category.

These cars are in a list of 70 vehicles and 40 motorcycles at this years event that will be celebrating its Golden Jubilee at the tail end of a successful 2022 motoring calendar which peaked in June with the WRC Safari Rally, and introduction of Rally X Country in Machakos recently.

Competitors who have painstakingly preserved or restored old cars will showcase the rich history and heritage of motor vehicles in Kenya.

Top on the list are two Ford Model A machines built in 1929 and 1931 entered by Anwar Fatehdin.

They will be competing for top honours together with a similar make of Adrian Wroe which was the overall winner in 2019.

The oldest cars on display will be an Austin 7, Ford Tudor and Ford Model A pick up manufactured in 1928, and owned by Paras Shah, Mike Duder and Joseph Kamau respectively.

To spice up the mix is car enthusiast Kakooza Wazzir from Uganda, coming to Kenya for the seventh time. He brings in his rare 1996 Mitsuoka Viewt saloon and a 1991 Mitsuoka le-Seyde. His compatriot Edgar Katamujuna competes in a 1985 Volkswagen Kombi in the utility cars made after 1970 category.

The motorcycle division has an interesting mix. Sati Jabbals 1925 DKW and Dominique Antoines 1925 Triumph are the oldest machines.

Satis DKW was the overall bikes division winner last year. It will be interesting to see whether the 1959 BSA Shooting Star and 1966 Triumph TR 6C of Peter Giraudos will upstage these Oldies.

For more than 10 years, the Uganda Bikers Association members have contributed enormously to the success of the Concours.

Ugandan riders also spice up competition by riding their 20 machines dressed in their black and red riding gear amidst wild cheers from the crowd.

Car lovers have also been invited for the Classic Sale of cars and bikes made 25 years ago and beyond.

This enables the owners of old but golden machines to offer them for sale to a significant number of spectators who are interested in buying vehicles for fun or with the aim of entering them in future Concours events.

In addition, there will be motor trade stands at Auto Expo for new vehicles being introduced into the local market by leading franchise motor vehicle companies.

Another attraction will be the Heritage Collection stand which will display old equipment and machinery including Roger Tanners old steam engines and an ancient TE 20 Massey Ferguson tractor owned by FMD.

End of Ngong this Sunday will be a petrolheads paradise

Getting a nanny-cam? Beware of falling into the trap of hyper-surveillance

CKR Mose | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

When a casual alaa, youre going home right now at 10 am, did you sleep here? from a cheeky male colleague elicited trembles, incoherence, and a reversing from the parking lot that almost shaved the side-mirrors of three cars off from a woman colleague, we became very concerned.

Home emergency, someone whispered in commiseration, and we waited to hear what had transpired to transform our usually equanimous colleague into a nervous wreck. It turns out, she had spotted her nanny beating her two-year-old daughter via her CCTV, connected to her smartphone.

You mean there are people who install CCTV in their houses to monitor their house-helps? One user on Twitter posed in mid-2020, at the height of the Covid19 pandemic, expressing shock at something that has been the norm since the late 2000s into the 2010s.

The first search results on Google when one types cctv brings a number of shops here in Kenya where one can purchase CCTV equipment, ranging from simple surveillance bulbs, to more sophisticated and high-tech gadgets, most of them with corresponding apps linked to ones smartphone, such that one can easily keep an eye on things wherever they are with nothing but an internet connection on both ends.

CCTV (closed-circuit television cameras) installed in public places, business establishments, or at work, are normalized. We are routinely fed with CCTV footage of robberies in progress in Kenya for example, and subsequent arrests made based on said footage.

However, while CCTVs are now a normalised part of public life, CCTVs installed inside the home are where many draw an uncomfortable line, as the Twitter user above expressed.

This line is based on what many read as a breach of privacy, a garish exposure of the goings-on in ones home, which is supposed to be a secret abode shielded and protected from prying eyes.

The discomforts around CCTV in the home become more pronounced when speaking to several CCTV sellers and installers based in Nairobis CBD the majority of those that come asking for CCTV installations in their homes are women, and mostly, working women with children, and who have employed nannies they do not particularly trust and would like to keep an eye on.

I install CCTV almost every single day in Nairobi, and send associated equipment to places like Embu and Chuka to my trusted clients, says Mr Njeru who owns an electronics and toy shop in Imenti House, one of Nairobis SME hubs. You get both men and women asking for CCTV for their shops, businesses, or exteriors, but many of those that want the nanny-cams are mothers.

And this is the crux of the matter the nanny-cam, and the parent, usually mother, in the thick of it.

Gendered parenting

The nitty-gritty dirty work of parenting has always been gendered, falling mainly on women the world over. This includes housework, and the practicalities of parenting children, from feeding them and bathing them, to spending time teaching them.

This is partly because society has for decades organised itself around gendered roles in society. The men traditionally provide for the family, while the women stay home and take care of the household and children, ensuring people are fed, watered, and that the home is running like a well-oiled machine.

While these roles thrived in the past, the modern age has brought with it challenges that have required women to step out of these home-grown roles and enter the workforce to supplement incomes in increasingly inflated economies where the sole income provided by men is no longer enough to cover the needs of the home in fact, many households are now increasingly held by women either as single parents, or the working parent.

Some pundits even argue that women have always supplemented household incomes from as far back as the 60s and 70s in Kenya drawing from their informal chamas and networks, only that their contributions were not always overt. This lack of overtness in appearing to usurp the roles of men in the family are indicative of a certain guilt and shame that women feel when they step outside their hitherto traditional roles.

Mothers, including single parents, are particularly tormented with this immense guilt, especially because choosing career and monetary pursuits when they should be staying home and taking care of their children is termed as abandoning said

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children.

This guilt is arguably part of the reason for the nanny-cam. Mothers who should be at home with their children feel the need to still be, at least virtually, in the home, keeping an eye on things, ensuring the home is run as they would run it themselves. To achieve this, mothers turn to the nanny-cam, that CCTV is their eye in the home while they are away at the workplace, or in the hustle.

However, this is just one of the reasons for installing the nanny-cam in the home. A lot of lore has emerged in the public space around the use of CCTV in the home, and this stems from the disbelief the Twitter user poses that there are people (read: women and mothers) who install them to monitor house-helps.

These narratives, some true, others not, only serve to exacerbate the guilt mums feel, leading to what I call double-surveillance while mums work to surveil the home while they are away using these nanny-cams, they are themselves already under societal surveillance, judged as either working mothers, or mothers who have dared to step out of their prescribed, home-based roles.

Double jeopardy of cruelty

One of these narratives has been that of cruelty in the treatment of nannies, or in the common, albeit problematic term, house-help. Problematic because the term has its origins in servitude, while the term help has a sliding scale of meaning that allows for some to be poorly compensated, if at all.

The idea of help is itself steeped in gendered roles that are not particularly seen as worthy of compensation. We, in 2022, still have cases where young girls (and in some cases, boys) come to the urban centres from the rural area to help families as they look for a job, but end up being indentured servants who are used to perform manual labour for little to no compensation.

It is no secret that domestic workers are usually subject to long hours of work, and low wages. Some are compelled to wake up in the wee hours, perform both housework and childcare, and then get paid about Sh3,000-8,000 per month. The average pay for domestic workers in Nairobi, at 2021 was Sh 13,200 per month. A large percentage of domestic workers are paid far below this minimum wage.

Such low wages, coupled with impossible and/or cruel work conditions, are seen as some of the reasons why domestic workers forced to perform jobs far beyond their intended scope, routinely unleash their frustrations on the children of their employers. Here, cruelty (from the employer) is said to beget cruelty (towards the children).

On the other hand, many parents, especially mothers, lament about how difficult it is to find a reliable nanny, or domestic worker, citing that no matter how kind one treats these employees, a bad apple will always remain a bad apple.

The expectation of kind treatment as a currency of exchange for good behaviour is as problematic as the idea of reliability. For instance, on asking my distressed colleague much later whether she had given her nanny a proper contract, job description and orientation, she shook her head with some irritation.

Unpacking surveillance

As was my friends reaction, many do not bother with proper job contracts, job descriptions, and job orientations for their domestic workers and/or nannies in fact, as I have pointed out, these roles usually merge into one. Domestic workers double up as co-parents, nannies, and house-helps, and sometimes, as school next-of-kin in cases where there are school-going children, attending meetings and parent-teacher conferences when the parents are unavailable, mostly due to the pressures of life and work.

They also sometimes double up as therapists and caregivers, taking care of the psychological needs of their employers, and taking care of sick/aged/bed-ridden in-laws or parents visiting from upcountry. These roles can become overwhelming, especially if the pay is not commensurate.

Worse, a lack of job description and orientation can lead to unclear, and therefore unmet, expectations. Some mums will expect their domestic workers to do all the housework and the parenting, both in their absence, and presence. When some come back from work exhausted, they would expect the domestic worker to continue with the chores including bathing and feeding the younger children.

Meanwhile, the domestic worker may expect the mother of the home to take over duties once she is back home, simply

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because she too is exhausted from working in the home all day. The belief that house-work is not as exhausting as office-work, a belief that women have resisted, continues to be perpetuated here.

Some mothers may expect the domestic worker to engage the younger children in reading and structured play activities, which may be beyond their skill level structured play is not an automatic skill that comes with proximity to children. Many mums expect the cleaning and cooking to be done a certain way.

When the domestic worker fails to deliver these expectations, conflict may ensue. Conflict management itself is also a big source of poor work conditions. In many cases, mistakes are addressed through harsh reprimands, the employer taking on a patron role that leaves no room for discussion or negotiation or understanding.

It is important to understand these working conditions as having their modern roots in the master-servant dynamic perpetuated by colonialism, where the servant is seen as being below the master in the general hierarchy, therefore undeserving of space to explain, only existing to work in silence.

We must understand that overall, the high level of surveillance meted out on women in society actually exacerbates the challenges of motherhood and domestic work a mother may not give a proper job description because it is understood that all women know how to cook, clean and perform childcare with a minimum of fuss.

Failure to live up to these expectations always attracts societal derision, and in the home front, derision from the employer to the domestic worker. It is that surveillance that we must be aware of.

What happens once we are aware of this surveillance? After all, women are not going back to the days of compelled domesticity, unless the world, ours or the global one, slides back into the slave-era inspired narrative of the Handmaids Tale (after all, it is not impossible to imagine a strict theocracy that polices women to the point of seen and not heard, as we live these realities on a daily basis).

Women are now in the workplace, but they are also in the home, as domestic workers, as housewives, as nannies. We deride these are lesser roles because society has us believing that advancing women can outsource these roles to other women. But we need to become aware of the double-jeopardy we are all existing within. All women are being constantly surveilled, and more so, mothers, since it is they who are saddled with the roles of bringing up the next generation.

This surveillance is based on gendered roles, and a certain shame when women step out of their places in the home to pursue different roles. It behoves us to, in turn, ensure we are not hyper-surveilling those we leave our children with, or, perpetuating the abuse meted out to us, on the women we leave in the home to take up the roles we leave behind, be these people domestic workers, nannies, relatives, or spouses as the case may be.

It also behoves us to bequeath household roles and duties the same dignity those jobs outside the home embody. This includes treating those doing the domestic work with professionalism, including legal pay, and workplaces that are not toxic. It behoves us to realise that surveilling our domestic workers is in line with societal surveillance of women in general.

While many argue that having home CCTV is akin to employers having CCTV at the place of work, it is also important to interrogate that office CCTV is it a lack of trust that employees are thieves, or bosses abusive? What are the deeper questions at play here, that would make a satisfied employee steal, for example, or a fair boss abuse others? This is not to discount the use of CCTV in the workplace(s).

It is to question the constant surveillance, which in part stems from a lack of trust, and a lack of a deeper interrogation of systems of abuse of power we have accepted as the norm. In the home, this surveillance is sometimes done in secret, since many domestic workers may not even be aware their every moment is being captured via CCTV.

What are the deeper questions here? Even the question the male colleague posed did you sleep here is indicative of that surveillance one that monitors movement in and out of the workplace, and does not give people, especially women, room to breathe.

I recall a former workplace where women who took smoking breaks were hyper-surveilled in ways men were not, even the minutes they stood outside to smoke counted, simply because they were women who smoked, an aberration to societal eyes.

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In this modern era where we are seeing cases of the abuse of domestic workers in Saudi Arabia, one driven by racist capital, we must become very aware of how we may be perpetrating cycles of this same abuse.

This abuse has its roots in racism, and in judging those that perform the household chores we claim to have surmounted, or outsourced, the same way a hyper-vigilant society continues to judge women, especially those that dare step out of their (invented) traditional roles, such as motherhood and parenting as lesser beings in need of control, censure, and surveillance. Ultimately, it is these questions we need to ask. A just society is one that does not require hyper-surveillance. This is what to strive for.

End of Getting a nanny-cam? Beware of falling into the trap of hyper-surveillance

Passive income is a step closer to achieving financial freedom

Florence Bett-Kinyati | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Ultimately, one of the goals we all want to smash is that of financial freedom. Financial freedom is where you have the choice to do whatever you want, when you want to. Where your days are not dictated by the money you make or the rivers you cross to make this money.

Money can buy you your financial freedom. One of the ways to buy this freedom is to build a steady stream of passive income.

There are two broad categories of income: active income and passive income.

Active income is the money you make while you are awake, while the sun is up in the sky. Passive income is what you make while you are awake and sleeping, its hours are not limited by the position of the sun and its earning potential is unlimited.

Your active income is likely the salary income from your job or the profits income from your business. Perhaps both.

Your passive income is likely the rental income from your property, leasing income from your equipment or royalties income from your creations (product or service). The investment income is also another stream of passive income.

Passive income

Today I want you to chew over ways you can make a passive income.

Let me use my personal example to show you where I am coming from. I am a writer and an author. I am also an urban wife and mother to two toddlers. I make my money from writing.

Read: Tips on how to beat inflation

My active income from writing comes from writing newspaper columns, stories such as this one you are reading. I write about money, urban culture and home styling. I write strictly from Monday to Friday.

I am only paid for published articles. If I dont write, I dont get paid. If my stories are not published, I dont get paid. If I am under the weather and I am unable to write, I dont make money. When I am grounded on maternity leave, I dont write, so I dont make any money. When I am pregnant, I am sorely unproductive and I write less, so I make less money.

Message alert

My passive income is from my book. I published it myself in December 2021. I am selling it directly myself, I am also stocked with all the major bookshops in Kenya. The income from my book is not dependent on the inhales and exhales of my urban life. It sells day and night, from Monday to Sunday.

There are moments right before I sleep when I hear my phone ping with a message alert it is an M-Pesa from a client. A purchase may be made overnight and I will wake up to another M-Pesa from another client. As I write this, I am hopeful there are Kenyans in the bookshops I am stocked with, holding my book in their hands and heading to the till to make their purchases.

My book sells if I am under the weather or if I am as peachy as a plum. It will keep selling when I am carrying the next pregnancy or nursing the next baby on maternity leave. Even on the days when the demands of motherhood get in the way of beating my newspaper deadlines, the book still sells.

It has also opened unexpected humbling doors I am invited to speak at money events, I charge a fee for this.

As with any stream of passive income, the book demanded a massive time and cash investment upfront time to write the book itself and money to publish it. I am still investing both to keep sales going and my passive income steady.

You too can create your own product to sell to the Kenyan and overseas market. Think of your technical skills. Think of your natural skills. Think of your professional and personal networks. Think of ways you can harness these ready-at-hand assets to create a product that will keep selling and raking in money no matter what the sky looks like.

Florence Bett-Kinyatti is a certified accountant and former financial auditor. She is also the author of the book Should I? Your questions about money.

@_craftit,

End of Passive income is a step closer to achieving financial freedom

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.

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

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 Africas 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. Weve also invested in the e-commerce platform, and its great to see this new chapter making such a positive impact on even more businesses.

The journey continues. At Mastercard, were 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

How many of Kenyas 10,000 speed bumps conform to the law?

Gavin Bennet | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Gavin,

If I want to build a speed bump on a road near my house, do I need to get permission? Are there any rules about the materials I use or the shape and size or marking of what I build, or where I build it? Can my neighbours build whatever they like, too? As a society, do we need to limit ourselves to the current 10,000 bumps countrywide? Why not 100,000 or a million? That also begs the question: if I do not like a particular bump, can I remove it?

Fred

Short answer: If you do anything to the structure of a public road, you can be prosecuted. Even for properly fixing a pothole! The Kenya Bureau of Standards lists about 2,000 currently approved Standards. Good luck trying to find and get the full text of one called KS 774:2000 which relates to speed bumps.

As to removing a bump you do not like, the Kenya Bureau of Standards does invite any member of the public who suspects any product to be sub-standard to bring a sample to their laboratories.

That prospect might sound tempting and make you smile, but of course it is not recommended if the product is two tonnes of hardened pre-mix tarmac. A photograph instead, maybe, with dimensional evidence.

Longer answer: Any speed bump on an otherwise regular road surface is a potential hazard and is intrinsically disruptive to a roads core purpose. It increases the time and cost of every vehicles journey, it generates more toxic exhaust fumes, brake lining and rubber dust, creates considerable extra noise and causes vibration (that can ultimately damage buildings) in the area. Clearly, regulation of such obstacles cannot be informal each and every one needs to be individually licenced even more strictly than individual drivers and vehicles. Because negative side-effects can be so serious, this is how diligent the investigation must be before a speed bump is authorised:

The internationally recognised process demands that a request for a bump be petitioned, an adjudicating authority be appointed, ambient speeds, traffic levels and accident data be assessed and benchmarked, the proximity of at-risk people and sidewalks and alternative safety measures be considered, and the public (stakeholders) be consulted by mailshot and at a public meeting, and that the vote-majority of those in the project area should be 70:30 or more in favour.

The project area guideline is at least 100 metres before the first bump and after the last bump, and a similar distance on either side of the bumped stretch of road. That is how far intensive side effects will spread.

If the petition is granted, the bump(s) should conform to a prescribed technical design of height, width, length, shape, spacing, advance warning signs, road surface painting, and reflective location pegs at the bump itself. The warning signs should preferably include rumble strips in case signs and markings are lost and/or visibility is poor.

Once the bump is constructed it must be inspected for compliance with all the requisite design parameters, and its effectiveness must be evidenced by monitoring the factors cited in the original petition. If speeds, traffic levels and accident data are not significantly changed for the better, the bump should be removed (to ameliorate the many downsides of the bump remedy).

If we accept those definitions as the law, then the good news is that Kenya only has a few dozen speed bumps. The other mounds of tarmac constructed on our highways and byways (there are many, many thousands of them) are obstructive to traffic, damaging to vehicles, cause unwarranted discomfort to motorists, can damage cargo, and can even cause loss of control. All of these consequences are specifically forbidden by KS 774, so whatever you choose to call them, they are not speed bumps by legal definition.

The issue is not about some non-compliant mounds in some places. It is that virtually all the mounds, virtually everywhere, are in contravention and their lack of legal compliance is not marginal, it is massive. In terms of combined height, gradient length, shape and speed limit location, I would estimate that our average speed bumps are between four and 10 times more severe than KS 774 intends or allows.

Speed bumps.

The legal limit for the height of a speed bump is in most cases 10cm, and only in exceptional circumstances where traffic needs to be brought to a near-halt, 15cm. Never more than that. Kenya is riddled with bumps that are more than double the height limit.

More significantly, the length of a bump should be at least 40 times its peak height. In the most exceptional

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circumstances a sharpness of 1:20 is permitted, normally reserved for car parks and very low speed roads which already have a limit of 50kph or less.

Kenyan roads even major highways designed for ambient speeds up to 100kph - are riddled with bumps, some with ratios of 1:10 or worse (which is akin to placing a tree-trunk sized log across the road). Many are also more than twice as high as the maximum limit and less than half the specified length. And they are completely unmarked and sometimes in the shadow of roadside trees.

The key question, yet to be answered, is: Do Kenya Standards mean anything? Are they just a suggestion (which each of us can follow or completely ignore), or do they constitute a legal requirement?

If they are legally binding, it follows that anybody who builds a speed bump which does not comply with the Standard is not just doing a bad job, but is committing an offence!

Most motorists understand the need for bumps (and even more particularly for more moderate versions known as speed humps or speed tables). Properly built in the proper place and properly marked, they can help make the motoring environment calmer and safer.

Compliant tables, humps and bumps may need to be prevalent on low-speed streets. They should almost never be used on open highways. If and where that does become necessary, a useful model to follow would be the bumps on Nairobis Southern Bypass, on a steep downhill on the dual carriageway from Kikuyu when nearing Dagoretti.

These work well because they observe the design principle, that a speed bump should deter excessively high speed but inflict no damage, delay or discomfort to vehicles travelling at up to 85 percent of the prevailing speed limit.

In the pipeline: Tax that deters quality and incentivises junk

What is most important where the rubber meets the road?

Lewis Hamilton Mercedes AMG f1 car 3D Illustration, 30 Jun, 2022, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Formula 1 racing is about the absolute limits of vehicle performance and control, and the difference between the best and the rest in what must be thousands of small details is only tiny fractions of a second. Yet during a race there is one element which seems to make ten times more difference than everything else put together. That is the hardness and wear of the tyres. Are there any lessons to be learned from that in ordinary motoring?

Christopher

Only one. That tyres are fundamental to performance and control of any motor vehicle. Crucial in motorsport; important in a trip to the shops. Tyres, after all, are your vehicles only direct connection with mother earth. They stand between you and every nuance of any road surface, both in their own right and as a member of the team called the suspension system. They ultimately transmit every instruction you give by steering, accelerator or brakes.

But ordinary motoring is not about absolute limits and milliseconds of difference are irrelevant. There is a lot more tolerance available. About right is as good as it needs to get.

Presuming the tyres on your car are the right size for the wheel rims they are fitted to, whats the most important thing about them? Right. They need to be filled with, and retain, air. Without that they dont work at all. And without the right amount of air (the correct pressure) they dont work well and control decreases.

Formula 1 World Championship.

Next most important? The tyre casing should be sound no cuts or bulges in the sidewalls. These represent an extremely high risk of a blow-out.

Third on the priority list? They need to have a decent depth of tread especially in the rainy season to give grip and prevent aquaplaning, but in dry times, too, for strength and puncture resistance.

With those three ingredients correct air pressure, sound casing and healthy tread - you have a basically functional and generally safe tyre. But there are dozens of other variables aye, dozens that can have a significant impact on your motoring experience.

Even without changing the wheels rims, you have choices of brand, tread pattern, thinner or wider shapes, different

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profiles (height of sidewall), casing construction options (kevlar, steel or fibre-braced etc), casing speed ratings (SR, HR, VR etc), tubed or tubeless, the number of ply, hardness and softness of the rubber compound

and of course theres the option of changing the wheel rims to other materials or designs or sizes that open up another whole range of tyre options. Then theres a further dimension of balancing and alignment, castor angles

New car tyres.

In sum, an enormous scope of choice. And everything in life that offers a choice requires a decision. Its up to you whether your decisions are well-informed or pure guesswork. If you dont know all the techy stuff yourself, using a supplier (or adviser) who does is probably a good idea.

Happily, motor manufacturers make an initial decision for you. They decide a type, size and specification of tyre, and recommend pressures which will give the best possible service over a catch-all variety of normal motoring conditions. Stick to what they suggest, and you will never go far wrong. But you will also never be exactly right.

There are, without any doubt, specifications which will give superior service in some respects, but worse service in others. The menu of respects includes safety, reliability, comfort, wear-life, fuel economy, speed, puncture resistance, traction on varied road surfaces, different loads, ground clearance, gearing, handling

Bottom line, if most of your motoring is in the normal range of everything, stick to the tyres the vehicles manufacturer recommends, but if part or much of your motoring is extreme in any way, bear in mind that tyres could be a significant element of any solution.

Do you have a Motoring question? Email

End of How many of Kenyas 10,000 speed bumps conform to the law?

Life-and-style

Lets talk about confessions in marriage.

Philip Kitoto | Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Why is it that in most relationships, no one is willing to confess wrong done? We tend to argue in order to prove who is in the wrong the most.

The greater agreement is reached in relationships where honest self-disclosure accompanies true and genuine confession of wrongs. Creating joint ownership for the plan of your marriage finds its foundation right here.

Since two cant take a journey together unless they agree on a common plan, such agreement is key to producing team spirit that helps relationships pull in one direction.

Such agreement must be seen in areas such as the way a couple deliberates on issues, how they process and arrive at a common decision, and whether they are willing to embrace change that leads to the right behaviour.

Read: How to react to a loved ones gross confession

For example, when a problem of disclosure in the area of finances comes up, the idea is to trace whether it is the result of a lack of a common plan or just based on a spouses stubborn nature? Where a couple fails to share a joint vision in such areas, fights will arise.

Developing a culture of confessing weaknesses and failures has the power to produce synergy. My opinion is that true agreement on issues has its foundation in honest disclosure of both the good and bad in life without fear of retribution.

Our desire must be to embrace confession that leads to repentance and affirmation. Confession and repentance are key factors that perform a cleansing role in relationships. If done well, true confession to one another will lead to healing. While sin separates, confession with forgiveness restores and re-establishes trust. However, many spouses think that it is a weakness to make mistakes and apologise.

When we allow issues to pile up or cleverly cover unresolved issues with quick statements of sorry, we hinder unity and intimacy and instead live our lives in secrecy and hypocrisy. When a couple lives in secrecy and shadows, it hinders productivity in the relationship. Where issues are resolved through a spirit of genuine trust in each other, this strengthens a couple emotionally. What we have to accept is that no one is perfect. We must see ourselves as each others keepers.

Read: My girlfriend forces me to apologise even when I havent wronged her

So, how does a couple learn to agree on how to make the relationship work well for them? This is maybe the one crucial step needed in relationships. The questions here will be: Do I see what needs to change in myself as much as I would like to see what needs to change in my partner?

Even more critical, Do I need to change? or Do I know that I hold the key to the change needed in our relationship? Sadly, refusing to confess needed change and instead choose to point fingers works negatively for the marriage. When I start the journey of change from my side without compulsion, I show by example that I am committed to change. This in turn will have a catalytic effect on the relationship. This could be just what my partner needs to see if the relationship is to pull the other person towards change. Because there is power in example, choosing good over evil and peace over war speaks volumes. Do remember, change is only possible where we have paid attention to the benefits it brings.

Healthy relationships must make it their aim to build a peaceable environment in the home. None should hurt or sideline their partner purposely. Assumptions and wrong interpretations of your partners actions could create conflict. When in a state of conflict, moving out of your hurt and focusing on the good that comes from confession has the power to revive hope in the marriage. Verbally toning down negativity and seditious statements helps cool down tempers and ushers in a peaceful environment.

Read: Who will teach our youth that the answer to infidelity is not violence?

Although it is common to find spouses on different sides of an issue, with good disclosure and confession of wrong, a couple will end the day with a desire for agreement. This however calls for boldness and sacrifice. The joy that results is fulfilling and surpasses any former pain.

Although hard, sacrificial disclosure establishes a climate where it is easier for spouses to share their successes and failures freely.

Marriages that are riddled with secrets generally have limited disclosure that limits couple intimacy and synergy. Love driven empathy, however, uses disclosure with the aim of healing and restoration and not to shame either partner. This is what makes a relationship feel safe, secure and confident. True knowledge must lead us to discovering our spouses inner

Lets talk about confessions in marriage.

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attributes.

When we have great values and good people skills, we will interact better together and with other people. Such interaction includes how we listen, process and interpret information at hand. Thriving marriages are where good people skills help maximise the effectiveness and productiveness of the interaction between spouses in a marriage.

Send your relationship questions to

End of Lets talk about confessions in marriage.