

# Clarify legal status of the Kisumu City

By GIDEON OCHANDA

**T**HE newly enacted Urban Areas and cities Act 2011 has put in to question the legality of Kisumu City as a County because it essentially creates another County which is not provided for in the constitution.

It all began on the night of 26th August 2011 when Parliament passed handful legislations to buttress the constitution in line with the year one listed as 'a must' legislations. Urban Areas and Cities Act, 2011 was in tow as required by the Constitution – Article 184 and the fifth schedule which states that "a national legislation shall provide for the governance and management of Urban Areas and Cities and shall in particular

- Establish criteria for classifying areas as Urban areas and Cities
- Establish the principles of governance and management of urban areas and cities
- Provide for participation of residents ..... may include mechanism for identifying different categories of urban areas and cities."

The Urban Areas and Cities Act,



Aerial view of Kisumu City

*From the provisions of the Constitution and the Act Kisumu City is either an illegal County or illegal City*

2011, based on the requirement of the Constitution established a criteria and different categories of urban areas and Cities.

The status for both Mombasa and Kisumu have been retained in the Act ".....the municipalities of Mombasa and Kisumu existing immediately

before the commencement of the Act shall be deemed to be cities established under this Act," (Sec 60). And this is where the problem begins.

With the exception of Nairobi that becomes a Capital City, Mombasa and Kisumu becomes City Counties.

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## Know your cancer status now

By BRIGHTON KAZUNGU

OPPORTUNITY has arisen for all Kenyans to know their cancer status immediately.

The government has launched a rigorous countrywide campaign to create public awareness on the prevalence of and dangers posed by cancer, which has become a major health risk in the country.

The campaign kicked off in Mombasa recently. However, it's expected to be conducted all over the country in a tight racing against time to tame the spread of the deadly scourge.

In the coastal region residents are being educated, informed and screened for various forms of the disease, including the most common ones like cervical, breast and prostate cancers.

Dr. Esther Getambo, the head of the Oncology Unit at the Coast Provincial General Hospital (CPGH), said 80 percent of cancer infections are curable if detected at an early stage of development. The tragedy is that many patients only go for treatment when it is too late.

"When they eventually come for treatment, they are already in stages three and four which are very advanced and cannot be helped much," she lamented.

Dr. Getambo said cancer is major public health problem not only in Mombasa but in the country as a whole. She attributes late diagnosis trends to apathy, fear, and ignorance of the disease.

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# Clarify legal status of the Kisumu City

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“City County means a city which is also a County,” Section 2 of the Act. The governance and the management of a County City is to be in accordance with the law relating to the County Governments- Section 12 (3).

From the foregoing, it is clear that we have three County Cities: Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu.

However, it is only Nairobi and Mombasa that are included in the list of Counties (Schedule 1) in the Constitution and given full strength in Article 6 (1). Nairobi and Mombasa fits in their entirety with all their constituencies within one geography and by extension potential distinct city county governments.

On the other hand, Kisumu County listed as Number 42 in the list of 47 Counties is not the same as Kisumu City created by the Act.

As currently placed, Kisumu City comprises of Kisumu East and Kisumu West Constituencies only but Kisumu County includes Kisumu Rural, Nyan-do, and Muhoroni, Nyakach as well as the two town constituencies.

What all this means is that the Act has created an additional County that is unconstitutional.

Kisumu County City is therefore “illegal” unless the constitution is amended to create space for an additional County or the Urban areas and Cities Act, 2011 is amended to provide for a different special status for



Kisumu City Hall

Kisumu City.

But the options are limited since amending the Constitution to alter territorial divisions (Article 6 and first schedule) will require both parliamentary approval and a referendum (Article 255). Changing the internal division of the territory is one of the protected clauses that parliament alone can not amend. It requires two thirds approval by parliament and a national referendum both of which the country can ill afford before the next elections.

If Kisumu remains as provided in both the constitution and the Act, there are fundamental concerns that must be addressed.

i) Which County Government shall Kisumu City board serve under?

ii) How does the City get its Governor, the executive committee and County Assembly?

iii) How will the City share in the National revenue distribution?

iv) If it remains under Kisumu County Government, how then does the City participate in the election of County Governor, the Senator and Women representative to the National Assembly?

Management of Cities

The management of the cities and municipalities is also headed for difficulties, tremendous confusion and an affront on the constitution. The constitution has created county executive committees and charged them with the responsibility to manage and coordinate the

functions of the county administration and its departments among other executive functions. But the Urban Areas and Cities Act, 2011 has first, placed more or less the same roles to city boards and two, has made those boards' body corporate entities.

The managers of the cities are answerable to the board and not the executive committee. City and municipal Managers who shall be the equivalence of the current city and municipal clerks are to implement the decisions and functions of the boards and not the executive committees of the county or City County.

For purposes of pecking orders, a governor is the head of a corporate entity called a county government but in the same

government there is another executive head called a manager heading another independent board. The net effect is that both the constitution and the Act have created different parallel governments for the same city counties.

The executive committees and the governors have a role in the establishment of the city or municipal boards but thereafter the boards are not answerable to anyone. The boards are charged with overseeing the affairs of the cities and municipalities, develop and adopt policies, plans and programmes, controlling land use and development, implement national and county legislations, enter into contracts and partnerships, prepare and administer the budget, collect rates, taxes, levies, duties, fees and surcharges, implement and monitor performance of management systems, etc. – Sect. 20.

The same functions are given to the executive committees of counties by the constitution art.183, thus, implement county and national legislations, prepare legislations and policies, county planning and budget processes, etc These indicate a clear contradiction or duplication of roles.

It behoves, the constitution implementation commission and all the relevant bodies to look again at the urban areas and cities law. It also begs as a reminder that legislations passed in haste and in shortened time that do not allow for public participation would mean constant ridicule of parliament.

## Know your cancer status now

From page 1

Recently prominent personalities such like the late Nobel Laureate Prof Wangari Maathai, Medical Minister Anyang Nyong'o and Jerry Okungu were diagnosed with the disease. Sadly, Prof Maathai succumbed to the disease.

Available data shows that breast and cervical cancers are still the most common among women in Kenya. The two account for 59 percent of genital tract infections and between 1,500 and 2,000 deaths each

year.

About 10 to 15 new cancer cases are reported at the Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) each week, with 64 percent of patients ranging within 30 to 50 years.

Getambo says since the unit opened a year ago, at least 170 patients have been referred for radiotherapy at KNH, with five deaths being recorded.

Many of those who turned up for the screening had other medical complications, according, she adds. The hospital

offers screening for cervical cancer every Wednesday and Friday at a subsidized cost of Kshs.100, but few women access the service.

Vaccination for Human Papilloma virus (HPV), which causes 80 per cent of cancers, is also available at private clinics for 13 year-olds who are not sexually active.

In Mombasa, a complete dose of the cervirax vaccine is available at Kshs.2,200, says Dr. Musimbi Soita, head of the Reproductive Health Unit at the

hospital.

This is still expensive for ordinary Kenyans, but parents who can afford should take daughters for the drug, he says.

Radiotherapy sessions for advanced cancers are only held at KNH, with most Kenyans being unable to afford the treatment, and residents have asked the Government to set up a similar unit at the Coast General Hospital to ease congestion.

At the high risk clinic, four consultation rooms have been set up to screen women, while a

civil servants clinic is just a few meters away.

About 200 women turned up on the first day alone, and Dr. Soita says at least 1,000 women will receive the life saving test.

The Provincial General Hospital is the largest referral hospital in the region, with only one cytologist who serves the entire province.

However, plans are underway to scale up screening in other satellite public health facilities for service to a larger number of Kenyans.



# Mukurwe-ini inches on with adult education

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

TWENTY-FOUR adult learners have graduated in Mukurwe-ini district after attaining basic education.

The grandaunts who included 22 women and two males graduated recently at their centre based in Kiawaita Primary School where they have been undergoing training.

They passed the proficiency test and were awarded with certificates by Youth assistant Minister who is also the area MP Kabando wa Kabando.

The learners started their free training in May and some have vowed to continue to another level of learning.

"They attained basic literacy in reading, writing and numeracy. Most of them are women since they are more interested in education," said the district adult education officer Lawrence Muriu.

A joyful 77-year-old Martha Wanjiku who is a mother of five children said she was happy that despite her age she has been able to take home the certificate.

Most of them are drawn from Kiawaita, Kiuu, Thangathi and Kaharo with an age bracket of over 40 years of age.

Muriu said the willing group will continue to the next stage where they can go up to the university level.

The group is being supported by the local CDF and the office of their MP.

The education officer said they have started a campaign which will ensure men enroll for evening classes instead of engaging in the consumption of alcohol in the evening.

Mukurwe-ini district has the highest number of adult learners in Nyeri County who have

enrolled for secondary education commonly known as post literacy.

More than 600 adult learners are also expected to report for the education soon.

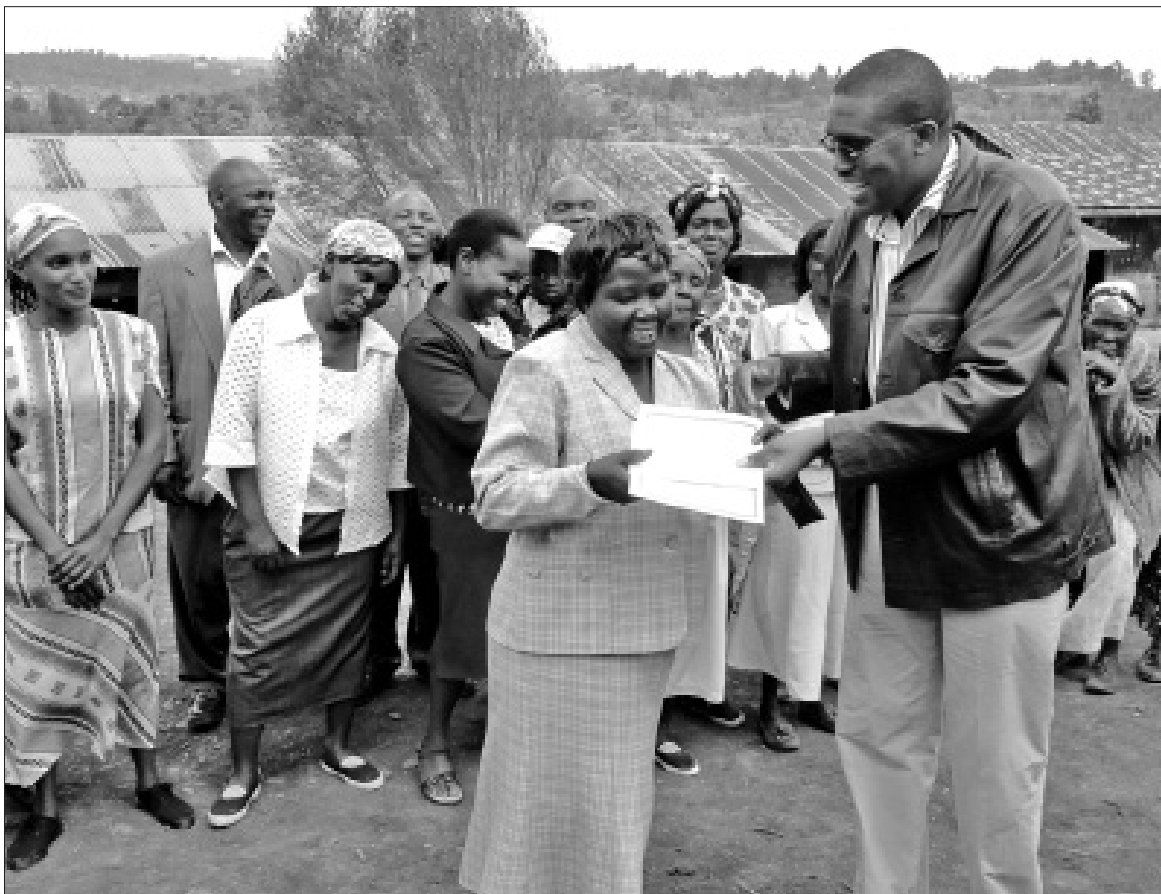
Kabando said the Government is also supporting the learners as teachers are paid by Government.

He promised to buy them uni-

form.

They graduates are also planning to start income generating projects like dairy goat projects and also start a social group for entertaining people.

The group is also looking for plot for demonstration of their agricultural work.



Joyful Agnes Maina is handed a certificate by Youth Assistant Minister Kabando wa Kabando after she graduated recently in Mukurwe-ini district. Photo/Joseph Mukubwa

## Union calls for doubling of salaries

By JOEL JUMA

THE Kenya Union of Post Primary Education of Teachers (Kuppet) has petitioned the Government to increase by 100 percent allocations channeled to students in boarding schools to help address the huge budgetary deficits.

The Union officials said high cost of goods and the depreciating shilling had destabilized operations in most schools due to lack of adequate funds.

"The Government should therefore increase the allocations from Kshs10,650 to over Kshs 20,000 as the cost of goods has gone up," said the union's Secretary General Akello Misori.

Misori said that parents were being forced to pay more as head teachers have started adjusting fee structures for next year without the approval of the ministry of Education.

"The Government should review the fee structures as parents were being forced to pay more from next year and yet the country's inflation rate is still high," said Misori.

Misori remarks comes barely a day after the Kakamega County Officials led by the branch secretary Harison Otota and the branch chairman Johnstone Wabuti said the union was against the fees increment in schools.

Many schools have already issued new fee structures for next year with some now charging between Kshs30,000 and Kshs 43,000 per year. The amount excludes the allocation from the Government.

At Mwhila boys high school in Khwisero district, parents were issued with new fee structure that reflected an increment of fees from Kshs 27,000 to Kshs 33,000 starting from next year.

The school's principal Namusende Musonye said that the school was still faced with debts totaling to Kshs 6 million.

"We have managed to reduce our debt portfolio which initially stood at Kshs12 million to save the school from collapse," said Musonye.

Area MP Evans Akula released over Kshs 30 million to the school which has been elevated to a centre of excellence to improve on the facilities.

Misori and Wabuti said the union wants the minister for Education Sam Ongeru to order schools to stick to the fee guidelines issued by the Government to stop overloading parents.

The officials explained that the cost of fuel and sugar was high and thus the need to allow schools to purchase sugar directly from the factories to avoid relying on suppliers.

"Most of the suppliers keep on adjusting their quotations and this has made schools to strain financially," said Wabuti.

He was speaking to the press after the Kakamega County branch monthly meeting held at the union offices in Kakamega town.

## School heads lack financial literacy

By AGGREY BUNCHUNJU

ALTHOUGH some public schools' head teachers lack managerial skills in financial matters, they continue to be entrusted with colossal amounts of money.

In the last 8 years the Government and other donors have been disbursing funds to Public Primary and Secondary schools, the capacity of head teachers to handle the cash notwithstanding.

The cash that has been and still being disbursed to public schools include funds for Free Primary Education (FPE), Free Secondary Education (FSE), Constituency Development Fund (CDF), bursary grants and Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (KESSP).

In some schools across the country the monies are not being used to the donors' and other education stakeholders' expectation.

Failure by the funds to meet expected impact in some recipient institutions is attributed to head teachers' inability to manage finances.

Until quite recently, there has

been no Government initiative to equip head teachers with the requisite skills for effective management of the monies.

Quite a good number of head teachers across the country have been interdicted for allegedly misappropriating or mismanaging the funds.

Aware that the Government is part of the problem, Education Minister Prof. Sam Ongeru recently launched a free diploma course in education management for all head teachers in the country.

Education stakeholders in Bungoma County have welcomed the Government's new initiative saying that it is appropriate and long over due.

Led by the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) Bungoma South branch executive secretary Mr. Ken Nganga, the stakeholders say that the course would minimize indiscipline cases among head teachers.

"The mandatory diploma course in managerial skills for all head teachers will streamline accounting procedures and enhance prudent use of funds in our



Prof. Ongeru

schools", he says.

Mr. Nganga at the same time expresses optimism that after successful completion of the course concerned teachers will be moved to the next grade.

The 10 months course which will be sponsored fully by the Education Ministry is part of proposals contained in Sessional pa-

per No. 1 of 2005 on government policy guiding programmes in the education sectors.

Areas to be covered in the course include effective resource management, human resource management, project management and financial management.

Other areas of interest in the programme are; - strategic planning procurement and stores management, integrity and good governance in schools, ICT Integration in education, and conflict resolution and disaster management.

The course will be offered by the education ministry through the Kenya Education Staff Institute (KESI).

It will be delivered through open distance and flexible learning modules in regional centres to be established in all parts of the country.

This course is anticipated to improve management of school funds and will be used by the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) as a competitive tool in appointing and promoting teachers to managerial positions.



# Siaya County school dropout rate alarming

THE school dropout rate in Siaya County is rising at an alarming rate due to high poverty levels.

The District Education Officer, Ms. Jane Omogi, says many factors had forced youth to drop out of school, with poverty being the biggest cause.

She says most families survive in less than Kshs.95 a day and therefore can hardly afford basic needs. "Many are leaving school and as the line ministry involved, we are putting every measures to see them back into school," said the DEO.

The head teacher of Yenga Primary School, in Ugenya District, Mr. Michael Ochieng, says other than the high poverty levels, teenage pregnancy was also a contributor to the dropout rate.

## COMMENT

By JOHN NYAMBUNE

He says the school is missing at least 2 pupils a term which is relatively high in a spurn of a given time frame which should be checked.

The Deputy Head Teacher of Got Omalo Primary School, Mr. Charles Obia, says the community should use the available resources to invest in education.

He also cites lack of role models to inspire the children and advises the local community to be steadfast in ensuring that the students are educated on the importance of education.

The Wendy Daniela, a pupil at Siror Primary School, in Ugunja district, says the dropout rate has been linked to Boda Boda operators who lure the young girls with petty cash and end up impregnating them at tender age.

"I take my education very seriously and would one day wish to be a teacher, and nothing else will deter me because I have seen some of my best friends in school getting pregnant and lead miserable life," says Daniela. There are many challenges facing girls but that should not be a ticket of messing around.

The area Education Officer in Ugenya District (AEO) Mr. William Mola also cited the pornographic video operator who was arrested by the police recently in the area as those fanning teenage pregnancy in the area.

"I appreciate the work of Administration Police who arrested operator of a video show in the area which poisons the minds of the youth," said Mr. Mola.

The District Commissioner (DC) Mrs. Carolina Onyonka, who is the chairman of District Education Board (DEB) said the Government would regulate video shop and arrest those showing indecent material to pupils.

He said at Sega location, residents were employing under-age children to collect scrap metals instead of letting them attend school and warned that perpetrators would be charged.

The Ugunja District Education Officer (DEO), Mr. Francis Kiplagat, said the rate of pupils leaving school before

completion was high and must be quickly addressed. "It is true the drop-out rate is high and there are several factors causing the situation in the County, poverty among other issues but we in Education sector have applied necessary measures to reduce the menace and we have collaborated with local chiefs and their assistants to help us arrest parents who do not want their children to go to school."

He said the Government initiative to offer feeding programme had helped improve the retention of students in schools and fight illiteracy.

The practitioners have called on the Government to ensure sex education is introduced at early stages and have urged parents not to fear discussing sex with their children at home.

By KAVYU-KURA

WORRIED by poor academic standards, leaders in Mwingi Central district have agreed to come up with a five-year strategic plan to improve the situation.

The resolve follows revelations that about 17,000 pupils in the area who completed their primary education over the last five years have not been able to transit to secondary schools due to dismal academic performance.

According to the District Education officer Mohammed Godad, out of the cumulative 7495 candidates who proceeded to secondary schools during the period under review, 3576 performed dismally with grades ranging from D plus and below.

The DEO spoke at a consultative Education stakeholder meeting at Mwingi town Catholic hall

## Mwingi leaders plan to assist KCPE graduates

dubbed "Friends of Education".

The meeting that brought together professionals, education experts, businessmen and clergymen was called to seek ways to fix the declining educational standards.

Godad further told the meeting that a total of 1,165 pupils largely drawn from primary schools had dropped out of school due to early marriages and the prolonged period of drought that ravaged the area.

The Education officer said

that high illiteracy levels among parents had also had a huge bearing in the dropout rates since they were not committed to educating their children as was drug abuse that was prevalent in schools around Mwingi town.

The meeting consequently resolved to raise nearly Kshs 2 million that would be used to formulate the five-year education plan to address all the issues ailing the local education system with improvement in examination performance as the cardinal priority.

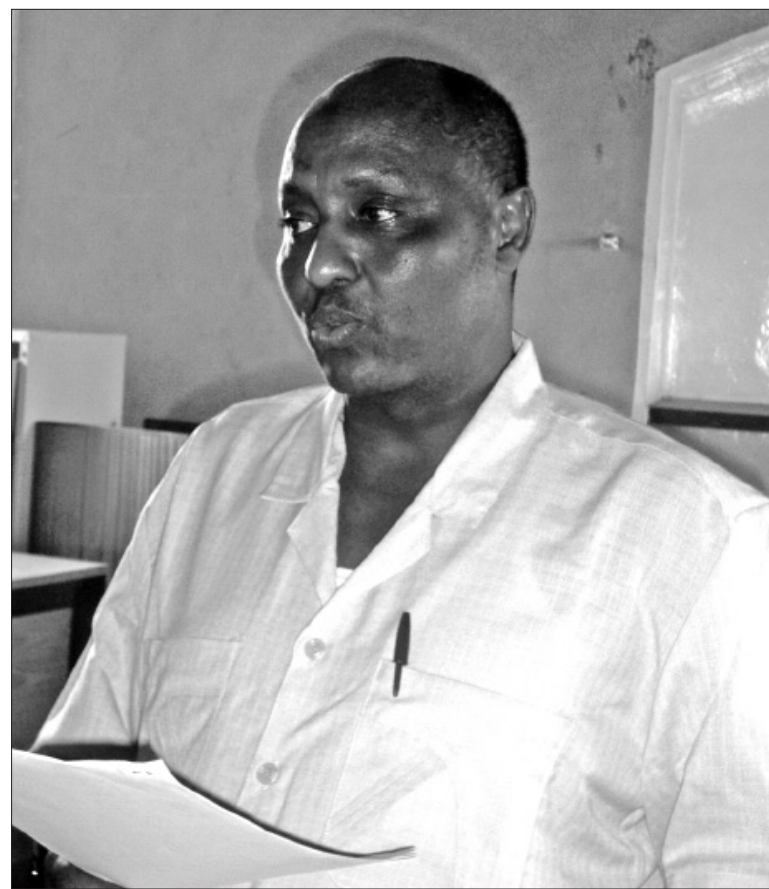
The leaders who included the acting Mwingi DO 1 Sarah Gichamba further agreed on the need to improve the existing dilapidated structures in schools to create a conducive learning environment.

In addition, the leaders agreed to ensure that parents and the community at large played a role in uplifting the disheartening education standards by actively participating in decision making processes instead of remaining passive by-standers as the situation worsened.

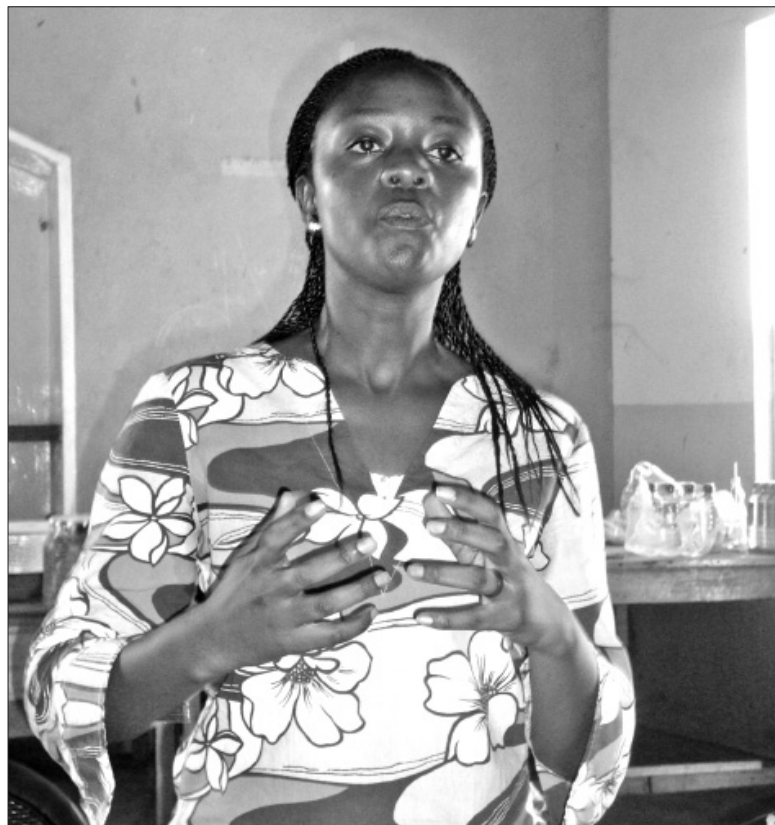
Tarbag District Agricultural Officer Fidelis Mwini Mwaniki who hails from Mwingi, attributed the ailing education sector to the absence of a drive to achieve results.

"It is high time Mwingi residents were sensitized to demand results from key education players in order to improve performance. This can be achieved if all stakeholders get involved instead of relegating their responsibilities to the DEO and teachers," said the agriculturalist.

The Kilifi District Development Officer, Alex Sammy Kil-



INSET: The Mwingi DEO Mohammed Godad addressing the education stakeholders meeting at the Mwingi Catholic Hall. Photo/Kavyu-Kura



The acting Mwingi central DO 1, Sarah Gichamba, addressing the education stakeholders meeting. Photo/Kavyu-Kura

onzo expressed dismay over the grim picture painted by the DEO.

He said that it was sad that local schools lacked the capacity to produce personnel required to steer development in the district.

The DO 1 lamented that many young girls who have just cleared their KCPE examination in Mwingi were being transported to Nairobi in hordes to work as house maids. She underscored

the need by parents to encourage their daughters to pursue further education.

"Parents should know that completing standard eight for their daughters is not enough. If they want them to have a promising future they must scale the education ladder to University. Allowing them to work as maids in Nairobi will be highly detrimental to them," said Gichamba.



## Kilifi wins UN award promoting education

By BEKADZO TONDO

KILIFI County Council has won the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) award for its relentless efforts in promoting educational activities in the area.

The council was selected the best among all the 175 local authorities in the country during the exercise coordinated by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) with support from the Ministry of Planning and National Development.

The chairman of the local authority Mr. Anthony Kingi said the council emerged the best for its outstanding support towards educational projects and cited the construction of classrooms, digging of pit latrines, purchase of desks among other crucial issues.

He said the projects have been undertaken in a transparent manner with support from the school management committees and respective teachers.

"Residents drawn from the 31 wards under the Kilifi county council have been prioritizing school development projects in their respective Local Authority Service Delivery Action Plan (LASDAP) meetings before the council approves funding for the implementation of the projects," said Mr. Kingi.

The clerk to the council Mr. Leboo Ole Morintat said apart from funding school development projects, the council has a bursary fund that supports needy students from the area.

He said special committees have been set in each ward and with the support of the council staff they identify needy students who are awarded the bursaries.

Mr. Morintat said education was key to development and therefore priority must be given to initiatives that support the learning process such as the construction of additional classrooms.

The clerk said the council recently allocated Kshs 500,000 to aid in the construction of a tuition block at the Kilifi medical training center.

But even as the council was feted by the UNDP, transitions rates from Primary to Secondary schools in the area still remained low.

The District officer, Kikambala Division, Mr. Justus Munyau lamented that transitions rates between Primary and Secondary school currently stood at 40 percent.

This was largely blamed on a high drop out rate occasioned by a high incidence of poverty.

The administrator directed chiefs to arrest parents who fail to take their children to school and arraign them in court for abdicating their parental obligation.

Meanwhile, the local authority plans to set aside funds to rehabilitate the damaged Rare River bridge along the Kilifi -Ganze road.

The clerk to the council Mr. Leboo Ole Morintat said the council was currently consulting the Kilifi District Roads Engineer to assess the damage and estimate the costs.

Mr Morintat said the bridge was crucial in connecting Ganze and Kilifi towns and transport is paralysed when the bridge is in bad shape.

# Mwingi school poses danger to pupils

By KAVYU-KURA

DISASTER is looming at Kanzui Primary school in Mwingi central district. The gaping cracks on the classroom walls portend a grave danger to the 269 learners and their teachers.

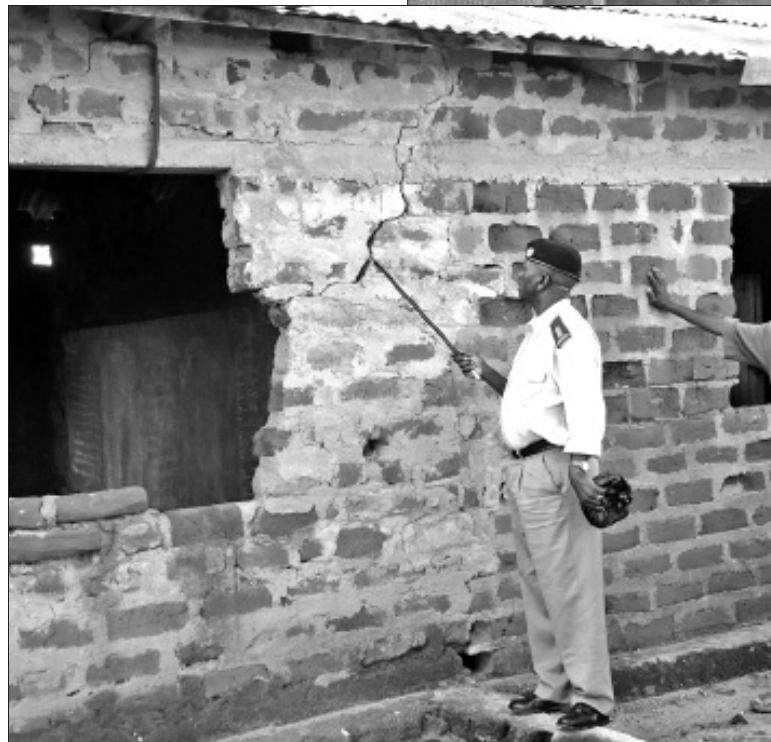
Already, one classroom has caved in following a heavy storm in the area. The 49 learners in class one however escaped unhurt as the damage occurred late in the night.

"We were in the process of mobilising resources to have the gaping cracks in the standard one classroom repaired but the wall collapsed due to the heavy downpour," said the school head teacher Shifta Musyoka.

As he accompanied the area assistant Chief Nicholas Muasa to assess the damage, the head teacher admitted that all the classrooms in the school need



**Pupils at Kanzui primary school look as the local assistant chief Munyoki Muasa plant a tree in the school compound.**  
**INSET: The Kanzui assistant chief Nicholas Muasa points at a crack in one of the classrooms.** Photo/Kavyu-Kura



to be brought down and re-build afresh as they were in serious state of disrepair.

He said during heavy rains, the pupils remained in their classrooms at their own peril because not only were the roofs leaking heavily due to uncountable gaping holes but the walls were likely to cave in if a mild tremor occurred with disastrous results.

The roofs to most classroom were aged while the walls were precariously bent, an indication of poor workmanship.

The head teacher now says that the school requires Kshs 3.5

million to oversee the rehabilitation exercise.

"We have applied for support from the Mwingi North Constituency Development Fund (CDF) kitty but we have not received any positive reply. We are still hoping that a donor will one day show up and help us out," said the head teacher.

He however said that he would soon write a report to the Mwingi district education officer indicating the risks that pupils at the school are exposed to on a daily. He expressed hope that the DEO's office would help him get the much needed support.

## Oparanya roots for quality education

By AGGREY BUCHUNJU

PLANNING Minister Wycliffe Oparanya has underscored the importance of quality education in all the 47 counties in the country.

Oparanya says the devolved governance system will require qualified personnel to run the counties' day-to-day affairs effectively.

The minister calls on well to do Kenyans and other development partners to invest in the education sector and other sectors of the economy in order for this country to realize vision 2030.

He urges leaders and the entire populace in the counties to assist

create conducive environment for both local and foreign investors.

"With the changing system of governance all counties must invest in education which is key to development in any region," the minister says.

Oparanya adds that to invest in quality and relevant education is the only sure way that can propel counties to high level of prosperity.

He points out that the Government is committed to ensuring that education is accessed by all Kenyans including persons with disabilities as enshrined in the country's constitution.

"Through private and public partnership the Government is determined to make sure that quality

education is accessible by all Kenyans," says Oparanya.

Article 53 (1) (b) of the Constitution states that every child has the right to free and compulsory basic education.

The constitution is however, silence on the accessibility of higher and college education which is very vital to the success of county Governments.

Oparanya who was speaking recently at Navakholo District headquarters in Kakamega County urged all education institutions in the country to provide quality and relevant education to Kenyans.

The minister was the chief guest during the official inauguration to Tomliza Education Centre,

a private primary school put up by a group of educationists from Kakamega County.

Higher, quality and college education is increasingly becoming a reserve for children from well to do families due to high fees charged by the institutions.

In public primary schools where majority of Kenyans enroll their children, quality education is compromised by over-stretched facilities.

Girls' education is still under threat in some communities. This may militate against the one third of either gender principle when it comes to hiring of personnel in some counties.



# Education system failing cohesion drive

By PETER MUTUKU

EVEN as the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) strive to inculcate national values in the political arena, the country's education system remains utterly inept in addressing citizen formation.

The education system which is critical in promotion of national values has purely focused on market needs and left out more subtle issues that underline the fundamental principles of stability, integrity and general prosperity of the country.

Save for the Gachathi Report of 1976 which criticized the education system for lacking in capacity to teach learners on the values of society, subsequent reports have primarily explored ways to mod-

ify the system to respond to market demands.

The Mackay report for instance underpinned the importance of technical and vocational education and dismissed the allegedly elitist and intellectual Education system then in force and which did not, according to the report fit market demands of the modern economy.

The report virtually ignored the concerns raised in the Gachathi report in relation to the education system. Similar reports have failed to identify and promote values that are critical to addressing the myriad challenges facing the nation.

And as the National Cohesion and Integration Commission undertakes to build a more cohesive society, it must

fully engage the Ministry of Education.

This will in effect mean that the skills which the market wants are built on a firmer foundation of the knowledge and appreciation of the values of citizenship.

The citizen should have a common consciousness, common frame of reference and approach to the policy problems facing the society. The citizens must understand the many diversities that exist in the society, the nature of the diversities and the shared values and interests that unite all despite these diversities. Such goal does not undermine the need to provide technical and vocation training that meets the demands of the market.

We shall have at any tier of education informed and intelli-

gent citizens and only secondarily citizens skilled in areas that the economy wants. This crop of Citizens will think and act responsibly and more importantly, be tolerant and empathic to divergent opinion or difference in ethnic, class and racial background.

The task facing NCIC is enormous. It demands a thorough engagement with education policy makers and social scientists in universities. It may call for a review of or clarification of our educational goals. It involves review of the quality of textbooks in our primary and secondary education.

It is a worthy task. Properly done, it is likely to provide the right foundation for the new structures of the government the constitution has created.

## Don tells state to invest in early education

By TITUS MAERO

THE Moi University's Dean of Education, Prof. Peter Barasa has asked the government to recognize the importance of Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) as one of the most important tools in accelerating the attainment of Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Barasa said EFA goals obligates the government to expand and enhance comprehensive ECDE programmes that are essential for basic education adding that the number of ECDE centres had increased marginally in the country.

The Don further pointed out that with the with low enrolment many of the children between the ages of 4-5 years end up directly joining primary schools without the relevant background thus negatively affecting retention and quality.

Addressing students at the Kakamega High School, the lecturer, however, noted that the country has made remarkable progress in increasing access to primary education noting that the completion rate had improved drastically.

He observed that in spite of all these regional disparities is evident adding that with regard to gender disparity in enrolment, the situation has been improving and the disparity is relatively small in primary schools.

"However a major factor constraining secondary school enrolment is that growth in the number of secondary schools has not matched the growth in primary schools," he explains.

He said the imbalance in regional enrolment in learning institutions is expected to worsen following the successful implementation of the Free Day Secondary school Education adding that the demand is more acute in urban areas.

And touching on education matters in the public universities, Barasa said transition from secondary to university stands at about 3 per cent saying that the last decade witnessed substantial growth in the university sub-sector.

Barasa observed that the increasing number of universities in the country has failed to meet the demand for university education adding that access to marketable degree programmes remains limited due to high costs.

He said the phenomenal demand for university education has resulted into expansion of universities through opening of satellite campuses most of which lack the requisite infrastructure and personnel.

The Don also noted that the expansion is likely to stifle the diversified university system and the goal of creating "centres of excellence" thereby affecting the quality and relevance of education at this level.

By KAVYU KURA

ABOUT 7000 primary school children in Mwingi region consumed aflatoxin infested Unimix distributed by the Kenya Red Cross Society through the Kenyans for Kenya initiative.

Information available indicate that seven schools in Mwingi Central district, 13 in Mwingi East district, 15 in Migwani district, eight in Kyuso district, seven in Tseikuru district and five in Mumoni district with a cumulative enrollment of 6944 pupils benefited from the contaminated unimix.

The Link established during a visit to Kanzui Primary School in Mwingi central district that received 277 bags that the teachers also took the porridge made from the flour alongside their 269 pupils.

"Although the authorities are concerned about the health of the pupils, they should not forget the teachers. All the teachers in this school consumed the bad flour and are worried about their health," a teacher who sought anonymity intimated to The Link.

The school's head teacher Shifta Musyoka confirmed the teacher's fears. He said teachers should not be left out in the ongoing efforts to reverse the impact of the poisonous Unimix, as they too, consumed the porridge derived from the bad Unimix.

"If the government is going to carry out any screening on the effects of the poisonous Unimix on the school children, they should not forget the teachers because they too had porridge prepared from the bad flour. Just like their pupils, they too may have been adversely affected and worried," said Musyoka.

Musyoka said that parents with children at the school were worried about their children welfare as a result of the bad Unimix scandal. "They are very much worried considering that the effects of small levels of aflatoxin are not felt immediately. They want all the children screened and those found sick given medication," said the head teacher.

A parent Nguno Muthuva expressed disgust that the government had in the first place allowed the bad food to be consumed in schools. She questioned the motive of distributing

## Teachers also ate the poisonous Unimix



*Pupils at Kanzui primary school being served a lunch of beans and maize. I couple of weeks ago they were served porridge lunch prepared from bad Unimix and parents are worried about their health. Photo/Kavyu-Kura*

contaminated flour to Kanzui primary school where her children and those of relatives attend classes.

"I do not know what to say. Where did this bad food come from and who can we hold responsible. I am worried that my children, those of my sisters and brothers may suffer stomach complications and fever from taking the

poisonous food," Ms. Mathuva, in her sixties, said.

The Mwingi public health officer David Munyoki however said that even after consuming the Aflatoxin infested Unimix, no child had suffered any adverse effects.

He said no immediate case of Aflatoxicosis has been reported among the

pupils who consumed the bad Unimix but his office was on high alert to detect any early symptoms of infection.

"I have sent out officers to the affected schools but no reports have emerged of an infection or pupils having signs or symptoms of Aflatoxicosis. We are closely monitoring the situation," said the public health officer.



# Saitoti warns communities over cattle rustling

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

INTERNAL Security Minister George Saitoti has warned that the government will not spare individuals or communities involved in cattle rustling in the country.

The minister spoke in Nanyuki town after chairing a peace and reconciliation meeting attended by leaders from Isiolo, Samburu, Turkana and Meru Counties.

He said the government was taking the issue seriously adding the meeting had resolved that communities which had stolen animals must surrender them to their rightful owners as the government would pursue them to ensure they are returned.

"We all know that lives of innocent people have been lost during cattle rustling incidents and the government will not allow anyone or any community to break the law and go unpunished," he said.

Saitoti said the government will recruit afresh members of the Kenya Police Reservists (KPR) while at the same time vetting afresh those who are already members under the newly enacted police act to ensure only those who can be entrusted with guns are recruited as members.

He revealed the government would also provide the KPR members with uniforms so that they can be easily identified by residents and be distinguished from criminals.

"The meeting also resolved that the disarmament exercise which had been halted to allow passage of the constitution resumes immediately to ensure guns and other weapons in the wrong hands are seized," he added.

The minister reiterated the government would also act sternly on parents who fail to enroll their children in schools as the issue was also fuelling cattle rustling due to idleness among youths adding some cultural beliefs were also contributing to the vice.

He however dismissed claims that the recent killings in Isiolo were

fuelled by cattle rustling saying it was an issue of disagreement between communities.

"About this issue, we have resolved the leaders spearhead reconciliation campaigns in their areas and also empower the peace committees that already exist," he said.

Saitoti stressed the new constitution was emphatic on protecting human rights of all individuals in the country while at the same time protecting the right to own property privately.

He regretted that cattle rustling had greatly affected learning in the area and advised pastoralists to take advantage of the County governments to develop their areas.

The meeting was also attended by

Minister for livestock development Abdi Kuti, MP's Rafael Letimalo, Simeon Lesirma and Abdul Bahari. Others were the PS Internal security ministry, Eastern Provincial Commissioner Claire Omollo and her Rift Valley counterpart Osman Warfa. NCIC chairman Mzalendo Kibunjia also attended.

Kuti urged the pastoral communities to focus on matters of education, health and development instead of relying on cattle rustling and ethnic fightings. He said the government was keen on initiating development in the areas which he said had been sidelined by the past regimes.

"I think we should now focus on how we can export meat products in other countries since the government

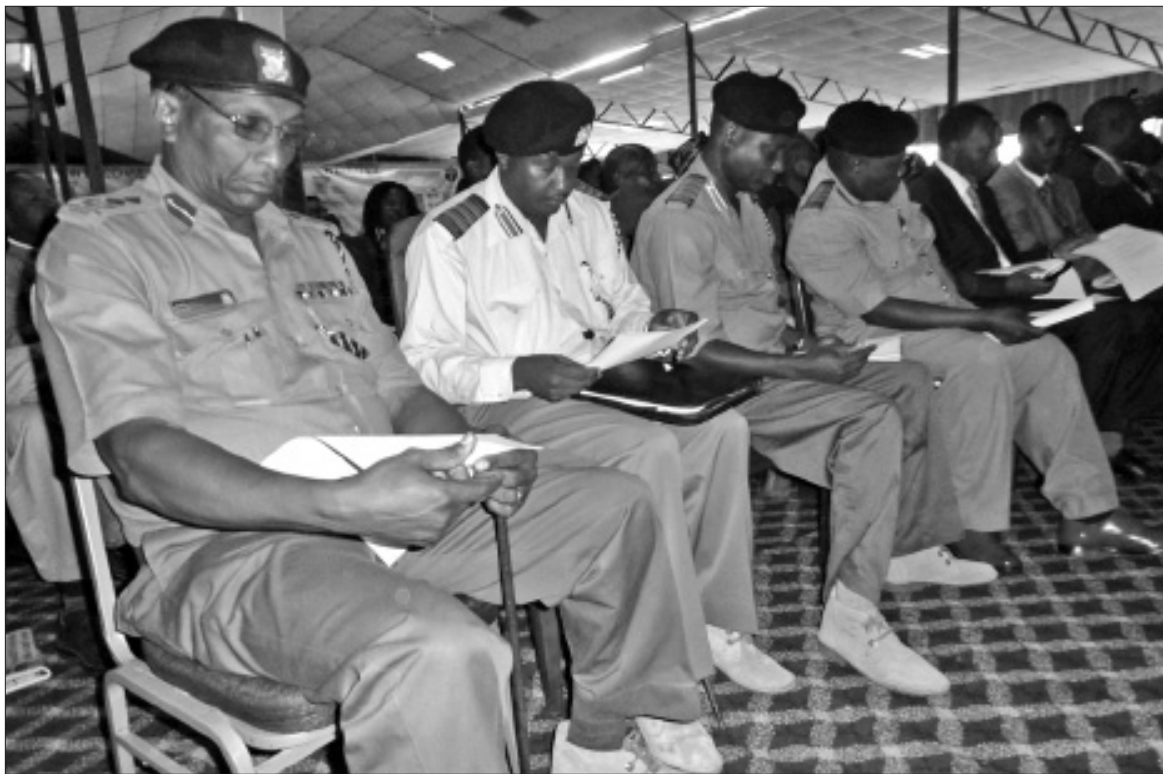
has given us an international airstrip in this region," he said.

He said those involved in cattle rustling activities who should not be allowed to hide in their tribes adding that the issue of land had also fuelled ethnic clashes in the region.

Lesirma said those who supply and sell guns in the area were known individuals who should be brought to book.

Saitoti however assured the leaders that the disarmament exercise will be conducted fairly in all the communities after they had raised concern that some communities were targeted while leaving out others.

He urged the leaders to shun politicians who spread hatred through politics.



Some of the herders and provincial administration who attended a peace meeting at Nanyuki town recently. The meeting was chaired by Internal Security Minister George Saitoti.

Photo/Joseph Mukubwa

## MPs to grill Kimunya over Kakamega Airstrip

By JOEL JUMA

PARLIAMENTARY Transport Committee is set to summon Transport Minister Amos Kimunya and other Government officials to explain why the rehabilitation of Kakamega Airstrip has stalled.

The Committee said it was disturbed that the expansion of the airstrip which was set to cost Kshs76 million had stagnated despite the fact that the demand for the flights to Kakamega have risen.

"We have received complains and the committee will be seeking an explanation from people concerned," said the committee chairman David Were.

Were, who is the MP for Matungu, explained that Kimunya, Kenya Airports Authority officials and Transport PS Cyrus Njiru will be grilled over the project. Were noted that the committee has already alerted those who will be grilled.

Were said he is shocked that after a tour of the facility early this year, construction works are still behind schedule. He said delays in completing work is inconveniencing operators and residents.

The legislator was speaking in his Matungu Constituency during an inspection of development projects.

Area DC Otieno Kwach, District Education Officer William Sugut and the Matungu branch ODM Secretary Raphael Welimo accompanied him.

The Kenya Airports Authority manager in-charge of Western Region Peter Wafula however said works slowed down due to heavy rains pounding Kakamega and it environs.

Wafula said flights to the airstrip will resume soon, as the expansion programme is almost being finished. "The contractor is doing his best to recover lost time," said Wafula.

He explained that KAA is also inspecting the facility on regular basis to ensure that the contractor does not delay the works. The manager explained that some materials were being sourced from far areas. While touring the airstrip earlier, Njiru said the Government intends to put up airstrips in all the 47 counties.

He said development matters must be improved in the counties to encourage tourism. He explained that some regions are lagging behind economically due to lack of air transport facilities.

Were said the committee wants KAA to ensure that airstrips are kept in good conditions. He said some airstrips had been ignored and become grazing fields for animals.

## Groups unit to promote rights of women

By AGGREY BUCHUNJU

CIVIL Society Organizations (CSOs) have teamed up to popularize the provisions on women and property ownership as provided for in the new constitution and National Land policy.

The CSOs that have joined hands in this noble cause include The African Women and Child Feature Services (AWC), ALDEF Kenya, Caucus for Women's leadership, and the Centre for Land, Economy and Rights of women (CLEAR).

Others are Great Rift Valley Development Agency (GRVDA), Kituo cha Sheria, The women's research centre and development institute and UN Women-Kenya.

Through a pilot project on enhancing women's Rights and access to land and property in line with the new constitution, the CSOs are set to conduct public education on gender sensitive provisions governing ownership of land and property.

Caroline Nyambura from UN Women-Kenya says that civil society groups should work together to promote civic engagement and awareness due to their experience and interest in women and land ownership issues.

Nyambura adds that women lead-

ers will also be sensitized to seize the opportunity presented by the new constitution and the National land policy of 2009 to them lay claim to their land rights.

She observes that for Kenya to reach equality, women must obtain adequate land rights that are both socially and legally recognized.

"Women must seize the opportunity in the constitution and land policy to confront the deeply entrenched cultural barriers, and other obstacles such as poverty traps, ignorance of the law and illiteracy that hinder access, control and ownership of land," she says.

She points out that the eight-month pilot project aims to enhance participation of women in decision-making over land management and use, and accelerate legislation and implementation of gender sensitive laws regarding land and property.

Nyambura was speaking recently at a Kisumu hotel in Kisumu city during a media workshop on women land and property rights. The one day training was facilitated by the African women and child feature service (AWC).

Speaking at the same forum Jane Godia, editor AWC Feature service challenged the media to take the community to the next level in the imple-

mentation of the new constitution.

Godia cautioned politicians against hijacking the process arguing that the media is the only tool that can give correct information relating to women's land and property rights.

Another speaker, Mrs. Dorothy Awino, Women's assembly convener, Kisumu county dismissed the Luo culture as punitive and crystallized by propaganda.

Awino said that widows in Luo land have experienced gross disparities in land and property ownership.

She claimed that widows' ties to land and property have been mediated by dowry payment and their relationship with in-laws.

However, the new constitution has clear provisions that guarantee women's land access and ownership rights.

The constitution specifically prohibits gender discrimination in law, customs and practices related to land and property.

Articles 60 points out that land should be held, used and managed in an equitable, efficient, productive and sustainable manner in accordance with the following principles of land policy;

- Equitable access to land
- Security of land rights
- Elimination of gender discrimina-

tion in law, customs and practice related to land and property.

• Encouragement of communities to settle land disputes through recognized local community initiatives.

Further, article 2 (4) on the supremacy of the constitution, says that any law, including customary law, inconsistent with this constitution is void to the extent of the inconsistency.

It is important to note that women contribute 80 percent of the agricultural labour and provide about 60 percent of farm-derived income.

In spite of this only 5 percent of land in Kenya is registered jointly with men and why 1 percent is registered by women alone.

The denial of equal property rights puts Kenyan women at greater risk of poverty, disease, violence, and homelessness.

However, the 2010 constitution of Kenya and National land policy of 2009 guarantee the protection of women's rights to land and related resources, including the provision for joint spousal registration and documentation of land rights.

If effectively implemented in its full intent, the new constitution will bring a significant change towards equitable access to land, suitable land use and secure land rights.



# The Link

Enhancing governance for all

## Call al-Bashir's bluff instead of panicking

**W**HEN President Hassan Omar al-Bashir of Sudan sneaked into Kenya to celebrate with Kenyans the birth of a new constitution, little did he know that the courts in Kenya would use their newfound freedom and independence to rattle him.

What al-Bashir's reaction has announced to the whole world is that court decisions in Sudan are made at his behest. It means Sudanese judges just read out what Al-Bashir has approved.

That is why he thinks Kibaki is the one who gave Justice Ombija green light to issue a warrant for his arrest. He was wrong about that as he is wrong on many issues affecting Sudan and the region.

But that is not the ugliest part of this diplomatic fiasco. What is more worrying is Kenya's kneejerk reaction that has been defined by panic and paranoia.

The speed with which Wategula was dispatched to Khartoum made the whole affair look like Kenya is a banana republic that would collapse the minute al-Bashir sneezes at it.

How can the President allow himself to be bullied and browbeaten by al-Bashir over an issue he does not have control over? When will we as Kenyans define and defend our national integrity and pride?

Kenya is not the keeper of South Sudan to the extent that we are ready to kneel before al-Bashir under the pretext of maintaining the peace in the region. We are pretty sure South Sudan can defend itself by standing up to al-Bashir as they have done for the last 30 years.

We cannot violate our own constitution just to please a known despot who came to power through the barrel of the gun that he will not spare to use against his people in Darfur for which heinous crimes the ICC wants to try him.

Wategula, a lawyer by profession, should not be overzealous in his quest to please his boss to the point of advising the executive to ignore its own constitution.

The dragon of impunity is already critically injured and Kenyans will not allow the likes of Wategula, al-Bashir and their like-minded cohorts to resuscitate it and unleash it on them once more.

We only have time and energy for making sure that the dragon is completely dead and buried and those who oppose that will be buried with it come next elections.

Who gave al-Bashir the audacity to give our government ultimatums anyway?



### COMMENTARY

## Turkana schools face closure due to insecurity

**A** NUMBER of schools in Turkana District are faced with imminent closure owing to the increased cases of cattle rustling.

Parents in Nakwamekwe and Kanamkwemer villages have already started transferring their children to schools in the neighbouring areas in fear of attacks by raiders.

Nelly Loree is a parent of three pupils. "Our children are afraid. There are armed bandits hiding with stolen animals in the thickets behind Nawoyaregae Primary School in Kaputir Location. Cattle rustling and the gory battles between these two neighbouring communities (Turkana and Pokot) is the order of the day. It has been sharpened by competition over grazing land and water.

"Pupils cannot attend classes daily. Sometimes you may go to a classroom and find just a handful of them. This may go on for months. Again, school lasts just four hours so that children make it home early because of insecurity," says the school's headmaster, James Lamukaga.

Primary school net enrolment is just 26 percent in the Turkana South District where Kaputir is found, compared to a national ratio 76 percent. Kenya's Free Primary Education programme has its work cut out for it here.

Nawoyaregae is a school getting by with what it can, its mud-walled makeshift classrooms already crumbling. Nursery lessons are conducted under a tree, with the young learners, 30 in number, crowded into the available shade, peering at instructions drawn on the battered blackboard.

According to Lamukaga, the school had more than 350 pupils, but this has fallen to 125. The figure fluctuates, but the trend is steadily going downwards. In re-

sponse, the community has employed the services of a police reservist, who accompanies children to and from school.

Reservist Salim Iro, rifle at the ready, follows the children to play on the school's field, to the River Turkwell to draw water. "I escort them every day. I cannot take chances, because when the bandits come, they attack all our people including the children."

Standing alert, gazing at the pupils from a distance as he caresses the weapon, Iro says, "This place is volatile. But children must learn; and we must do all we can to ensure their safety when learning," he says. Oxfam reports that as many as five pupils are killed in attacks by raiders every year.

Even though a 2007 presidential directive led to the recruitment of Kenya Police Reservists in bandit-hit areas, this has not addressed the security situation because of inadequate numbers.

Only one police reservist is deployed to each of the three schools in the region, which are about 10 kilometres apart. This, says the area's chief, Charles Lopuya, is insufficient to provide adequate protection. He wants about six reservists for Nawoyaregae.

Development organisations in the area say the communities face a dilemma: insecurity keeps children away from school, but education is the key to solving such conflicts with traditional roots.

"To address this, we need to achieve some level of education and use it to build peace in communities. Providing opportunity for education to the young generation and helping them understand

the role of peace in development is critical," said Nick Wasunna, World Vision Kenya's senior advisor.

Joyce Emanukor, Oxfam's education officer in Turkana, is concerned by how the prevailing insecurity has uprooted children from schools, particularly those on the Pokot border, forcing them to relocate to facilities in other areas, resulting in massive overcrowding.

"These facilities are overstretched. There are no additional books, classrooms and other learning material to care for the extra pupils; the quality of education is quite low," she said.

Insecurity is not the only factor compromising education in Turkana. A gross shortage of teachers is a concern. For example, Nawoyaregae Primary School, with an enrolment of 350 or more school-aged children, has only three teachers.

"This is a great challenge, especially when we have more pupils coming back to school after fighting has subsided. The teachers get overloaded, and this is not good for the pupils," Omukaga, the school's head said. He said he would need about nine to be comfortable.

The situation is replicated in neighbouring East Pokot District, where the majority of schools have just two or three teachers serving over 200 students, according to Mutuku Mwenga, the District Commissioner. He noted that teachers had been shying away from being deployed in areas such as Turkana and Pokot, largely due to the insecurity.

Even though the government has announced plans to deploy more teachers in these regions by enticing them with additional allowances, analysts contend that uneven progress on education will leave remote rural communities - who need it as much if not more than anyone - behind.



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# The Link

Enhancing governance for all

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# DC's stitch in time saves nine children

By KAVYU-KURA

KYUSO District Commissioner in Kitui County recently ordered forceful treatment of nine sick Kavonokya Sect children after another succumbed to measles and died.

Kyuso DC Peter Maina acted to save the children from Tyaa Kamuthale village in Kamuwongo division after their parents failed to take them to hospital as it was against their Kavonokya sect faith.

A contingent of armed police officers led by Kyuso AP commandant Michael Wambua stormed the affected homes and forcefully took away the sick children who were hospitalized at Kyuso district hospital.

Since the rescued children belonged to two families respectively their mothers were also arrested and locked up at the Kyuso police station where they were interrogated before being arraigned in court.

The rescue mission comes in the wake of a sustained campaign by public health officials in the neighboring Mwingi East district to have measles struck children from Ngoo village treated after nine succumbed to the disease.

The district Public health officer Joseph Nyaga said since the death of the children whose parents belong to the Kavonokya sect, we have rescued 22 children



A Kavonokya sect member and her sickly children walks away after police led by Mwingi OCS Jonathan Wafula stormed her home in last September and forced her to accompany the children to Mwingi district hospital for treatment. Photo/Kavyu-Kura

over the last three months who have been treated at the Mwingi district hospital for the disease.

In September police officers staged a raid at the home of a Kavonokya sect adherent in Mwingi East district and rescued three measles struck children and took them to hospital. A day earlier, a sibling who was a form three student at Mui secondary school had succumbed to the ailment.

A contingent of police officers led by Mwingi OCS Jonathan Wafula raided the

home of Mbevo Musili in Kyamwenze village of Mui division following a tip off by Ngoo assistant chief Julius Musyoka Mukiti after parents became adamant and refused to take the children to hospital.

Following the rescue of the nine children, Kyuso DC declared an all out war on the sect members within his jurisdiction.

"This cannot be allowed to continue. It is a sad story that such primitive acts are taking place in the 21st Century," lamented DC Maina.

## MPs told to rise above parochial interests over CDF projects

By BOB OMBATI

FORMER Kitutu Masaba legislator Samson Okioma wants measures put in place to ensure projects initiated through the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) are completed even after the expiry of a parliamentary term.

Okioma who lost his seat during the last General Elections said that most of the projects he had initiated during his term had become obsolete as his successor refused to allocate more funds to oversee their completion.

The former lawmaker challenged all incoming legislators to rise above parochial interests and give projects initiated by their predecessors a priority before funding new ones as incomplete projects were becoming an eyesore in most constituencies. "As much as the MPs want to be seen to be working, it is logical that they complete old projects before starting new ones since they are all under their jurisdiction," stated Okioma.

He said CDF was a public fund which should finance projects meant to benefit respective communities regardless of whether legislators lose their seats or not. "Incoming legislators should stop blocking completion of projects started by their predecessors as this was counterproductive and disfranchised taxpayers who have to contend with wastage which was negating the purpose and intent of the fund," he added. Addressing journalists in Kisii, he challenged members of the public to monitor projects funded by the government in their respective localities. The lawmaker implored the electorate to vote for visionary leaders with a proven track record instead of experimenting on leaders who, he claimed sought the seat for selfish interest.

## Disquiet in Butere council over alleged graft

By LINK CORRESPONDENT

BUTERE/MUMIAS County councillors want the Government to probe how Kshs20 million obtained by chief officers as a bank overdraft was spent.

The councillors said it was sad the funds have been exhausted within two weeks leaving the workers salaries unpaid. The workers have already issued a seven-day strike notice to the council if the chief officers fail to pay them their salaries.

Civic leaders led by Michael Keya and Concilia Pasi said the Minister for Local Government Musalia Mudavadi must deploy auditors to probe the council as the chief officers and the chairman had hatched a plot to loot the local authority ahead of next year's General Elections when civic bodies will be replaced by county governments," said Keya.

Keya and Pasi claimed that Cabi-

net Minister Wycliffe Oparanya was protecting the chief officers and the council chairman Mondecai Nandwa from accusations of financial impropriety. Keya urged Oparanya to intervene and take action instead of keeping silent as the council fails to implement projects approved during this financial year.

The Council Clerk Maurice Odundo and the Treasurer Reuben Wanyama however dismissed the allegations as cheap politics being fanned by Keya and his colleagues.

Odundo and Wanyama said they were ready to account for all the funds used by the council during their term in office. "We are trying our best but some councillors want to remain in the opposition throughout their political career," said Odundo.

Odundo said the council has allocated over Kshs68 million for the completion of all stalled projects initiated by the council. He explained

that the council was set to ensure that all projects are completed before the County Government becomes operational.

"We are implementing our strategic plan and we shall achieve it before the next General Elections when operations will shift to the County Governments," said Odundo.

The Kenya Local Government Workers Union Western Regional Secretary Juvenus Orao said the union was monitoring the performance of all councils to curb on the mismanagement of funds.

Orao said that the union has entered into talks with the chief officers to explore ways through which workers are paid their arrears amounting to Kshs6 million before the next General Elections.

Orao said talks are ongoing in Webuye and Kimilili Municipal Councils where the workers are operating on salary arrears.



# Poor medical services appall Busia residents

By NYAKWAR ODAWO

PATIENTS seeking treatment at the Busia district hospital have expressed dismay over the poor services offered at the facility.

Allan Salano Simwa, a resident says that he was recently forced to seek treatment from a traditional herbalist after he was bit by a snake after nurses at the hospital treated him badly and declined to attend to him when he complained of neglect.

He said he was rushed to the hospital in pain but the nurses allegedly refused to attend to him even after he pleaded with them that he needed emergency attention as he had been bitten by a poisonous snake and his toe was swollen.

"The nurses declined to attend to me claiming that they were not properly equipped to remove the poison from the affected part of the body," said the victim.

Sources at the hospital who sought anonymity said a female patient who had been admitted at the hospital recently after she was bitten by a snake passed on when the nurses declined to attend to her.

"Last month a female patient who was brought in here after being bitten by a snake, passed on after the nurses delayed to accord her emergency treatment," said the source, adding that the hos-

pital has no medicine for treating the patients suffering from snake bites.

Scores of patients frequenting the health facility for treatment have pointed an accusing finger at the nurses especially those stationed in Room number four and at the reception where they claim

patients are harassed and denied treatment if they complain.

"The situation has forced majority of patients to seek medical attention from private clinics majority of which are owned by the medical officers working at the Busia district hospital," said one of the victims, adding that one can

only get the prescribed drugs after money has exchanged hands.

However, efforts to get comment from the Medical Superintendent Dr Roselyn Atieno over the allegations did not bear fruit as she was not in the office neither could she be reached through her cell-phone.



Patients patiently waiting to be attended to.

Photo/File

## Kibujia team to train police on hate detection

By PETER MUTUKU

THE National Cohesion Integration Commission (NCIC) plans to train police officers to enhance their capacity to investigate cases of hate speech ahead of next year's General Election.

According to NCIC chairman Dr Mzalendo Kibunjia, the training programme targets police officers including station commanders, inspectors and crime branch officers.

Dr Kibunjia reveals that the training will first take off in Mombasa before being replicated in other parts of the country. He says that hate speech monitors will also be trained in all the counties during the initiative which is set to end in March 2012.

Already a task force that comprises of NCIC, the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP) and the police force has been set up to identify gaps that may derail the enforcement of the law relating to hate speech.

The NCIC Chairman says that it is unfortunate that even with the laws in place, the commission is still witnessing high levels of political intolerance in the country and cited the build up of religious animosity, intra ethnic and inter ethnic tensions in different parts of the country.

"We are deeply concerned about the rising levels of intolerance and hate speech in the country based on ethnic, political, religious and other differences as we move towards the

General Elections," adds Dr Kibunjia.

The chairman singles out the ongoing ethnic profiling of the Cushitic communities that targets the Kenyans Somalis following the abduction of foreigners and subsequent military campaign launched by Kenya against the Al-Shabaab militia.

He says the profiling is mainly being fanned using the social media networks, broadcasts and short text messages which amount to ethnic and racial discrimination of the Somali Community.

"We have received many complaints of victimization of Kenya Somalis, including allegations of women in buibuis being spat on," he laments adding that discrimination against Somalis has extended to public transport vehicles and even schools. "Kenya is increasingly preparing the ground to make Somalis targets of xenophobia and violent attacks. NCIC shall not allow this to happen," he affirms.

Dr Kibunjia says that people choose to become members of extremist groups like Al Shabaab in their individual capacities and not as ethnic, religious or racial entities. Dr Kibunjia says NCIC has at the moment launched investigations into the origins and spread of hate propaganda against Cushitic Communities, particularly Somalis.

He says the Commission is liaising with Media Council of Kenya



Mr. Kibunjia

and Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) to obtain information that could be used to prefer charges against the perpetrators of the hate propaganda. NCIC has also raised alarm over rising sectarian tensions due to political competition ahead of the 2012 poll.

"Every Kenyan should be able to go to any part of the country and express their opinion without fear or favour as long as their sentiments do not violate the Constitutional rights of other Kenyans," Dr Kibunjia said.

At the same time a Deputy Commissioner of Police Julius Ndegwa warns that the government will deal firmly with individuals who engage in hate speech.

"We call for total accountability from all Kenyans and we shall deal firmly with any acts of impunity. It is our collective responsibility to decide what is legitimate and exercise the enjoyment of our freedom of expression without infringing on the rights of fellow Kenyans," Mr Ndegwa says.

Meanwhile, the Vice President Kalonzo Musyoka has urged Kenyans to discard tribalism and embrace national unity in order to sustain the country on the path of peace and prosperity.

The VP cited tribalism as one of the biggest impediments to national unity and development and which should be eradicated through the available legal provisions and social programmes.

Mr Musyoka called upon Kenyans to shun politicians who seek to divide them along ethnic lines, pointing out that the new Constitution has empowered the people to chart their destiny.

In this regard, he appealed to Kenyans to embrace and support the law, terming it as one of the best in the world.

"We should all defend the new Constitution because, besides providing for the respect of the rights and equality of all Kenyans, it also allows the impeachment of a President who fails to live up to the call of his office and thus eliminates dictatorship and bad governance," Mr Musyoka said.

## MPs urged to use roads money diligently

By JOEL JUMA

THE Government has released over Kshs 1.4 billion meant for the rehabilitation of roads in all the 210 constituencies.

Each constituency has received over Kshs7 million in the first tranche. The remaining balance will be disbursed before the end of this financial year.

Parliamentary Transport Committee Chairman David Were said contractors awarded the jobs should start working immediately.

"Any MP who has not received the money should report to the committee so that we can follow up the matter," said Were.

Were said the committee will start going round to assess the state of roads soon after the release of the funds. "Some MPs leave the money to waste in their accounts and the trend must not continue," said Were.

The chairman explained that contractors who have benefitted from the jobs before will not be awarded other contracts in the constituencies as priority will go to new applicants.

Were was speaking at Emanani Primary School in his Matungu constituency where he presided over a funds drive meeting.

The MP explained that the committee wants to ensure road network in the country is improved before the introduction of County Governments.

"Some provinces are already ahead. We need to have the funds released on time to balance development matters in the country," said Were.

He explained that his committee wants Roads Minister Franklin Bett to ensure the Kenya Rural Roads Authority, the Kenya Urban Roads Authorities and the Kenya National Highways Authority come up with programmes that will balance development of roads.

Were's remarks came as Cabinet minister Soita Shitanda expressed the need to dispatch auditors to Kakamega County to ascertain how the Kshs300 million released to the nine constituencies during the last financial year were utilised.

Shitanda who is the minister for Housing lamented that some roads in Kakamega town were in a pathetic state.

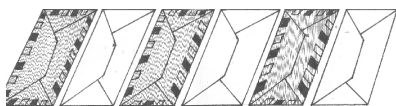
Shitanda explained that the most of the roads in Kakamega town were impassable and blamed assistant minister Manyala Keya for not pursuing the matter with the Kenya Urban Roads Authority.

Keya later went to the authority and complained to the officials about the state of roads in Kakamega town.

Keya said the officials told him they have developed designs aimed at decongesting the town.

He said more other routes will be opened up to ensure that passengers who have no business in the Central Business District are not forced to enter into the town.





## Profiteers made cost of living more worse

A RECENT World Bank report restated what is already common knowledge — global food insecurity and escalating poverty. With widespread degradation of the environment and the negative impact of climate change, recent announcement of world population hitting the seventh billion mark is bound to add to uncertainty over food security and general poverty.

Amid the apprehension, the gulf between the rich and the poor is widening. The message by anti-capitalist protestors occupying St. Paul's Cathedral in London, New York's Wall Street and Oakley in the US in recent weeks is that something is not right and the state of affairs needs to be re-evaluated. What the world is witnessing cannot be explained away as mere expressions of neo-socialism fervour. Truth is, the power of capital has been degrading the safeguards put in place by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the trade union movement and consumer rights lobbies.

The rising cost of food and consumer goods is not restricted to Kenya. A number of European countries are edging towards the economic turmoil that has engulfed America for well over a year now. Nobody can claim that there are any quick fix solutions so we should not expect the government to perform any miracles. However, the government must be on the lookout for profiteers and cartels who exacerbate Kenyans' pain.

We do not believe on command economy where prices are arbitrarily fixed and market dynamics interfered with. However, there must be sensitivity on the part of oil merchants, landlords, PSV operators, manufacturers down to the retail chain.

This is not to say that firms should sell fuel at a loss, that PSV crew and operators should be denied profit but to appeal to them to accept the guidelines rolled out by the regulatory mechanism and even market realities so that they pass on the benefits to consumers.

They must remember that increase in fuel cost drives up the cost of everything else disproportionately. For example, why not give Kenyans a break when crude process fall at the international market? In any case market forces work best where competition is fair with reasonable latitude in supply options.

This country cannot afford to be complacent and assume that social upheavals only occur in other places. In part due to historical reasons founded on colonial practices, inequity is rife in our country.

This together with migratory patterns from rural to urban to seek relief, poverty is getting dredged. To their credit, these people have devised ingenious ways of surviving but let's not push our luck too far.

**Okello K'Ajoji,**  
via e-mail

# Lessons for Africa from our new Constitution

THE self-immolation of a young man, Mohamed Bouazizi, on December 17, 2010 in Tunisia sparked civilian protests that led to the ouster of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali 28 days later, ending his 23 year iron fist grip on power.

Soon the whirlwind spread like bush fire across North Africa and Middle East-leaving scores dead and what once seemed like 'indomitable' governments toppling down like dominoes. Another uprising soon followed in Egyptians followed the civilian uprising where tens of thousands of protesters gathered at Tahrir Square demanding change and bringing to an end the 30 year-old regime of President Hosni Mubarak.

The protests inspired similar actions in Libya where the protests turned into a full-scale civil war that led to the tragic death of Muammar Gaddafi on October 20, 2011, ending 42 years of his authoritarian rule.

However, despite the civil unrest, Gaddafi had ensured that his people had access to free healthcare and education. In Tunisia, the people began the protests in response to among others curtailed liberties and high corruption. In Egypt, similar factors were the cause of uprising, among them, state of emergency laws and political censorship, entrenched corruption, high unemployment and inflation.

Following in the footsteps of Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, quite a handful of countries in North Africa and Middle East are experiencing uprisings demanding a change in the way those in the government conduct the politics in those countries. Yemen, Jordan, Syria, Bahrain, Mauritania, Morocco and Algeria have all experienced some form of civil unrest.



*The protests against Gaddafi's 42 years dictatorial regime. Photo/File*

The aggravating factors towards the civil unrest are all centred on a government that has continually suppressed any form of political activism, room for reform and freedom of choice.

In Egypt there were charges of graft, manipulation of the electoral process such that Mubarak was the only candidate of choice. Although he claimed to have won on an overwhelming majority, voter turnout was usually extremely low because of the lack of trust in the representational system. This low voter turnout was in contrast with the voter turnout witnessed during the March 10, 2011 constitutional referendum where over 18 million Egyptians cast their votes.

Kenyans can identify with such scenario and thanks to second liberation hence and heroines, the new Constitution which was promulgated by President Mwai Kibaki last year puts Kenya at a level nearly all other African countries can only dream about.

Safeguards and controls, including an elaborate and progressive Bill of Rights ensure that unchecked police brutality that would be unleashed on protestors, restriction of speech and the press and high inequality index are now things of the past.

Unfortunately, many countries in sub-Saharan Africa are still saddled with similar heart-wrenching experiences. Civil unrest is stoked when people feel that their rights are not taken into consideration by the government.

The 2007/8 post-election violence, though orchestrated by a few political elites in truth can also be interpreted as protest against perceived violation of the electorates' sovereign rights.

Africa can learn from our own laws that man's spirit yearns for freedom and rights which are God-given. No individual should rule without consent of the people.

**Pam Inoti,**  
Via e-mail.

## Rebuff politics of violence and stone-throwing

THE recent attack on Presidential aspirant Raphael Tuju's convoy in Kisumu is worrying.

With the general election just a year away, the incident suggests there are some people who learnt nothing from the tragedy intolerance and mindless disposition to violence visited on the Kenyan people.

This country will be a wrung better off the day when all compatriots and especially the youth learn that violence only brutalizes, stains the country's high standing and sows seeds of retribution.

The youth must vow not be used by political players who more often than not are only driven by short-term agenda.

The new Constitution is clear. Political leaders have obligation to preach peace to their followers. True, desperation and joblessness have in the past been blamed for youth manipulation.

And which is why civic education must be stepped up. But even before that is done, is it not common sense that violence is counterproductive?

This country marked a milestone by embracing a new Constitution last year.

That set of law spells out our responsibilities, privileges and also obligations.

The assumption in competitive politics is that every candidate has a right to sell his or her agenda and ideas. They must be allowed to do so without being harassed.

Likewise, you the voter, has a choice to accept or reject such agenda. The ultimate arbiter is the ballot box.

There cannot be an alternative to this universally recognised arrangement. Kenyans must reject in totality, politics of stone-throwing and a repeat of the 2007/2008 violence — a chapter that stained Kenya's reputation as one of select Third world countries where elections are successfully held as scheduled every five years.

Kenyans earnestly hope that people who resort to violence are not allowed to get away with it.

**Sophiah Muthoni,**  
Via e-mail.



The editor welcomes letters and comments on a variety of issues.

The letters should be brief, topical and issue based.

The editor reserves the right to edit for brevity or clarity.

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## Machakos poor in reproductive health services

By PETER MUTUKU

MACHAKOS District continues to lag behind in reproductive health services with a large percentage of pregnant women seeking the services of Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs).

According to the 2009, Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey, only 11.4 percent of the children in the District are delivered by doctors while only 18.4 percent are delivered by nurses or mid wives. 21.4 percent are delivered by trained birth attendants while a massive 37 percent are born through the assistance of traditional birth attendants.

The District with a population of 207,328 people has 17 public health facilities, four mission hospitals and seven private health centres. However, remote areas within the District have no health facilities and rely on community outreach programmes organized once every month. The Machakos District Medical Officer of Health (MOH) Dr Jack Nthanga says that although no official survey has been conducted, most women in the District still rely on traditional birth attendants and hardly see any need to seek hospital services in the second or third pregnancy.

He, however, says that the high levels of poverty push them into seeking services of TBAs as some believe the fee charged in hospitals is still far out reach for the majority of them.

"Poverty and accessibility to medical facilities are some of the main problems that are discouraging mothers from going to hospital in Machakos District. Some far flung areas of the District like Kimutwa and Kalama have poor road network systems which inhibit their access to hospitals," he adds. But Dr Nthanga believes that the attitude of most health workers in the past also contributed to the disinterest for health services in hospitals.

"In the past maternity staff in most health facilities were perceived as insensitive to the plight of mothers when they came to deliver. But over time, this is slowly changing and in the District we have been convening sensitization meetings at the grassroot level to persuade people to discard this notion as well as prevail on them to seek skilled deliveries in our facilities," he explains.

The District has now established a community strategy where resource persons are trained as community health workers. After the training, they become the link between the people and the nearest facility. Within this system, the TBAs have also been integrated and taught on the need to advise mothers to seek medical attention in hospitals.

The MOH explains that apart from the government, other organizations like Aphia Plus Kamili, the International Centre for AIDS Care and Treatment (ICAP) have supported various reproductive health programmes in the District and this has slowly increased the number of children born through skilled deliveries.

# KMD decries low budgetary allocations

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

LOW budgetary allocation is one of the major challenges facing the Kenya Metrological Department.

Senior Deputy Director, Dr. Samuel Marigi of the Central Forecasting Office at the department lamented that the department was experiencing problems in developing its infrastructure due to low budgetary allocations.

Marigi said the meager allocations in the department have been channeled towards addressing the impact of climate change which is a critical area.

Speaking at Great Rift Valley Lodge in Naivasha during five day media training on climate change

adaptation, Dr. Marigi said:

"KMD therefore receives low budgetary allocation and experiences problems in developing its meteorological infrastructure (in particular observational instruments and network, telecommunication and data exchange, data processing, forecasting and dissemination as well as human resource development)."

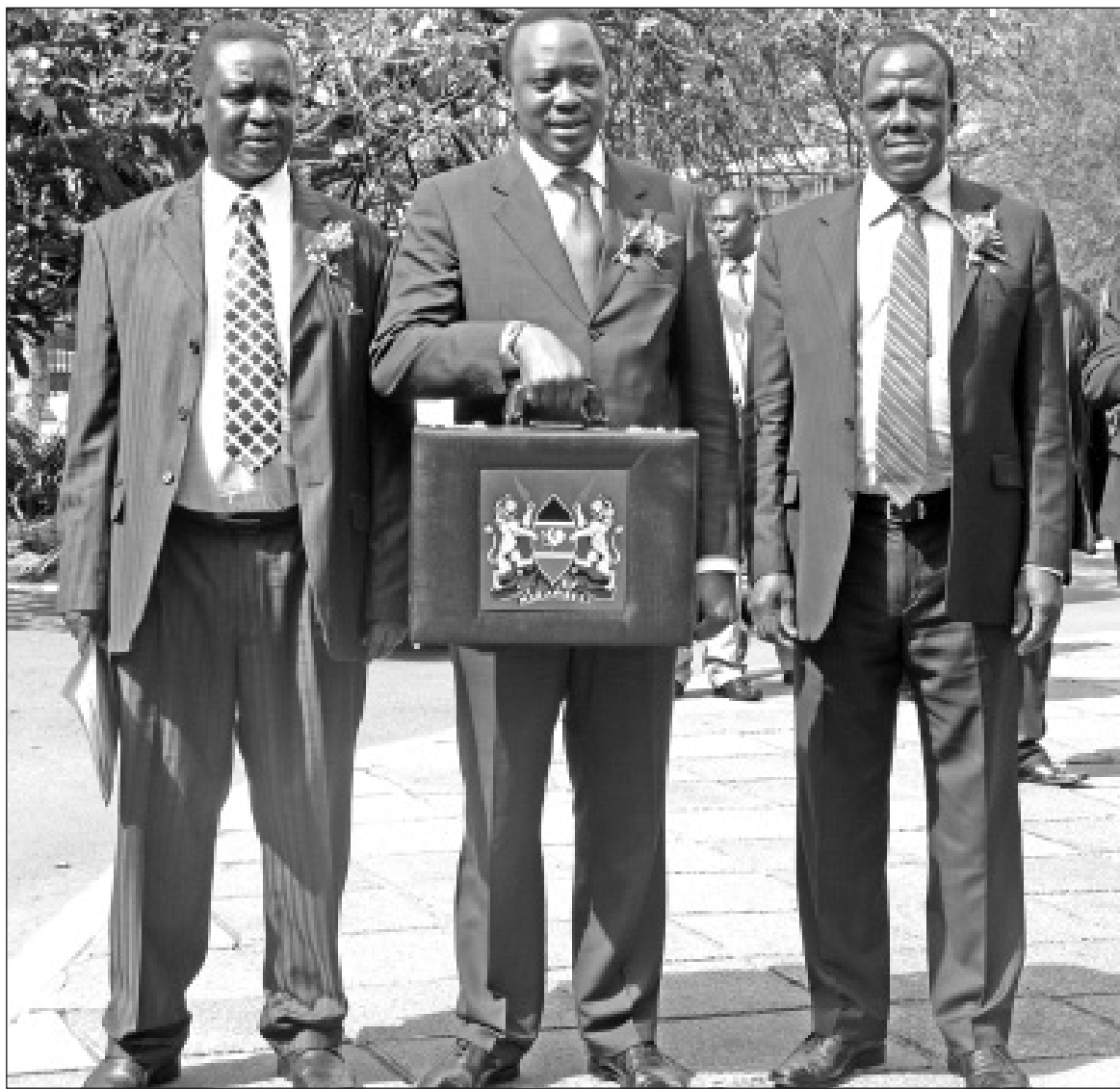
He said the climate change affects the economy of the country by way of floods and droughts resulting in destruction of infrastructure, low agricultural outputs, and inadequate electrical energy supply among others.

The officer said it is evident that climate change is real and is taking place in the country and

so ignoring climate change will erode economic growth and livelihoods of many communities.

"Our actions over the coming decades could create risks of major disruption to livelihoods and many socio-economic activities in this century on a scale similar to those associated with the great wars and economic depression of the first half of the 20th century and it will be difficult or impossible to reverse changes," he added.

The training was officially opened by Ministry of Environment PS Ali Mohammed who said the Government is committed to address issues of climate change and global warming at global level.



Mr. Oburu Odinga, Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, Finance minister and Mr. Oparanya during the budget day.  
Photo/File

## Cattle rustling a threat to peace efforts

By BOB OMBATI

CATTLE rustling along Borabu Sotik common border remains a major threat to the ongoing peace efforts in the area.

North Mugirango Borabu Member of Parliament, Wilfred Ombui says the cattle rustling menace threatens to derail gains made in promoting peace in the area.

He says Dairy farmers in Borabu were losing thousands of cattle to rustlers from neighboring districts who killed anybody who resisted or answered to distress calls.

"I cannot keep quiet when my voters are being killed by marauding rustlers and criminals. Something must be done to address their plight urgently," stated Ombui.

Cattle rustling, noted the MP had impoverished area residents and scared away investors leading to underdevelopment.

The legislator now wants the communities who share the common border to discard the menace which may result in ugly scenes witnessed at the height of the 2007 post election violence.

The lawmaker appeals to the stakeholders to support initiatives geared towards addressing the problem to help end hostilities in the area and steer development ahead of the 2012 general election. Ombui, who is Culture and National Heritage assistant minister, deplored the poor state of roads along the border and asked the government to upgrade the road network to enable residents trace and recover their animals with ease.

The MP who addressed Borabu leaders in Keroka town urged the government to increase administrative units along border and security officers to enhance security.

Ombui challenged all leaders to support peace initiatives spearheaded by elders from Gusii and Kalenjin communities and stop politicizing them to hasten the healing process following the 2007 poll skirmishes.

The lawmaker who was accompanied by Abagusii Culture and Development council chairman, Araka Matundura and Borabu Kenya National union of Teachers Executive Secretary, John Matiang'i urged members from both communities to engage in joint peace activities to hasten cohesion.

The legislator called on the Ministry of Education to replace secondary school teachers who fled the area during the Post Election Violence to address the acute teacher shortages in the area.

## Union calls for investigation of councils

By JOEL JUMA

THE Kenya Local Government Workers Union (KLGWU) has called on the Kenya Anti Corruption Commission (KACC) investigate alleged misuse of funds in Nambale, Kimilili and Webuye local authorities.

The Union officials also asked for a reshuffle of chief officers in local authorities in Western Province.

KLGWU said the three local authorities need to be audited to ascertain how they used devolved funds as

they have failed to pay workers despite receiving the Local Authority Transfer Fund two months ago.

Nambale town Council owes workers over Kshs7 million in salary arrears. The amount has accumulated over the last eight months. The union said KACC should act on the matter as the trend amounts to corruption.

"Investigations must be carried out to ascertain why these councils have been unable to pay workers yet levies are collected on a daily basis from the markets," said the union's Western Re-

gional Secretary Juvenus Orai.

Orai said it is shocking that Western Regional Local Government Office allows councils to obtain bank overdrafts, which do not settle salary arrears. Workers at Nambale town Council have not received their salary arrears despite going on strike. Orai asked the minister for Local Government Musalia Mudavadi to intervene and end the injustices committed by the local authorities.

Orai said the situation at Kimilili Municipal Council is worse, as there are no negotiations between the chief officers

and the union on how the workers salary arrears will be resolved.

He explained that he would be forwarding workers complaints to the union Secretary General Boniface Munyao for action as the chief officers at Webuye, Kimilili and Nambale seem reluctant to address the matter.

"The chief officers have signed performance contracts. Financial management is key to their work. Why should they fail to pay the workers who collect the same money," questioned Orai.



# MPs gang up in defense of CDF

By MORRIS GITHENYA

MEMBERS of Parliament have vowed to put a spirited fight to ensure that the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) kitty is not phased out after 2012 polls.

A group of lawmakers who included Elias Mbau (Maragua) Muturi Mwangi (Kiharu), Clement Wambugu (Mathioya), Maina Kamau (Kandara), Abdul Bahari (Isiolo North), Peter Kiilu (Makueni) Joseph Gitari (Kerugoya Central), Nelson Gai-chuhie (Subukia), Alex Mburi (Tharaka Nithi) and Emilio Kathuri (Manyatta) said they will mobilize their parliamentary colleagues and members of the public to ensure the kitty remains even after the establishment of county governments after next year's poll.

They spoke at Rurago ACK Hall during a meeting with CDF officials in Maragua constituency. They said the kitty had helped initiate valuable projects which would have cost the communities a fortune.

The MP for Isiolo North said the CDF kitty should be retained as it had transformed the rural set up and improved lifestyle of the people.

"We as members of parliament we are concerned with the effective delivery of service to the people and that's why we want CDF to remain," said Isiolo North MP.

Mbau who is also the chairman of the powerful parliament

tary budget committee said he has received proposals from like minded legislators who want the kitty retained. "We expect to marshal support in parliament as the kitty has managed to initiate development in different parts of the country," said Mbau.

Mathioya MP said scrapping of CDF kitty will plunge the

country into a nightmare as county governments will not be able to handle the numerous expectations from the public.

"CDF should not be abolished but funds can be channeled through the county government and be managed by parliamentarians," suggested Wambugu.

Kathuri said, there was more

evidence about what the kitty had done compared to other devolved funds and therefore the need to restructure the management of the fund instead of scrapping it.

"The kitty has done a lot in improving the local economy as roads have been improved classrooms built why have it scrapped," posed Kathuri.



Parliament in session. Photo/File

## Former Busia council treasurer under fire

By NYAKWAR ODAWO

THE Busia County Council Finance Committee members want the Ministry of Local Government to reign in a former treasurer who allegedly squandered Kshs800, 000 from the civic body.

The irate civic leaders told a special full council forum that the treasurer had allegedly withdrawn the cash from the council kitty to pay employees who had been transferred to other stations.

The civic leaders urged the County Clerk George Maruti to move with speed and ensure that appropriate legal action is taken against the former county treasurer.

They also demanded that the official appears before the finance committee to explain the whereabouts of the cash in question.

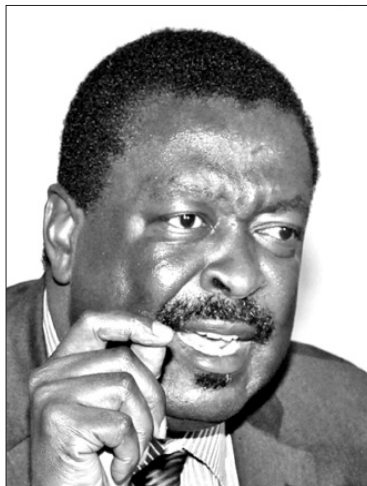
"The former county treasurer should be recalled as a matter of urgency to explain to us

the whereabouts of the said cash or else stern legal action will be taken against him," said the Cess committee chairman Jack Wambulwa of Walatsi civic ward.

The Cess committee chairman at the same time sought to know the circumstances surrounding the transfer of Kshs500, 000 from the fixed account to the general fund without a resolution by the council as stipulated in the council by-laws.

"As representatives of the taxpayers at our respective areas, we want to know why the county clerk had decided to transfer sh500,000 from the fixed account to general funds without following the right procedure as required by the council's by-law," posed Wambulwa.

However, the county Vice chairman Egesa Sikoyo who was by then the head of finance and general purposes committee said that out the Kshs500, 000 that had been transferred to general funds account Kshs400, 000 was



Mr. Mudavadi: Local Government minister

used to finance a retreat for councillors in Mombasa.

An effort to reach the former county treasurer on phone for comment over the allegation was unsuccessful as he could not be reached immediately by the time of going to the press.

The County Clerk Mr George Maruti absolved the treasurer from the accusations saying that the money in question was spent on civic leaders' education in Mombasa.

"The treasurer never embezzled any funds from the council since the cash was used to cover the expenses incurred by civic leaders during an education tour in Mombasa," said Maruti.

The County Clerk assured the civic leaders that the government has put in place effective machinery to ensure that funding channeled to local authorities through the Local Authority Transfer Fund (LATF) is properly utilized.

"Such funds are strictly monitored through the deployment of auditors from the Ministry of Local Government each financial year, therefore there is no cause for alarm as anybody involved any scam has to account for the same and appropriate legal action taken," said Maruti.

## Anxiety grips members of Kakamega SACCO

By LINK CORRESPONDENT

THE Ministry of Cooperatives has raised a red flag over none remittance of over Kshs 800 million workers' deductions by a local authority in Kakamega County.

Members of the Kakamega Municipal Savings and Credit Cooperative Society are now worried that the council may not be able to remit the funds before the next General Elections when the County Governments become operational.

Many local authorities are carrying out inventory of their assets and liabilities in readiness for County Governments that are set to take over their affairs after the next elections.

Western Provincial Cooperative Officer Nathan Mukhweso said the Government was considering enforcing Section 35 of the Cooperatives Act to attach properties of the Kakamega Municipal Council for failing to remit the funds to the society.

Mukhweso said the Government will not allow the council to transfer the debt to the County Government when the term of the current mayoral leadership winds up at the end of this financial year.

"The council is not willing to reduce the debt and yet it generates over Kshs500,000 every month from traders," said Mukhweso.

Mukhweso explained that the matter has been forwarded to the Commissioner of Cooperatives Fred Odhiambo to advice how the money can be recovered from the council.

The society chairperson Iris Masambaga confirmed that the council has not remitted the money despite intervention by the ministry of cooperative officials.

Ms Masambaga said that money has accrued from 2004 as the council was not paying the interest on the principal amount.

She explained that the council has refused to remit any funds to the society despite getting over Kshs30 million through the Local Authority Transfer Fund early this year.

The Kakamega Central Cooperative Officer Andrew Opanda said that councillors should allocate funds to the society before their term ends next year.

Kakamega mayor Mathias Sichere said he has instructed the Town Clerk Newton Mukabwe to sort out members dues to the society before end of this financial year.

Sichere said that the council must remit workers deductions to the society as the current scenario undermined the welfare of employees.

Many councils which include the Kakamega County Council, Butere/Mumias County council are taking stock of their assets in readiness to handing over to the County Governments.

Kakamega County Council Chairman John Shimaka said that plots are being surveyed while illegal kiosks are being demolished to ensure that there are no disputes during the handing over process.



**MANAGER'S COLUMN**



By  
**JANE  
MURUTU**



# PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE

A monthly supplement funded by the European Union and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung

## Counting the gains made by the project

**T**HIS may be the last issue of the Partnership for Peace Supplement. The project under the existing conceptualization has officially come to an end and when I look back I am very pleased with the results that we have achieved through your continuous support to the entire process.

In the region where we work we have not had robust research on conflict trends and dynamics over the years and one landmark achievement of this program has been the publication of *The Invisible Violence*, which was published in the beginning of the year and has been well received by both national and international civil society organizations, universities, researchers and other institutions interested in peace and conflict issues. The research laid the foundation for all capacity building trainings that have taken place since February 2010. The trainings have had skills built the capacities of more than 140 CSOs in solving and mitigating conflicts in the regions of Rift Valley, Nyanza and Western.

When the partnership was being built many of the national, regional and local players in peace and conflict were working independent from each other,

### MANAGER'S COLUMN



By  
**HANNA  
CARLSSON**

tional networks.

In Rift Valley three networks have been established. Two of the networks are already legally registered and have executed activities as networks. For instance, COPEN, the north Rift network held peace meetings before and during the ICC hearings. The hearings caused tension on the ground which was not reflected in national media or other channels. Meetings have also been held in locations where IDPs have returned home.

More meetings are planned for the future. The network covering Narok, Bomet and Kajiado (NABOK) has in total held 14 peace meetings and visited all the counties in their area of jurisdiction. During their visits they have met with several other CSOs to coordinate peace initiatives. BAKENA which is the network of CSOs from Baringo, Kericho and Na-

therefore, a deliberate strategy was developed to harness their individual competencies and strengths and this then led to establishment of func-

kuru areas is in the process of getting registered. The network has also implemented activities as joint peace meetings.

In Western the network has a more informal structure. So far the network has focused on Early Warning and Early Response system for the General Election 2012, using FrontlineSMS and CrowdMapping. The work took off in August.

In Nyanza the network named Nyanza Partners for Peace Alliance, with support from a member of the expert pool, has developed a regional Early Warning and Early Response System based on FrontlineSMS and the Ushahidi platform, <https://nyanza.crowdmap.com>. The platform is also used to collaborate and coordinate peace initiatives in Nyanza region.

Within the framework of the project we have also managed to train a substantial number of regional experts on how to respond and handle conflicts, experts who remain critical persons in their local areas in managing and reporting conflicts.

Finally, I would like to mention the policy dialogues that the CSOs have actively participated in. One of the products from the policy dialogue processes is a National Cohesion and Integration Policy where the CSOs have

contributed with recommendations and also validated the final draft. The lack of National Cohesion was identified in the research publication, *The Invisible Violence*, to be one of the main sources of conflict in Kenya.

When this project took off and I interacted with some of the researchers who at that time had been contracted to do the research for *The Invisible Violence*, I was told that considering the task at hand we were paying them poorly. However they told me that they accepted the terms because of their love to Kenya. I hope that the CSOs that have been involved in this process since inception have had a transformative attitude. You were not in the partnership because you thought you would gain in monetary terms but you were in because of your love to your country and therefore you will also continue with the work that we have initiated.

Lastly, on behalf of the project team, I would like to thank you for your untiring support and wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

**The writer is the International Project Manager of the Partnership for Peace Project. For comments or suggestions write to:**

[partnershipforpeace@gmail.com](mailto:partnershipforpeace@gmail.com)

## Conflict management goes hi-tech

BY LUKE KAPCHANGA

**I**NFORMATION and Communication Technology (ICT) is being considered a vital tool in peace building and conflict management.

The Partnership for Peace project sponsored by European Union (EU) has developed a network that brings together about 120 civil society organizations that will give early warning signals to help in the

detection of conflict.

"ICT will be used to circulate early warning information faster among the network members for action", said Hanna Carlsson, the International Project Manager at Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

The network brings together organizations from Rift Valley, Nyanza and Western provinces which were hard hit by the post election violence.

Ms. Carlsson at the same time said, "it has emerged that most of

the CSOs, which have been participating in the Partnership for Peace project, have no resources to facilitate their activities at the grass root".

The groups drawn from Western province met in Kakamega, under the Mt. Elgon Residents Association and were encouraged to initiate exchange visits amongst themselves to share and learn each other's experiences.

The exchange visits are likely

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This project is funded by the European Union



Internationale Zusammenarbeit



This project is implemented by Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and her partners and associate





# Kibunja team to train police on hate detection

By **PETER MUTUKU**

**T**HE National Cohesion Integration Commission (NCIC) plans to train police officers to enhance their capacity to investigate cases of hate speech ahead of next year's General Elections.

According to NCIC chairman Dr Mzalendo Kibunja, the training programme targets police officers including station commanders, inspectors and crime branch officers.

Dr Kibunja reveals that the training will first take off in Mombasa before being replicated in other parts of the country.

He says that hate speech monitors will also be trained in all the counties during the initiative which is set to end in March 2012.

Already a task force that comprises of NCIC, the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP) and the police force has been set up to identify gaps that may derail the enforcement of the law relating to hate speech.

The NCIC Chairman says that it unfortunate that even with the laws in place, the commission is still witnessing high levels of political intolerance in the country and cited the buildup of religious animosity, intra ethnic and interethnic tensions in different parts of the country.

"We are deeply concerned about the rising levels of intolerance and hate speech in the country based on ethnic, political, religious and other differences as we move towards the General Elections," adds Dr Kibunja.

The chairman singles out the ongoing ethnic profiling of the Cushitic communities that targets the Kenyans Somalis following the abduction of foreigners and subsequent military campaign launched by Kenya against the Al-Shabaab militia.



*Kenya Police in a training camp.*

*Photo/File*

He says the profiling is mainly being fanned using the social media networks, broadcasts and short text messages which amount to ethnic and racial discrimination of the Somali Community.

"We have received many complaints of victimization of Kenya Somalis, including allegations of women in buibuis being spat on," he laments adding that discrimination against Somalis has extended to public transport vehicles and even schools.

"Kenya is increasingly preparing the ground to make Somalis targets of xenophobia and violent attacks. NCIC shall not allow this to happen," he affirms.

Dr Kibunja says that people choose to become members of extremist groups like Al Shabaab in their individual capacities and not as ethnic, religious or racial entities.

Dr Kibunja says NCIC has at the moment launched investigations into the origins and spread of hate propaganda against Cushitic Communities, particularly Somalis.

He says the Commission is liaising with Media Council of Kenya and Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) to obtain information that could be used to prefer charges against the perpetrators of the hate propaganda.

NCIC has also raised alarm over rising sectarian tensions due to political

competition ahead of the 2012 poll.

"Every Kenyan should be able to go to any part of the country and express their opinion without fear or favour as long as their sentiments do not violate the Constitutional rights of other Kenyans," Dr Kibunja said.

At the same time a Deputy Commissioner of Police Julius Ndegwa warns that the government will deal firmly with individuals who engage in hate speech.

"We call for total accountability from all Kenyans and we shall deal firmly with any acts of impunity. It is our collective responsibility to decide what is legitimate and exercise the enjoyment of our freedom of expression without infringing on the rights of fellow Kenyans," Mr Ndegwa says.

Meanwhile, the Vice President Kalonzo Musyoka has urged Kenyans to discard tribalism and embrace national unity in order to sustain the country on the path of peace and prosperity.

The VP cited tribalism as one of the biggest impediments to national unity and development and which should be eradicated through the available legal provisions and social programmes.

Mr Musyoka called upon Kenyans to shun politicians who seek to divide them along ethnic lines, pointing out that the new Constitution has empowered the people to chart their destiny.

In this regard, he appealed to Kenyans to embrace and support the law, terming it as one of the best in the world.

"We should all defend the new Constitution because, besides providing for the respect of the rights and equality of all Kenyans, it also allows the impeachment of a President who fails to live up to the call of his office and thus eliminates dictatorship and bad governance," Mr Musyoka said.

## Conflict management goes hi-tech

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to be more effective, when the project comes to an end, as they will develop capacity in responding to the needs of vulnerable people.

Ms. Carlsson however said that as much as the program was coming to a close, they were exploring ways through it can be extended for up to six months.

"If the funds are available, the next phase will focus on communication and coordination strategies," she added.

Jane Murutu, the co-manager of the project challenged the groups to use such visits in gathering relevant and technical support for their members.

"Peer exchange visits are practical and effective tool to foster learn-

ing between organizations", Murutu added.

The Co-manager urged participants not to focus so much on funding but sharing of ideas, knowledge and practices to improve on service delivery.

Mr. John Cheptai, chairman of MERA, accused CSOs of focusing more on raising money instead of activities meant to empower the lo-

cal communities.

He said that the CSO seeks to explore ways of reducing conflicts before they occur. Community elders were identified as crucial partners in conflict management.

"Involving community elders is very useful as they have the experience of the negative and destructive impact violence has on development", Cheptai said.



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## Pressure mounts on state to tame terror gang

By **BOB OMBATI**

**T**HE provincial administration in Kisii and Nyamira counties has come under attack for failing to protect residents from terror unleashed by outlawed Sungu sungu militia group.

In a report compiled jointly by the Kenya Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR), the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC) and National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC), police have been accused of working in cahoots with the group to kill suspected criminals.

The officials said that the group had established a strong network at the grass-roots level due to a failed police and judicial system. "We must state here that while we hold no brief for any criminal elements in society, we will continue to ask as indeed we have done time and again in the past that any issues of crime must be addressed within the clearly defined confines of the law," they said in the report.

According to the report the militia group still continues to wreck havoc in the area despite assurances by the community and government agencies that it had been disbanded and members incorporated in the community policing programme.

Commission officials Ann Ngugi (KHRC), Mohammed Hallo Secretary (KNHCR), Davis Malombe deputy executive secretary (KHRC) and Tom Kagwe Senior programme officer KHRC said the scenario had become more complicated as there are no clear distinctions between activities spearheaded by the Sungu Sungu militia group and the ones undertaken through community policing.

The report said that the militia group was operating at the confines of community policing to violate human rights.

"While community policing entails the



Police in patrol.

detection, prevention and exposing criminal elements in your midst, this has taken another dimension in Kisii where the militia group serving as members of the community policing programme are the perpetrators of crime and human rights violations.

The report dubbed: *Sungu sungu merchants of terror and death in Kisii* indicts the militia group for overstepping the mandate of community policing.

"Those who purport to provide security under community policing in Kisii have clearly overstepped their mandate. They are known to make arrests, carry out investigations, detain suspects in illegal holding cells and pass judgments in Kangaroo courts," said the report.

The study had established that the mili-

tia group was engaging in merciless killings of suspects besides inflicting grievous bodily harm to their victims and issuing threats. The report also stated that the group was behind the disappearance of suspects and was openly extorting funds from members of the public and demanding sex in order to offer protection.

The report accused security personnel of abdicating their responsibilities to provide security in the area and challenged them to take charge instead of allowing militia groups to run parallel groupings under the guise of self protection.

The report proposed that community policing committee be reconstituted afresh to rid the region of criminal elements operating under the cover of community policing.

## Saitoti promises titles to Mt. Elgon squatters

BY **JOHN NYAMBUNE**

ABOUT 1,735 families at the Chepyuk settlement scheme, in Mt. Elgon District, have received allotment letters.

The families are part of the group that was forcefully ejected by the Sabat Land Defense Force (SLDF) which had strongly opposed Government's bid to settle people on the land.

According to the Minister for Internal Security and Provincial Administration minister, Prof. George Saitoti, beneficiaries will receive their title deeds before the end of the year.

The minister at the same time disclosed that the Government has acquired an additional 742 acres of land at Kshs180 million in Kitale where 350 other families would be resettled.

Prof. Saitoti urged residents to uphold peace prevailing in the region in order to fast-track development.

The minister who spoke at Kapsiro division recently during the launch of a peace caravan to enhance cohesion, said the government will continue to enhance security and support families to settle and their rebuild lives.

He urged chiefs and their assistants to be vigilante and ensure that beneficiaries do not sell land, saying the Gov-

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## Kalonzo calls for peaceful polls campaign

BY **AGGREY BUCHUNJU**

**A**S we approach the next general elections concerted effort is being made to ensure that peace prevails during and after the elections.

Kenyans across the country are being called upon by the state and non-state actors to shun violence and instead strive to forge a cohesive and peaceful country.

Vice President Kalonzo Musyoka recently joined other peace crusaders by calling upon Kenyans to co-exist peacefully saying no one chose where to be born and reside.

Speaking during the signing of a peace agreement between three (3) ethnic groups, residing in Mt. Elgon District in Bungoma County, Musy-

oka said the country cannot move forward without peace.

Mr. Musyoka said that time had come for Kenyans to forget about the post election violence and instead open a new chapter that mirrors all ethnic groups as equally important.

"I would want to urge all Kenyans to consign the post election violence crisis to history and forge unity and understanding amongst themselves," the VP said.

The VP reminded Kenyans that the new constitution guarantees basic rights for every Kenyan including the right to own property and reside in any part of Kenya.

Article 39 (3), states that every citizen has the right to enter, remain and reside anywhere in Kenya.

And Article 40 (i) (a) and (b) states

that every person has the right, either individually or in association with others, to acquire and own property of any description, and in any part of Kenya.

The VP challenged the signatories of the peace agreement to always live by the pact saying that it was the wish of God that the human race lives in peace.

He assured the three ethnic communities residing in the volatile Mt. Elgon that the government recognized and endorsed the peace agreement.

Mr. Musyoka who was the chief guest during the signing ceremony reiterated that it was now upon the concerned parties to respect the deal.

Elders from the Bukusu, Ateso and Sabat communities attended a four day peace conference at Mabanga

Farmers Training Centre (FTC) in Bungoma County before signing of the peace pact.

The conference was sponsored by the peace and eighth programme of the free Pentecostal fellowship in Kenya.

Speaking at the same function Bumula MP Bifwoli Wakoli challenged Bukusu elders to initiate a move that is aimed at reconciling political leaders in the area.

Mr. Wakoli said that there was no need to reconcile Bukus and Tesos since the two communities are not at war and have never been at war.

The MP who is also lands assistant minister instead asked the elders to reconcile Bukusu MPs who he claims are always at logger heads over petty issues.



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# PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE

## Saitoti promises titles to Mt. Elgon squatters

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ernment will support the families with inputs to embark on farming.

The minister was flanked by Mt. Elgon legislator, Mr. Fred Kapondi, Internal Security PS, Mr. Francis Kimemia, and chairman of the task force that subdivided the land, Mr. Solomon Ouko.

Mr. Kimemia said the Internal Security Ministry had come up with incentives that will see peaceful districts receive a cash award of Kshs.100 million to support development projects for the benefit of the community.

Mr. Kapondi, who is also the chairman of the Parliamentary Security Committee, asked the Government to hasten the issuance of title deeds to allow families develop their farms.

"Beneficiaries have been unable to initiate any meaningful development because they have no document to prove ownership of the land," he said.

The chairman of the task force that subdivided the land said 41 public plots have been earmarked for the construction of schools, markets, shopping centres, roads, river-line areas and Government offices.

He urged the Government to provide families with building materials and construct access roads. Prof. Saitoti said the ministry had set aside funds for the construction of roads to enhance security in the area.

Meanwhile, Mt. Elgon leaders have lauded Government's move to settle 1,735 families at Chepyuk phase III scheme, saying this will help create lasting peace in the area.

Mr. Kapondi says the settlement exercise will go along way in resolving long standing disputes triggered by limited.

Former area MP, Mr. John Serut, said all displaced families should be settled to ensure equity and fairness in land distribution at the settlement scheme.

The Sabaot supreme court of elders Chairman, Mr. Reuben Butaki, said the resettlement was a key step by the Government to ensure peace prevailed by addressing land distribution issue.

Prof. Saitoti said more families will be resettled in the next phase as Kshs.180 million had been disbursed to finance the exercise.

In 2008, about 600 people were killed and thousands of others displaced at the height of conflict over Chebyuk scheme spearheaded by the Sabaot Land Defense Force.

## Now Sabaot violence victims call for probe

By **AGGREY BUCHUNJU**

PRESSURE is mounting on the Government to set up a tribunal to probe atrocities committed in Mt. Elgon region.

The Coordinator of Torture Survivors Organization Mr. Taiga Wanyanja challenged the government to investigate the atrocities and mass graves in Mt. Elgon during the 2006-2008 violence.

"It is only an independent tribunal that can unearth the root cause of the atrocities and those involved," he says.

HUNDREDS of people are said to have mysteriously disappeared during the Mt. Elgon conflict and subsequent military intervention.

Torture Survivors Organization, a human rights lobby group, claims that the victims were either abducted by the Sabaot Land Defense Force (SLDF) or killed by the military.

Mr. Wanyanja alleges that over 700 people died or disappeared in the hands of the military during the infamous "Okoo Maisha" operation.

The rights lobby group coordinator questions who the army was fighting since there was no exchange of fire during the infamous military operation in the area.

Mr. Wanyanja censures the Government for allegedly using improper methods to clamp down on the then



*Youths ready for violence.*

notorious militia group, SLDF. "The government employed unorthodox methods to suppress the militia group leave alone perpetrating the killing of innocent residents", he alleges.

Mr. Wanyanja further alleges that police helped perpetrators to escape besides spoiling the evidence, thus perpetuating impunity.

He equates Mt. Elgon atrocities to the post election violence (PEV) where 1300 people were killed and over 600,000 others were displaced.

Mr. Wanyanja calls upon the International Criminal Court (ICC) at the Hague to come and take over the cases since the Kenya Government is not willing to probe the atrocities.

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## Land grabbing hampering youth project in Kisii

By BOB OMBATI

LAND grabbing in Kisii District has hampered the implementation of Kazi Kwa Vijana (KKV) projects.

Abel Onchari, a member of the Kisii District Environment Committee (DEC) says private developers have encroached on public land in the area, making it difficult for environmentalists to implement projects aimed at conserving and protecting the environment.

Onchari, who led thirty youths contracted under Kazi Kwa Vijana (KKV) programme in a protest march against land grabbers said the group is unable to proceed with a project that seeks to plant trees at the Kisii town's recreational ground since the land had been grabbed.

The youths, who marched to the Kisii Municipal council offices where Deputy Clerk, Francis Otachi promised to address their grievances, vowed not to relent in their fight against land grabbers until all grabbed public land is repossessed.

They accused the developers of using the courts to frustrate efforts by the government to beautify the town especially recreational parks, adding that the town lacked a recreational facility which forced residents to while their time at Kisii Golf course which is a members club.

Onchari, flanked by DEC member, Evans Mageka said the town was poorly planned and congested due to the influx of job seekers from rural areas. "Therefore, the absence of social amenities only complicate the scenario leading to the mushrooming of slums and spiraling crime.

Area District Environment Officer (DEO) Samson Bokea said he had received a court order from one of the developers stopping the youths from planting trees at the park pending the hearing and determination of the court case.

The DEO said plans to reclaim and replant trees at the park followed recommendations by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Senior Deputy Secretary Ben Mugambi, and National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) Deputy Director after trees planted during the first of the KKV programme were destroyed by unknown people.

Bokea told *The Link* in his office that the two officers who were evaluating the KKV project were shocked and dismayed by the massive destruction of trees at the recreational park, saying it was a waste of public funds.

He said he had presented a budget of Kshs 1.6 million which was approved by the Ministry to allow the youth to replant trees at the park. "The exercise was however halted by a court order filed by one of the developers through advocate Samuel Nyariki Ondieki and company advocates," he said.

# Mwingi hospital in need of help

By KAVYU-KURA

MWINGI district hospital is in dire need of assistance to acquire modern facilities, the institution's management has admitted.

The hospital's administration officer, Dickson Mutua, said that the aging and dilapidated structures require an urgent face lift to give the hospital a better status.

"Some of the wards are pretty old and aging. Such environment compromises the get well fast policy as it is not homely and hospitable. We need assistance to build new wards and fit in modern equipments," said Mutua.

He added that not only did the hospital lack essential equipments in the wards, laundry and mortuary but also an ambitious community driven amenity ward project stalled midway. He

said the project collapsed after issues of financial impropriety were raised. He said it was time the revival of the project was mooted.

The hospital administrator made the remarks when he hosted the director of markets development in the ministry of local government, Patrick Mutua Nzoka, recently. Nzoka who hails from the area had called at the hospital to formally assess its needs with a

view to sourcing for required support.

The local government director said he was touched by the state of the hospital a month earlier when he took a relative who had broken his leg to the facility only to realize the hospital did not have equipments to fix broken bones.

"I had to transport my nephew to Naivasha where he had his leg fixed at a cost of Kshs 100,000. But the issue of lack of the right facilities for treatment especially for the ordinary residents who could not afford the high medical charges kept haunting me thus the reason for this follow up visit," said Nzoka.

Nzoka interacted with patients in the maternity, surgical and general men and women wards and cleared hospital bills amounting to Kshs. 30,000 for patients who had been discharged but could not leave before they paid up. He also sponsored lunch of rice and meat for all the in patients at Kshs 20,000.

The director lamented that in its current state, the hospital could not guarantee quality health services to the residents of Mwingi. He added that since he had firsthand experience of the deficiencies at the health facility, he would mobilize assistance to improve the situation.

"I will talk to our two MPs-Kalonzo Musyoka (Mwingi north) and David Musila (Mwingi south) with a view of getting intervention through their respective Constituency Development Funds and Mwingi town council. I will also mobilize support from the Nzoka foundation and local and international friends," he pledged.



Director Patrick Mutua Nzoka speaks to Munuve Muniyithya at the Mwingi district hospital general wards during a visit to the facility. Photo/Kavyu-Kura

## Government under fire in Malindi

By BEKADZO TONDO

THE provincial administration in Malindi District has come under criticism for alienating the public in the management of public affairs.

A civil society in the area told a forum convened to discuss community participation in projects funded through devolved funds that the administrators were blocking efforts by civil society groups to push for public participation in the monitoring of projects.

The director of the Institute of Participatory Development (IPD), a local based Non Governmental Organization, complained that civil society organizations have achieved very lit-

tle in their campaigns to sensitize the communities on good governance and participation in the implementation of projects funded using devolved funds due to lack of support from the local administrators mostly the chiefs.

"The work of civil societies to sensitize the communities on their rights and push for good governance and participation by community in project implementation process has been blocked by our chiefs who fail to co-operate with organizations and members of the public," said Mr. Mzungu.

He claimed that a large percentage of funds earmarked for development projects in the area had been returned to the treasury despite the fact that the area still lags behind in development.

"This is because members of the public are involved in the identification and implementation of the projects," he said.

However, Mr. Samuel Kahindi who is the chief of Bungale location absolved the administrators from blame and accused civil society for alienating government officials in their work.

"Some civil societies hardly inform the government about their work programs and therefore it has become impossible for the administrators to support them," said Mr. Kahindi.

Mr. Kahindi said chiefs take orders from their superiors mostly the District Officers and the District Commissioners and they cannot usurp their

mandate by going against the set rules.

Mr. Mzungu said NGOs are legitimate entities after having been licensed by the government and therefore must be accorded support by the provincial administrators.

"The government cannot register or issue licenses to civil societies which do comply with the set regulations and therefore claims by the chiefs that NGOs are not been transparent in their work are meaningless," said Mr. Mzungu.

He said the role of civil society groups is to supplement government efforts in enhancing good governance and thus the need to support them to hasten development at all levels," said Mr. Mzungu.

## Contractor urged to speed-up building of market

By LINK CORRESPONDENT

CONSTRUCTION of new market stalls by Kakamega Municipal Council valued at Kshs 153 million will be completed by the end of the year.

The new market stalls are set to accommodate over 500 traders who were re-located to various places within the town after the ministry of Local Government disbursed funds to improve the facility.

An assistant minister Manyala Keya who had petitioned the contractor to speed up construction

work said that he was now happy that the project was set to be completed.

Keya and the town Mayor Mathias Sichere said that traders should not be anxious of the allocation criteria since the council will ensure that they retain their stalls once the project is completed.

Keya and Sichere explained that the council was concerned that the ongoing heavy rains had paralysed operations at the open-air markets.

Keya of Gender and Children Affairs ministry made the remarks when he toured the site. The Direc-

tor of Channa Construction Limited Company M. S Channa said he was set to heed to the deadline.

Sichere said that a parking site for the complex will be established at the facility.

"We are going to transform the market into a regional Centre as the Kenya Municipal Programme has earmarked the town for the establishment of other facilities," said Sichere.

He explained that road network in the town was wanting and challenged the minister for Roads Franklin Bett to dispatch a team of au-

ditors to ascertain how funds meant for rehabilitation of roads were being spend.

"I am concerned that the Kenya Urban Roads Authority is not doing anything on the town roads," said Keya who is the Lurambi MP.

He said that he was set to forward the complains to the Parliamentary Committee on Roads for investigations as the residents were suffering.

Officials from the urban roads board however said they were waiting for the funds to be released before they can repair roads within the

town. However, Keya said it was unfair for the residents to blame him when the funds were being channeled through the urban roads authority.

The Kakamega County Council Chairman John Shimaka said that roads in rural areas were better than those in towns because the council was utilising cess funds from sugar factories to maintain them.

Shimaka explained that cess funds from Mumias Sugar Company and West Kenya Sugar companies have played a key role in improving road network in the region.



## Kakamega County roads set for rehabilitation

By JOEL JUMA

THE Government has released over Kshs300 million for the rehabilitation of roads in the nine constituencies of Kakamega County.

Roads in Kakamega town however fall under the Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA).

Cabinet minister Soita Shitanda said there is need for Kakamega town residents to demand answers from KURA on the state of the roads in the area.

He said MPs from the county focus on rural roads managed by the Kenya Rural Roads Authority (KERRA). "The only MP who can demand to have urban roads in the County repaired is Lurambi MP

Manyala Keya because his constituency is both in urban and rural areas," said Shitanda.

Shitanda said roads in rural areas are better compared to the urban roads due to close supervision by the Constituency Road Boards.

He said MPs in the County are investigating the criteria used to select contractors for the jobs.

"It has emerged that most of the roads were given to contractors from one region and locals locked out despite having applied for the jobs," said Shitanda who was speaking to the press in Kakamega town.

He explained that the matter will be forwarded to the Parliamentary Committee of Roads and Housing.

He added that the minister for Roads Franklin Bett should explain the criteria used in the selection of contractors. The Parliamentary Roads Committee Chairman David Were said he has received the complaints. He promised to move round to collect information regarding the selection of contractors before summoning Bett over the matter.

Were, who is Matungu MP said he was shocked to learn that most local contractors were not given the jobs despite having qualified.

"The idea of devolution is to ensure that funds at the grassroots level circulate among the locals," said Were who was speaking in his Matungu constituency.

Area MPs who include Shitanda, Keya and Ben Washali (Mumias) have raised concern over the selection of contractors.

Shitanda said it is shocking that local contractors were left out in awarding of jobs for the construction of bridges in the County.

Over Kshs 400 million was spend by the Kenya Sugar Board (KSB) for the construction of bridges in the county with only six contractors out of the 16 being locals.

The KSB Western Regional Manager Laban Mulehi explained that the jobs were awarded on merit.

Mulehi explained that a panel formed to award marks followed the requirements adding that it was not fair to deny those who qualified for the jobs merely because they are not locals.

KSB Directors Ewing Mwombe and Mohammed Mukhwana said politicians should stop politicising development matters.

# Volunteer fire fighters graduates in Nyeri

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

FORTY volunteer fire fighters from Nyeri County have graduated after a two – week training.

The firefighters underwent an intense training programme on how to fight fire and administer first aid to fire victims in the event of an emergency. The course was sponsored by the Ministry of Special Programmes, Nyeri CDF and G4S Kenya.

The training was the first to be conducted outside Nairobi area and the third initiative to take place on an annual basis. This brings a total of 125 volunteer fire fighters trained by the G4S throughout the country to date.

The G4S is partnering with the Ministry of Special Programmes and organizations like Kenya Emergency Medical Technicians Council to train volunteers across the country on how to respond to fire incidences.

Organised by the G4S Kenya and the Emergency Medical Technicians

Council, the training was mooted to address gaps in the management of fire tragedies which have become synonymous with the region.

Speaking during the graduation ceremony at Dedan Kimathi Kamukunji grounds, the G4S deputy Managing Director Jack Muchira noted that the recent spate of fires across the country call for more trained fire fighters to be able to contain and manage incidences. Special Programmes Minister Esther Murugi while officiating the graduation expressed concern over the recent loss of lives to fire and called for more caution, and urged the public to stay away from scenes that are likely to cause fires.

"The country has experienced several incidents of destruction and fatalities caused by fire tragedies. The public should also desist rushing to scoop or siphon fuel from tankers. The recent fires have wrecked havoc and left a trail of deaths and destruction including Sinai Fire in Nairobi and

the Busia fire involving a fuel tanker," Noted Murugi.

Nyeri Police boss Kirunya Limbitu urged members of the public to join hands with the police in order to help fight fire once it erupts instead of throwing stones to fire fighting engines when they are late for the incident.

"This partnership is a positive step in increasing national disaster preparedness. Since initiation of the programme three years ago, G4S fire services has trained and equipped 125 personnel with fire fighting skills. The company intends to partner with the Government in order to carry out this exercise across the country," said Muchira.

Nyeri Mayor Edward Muteru urged the graduates to be well disciplined and be good ambassadors.

Nyeri deputy mayor Grace Wanyeki said they should help to manage any disasters when fire erupts and more importantly be able to call for assistance when required.



Volunteer fire fighters put off the fire at Dedan Kimathi Kamukunji grounds in Nyeri town recently during the drill exercise where 40 volunteer firefighters graduated after a fortnight training course.

Photo/Joseph Mukubwa

## Bahari youth asked to utilize fund to improve their welfare

By BEKADZO TONDO

ABOUT Kshs 5million Youth Entrepreneurship Fund (YEF) earmarked for Bahari Constituency lies idle in the banks as youth in the area fail to apply for funding.

Kilifi District Youth Officer Ms Jocelyn Katunge says the fund is underutilized in the area with only a few youth groups seeking for funding.

Speaking during a youth meeting at the Kilifi township chiefs' office, the officer says it is unfortunate that youth are still reluctant to seek for the funds despite the vigorous campaigns aimed at sensitizing them.

"I get disappointed when I receive few applications from groups requesting funding when we have many jobless youth in Bahari," adds Ms Katunge.

The officer dismissed claims that majority of the youth in the area were unable to meet the tough conditions imposed by the government.

She explained that the government has relaxed conditions to attract more youth and cited registration of groups and identification of viable projects as some of the conditions that must be met

before any funding can be approved.

The officer challenged the youth in the area to engage in meaningful projects other than indulging in unlawful acts which deprive them of a future.

"The government has been allocating Bahari constituency Kshs1 million in every financial year to support the Youth Entrepreneurship Fund but it was shocking that the youth have failed to tap on the enormous opportunity," said Ms Katunge.

The youth who attended the forum however insisted that the conditions set by the government were prohibitive and had denied them access to the fund.

The youth claimed that the process was time wasting and must be revised to ease access to the funding.

Eda Kadenge, a youth from the area said that officers entrusted with the fund are not supportive and this had contributed to the problem.

The district youth training Officer Mr. Joel Mulathya challenged youth to enroll in youth polytechnics to acquire skills that can help them venture into income generating activities.

Mr. Mulathya said the polytechnic were offering competent courses and thus the need for youth to take advan-

tage of the available opportunities to acquire gainful skills that can help them start meaningful projects that can attract funding.

He said the polytechnics are highly funded by the government and students hardly pay any fees.

He announced plans by the government to put up another polytechnic in Kilifi town.

The officer further urged the community to supplement government efforts by supporting the initiative.

Kilifi District Commissioner Mr. Katee Mwanza who presided over the meeting challenged the youth to start income generating projects using loans sourced from the youth fund instead of joining outlawed groups such as Mombasa Republican Council (MRC).

Mr. Mwanza said most youth had been pushed in such groups by poverty because they are promised with goodies but challenged them to make use of the youth fund to empower themselves financially.

The administrator said the youth have a role to play in the development of this nation and said it was counter-productive if they engage in criminal activities.

## Council pays off NSSF its dues

By LINK CORRESPONDENT

KAKAMEGA County Council has released over Kshs34 million to the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), in compliance with a Government's directive to clear outstanding statutory debts.

The council cleared the dues, which had accumulated since 2006. This made it the first local authority in Kakamega County to heed to the demands of the statutory body.

"We do not have any arrears as all the dues have been remitted," said the Council Clerk Patrick Kamwessar.

Kamwessar and the Council Chairman John Shimaka said the local authority wants to ensure debts are cleared during this financial year before the County Government comes in place after the next General Elections.

Most of the local authorities are struggling to take stock of their assets and liabilities before the operations are handed over to the County Government after the next polls.

Shimaka said that the council has already demolished kiosks constructed illegally saying that stock-taking requires that plots with disputes be resolved before next year.

Shimaka said that the council has also remitted workers deductions to the Bukhungu Savings and Credit Co-operative Society as part of ensuring that there is smooth transition from the Local authorities to the County Governments.

Shimaka remarks came as the Ministry of Cooperatives warned Kakamega Municipal Council against withholding over Kshs 80 million meant for the workers in the cooperative movement.

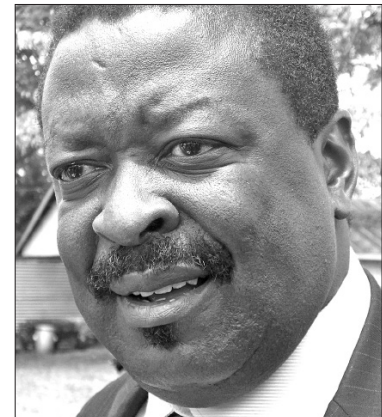
The Western Provincial Cooperative Officer Nathan Mukhweso has declared that the council assets risk being auctioned to clear the debt owed to the Kakamega Municipal savings and Credit Cooperative Society.

The Society Chairperson Iris Masambaga said that workers were not able to obtain loans from the society due to none remittance of the funds by the employer.

Masambaga said the debt had paralysed the operations of Sacco which is unable to advance loans to members due to lack of adequate funds.

Deputy Prime minister and Minister for Local Government Musalia Mudavadi while addressing chief officers and councillors at the Kakamega County Council Hall urged the stakeholders to ensure that there is proper management of the public resources.

Mudavadi explained that council should not engage in practices that will make them financially unstable.



Mr. Mudavadi



# Desire to own a car drives boy to make one



Repairers work on broken down bicycles. A polytechnic graduate has made major strides towards creation of jobs with his bicycle repair garage in Kakamega town. Photo/File

By JOHN NYAMBUNE

FOR John Ambunya, dropping out of school was not going to shutter his dream of success.

John went ahead and designed Tuk Tuk which has transformed transport industry in most rural parts of this country. His contraption was inspired by a desire to own a car. But owing to his poor economic status, he knew that was just a dream.

Ambunya, 50, hails from Eshisuru village, North Butsoto location, in Kakamega County. He dropped out of Form two in 1980 after his family was unable to pay for his school fees.

He later joined his grandfather in fixing bicycles and with that he developed a passion for fixing things.

Ambunya nurtured his skills while working for his grandfather and it was not long before his prowess in the business attracted a Dutch

investor who owned a polytechnic in Kakamega.

At the polytechnic known as Mathai, he assembled bicycles and wheel chairs and picked up more skills for a year before picking up a certificate in the field.

Ambunya later decided it was time he opened a repair shop, and in 1984 he launched his business as he taught others interested in the art.

He started with 15 people but the number slowly rose with time. Most of his apprentices were proud owners of garages in Kakamega.

As the business grew, it became difficult for him to transport tools and spare parts to and from home, for he did not have anywhere to store his wares given the high levels of insecurity in the region.

It then dawned on him that he should acquire a car, a thought that

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## Pan Paper set for re-opening after years of dormancy

By TITUS MAERO

THE largest paper manufacturing company in East Africa Webuye based Pan Paper Mills Limited is set to be re-opened after the government appointed task force issued re-call letters to some key technical former employees of the firm.

The task force Chairman Wafula Muliari announced the revival of the factory as the Ministry of Industrialization and that of the Finance stepped up the re-opening process of the factory which was shut down due to severe cash crunch.

According to sources at the factory, the government has released funds to jump start the factory that was closed down on November 8, 2009 sending over 1,500 permanent employees and about 20,000 casuals home.

The Pan Paper Mill was started in 1974 with a production capacity of 45,000 tonnes of paper annually but before it collapsed it had hit an impressive production of 120,000 tonnes per annum.

Recently, the task force Chairman Mr Muliari said the factory aims to start production with an initial 80 tonnes of paper daily until the whole factory system was operationalized to start full scale production.

It is projected that for the factory to be fully operational it requires huge amounts of capital, but so far the government has pumped Kshs500 million following a cabinet approval to clear debts owed to creditors by the company.

Initially, the government, which is the main shareholder jointly, owned the factory with Biria Company Limited of India. The Biria Company's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mr H.A Saha later pulled out and re-located to India.

Prior to the closure of the factory, it had been performing poorly mainly due to high operating costs, low capacity utilization rates and competition from cheap paper imports by other players in the field of paper manufacturing.

In recent times, problems at the factory have been aggravated by increased electricity tariffs which rose by more than 65 per cent from July 2008 resulting in huge debts in unpaid power bills.

The Kenya Union of Printing, publishing Manufacturers and Allied Workers National Vice Chairman Stephen Watuti has said that while the government had pledged Kshs2 billion for the revival of the factory only Kshs500 million had been released.

Wafula said prior to the closure, the factory was ISO 9001 certified for manufacturing quality products and had also served as the social economic livelihood to the local people through business establishment and creation of employment.

The company stopped operations after it plunged into huge debts running to billions of shillings according to records.

# Kenya Power moves to light up slums

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

KENYA Power and Lighting Company (KPLC) is set to connect about 70,000 slum dwellers in the country with electricity at a cost of Kshs1 billion.

The company coordinator in charge of the Rural Electrification project Harun Mwangi said over 67,000 customers living in the sprawling slums will only be required to pay Kshs1,000 (which is affordable) as connection fee instead of the normal Kshs35,000.

They will also be required to hire a qualified electrician for wiring of their homes.

Speaking during the ground breaking ceremony at Witemere slums in Nyeri town, Mwangi said already slum dwellers in Kibera and Mukuru slums in Nairobi have already benefited. Others living in Kiandutu in Thika have also benefited.

The project is being funded by the Kenya Power with support from the World Bank through the Global Partnership Output based assistance.

"We are committed to improving the lives of the slum dwellers. We want them to invest in power and start income generating projects like saloons, barber shops. We believe this will reduce the high rates of illegal connections which are risky

and dangerous," he said.

The project will provide affordable electricity to the people in settlement schemes by connecting them at highly subsidized rates and will prevent loss of revenue by the company through unmetered power usage.

He added that the connection

will improve security by lighting up the people settlement areas and uplifting their economic well being.

The customers will use prepaid services while paying the bill as they will be unable to pay monthly fee.

At Witemere slums, about 500 of them will benefit.



Kenya Power coordinator in charge of Rural electrification Harun Mwangi during the ground breaking ceremony of the slum electrification project in Nyeri town recently. Photo/Joseph Mukubwa

# New development policy underway — official

By JOEL JUMA

THE Government is formulating a policy to guide development matters at the County level.

Local Authority Act, which has acted as a guiding tool for the chief officers managing council affairs, will be replaced with a new policy being formulated by a team of officers drawn from various ministries.

Director of Physical Planning in the Ministry of Lands Augustine Masinde said having many Acts greatly contributed to confusion in the implementation of Government policies at the grassroots.

Masinde said the new policy will

guard against confusion during the implementation of Government policies in the Counties.

Land matters are mainly handled by either the Commissioner of Lands or Lands Registrar.

This time round it will be difficult as most land matters will be handled at the County level," said Masinde.

Masinde explained that the new policy aims at abolishing Cap 265 of the Local Government Act.

"Some of the problems facing Physical planners are caused by town clerks and civic leaders who allocate plots without the knowledge of the Physical planning Department," said Masinde.

He said all Acts related to Water, Public Health, Environment, Lands, Local authority, Physical Planning and Agricultural will be guided by the new Cities and Planning policy.

Masinde was speaking at Kakamega Golf Hotel during a two-day capacity building workshop for land stakeholders drawn from the Kakamega County.

Western PC Samuel Kilele opened the workshop which was attended by civic and church leaders. District Commissioners from the County also took part in the programme.

Matungu DC Otieno Kwach and the Western Upper Regional Commissioner Peter Okwanyo said civil serv-

ants are sometimes confused while implementing some policies at the grassroots. "The Lands and Agriculture Acts sometimes conflict with the Environment Act. We need a harmonised policy formulated under the new Constitution," said Kwach.

Kwach explained that having many Acts cause confusion in management of resources, as they are not supportive to one another.

Masinde however said matters will be resolved as the draft will be circulated to the stakeholders to add in their views. "We shall come back with the draft so that public can give their input before being taken to Parliament," said Masinde.



# Nairobi Hospital to build cancer centre

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

THE Nairobi Hospital will build a Kshs700 million Cancer centre to cater for cancer patients.

The hospital CEO Cleopa Mailu said the hospital will start the facility and bring in modern equipment in order to cater for those suffering from the disease.

He was speaking at Dedan Kimathi Kamukunji stadium in Nyeri town recently during the seven kilometer Cancer walk.

Mailu said this is part of their corporate social responsibility.

"We want to compliment what the Government is doing in the fight against Cancer. The centre will also enable more people to

know their status," said the CEO.

Over 3,000 people participated in the walk including students from seven secondary schools of Nyeri County.

The schools included Tumutumu Girls, Chinga Girls, Dedan Kimathi Secondary and Kangubiri Girls among others.

The walk in Nyeri town was the third after another one was held in Nairobi and Kisumu towns.

All the walks will cost more than Kshs 8 million.

The theme of the walk was 'Taking Strides Against Cancer.'

The walk's objective is to create awareness on the importance of early detection as the best way to beat cancer.

Statistics show that about 50 person die daily from various forms of cancers and about 90,000 cases of cancer are diagnosed each year, with the most common listed as breast, cervical, prostate, colon and lung cancer.

"Early detection translates to higher survival rates because it increases the opportunity to catch cancer early and provides an opportunity for intervention before it has spread to other areas within the body," said the CEO.

During the exercise, women and men who participated in the exercise were screened free of charge.

The participants were also awarded with certificates.



Some of the secondary and college students during the Nairobi Hospital Cancer walk held in Nyeri town recently. Photo/Joseph Mukubwa

## Oparanya okays audit of Butere CDF

By JOEL JUMA

PLANNING Minister Wycliffe Oparanya has given the National Tax Payers Association (NTA) a go ahead to audit the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) kitty in his Butere constituency, Kakamega County.

Oparanya, whose office is in charge of the kitty, said auditing of CDF is a pre-requisite measure to curb corruption. His Butere kitty will be audited alongside the Malava CDF run by Soita Shitanda.

Malava was recently rocked with controversy after it emerged that bursary funds were not being distributed fairly. Shitanda was forced to disband the CDF committee following a public outcry.

Students at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology from Malava had complained that the

fund was benefitting un-deserving cases. Shitanda acted by reorganizing the CDF committee. He appointed former MP John Anaswa to be the chairman and sacked Phillip Makola.

NTA National Coordinator Davis Adieno and the Western Regional Coordinator Everlyne Khamala said the teams to audit the two constituencies are already on the ground.

"Oparanya has agreed to have the CDF funds audited to expose malpractices," Adieno said. He explained that the Butere CDF management committees have already availed all the relevant information to the experts to audit the projects in the area.

Adieno who was speaking in Mumias town during a workshop for researchers slated to audit the projects noted that complains from Malava and Khwisero were rampant. "We have not started work but the demand for

auditing of some projects in Malava and Khwisero is high," said Adieno.

Recently Oparanya told MPs to allow NTA to audit their projects. He said the trend should be encouraged as it gives the public a chance to air their views on the management of the public funds.

Oparanya said MPs need to be put to task over disbursement of the funds as the kitty is winding up this financial year. The Government allocated over Kshs 22 billion in this financial year to complete projects funded by the CDF. Adieno and Khamala said auditing of the devolved funds will extend to the Economic Stimulus Projects (ESP).

The Parliamentary committee on Housing, Roads and Works chaired by David Were is also going round to assess the progress of ESP funded projects.

## Desire to own a car drives boy to make one

From Page 22

made him laugh at himself because he knew he could not afford one being a polygamous man.

But if he could not afford a car, he mused, he should make one to check losses his business was facing for lack of resources to hire storage facilities and his transport.

When he told his friends he was planning to make a car, they thought the idea was "ridiculous" and they almost convinced him it was impossible. "Their doubts pushed me and I was determined to prove not just to them but to myself, that it was possible. All I had to do was give it my best," Ambunya says.

Assembling the parts was not easy as they were expensive. It took him two years before to have everything in place. By 1999, the three-wheeled car that resembles a Tuk Tuk was up and running. The first passengers were his two wives and the last born child.

"No one believed it. People all over town were shocked, especially when they saw me riding it. I was very happy," he says in a smile.

The car can accommodate a maximum of three passengers and

is operated manually as it has no engine. After inventing the locomotive, he stopped fixing bicycles as the vehicle was in high demand. People would hire his locomotive for various purposes either in the farm, supermarkets or just for carrying personal goods.

The car would also carry passengers around the town but the furthest it has every gone is 20 kilometers out of Kakamega town.

"Old age set in and I no longer have that kind of energy, I cannot carry passengers for more than one round because my car requires great energy to carry out such a task for the whole day," he says in a giggle.

He uses the locomotive to sell sugarcane, fruits and other fast foods. All this is to supplement his other income-generating activities.

Ambunya did not fully neglect what he does best: fixing things up. His magical hands still means many customers still trickle in to his work place to get bicycles fixed.

In the afternoons when he is not busy repairing bicycles, he rides his 'car' around town as he fetches customers. "It is also good exercise for me after a hectic day at work," he says.

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# Mukurwe-ini residents get new health center

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

THE Government has unveiled Thangathi Model Health centre in Mukurwe-ini district which has been built under the Economic Stimulus Programme.

Assistant Minister for Medical Services Kambi Kazungu and Youth assistant Minister Kabando wa Kabando commissioned the facility which is aimed to benefit area residents recently.

The multi million facility will offer maternal and infant health-care.

Kazungu who was also accompanied by Safaricom foundation chairman Les Baillie said the health centre should be immediately be upgraded to sub district hospital.

Kabando said the facility has come at a time when the local community needed much the health facilities. This is one of the comprehensive health care reform programme covering infrastructure development.

It is part of the Kshs 4 billion (Kshs 20 million per constituency) earmarked for the construction and equipping of a health centre in every constituency.

The programme also involves employment of 20 nurses per constituency, procurement of 20 bicycles per constituency and procurement of medical supplies comprising of drugs and non pharmaceuticals.

The programme of model

health centre projects was started two years ago.

"To date 108 health centres have been completed and are ready for commissioning, 37 facilities are between 80 and 99 per cent complete and only 11 facilities are below 50 per cent," said the assistant minister.

The launching of complete fa-

cilities exercise started in September in Kwale County.

"We have managed to recruit 3,781 nurses 2, 004 community health extension workers and 535 public health officers/ technicians. Our target is to employ 10, 500 staff once all projects are commissioned," he added.

The ministry has been able to

distribute 1,117 motorcycles and 2, 347 bicycles and also procured 43 ambulances for the counties.

Kazungu said the ministry is ready to improve access to public health and sanitation and also improve quality of public health services through the rehabilitation of facilities and reducing incidences of diseases.



From left Safaricom foundation chairman Les Baillie, assistant Minister for Medical Services Kambi Kazungu and Youth assistant Minister Kabando wa Kabando after they commissioned Thangathi Model Health Centre in Mukurwe-ini district which has been built using the Economic Stimulus Programme funds. Photo/Joseph Nukubwa

## Nambale CDF allocation list

By NYAKWAR ODAWO

NAMBALE Constituency Development Fund(CDF) committee has disbursed a total of Kshs13million to finance development projects identified in the constituency.

Addressing stakeholders during the monitoring and evaluation of various development projects in the constituency at the Nambale district headquarter, the Nambale Constituency Development Fund project manager and CDF chairman Joshua Mulesi said that the constituency development committee unanimously resolved to set aside funds to finance projects in critical sectors among them the construction of the provincial administration.

"The provincial administration and security agencies play a crucial role in the society and that is why we have agreed as a committee to fund the project from the CDF kitty," said the project manager, adding that initially the provincial administrators in the area were operating from dilapidated mud-walled structures.

Other projects that received funding included the construction of the constituency office which was funded to the tune of Kshs 10million, Busibwabo community office received Kshs 300,000; Buyofu assistant chief's office cost Kshs300,000. The construction of Lwanya chief's office and a police patrol base at Mayenje within Busia municipality received Kshs 1 million each.

The CDF committee at the same time disbursed a total of Kshs1.9million towards the construction of various water projects in the constituency in a bid to ease the water problem.

The Nambale District Commissioner Francis Lenyangume commended the CDF committee for supporting projects geared towards the improvement of livelihoods in the community.

The DC who also chairs the District Education Board (DEB), cited the education sector which he said had benefited immensely from the CDF kitty adding that several classrooms, administration blocks, libraries and laboratory facilities have been put up in various primary and secondary schools in the district courtesy of the CDF money.

The CDF project manager assured stakeholders that the committee will continue to allocate more funds towards the construction of additional classrooms to accommodate the large number of students seeking for enrolment annually.

"We are very much aware that most facilities in schools are over-stretched due to the large number of students in the constituency. We are going to allocate more funds to facilitate the construction of additional classrooms to accommodate more learners," said Mulesi.

## Will Base succeed where Tiomin has failed?

By BRIGHTON KAZUNGU

AS a new investor prepares to take over operations of titanium mining in Kwale County the questions that seems to be in everyone's lips is: Will it succeed?

Base Titanium Limited has announced plans to take charge of the project, which has stalled under Canadian firm Tiomin Resources Inc.

The company's Social Manager, Mr. Colin Forbes, says adequate measures have been taken to reduce environmental degradation during the mining process.

He said significant health risks due to the poisonous emissions associated with titanium mining will not be an

issue as precautionary measures had been set up to reduce toxic discharge.

Addressing a sensitization meeting of residents at Shika Adabu, Mr. Forbes said the project will create employment opportunities and support community development projects.

The official said a community-based approach had been applied to ensure the project benefits all stakeholders benefit during the 13 years of mining and 14 years of revenue reach.

He said the recruitment process will be transparent by ensuring residents get top priority. "Applicants will undergo stringent vetting process to ensure that area residents benefit fully from the project," Mr. Forbes said.

He said the extracted titanium will

be transported by road to the Mombasa port for export and urged residents to cooperate with the company and the Provincial Administration.

The manager said the project will use huge amounts of water and a recycling plant is set for construction.

"The community will benefit immediately from the water plant which can be utilized for domestic and commercial purposes," said Mr. Forbes.

"There will be a few expatriate who will be employed at the beginning of the project to train locals to ensure smooth transfer of skills over a period of five to seven years," he said.

However, local contractors will be involved in building roads, among other civil engineering projects.

Mr. Forbes said Base Titanium Limited has set up three liaison committees to cover "footprint areas" under the project, including Likoni, Kwale and Msambweni.

The committees will facilitate preparation of regular meetings during which project matters will be discussed in the presence of all stakeholders, including community members, and viable solutions worked out, he said.

The Mombasa National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) Environmental Officer, Mr. Bakari Mangale, said the process had been given a go-ahead after a thorough impact assessment had been carried out.

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

STAKEHOLDERS attending a consultative forum in Nyeri County on the budget making process were urged to give priority to programmes that are in line with the realization of Vision 2030.

Ministry of Finance Budget Policy Advisor, Samuel Kiiru told stakeholders that the next national budget will give priority to projects that are fully compliant with the government's regulations and whose priorities are justified and outlined in the Vision 2030.

Kiiru said the proposed projects should indicate how they will contribute to economic growth, job creation and improvement of citizens' welfare.

He said there is need for careful and disciplined resource allocation

and expenditure rationalization due to the economic challenges stemming from negative impacts of drought and global economic crisis which are likely to slow down economic activities in the country.

Kiiru said the main reason for stakeholders' involvement in budget making is to enhance the capacity of the public to participate in public finance and ensure the process is transparent and accountable in line with the new Constitution.

Through such participation, he said the public will have acquired greater ownership of the whole process thus creating a transparent and accountable budget that is programme-perform-

ance based aimed at attaining achievable and measurable results.

He added that public participation in budgetary process is also a way of making stakeholders more enlightened on public money spending, helping them to monitor and evaluate government spending, and increasing acceptance and legitimacy of policy plans. The views being collected from all the Counties by nine different teams comprising members drawn from nine key sectors of the economy will form the final programmes for next year's budget.

These key sectors include Tourism, trade and industry, Special programmes, Research innovation and

technology, Public administration and foreign relations, Physical infrastructure, Human resource development, Governance, justice law and order, Environment, water and irrigation, and Agriculture and rural development.

Central Provincial Director of Planning, Grace Muimi said the various sector views collected recently will be compiled and subjected to another public forum for validation before submission to treasury.

Upper Central Regional Commissioner, Ann Ng'etich urged all Kenyans to participate fully in all governance issues in the spirit of implementing the new Constitution which requires full participation of every one.

## Next budget to prioritize Vision 2030



# Keep plants at home for healthier life

By BRIGHTON KAZUNGU

DID you know that keeping plants inside your home can help detoxify your environment and guarantee a healthier life?

The Kwale Public Health Officer, Ms. Redemptor Mwendo, wants residents to keep indoor plants to help purify the air at home by reducing impurities that can negatively affect health.

She says indoor plants or house plants, regardless of whether they are flowery or not, are powerful cleaners that provide a natural, cost effective way of cleaning in-door air.

This she says will help bring down respiratory infections in the area especially asthma which is on the rise. Mrs. Muendo explains that air pollution acts as a trigger for respiratory diseases and allergies.

Her sentiments appear to support information available in a website on environment that encourages people to use house plants to clean and filter the air naturally instead of investing in

expensive electrical air purifiers.

Houseplants, according to website work better than high-tech gadgets in removing unwanted pollutants from the air.

Air pollution is prevalent in most houses due to chemicals introduced through the contemporary lifestyles.

The danger posed by indoor pollution should not be underestimated. Pollutants have not only been known to increase cases of respiratory infections such as asthma, but some chemicals cause allergies, auto-immune disorders and headaches.

Other air pollutant chemicals include carcinogenic that can increase the probability of developing cancer. The carcinogenic chemicals are used in the manufacture of synthetic substances.

Research done by the US agency responsible for the exploration and scientific study of space, the National Aeronautics Space Administration (NASA), while exploring ways of creating suitable space station habitats

found that all in-door plants can purify in-door air. Plants not only provide food for man but also clean the air. Trees and other plants are living lungs that breathe for the earth.

As we adopt modern lifestyles, pollution has increased, leading to a drop in the plant cover. This has increased air pollution because of lack of enough plants to remove impurities in the air.

Experts say plants 'breathe' carbon dioxide and release oxygen as part of the photosynthesis process. This ensures the amount of carbon dioxide in the air is checked.

Carbon dioxide is linked to poor concentration and lower work performance in indoor working areas.

The NASA research discovered that plants reduce components in volatile organic compounds such as benzene, toluene and xylene. The three top household toxins are benzene, formaldehyde, and trichloroethylene. This is likely to lead one to assume that the complicated sounding chemi-

cals are not in homes.

Benzene is a colourless toxic liquid used in the manufacture of dyes, paints, plastic wall covers and adhesives. Any new house or furniture is almost sure to give out benzene from paints and glues used. The chemical is also generated into the air during cooking using gas. Benzene is also used in the manufacture of detergents and pharmaceuticals.

Benzene is also found in tobacco smoke. In offices, photo copiers and printers also emit benzene and exposure to the substance can cause dizziness, nervousness, headaches, anaemia and can irritate eyes and skin.

Trichloroethylene is present in inks, paints vanishes and adhesives. Formaldehyde is present in most adhesives, paints plastic grocery bags and varnishes. It is also found in chip boards and paper products.

The toxin is also present in new curtains, upholstery, fabrics and floor coverings and is responsible for the smell of newness in a car, curtains or

seats. Formaldehyde irritates membranes of the upper respiratory system and can increase asthma. Pollutants from new materials can continue for some time, at times for up to several years, depending on the material of product in question.

Although all plants require light to grow, most indoor plants evolved in tropical or subtropical forests where they received only filtered light. This is what makes them suitable for growing indoor. You need 15-20 plants per 1,800 square feet for effective air purification. Some sources put the requirement at 10-12 inch potted plant per 100 square foot.

Plants love rain water and whenever possible, one should capture rainwater for houseplants as they thrive best with natural sources. One should learn more about plants to know the amount of water each need. Since the aim is to avoid non-organic fertilizers, keeping the soil well fed using natural composts and manure is recommended.

## My husband sold the family land without my consent

After Kenyans voted to accept a new constitution, women across the country speak about their hopes and expectations. News Correspondent **MALACHI MOTANO** listen to some women, sharing bitter tales that could stand for the story of millions of women in Kenya who have been robbed of their contributions to matrimonial lands and other assets.

ELIZABETH Kache is 55 years old. From her modest grocery store in Jericho Estate, Nairobi, she recounts how in the early 1990s, her husband sold the house they had bought together without her knowledge.

"My husband and I owned a modest home which we had bought from the city council. But one frosty morning, my six children and I woke up to loud bangs by rowdy youth who had been hired to evict us from the house.

"To my shock I was informed that my husband had sold the family home without my knowledge. Nor had I seen the money he received from the sale."

Attempts to seek redress proved futile because she had no legal claim to the family home since she had no proof of her contribution to buying the house.

But now the new constitution provides for the elimination of gender discrimination in law, customs and practices related to land and property.

Jacinta Wanjiku's husband -Isaac Kamau Mungai also sold their family land without her consent or the consent of their eight adult children. The family depended solely on the land for their cash and subsistence crops and lived in a house on the property.

The sale failed to consider Kamau's interests, and upon completion of the transaction, the buyer, Ndirangu Gatigi, threatened to evict the family from the land, prompting Kamau to go to court for protection.

The court however argued that "It has never been the practice nor a legal requirement that before the legal proprietor of a piece of land disposes of it he or she should consult any third party be it his/her husband or wife."

Nora Muthoni Mbugua is 65 years old, and a mother of four (two ladies and two gentlemen). She lives



**Nora Muthoni takes the News Correspondent to her farm within the homestead. This is the land that has brought problems for her with the brothers since their father passed away.** Photo/Malachi Motano

in her parental land where she has managed to successfully bring up her children who are two day family men and women. The old woman has had great huddles and battles with her brothers who many times tried to evict her from the father's land. At least today, she has a shield to hold on-to defend herself with- the new constitution, section 60 which ensures "equitable access to land" and "security of land rights"

"My father is called Mr. Both Mbugua. He had two wives. I was born in the first family where we were four girls and two boys. The second family was seven in total. We grew loving one another until it reached a time when we wanted to establish our own homes when the problems began" Nora begins her story

Their father (the late Mbugua) had ten Acres of land in fact according to Nora, they were more than ten acres, but they lost some when the feeder roads were being constructed. Because her other three sisters had

got married, her father before he died divided the ten acres to the three of them (Nora and the two brothers). After the demise of the father, fighting began.

"My two younger brothers, other three from the second family and together with my married sisters came together to remove me from the family land. At some point I had to take a refuge at my friend's place with the four of my children. To me, the world was getting to its end"

Nora received all the abuses and was also called all the names in this world "My Sister referred to me as a prostitute who wants to spoil the village school boys. My brothers reminded me that a woman's land is at her maternal home

"I took the matter to the area to the village Elder Mr. Patrick Kanja but my efforts were thwarted when he asked me whether I am a serious woman. I then took the matters to court in Limuru but the brothers in one way or the other blocked the

case. I remained a helpless woman and it is up to that time when I decided to return home even if they will me and my children, I will die at my father's home "

Peter Echaria, a civil servant, married his wife Priscilla in 1964. She had a career of her own - first as an education officer, then as a management consultant - but had to stop working to accompany her husband abroad when he was assigned to a diplomatic posting. This was to have painful consequences.

When they divorced in 2001, the court had to determine the division of 118 acres of land which was their joint property. The court in its judgment held that "the beneficial share of each spouse to matrimonial property depends on his or her proven respective portions of financial contribution either direct or indirect towards the acquisition of property."

Priscilla Echaria was awarded just a quarter of the land.

Further, the court said "...the sta-

tus of the marriage does not solely entitle a spouse to a beneficial interest in the property registered in the name of the other, nor is the performance of domestic duties. Even the fact that the wife was economical in spending on the housekeeping will not do."

This interpretation, gender activists say, fails to recognise the indirect contributions of women in their productive, reproductive and community roles.

Cases like these are widespread. Hilda Nguai, FIDA-Kenya's client services officer says the organization receives many cases and most of them involving land. The figures have been increasing over the years.

"Many women have been denied land. Some are disinherited by their in-laws upon their husbands' deaths. Some are chased away and barred from accessing any matrimonial property,"

Thanks to the new constitution which stipulated government to establish a legal framework, to divide land and other matrimonial property equitably between spouses. The policy also protects the rights of widows, widowers and divorcees through the enactment of a law on co-ownership of matrimonial property. This, it is believed, will guard against acts of selling and mortgaging of family land without the involvement of spouses.

Although the new legislation is guarding against discrimination against women in the division of land and other matrimonial property, culture seems to be an obstacle. "There are customary practices that undermine efforts seeking to support women's access to land, and they are widely practiced," observed Rosemary Wachira, who coordinated the draft land policy.

Across Kenya and Africa, culture and tradition is frequently invoked to assign property rights to men, sometimes even holding that women are forbidden to own and inherit land.

Women and human rights activists contend that public education campaigns are crucial to encourage communities to abandon practices that bar women from owning and inheriting family land, but how long it will take to erode such cultural practices may be another matter.



# Who really owns Simbauti farm?

By BOB OMBATI

A FARMERS union in Nyamira County is embroiled in a tussle over the ownership and management of the giant 1,130 Simbauti farm.

Bought in 1965 from white settlers by 27 coffee cooperative societies affiliated to Gusii Coffee Farmers Cooperative union (GCFCU), the farm's ownership still remains a puzzle to many despite the fact that it is managed by the union.

A group of politicians and senior civil servants in the area have laid claim on sections of the land which they ostensibly bought from former union officials. Another self help group headed by Peter Ochoki has also joined the fray and is seeking to repossess all union land that has been sold off illegally by the errant officials.

Members of the self group, with support from local politicians, have pitched camp at the farm to demand the immediate removal of union officials over alleged corruption.

However, the union's Chief Ex-

ecutive Officer (CEO) Robert Mainya says that any assets owned by the union can only be sold with the approval of delegates during a special general meeting.

Mainya stresses it is difficult for a small clique to dispose the land secretly since tenders inviting buyers are advertised openly and the highest bidder is allocated the land.

The CEO says that members from the societies and outsiders are allowed to apply for tenders and the selection process is competitive and transparent. He says that only 330 acres of the Simbauti farm was disposed off in March 6, 1995 to repay a bank loan that had been secured to build the union's Kahawa house.

"The sale was done with the approval of local Members of Parliament, after the bank threatened to auction the union's properties to recover the debt which had accumulated to 33million from Kshs 11 million," he explains.

Mainya disclosed that the then Gusii lawmakers- the late Zachary

Onyonka, Dr. Hezron Manduku, Reuben Oyondi, Stephen Manoti, Dr. Protus Momanyi, Ferdinand Obure, and the late nominated legislator, Dr. Lawrence Sagini endorsed the sale while Simeon Nyachae, then minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Marketing sent an apology but endorsed the sale minutes.

He added that relevant government Ministries were furnished with copies of the resolutions passed during a District Development Committee chaired by the then DC, Harry Wamubeyi for approval.

Mainya insisted that the farm is jointly owned by the union and the societies whose delegates serve as the supreme organ. He said those claiming ownership are ignorant of the procedures.

The union's board Vice chairman, Abel Mainga has scoffed at claims that the officials were secretly disposing of land and challenged aggrieved parties to seek legal redress instead of disturbing farm workers. "In 2007 another group had sued the union be-

fore the land tribunal but lost the case. I therefore urge those camping at the farm to follow suit," he advised.

Mainga urged the government to evict the members of the Group from the farm, adding the union was filing a case against them for trespass and disturbance.

Some Gusii MPs including Dr. James Gesami who bought land on the farm and former South Mugirango legislator Omingo Magara have accused the union management of secretly disposing land belonging to the farm. "Why is it that whenever we are approaching an election year, the issue of Simbauti farm crops up? Posed Mainga and urged stakeholders to seek information from the union over its ownership and management of the farm.

A survey by The Link has established that wealthy politicians- both former and current and senior civil servants have farms and huge houses in Simbauti farm and admit they bought and own their pieces of plots legally.

# Farmers decry rampant theft of coffee

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

THE director of Coffee Research Foundation Joseph Kimemia has advised farmers to hire police officers to guard coffee factories and curb the theft of coffee.

Kimemia said hiring armed police officers during the time when they are ready to sell their beans, will minimize the rampant cases of coffee theft in the factories.

"Hiring an old man with a rungu cannot prevent the theft. The farmers should contact the Ministry of Internal Security to get police officers who would be guarding the coffee factories during the time they are ready to sell their coffee," said Kimemia.

He was speaking at the research foundation based in Ruiru of Kiambu County during a media workshop on impact of climate change on coffee.

Kimemia who was accompanied by Economist Kennedy Gitonga and official James Minai

said the hiring of police officers is the only way to curb theft.

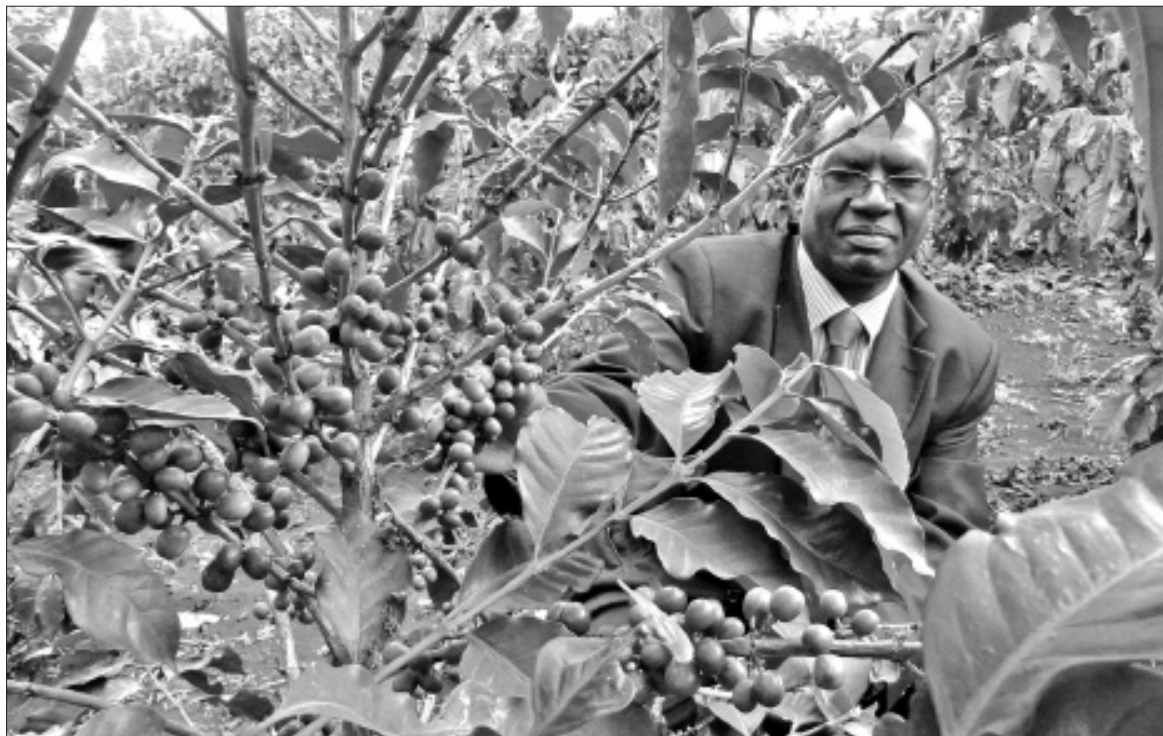
He said the exercise is not

expensive as the officers will guard the beans during the time they are searching for the mar-

ket.

The call came as Kabiru-ini Coffee Factory in Mathira district lost over 120 bags to robbers who stormed the factory and also killed a watchman.

Cases of coffee theft have been rampant in Central Kenya despite calls by President Kibaki to curb the vice which has become the order of the day.



The Director of Coffee Research Foundation Joseph Kimemia check on some of the coffee berries at the research foundation in Ruiru of Kiambu County. Photo/Joseph Mukubwa

# Group devices ways to raise school fees

By BRIGHTON KAZUNGU

RESIDENTS of Sita village in Kilifi County have embarked on an ambitious plan to raise school fees for their children.

The group has formed the Pisa Bursary Kit group (Pisbuk) that comprises of 18 members who are currently engaged in the sale of roofing materials using the coconut tree to generate funds to support educa-

tion for their children.

"The highest level of education in our village has for a long time remained at class four. But we are now determined to change this cycle by setting aside funds to support our children complete their studies," says Peter Baya, the chairman.

The group with the support of the Aphia II Plus, a Non-Governmental Organization that works in the coast region has been able to set up a

school. This is the only pre-school whose launch was done with resources from the project.

The group's next goal is to start a primary school section and Standard One next year. They hope the school will one day grow to Standard Eight.

Pisbuk group has focused on the tree to provide roofing and walling material. The residents weave fronds; fasten them with sisal fibre onto the leaves' central support to

make a 'sheet'. One branch produces about four sheets of one foot wide, each of which is worth five shillings.

Every group member targets to make a minimum of 20 makuti sheets a day. The 20 ploughed back to the groups account. However any extra sheets that members make are exchanged for cash, which is used to buy food and cater for other daily needs.

# Kitui traders forcefully occupy Bus Park

By KAVYU-KURA

TRADERS and public service vehicle operators in Kitui have forced their way into the newly refurbished Kitui Matatu and Bus park.

This follows delays by the government to officially reopen the facility months after the completion of a lengthy rehabilitation exercise.

The angry traders pulled down the iron sheets that had been used to seal off the facility to allow vehicles plying the Kitui-Nairobi route to start operating from the park.

The bus park has been under construction over the last six years and was slated to be officially reopened by a high ranking government delegation led by Deputy Prime Mutsaers Mudavadi.

But the traders and Matatu operators overtly impatient with the government's delay in opening the park, took control of the facility after defying pleas from Water Minister Charity Ngilu to wait until the official commissioning.

The Kshs. 90 million refurbishment works was financed by the Local Government ministry under the Urban Development Programme. The construction had stalled twice after the project exhausted the initial funding. This led to a sharp rise in the project cost from the initial estimate of Kshs 40 million to Kshs 90 million owing to inflation.

However, on completion, the traders led by the Chairman of the Kenya National Chambers of Commerce, Kitui branch, Daniel Ngoima Kimanzi, petitioned the government to hasten the opening of the park.

The traders had complained that the delay had impacted negatively on their businesses and general development of the town.

He claimed that since the bus terminus was temporarily re-located to Kunda Kindu area from the central business district to pave way for the construction of the modern facility, trade has been sluggish.

While conceding that there was delay in opening the bus terminus, the Kitui Town Clerk Lucy Waema however laid blame on the Ministry of Local Government.

Waema said in an interview in her office that the project was under the Ministry and therefore the decision on when to open the bus terminus lay squarely with the Minister for Local Government.



By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

OTHAYA Farmers Cooperative Coffee Society has raised a red flag over illegal coffee dealings in the area.

The society chairman Newton Mwangi Ndiritu says the area has become a haven of illegal coffee racketeers where illegal coffee dealings including coffee hawking is the order of the day.

Speaking in Nyeri town recently, the chairman who was accompanied by the manager James Kimondo said buying and selling of coffee is now being done along roads side and shopping centres in broad daylight in total disregard of the law. He said this will soon lead to the collapse of the society which serves 14,000 farmers from 19 coffee factories. The dealers are buying Kshs 40 per Kg of cherry and Kshs 20 per Kg of dry beans.

The society however accused local police of laxity saying that suspects who were arrested recently with illegally acquired coffee were released at night from othaya Police station without conducting any thorough investigations. He added that after the release of the culprits from the police station, they went round shopping centres bragging that illegal coffee dealings are there to stay.

"The illegal practice contravenes the Coffee Act specifically section 17 which deals with the buying, selling, milling, dealing or transacting any business in coffee," he said.

The chairman said that if the trend continues, cases of insecurity and general lawlessness will go up since the illegal dealers might start stealing coffee from the farms and factories and selling it," he added.

He blamed the vice on the commercial millers. "The illegal dealings have a damaging impact on the coffee industry in Othaya and beyond. The criminal activities which are being

# Society cries foul over illicit coffee dealings

funded by a commercial miller are taking place shortly after the Government waived debts to coffee farmers worth billions of shillings and also at a time when the Government has established the Coffee Development Fund," he said.

He added, "We are aware that the coffee is being taken for processing to a coffee society in the neighboring district with the evil motive of destabilizing the society and eventually cripple it,"

The chairman said that the illegal coffee dealings intensified shortly after Othaya Farmers Cooperative Society acquired a dry coffee milling plant. The society has also been gearing up towards engaging in value addition adding that the acquisition of the dry mill by the society angered some commercial millers who termed it as a threat to their life line.

He said the commercial millers want to cripple their milling plant by making it non-functional so that the

farmers can be incited to turn against it. "We are requesting the Coffee Board of Kenya to intervene and the police to have this illegal exercise stopped once and for all by bringing to book the illegal coffee dealers who are masquerading as coffee business dealers while others operate in the name of self help groups," he appealed.

The society appealed that legal and administrative provisions be enforced on the miller behind this illegal activity for the good of coffee farmers.



Coffee farmers in Othaya prepare coffee for sale. Othaya Farmers Coffee Society has since raised red flag over illegal dealings of coffee in the area. Photo/Joseph Mukubwa

## Mgeno community ranch set for rehabilitation

By BRIGHTON KAZUNGU

MGENO community ranch in Mwatate district, Taita-Taveta County is set for rehabilitation following the allocation of Kshs.8.3 million by the government through the Economic Stimulus Programme (ESP).

The District Livestock Production Officer (DLPO), Mr. Martin Oyindo, says the funds will help initiate development in the ranch and finance renovation work to help transform the ranch into a citadel of excellence in a county which boasts of 28 ranches," said Mr. Oyindo.

Among the key projects earmarked for implementation include the purchasing of additional 190 heard of cattle. The funds will be channeled towards the rehabilitation of cattle dips, buying of modern drugs for animals and bush-clearance on extra 32 hectares to expand the area under pasture.

The ranch has set up a weighing scale for animals under a fattening programme before being fetched for sale in the local and global markets.

Mr. Oyindo said a water pan with the capacity to hold 18,000 cubic meters is under construction to help resolve the problem of water scarcity in the ranch. "When all the projects are completed, Mgeno ranch will be a pacesetter in the ranching sector in the country," said the officer.

He said the ranch has been working closely with the livestock department and has complied with a Government directive to ensure transparency in the management of the community ranch's affairs.

The ranch has also signed a contract with Kenya Meat Commission (KMC) for the provision of beef cattle to the meat processing company. Mr. Oyindo said most ranches in the area face challenges as they never involve livestock officials in the running of their affairs.

"We need to be involved if we are to offer positive improvement, he said.

## Migori fish farmers get a major boost

By JOHN NYAMBUNE

THE government has released Kshs 4.8 million to support fish farming in Migori County. The District Fisheries Officer in charge of coordinating activities Simon Munguti says that the county will receive an additional Kshs.600,000 to promote fish farming.

The fisheries officer at the same time says that plans are underway to put up a mini fish processing plant in Rongo District to salvage the sector. "We are also encouraging fish farmers especially where there is a dam to form groups and think on ways and means of making their own fish feeds," says Munguti.

He spoke as it emerged that fish farmers in the county are exploring ways through which they can come up with an alternative economic activity owing to the declining fish stock.

The industry has become fragile and farmers have no option but to diversify their trade to survive in the harsh economic times.

Dancan Kowa, a fisherman and a member of Mugabo Beach Management Unit (BMU), expresses fears over the changing trends in the business that has been his economic backbone for years. "Fish from the lake has continued to reduce drastically.

In the past two months, we used to get two tonnes per day but presently on a lucky day you can only get one or even half a tonnes," says Kowa. He says because of lack of economic empowerment the locals are also losing the sector to Somalis who have developed keen interest in the sector.

Tobias Muragiri, a committee member of the BMU agrees with the sentiments, adding that unlike the locals, the Somalis have access to loans as well as

direct links with fish processing industries; hence they buy for Kshs.200 per kilogram. Muragiri says locals venture into fishing independently.

"The kind of investment required for this kind of business is beyond our means that is why we have to rely on these Somalis. You need about Kshs.500,000 to be able to acquire both the machine and the boat required for fishing," he says.

Another fisherman, Mr. Thomas Odundo, says in the absence of supplies, the future is uncertain and blames piracy for the problem. "The lake is our core business and it is important that a solution is found to check on the declining fish from the lake," he says.

Mr. Odundo says the Government should take measures to ban small species. "If possible storage facilities should be built at the beach to allow us to sell our fish directly to the industries," he says. Abubakar Abdi, a Somali trader who has purchased fish for the last 14 years at Mugabo BMU, in Muhuru Bay, Migori County, decries the rate at which the stocks are falling. He says this has been the worst year ever since he ventured into the business.

Last year we would get at least 50 kilograms per boat but now we get an average of five kilogrammes and on a good day one can get 20 kilograms," says Mr. Abdi. Mr. Munguti says the county has a high potential but overwhelming pressure on the lake by the rising number of people who are competing for the commodity requires intervention such as controls on the number of nets and fishermen.

Mrs. Penina Okeyo, treasurer of the Mugabo BMU, says over-fishing was a major contributing factor to the situation, saying over 100 boats can be seen at the lakeside unlike in the past when only 30

would operate.

"The Government should urgently intervene and ensure that each person only operates a maximum of two boats otherwise very soon there will be no fish in our waters," says Penina.

Lack of proper gear, she says, has forced a number of locals to improvise tools such as mosquito nets for fishing, leading to the wiping out of immature

products.

However, Abubakar Abdi traces the problem of shortage to monopoly, especially by Asian entrepreneurs who own fish industries in the region.

"The problem to be addressed as far as I am concerned is not over fishing, we should be looking at the issue of establishing industries to empower these locals because these factory owners keep on reducing prices at will and because people have to make a living they try to get more fish for sale," says Mr. Abdi.

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# Mwingi expecting bumper heaveests

By KAVYU KURA

THE famine prone Mwingi Central district will realize 90 percent crop yields to the current rains, the District Agriculture Officer has predicted.

The Mr James Muchoka said recently that farmers in the area received 26 tons famine recovery seeds which they planted early before the onset of the October-December good rains.

“By the time the rains arrived in the second week of October the farmers had already planted and the crops germinated very well. Now what is remaining is proper tending of the crop to maturity. We expect 90 percent yields this time round,” said Muchoka. He was speaking to newsmen at the sidelines of the launch of a participatory initiative to drive local farmers back to their farms to nurture the growing crops to maturity in order to realize a good harvest.

A number of district heads of departments participated in the launch that involved joining a local women's self help group in a physical weeding exercise led by DC Peter Kinuthia.

The drive according to Muchoka is meant to build a “back to farm mood” among local farmers after keeping off their Shambas for a long time due to the prolonged period of

drought and rain failure. “During the prolonged drought the locals had kept away from their Shambas because there was no work to do,” said Muchoka.

The area DC (Kinuthia) led a number of government departmental heads to a farm belonging to a member of the Ithumbi Farmers Field School, Rose Mulyungi, in the outskirts of Mwingi town where they launched the initiative by participating in a menial weeding exercise.

The DC said that his taking part in the physical weeding exercise served to show his devotion to kicking famine out of Mwingi by encouraging farmers to take good care of their crops to maturity. He added that he would make unannounced visits to farms in various parts of the district to further the initiative.

Muchoka said the failure to nurture the growing crops following the current heavy rains in the area would compromise on the expected good yields. He said it was time local farmers spend more time in their farms to tend their crops.

He expressed fears that although the area was bound to realize good harvest, food shortages were likely to be experienced shortly after the harvest if farmers dispose their yields cheaply soon after harvest.



The Mwingi Central DC Peter Kinuthia (in official uniform) joins the Ithumbi Farmers Field school members in physical weeding during the launch of the “back to the farm” initiative. Photo/Kavyu-Kura

## Man who quit farming for bar business

*Peter Oruko is a polygamous man. His two wives have three children each. For more than twenty years he was surviving from subsistence farming in the Semi-arid Nyabeda, a rural village in Uyoma Kobong' in Rarieda. One day he just quit farming for bar business and leaving his wives to manage the family land, writes MALACHI MOTANO*

WHEN his first children were getting into secondary education in 1999, the 57-year-old couldn't support his family from his six hectare farm, so he quit farming to open a bar. But he turned the land – and decision-making on it – over to his wives who later turned out to be better farmers than he ever was.

Monica Awino and Jane Atieno (Oruko's two wives) rise at 6 a.m. every day to pick kale leaves to feed chickens. Sometimes they supplement the sukuma wiki, as kale is known locally, with crushed maize and pigeon peas for her 120 indigenous birds, since they cannot survive on greens alone.

“This is a drought-stricken area. That is why we must consider using indigenous knowledge to sustain any

kind of farming,” says the 30-year-old Monica or Mama Nyandori, as she is referred to by her women colleagues. She shuns uniformly heavier, faster-maturing exotic breeds to raise hardier, motley indigenous varieties – like many others raising poultry in Kenya, she has found a niche market for these free-ranging birds, consumers claiming they are tastier than exotic broilers.

The chickens are the foundation of the success the family enjoys since taking over managing family's six hectares of land in the tiny Nyabeda village in Rarieda. The two women began with five birds, and carefully nurtured them to reach their present number (500).

The two women ploughed the profits from the poultry project into dry land farming. “We grow several types of vegetables including amaranth, cowpeas, kales, tomatoes, legumes such as pigeon peas and many others. I also grow maize and millet – basically for domestic use and feeds for my chicken, and also sell the remaining produce to the local market.”

The hardworking Monica and her co-wife Jane later started planting chil-

li, capsicum, and other drought-resistant crops for export. “We have brokers who come over every Saturday with Lorries to buy the produce for the export market,” says Jane who is also the first wife. She has three salaried farm workers and three casual labourers on daily basis. On Saturdays, when she is harvesting for the export market, she hires more day labour to boost her staff to 15.

The farm has a gross income of 120,000 Kenyan shillings per week – 1,500 dollars – from which she pays her workers, buys necessary farm inputs, and spends the rest on the upkeep of her Children and boosts the economic status of the general family, including her mother-in-law and eve the husband.

Oruko sometimes helps his wives supervise activities on the farm when there are lots to be done, but he is happy to see her retain full control of the family land. “Things have changed. In fact, they sometimes help me re-stock my bar, and at the same time take care of most domestic needs I trust them. And I think I am lucky to have such industrious women as my wives.”

“When I found out that my stock was growing steadily, I decided to join a women's self-help group known as Mond Kobong' as part of the Mawira Farmers Association,” says Monica. The association is composed of 21 women-driven self-help groups, with a total membership of 750 small-scale farmers. The group collaborates with a non-governmental organization known as the Inades-Formation – a pan-African Non Governmental Organization that encourages groups to save collectively to support individual members with loans.

She is yet to take her first loan. “I have my shares accumulating and very soon I might go for a loan in order to expand my project.”

The example set by the two women supports research findings published by the Food and Agriculture Organization this month, which suggest that if women had access to same resources as men, their farm yields could rise 20 to 30 percent.

They are some of the women who have risen from a state of poverty to become bread winners for their immediate and extended families through small-scale farming,” said Jane Biashara, a community development expert who has worked with more than 60 groups of small-scale women farmers in Kenya.

According to Biashara, the best way to empower poor women is by mobilising them into groups, where they can raise funds and borrow from their own pooled savings. “From my experience, I have learned that poor women are more comfortable borrowing from ketties they own, than getting loans from other organisations. The interest accrued goes back to the same kitty thus avoiding losses,” she said.

She points out the example of the Mawira Farmers Association to which the two women belong. The group has accumulated over 70,000 dollars in capital over five years simply by members buying shares in the association at a cost

of 500 shillings (\$6.25) per share.

According to Judith Wayumba, members are allowed to borrow money from the association's account, which they repay later with interest. “The interest therefore becomes a dividend to benefit all group members.”

Not having formal title to land is a common obstacle for women seeking credit; the association solves this by requiring a borrower to get three guarantors, also members of the self-help group she is part of. The amount members may borrow is also limited by the number of shares she has purchased in the association. “We use members as guarantee simply because in most cases women do not own properties which they can attach as a security to secure a loan. This means that if one is unable to service the loan, then we go for shares of the guarantors,” said Wayumba. The project points to an essentially untapped resource at the heart of African agriculture: empowered women.



Monica and Jane in their family farm. “We grow several types of vegetables including amaranth, cowpeas, kales, tomatoes, legumes such as pigeon peas and many others. We also grow maize and millet for domestic use only. Photo/Malachi Motano



Monica (left) and Jane attends to the chicken. The chicken are the foundation of the success the family enjoys since taking over managing family's six hectares of land in the tiny Nyabeda village in Rarieda. Photo/Malachi Motano



# Kikuyu youth told to stop drinking killer brews

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

YOUNG people in Central region have been told to stop drinking dangerous brews that have killed and maimed hundreds of them.

Deputy PC Francis Sila said the use of the brews had ruined many youths in the region and said there was need for them to engage in other income generating activities.

Sila who was speaking recently at the opening of Civil Society Exhibitions at Whispers Park in Nyeri town said the use of illicit brews has put the region in to shame as compared to other regions in the country.

"I pray that the youth in this region can stop using these illicit brews. The brews have put the region in a very shameful position," said the PC.

At the same time, he called upon Kenyans to commit themselves to the new principles enshrined in the Constitution, where the lives of all citizens must be protected and respected by all.

Sila said the New Constitution has ushered in a platform that eliminates the culture of impunity and violence as evident after the 2007 elections that nearly destroyed.

"All efforts towards having a peaceful 2012 elections must be intensified as the New Constitution has provided the country with a golden opportunity to exorcise the ghost of

violence," he noted.

He added that the Constitution recognizes our diversity but at the same time emphasizes that we are one Nation, with one destiny and it is therefore incumbent on all of us to ensure peaceful co-existence.

This year's Democratic Govern-

ance Civil Society Week was being held in Nyeri town where over 300 delegates have been discussing critical issues on the preparedness for 2012 Elections.

The exhibition was meant to provide an opportunity for Nyeri residents to learn more about the contri-

butions being made by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in promoting Democratic governance.

The Deputy PC said the Government welcomes the partnership CSOs as they contribute to development of our country providing a momentum for growth and unity.



Central Deputy PC Francis Sila (right) visiting some of the exhibitions at Whispers Park in Nyeri town recently. Photos/Joseph Mukubwa

## Loan defaulters threaten future of Society

By BEKADZO TONDO

KILIFI Teachers' Savings and Credit Society is owed Kshs17.1 million through defaults in loan repayments and accrued interests.

The directors say that the debt has financially crippled the Sacco whose membership stand at 400 due to non-repayment of loans advanced to members.

A financial report compiled by the Sacco reveals that about Kshs11.4 million has not been repaid by 194 members who were awarded the loans through the Sacco's front office services.

The report compiled by the supervisory committee chairman Mr. Michael Kithi and read to delegates during the Sacco's annual general meeting held at Kilifi county hall indicated that 208 members are yet to clear loans advanced to them by the sacco.

"The accumulation of unpaid loans is threatening to cripple the Sacco's operations and the supervisory committee now wants the sacco management board to advise on the best way the debt can be recovered," adds Mr. Kithi.

The chairman Mr. Richard Dzombo suggested that the Sacco adopts

stringent measures to recover the debt from the defaulters.

"Cases where members fail to repay loans advanced to them in good time is becoming a big challenge to the Sacco and I would request defaulters to honour their pledges to avoid destabilizing operations of the Sacco," said Mr. Dzombo.

The chairman noted that most of the defaulters have overcommitted their pay slips and therefore the Sacco is unable to recover the debt from their salaries.

Delegates at the meeting almost disrupted the proceedings after it emerged that the Sacco's management

board had not budgeted money to facilitate in-house trainings next year.

The delegates said for the Sacco to run well and make profits, members have to be trained on proper marketing strategies in order to lure more members to the Sacco.

The delegates at the same time accused some members of defaulting in their loan repayment schedules and later seeking for loans from commercial banks.

They said that the Sacco must now crack the whip on defaulters so that other members whose loan applications are still pending can benefit. Delegates at the meeting also demanded that the management streamline operations so that more members can access credit facilities.

## Machakos youth calls for end to graft

By PETER MUTUKU

YOUTH in Machakos County want the government to put in place measures to curb corruption which has become rampant in the implementation of programmes meant to boost their welfare.

Speaking in Machakos town, the youth led by Michael Musyoka Muma from Yatta District claim that most projects initiated and funded by the Government and development partners for youth economic empowerment were marred by controversy and hardly benefited them.

The youth cited the Kazi Kwa Vijana programme which they said was shrouded in secrecy and no information is availed on projects be-

ing undertaken at locational level to enable interested youth to apply for recruitment.

They claimed that they were being forced to bribe recruitment officers with cash before they can be enlisted to work under the programme.

They took issue with line government ministries and other agencies who they accused of conspiring with politicians to recruit their cronies.

The youth said although the programme was a move in the right direction, stringent mechanisms should be put in place to seal any loopholes that allowed corruption to thrive.

They proposed that the hiring of an independent agency that will oversee the hiring and payments of the youth working under the pro-

gramme, while line ministries concentrate on supervisory roles and offering of technical advice on the projects.

Meanwhile the Malezi Bora initiative that was launched in 2007 by the Ministry of Health to cater for pregnant women, breast feeding mothers and children under the ages of five years has become a success in the rural areas.

In an interview with The Link, Machakos District Medical Officer of Health, Dr Jack Nthanga however says children under the programme need vaccines and close observation due to declining health indicators that were revealed during a recent survey by the Ministry of Public Health.

The initiative aims at prevent-

ing diseases that result from vitamin deficiencies. The Ministry enhances awareness of mothers and children on the need to visit public health institutions where they can receive checkups and medical supplements.

The exercise was officially launched recently in Machakos town. "Fruits are rarely budgeted for in daily meals and children cannot access the required amounts of vitamins sourced from fruits," he said.

Dr Nthanga said taking a balanced diet by families ensures healthy living for the fulfillment of Vision 2030 goals in the health sector.

Far flung areas such as Konza in Machakos County will enjoy a one day medical camp.

## Church cry foul over illegal occupation of its land

By LINK CORRESPONDENT

A CHURCH in Kakamega North District is opposed to plans to construct provincial administration offices on its land.

Bahai Faith Church Ministries has written to the area District Commissioner Gideon Ombongi demanding that the Government offices be re-located to an alternative land to avoid controversies over the matter.

The church said in a letter to the Western PC Samuel Kilele that it was unable to undertake any development since the provincial administration had occupied its parcel of land.

Ombongi confirmed that he had received the letter from the church administration. He said there was need to relocate the offices to avoid disputes between the church and the Government officers.

"We are not the only offices faced with lack of land. Even Malava girls was put up on land belonging to the forest," said the DC.

The DC made the remarks at Samitsi secondary school in Malava constituency during inspection of projects by the officials of the National Constituency Development Fund led by the board's Public Relations Manager George Muruli.

Housing minister Soita Shitanda said that cases of land disputes should be addressed by stakeholders before the County Governments are put in place next year.

Shitanda who is the area MP explained that failure by school to obtain land title deeds on time was contributing to land disputes.

The minister explained that the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) has so far spent over Kshs 7 million to purchase a piece of land for the construction of a youth entrepreneurship centre.

He said that the centre will be equipped with Information Technology (ICT) facilities to enable the youths scout for employment opportunities in various parts of the country.

The Kakamega County Council Chairman John Shimaka said that lack of employment among the youths was to blame for the increased wave of crime in the County.

He said that despite efforts being made to have the youths engage in income generating activities, which include motorcycle transport industry, they lacked capital to expand into other sectors of investment.

Shimaka said the Kazi kwa Vijana programme should be become permanent instead of being implemented on temporary basis.



By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

MAENDELEO Ya Wanaume Organisation has called upon the Government to introduce a policy to manage police posts countrywide.

The organization chairman Ndiritu Njoka said this will avoid cases of innocent citizens being tortured and confined in police posts illegally and therefore called upon the Internal Security Minister George Saitoti to urgently introduce the policy.

"We are also calling upon the Commissioner of Police Mathew Iteere to investigate police posts countrywide because the main objective to build police posts through CDF by the community was for the purposes of bringing security closer to the people but it is unfortunate that instead some police posts have now turned against the same communities," said the chairman.

He claimed that some posts have

## Webuye Council in financial stress

By LUKE KAPCHANGA

WEBUYE Municipal council risk being rendered insolvent as the government continues to withhold its Local Authority Transfer Fund (LATF) allocation for the third year running.

The move by the government follows the inability by the council to clear an outstanding statutory debt that currently stands at Kshs50 million.

Operations at the local authority now threaten to ground to halt even as the Mayor Ali Mutoka sends out a passionate appeal to the government to intervene and salvage the local authority from imminent collapse.

Services at the council have deteriorated to alarming levels with employees going without salaries for the last three months. He says that the council mainly relies on revenue generated from business permits but that still is not enough to enable it effectively discharge its mandate.

"Residents have suffered enough as the government continues to punish the council over misdeeds committed by former officials of the council who have since been transferred," adds Mutoka. The council has not received the last three disbursements of LATF funds following a directive by the Ministry of Local Government to clear the outstanding statutory debt or miss out of LATF allocations.

The finance and general purposes committee Chairman Mr. Jafred Makhakha accused former councillors and senior staff of plunging the council in the current crisis. "We are now unable to provide essential services to the public with most projects funded by LATF being suspended," he said.

The two councillors confirmed that the implementation of thirty six projects has stalled in the six wards served by the council. "We ask the Ministry of Local Government and the treasury to release the funding to enable us meet our obligations as a local authority," said the Mayor.

He said those who mismanaged funds in the council should be brought to account instead of subjecting innocent people to untold suffering.

"The question as to why the funds were deducted but never remitted to the statutory bodies can only be answered by those who were responsible then," he added. "In case the treasury finds it difficult to remit the LATF fund amounting to 71M to the council, then they should directly clear the statutory debt and give us the remaining amount to run our operations," suggested the mayor.

# Saitoti urged to introduce policy on police posts

been turned into extortion havens by police officers where people are confined illegally and sometimes reports are not booked or taken seriously.

Njoka who was accompanied by the Secretary General Fredrick Mwangi was speaking recently in Nyeri town after he met with a man who was allegedly beaten by police officers at Gatitu Police Post in Nyeri Central district last month.

The victim Eric Mathangani was allegedly arrested and tortured for three days at the police post after he was arrested over a theft case.

Njoka said the heinous acts are rising day by day with victims facing the wrath of ruthless police officers.

"It is very sad to note that the victim was booked in the police post where he was arrested and confined illegally in the cell for three days before being released without any charges," noted the chairman. He demanded that police officers implicated in the case to face the law the victim who has now become incapacitated and can hardly undertake his daily chores.

"We are now calling on the Police Commissioner to intervene by taking

action because the victim has been threatened with dire consequences by the police officer if he reports the case to higher authorities," added Njoka.

"We as an organization that advocates for the rights of men and women in general may resort to peaceful demonstrations if innocent people continue being tortured and oppressed by security officers," he concluded.

He urged the police force to reflect, focus and embrace the rights of all people whether prisoners, suspects or the common mwananchi as enshrined in the new constitution.



**Maendeleo ya Wanaume Organisation Secretary General Fredrick Mwangi (right) and the national chairman Ndiritu Njoka (left) shows the leg of Eric Mathangani who was allegedly beaten by police at Gatitu Police Post's cell in Nyeri Central District last month.**

Photo/Joseph Mukubwa

## Contractors challenged to finish roads faster

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

ROAD contractors have been called upon to hasten the completion of major roads to avoid inconveniencing motorists.

Kieni MP Nemesys Warugongo who was speaking on the sidelines of Central Kenya Regional Stakeholders Consultative meeting held in the Nyeri Town Information hall said funds used in the construction of major roads are usually grants loaned to the government and thus the need to speed up construction work so as to benefit Kenyans who will repay the loans.

"The money used in road construction is loans though many think they are donation. And since it will have to be paid back, then it is good that it is used in construction of roads

that are useful to our economy," said Warugongo.

He said that farmers in his constituency have been experiencing problems delivering their produce in the market and the construction of the roads in time will be of great benefit to them.

Warugongo singled out the 28 Kilometer Bellevue - Kiambo road in his constituency which he said is in poor state and said that he had requested that the road be given the first priority.

"Residents who use this road have difficulties transporting their perishable products to the market due to the poor state of roads. The area is so productive and produces cabbages, tomatoes, carrots and potatoes among others which need to be delivered to the market on time," said the legislator.

He said some areas of the road

have been cut-off by heavy rain causing transportation challenges to farmers intending to deliver their farm and dairy products to the market.

Warugongo said that most of the roads in the constituency are in poor condition though the vast Kieni Constituency is the biggest in Nyeri County with ground coverage of 52 per cent.

"I expected that at least 120 to 200 kilometers of the constituency would have been considered for tarmacking as the area is vast and have long roads but only five roads measuring 86.6 kilometers have been approved. But I am contented with that for the time being," he said.

Youth and Sports assistant Minister who is also the MP for Mukurweini Kabando wa Kabando also attended the meeting.

## Carbon traders should be honest with communities

By PETER MUTUKU

WHEREAS a plan by a local company to supply resident of Mbeere with energy saving stoves is laudable, it needs to also inform them on how to share the financial benefits likely to accrue from carbon financing.

Climate Pal is expected to supply over 20,000 households in the area with modern wood stoves. Even so, it is known that such projects attract huge financial benefits for the service providers that they more often than not do not disclose to the communities.

The residents are expected to pay Kshs 100 for the stove according to the Chief Executive Officer, Geoffrey Kiringa Ruku.

The project being supported by the French government will enable the residents access fuel efficient stoves in a bid to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

Ruku was addressing a stakeholders' consultative meeting convened to explore ways of scaling up the project to include all households in the entire Mbeere District.

He said the project will address the enormous challenges posed by firewood collection and environmental degradation and save time spent in looking for firewood especially by the school going children.

The CEO said the improved wood stove project comes as a great relief to the residents who are faced with myriad challenges.

He said the new technology will also reduce the amount of carbon dioxide released from daily cooking chores in the local households.

Ruku said residents can now conserve and preserve vegetation, enjoy reduced fuel costs, cleaner environment and manage carbon dioxide emissions.

Ruku said under the same project international companies have also signed a multi million deal programme to trade in carbon credits in the carbon market.

Prof Genesia Kinyamaro of Nairobi University who helped develop the stove, said the project will go a long way in reducing carbon emissions by over 50 percent.

He said the project will be a milestone in efforts to mitigate against climate change.

Dr Kenyi of Kenyatta University, who was also involved in the production of the wood improved stove, said the project will assist in sensitizing rural communities and in benefitting from carbon trading and reduction.

However, the team did not say how the community would share in the benefits likely to accrue from the expected carbon credits. The issue of benefit-sharing needs to be addressed as there are many organizations in Kenya going directly to communities to implement climate-friendly projects without informing them of real objectives of their hidden motives.



## How to access credit still a challenge to the poor

By LUKE KAPCHANGA

ACCESSING credit still remains a major challenge to most rural entrepreneurs and smallholder farmers in developing countries.

While there has been considerable growth in microfinance institutions and private commercial banks serving micro and small enterprises (MSEs) in urban areas over the last fifteen to twenty years, too often rural areas lack sufficient financial services.

"The growth of rural enterprises and the industries or subsectors in which they operate is often limited by the scarcity of institutions offering a range of financial services including overdraft protection, working capital, investment and lease financing, savings and others," said Abraham Sarfo a Value Chain and Financing Expert.

Sarfo was speaking in Nairobi at a 3 day International conference on Innovation in extension and advisory services; dubbed Linking Knowledge to Policy and Action for food and Livelihood. He said banks and nonbank financial institutions often cite the high cost of accessing individual smallholders as a key constraint to servicing the vast group of smallholder producers.

"It has become imperative that in addressing the low level of financial inclusion of the smallholder farmer and rural enterprises, information on financial services and innovation in the financial sector is brought to the level of the farmer," he said. The extension service and the advisory service offer the vehicle for delivering this financial inclusion.

"However, currently most of the support services lack the knowledge and skills to holistically approach this dilemma on behalf of the rural farmer," said Sarfo.

He said trader credit referred to short-term or seasonal loans between buyers and sellers of inputs or products, typically provided in commodity-based value chains such as rice or other basic grains.

"In contract farming, financial service and credit are tied to purchase agreements: farmers agree to sell to a given buyer, who in turn often commits to providing additional services such as technical assistance. This increased level of commitment is more appropriate for buyers and sellers of high-value, specialty products," explained Sarfo. With changing environment of agricultural extension, institutional pluralism and bottom up participatory approaches are necessary to address new challenges.

The public sector may still need to play an important role in providing agricultural extension services due to its 'public good' nature, but its role should be changing in the face of increasing role of private and NGO sector and additional responsibilities of extension services.

"Entry of actors such as the private sector and NGOs in delivery of such services should not be relaxed to facilitate the creation of innovative public-private partnerships (PPP)," observed Sarfo.

From the value chain point of view, several interventions have been designed for capacity development of actors with the Comprehensive African Agricultural Program (CAADP) that could benefit advisory services providers.

# Marikiti traders threatened with eviction

By KAVYU-KURA

VEGETABLE hawkers at the Mwingi town's Marikiti market will soon be relocated to the new ultra modern wholesale market.

The Mwingi town council chairman Felix Musya Nzung'u said that no amount of political pressure will deter the council from implementing its by-laws and removing "the misplaced hawkers."

"We allowed the hawkers to operate from makeshift stalls because we did not have an alternative site for them. Now that we have a new ideal, spacious and secure market site they should all move there before we forcefully eject them," said Nzung'u.

Nzung'u who spoke from his town hall office said that there was need to urgently decongest the Marikiti market that was currently overwhelmed by hawkers. He said in its current state and with the many makeshift stalls made from nylon and cardboard, a fire disaster would be catastrophic.

The chairman said although an earlier attempt to remove the hawkers from the congested Marikiti market did not bear much fruit after the intervention of the area MP David Musila, they will have to move once the council cracks the whip.

"Due to his political interests in the area, the MP opposed an attempt to relocate the hawkers to the modern open air market but we are now obliged to follow the council's by-laws," said Nzung'u.

The Chairman's warning fol-



VP Kalonzo Musyoka accompanied by Roads minister Franklin Bett as officially opens the new modern wholesale market in Mwingi town last August. The hawkers will be forcefully moved there. Photo/Kavyu-Kura

lows a recent visit to Mwingi town by the director of Markets development in the ministry of local government Patrick Mutua Nzoka. During the visit, Nzoka had directed that vegetables hawkers be removed from road reserves and other unsanitary sites.

Nzoka directed the Town council enforcement officer Mulandi Kavali to ensure that hawkers were immediately removed from the road reserve. He lamented that their wares end up

being contaminated from car fuel fumes and other toxic elements harmful to the health of consumers.

"We want these hawkers moved to the new market which is more secure and free of contaminants. Tests have also shown that vegetables sold at the road sides are contaminated with a big percentage of metals. This endangers the lives of consumers who are exposed to diseases like high blood pressure and diabetes," he said.

## Busia County parades its needs

By NYAKWAR ODAWO

BUSIA County is in dire need of essential infrastructural facilities to effectively discharge its mandate as outlined in the Constitution.

The County is still grappling with an acute shortage of teachers and lacks enough schools to cater for the growing student population. Further a large number of pupils are out of school and have opted for casual jobs to supplement income for their peasant families.

The County does not have a maternity wing, a theatre, lab facilities, health centers, staff housing and the medical personnel are not enough.

Poor road network is a predominant feature that underpins the border town.

A stakeholder's consultative forum organized by the Commission on Revenue Allocation heard that the county lacks the necessary infrastructure to support both social and economic development as outlined in the constitution.

There are no modern markets, bus

parks, the drainage system is poor and the county lacks fire fighting machine to fight emergency fire outbreak among others.

Speakers blamed lack of transparency and accountability in the management of devolved funds to the poor state of affairs.

Addressing the meeting, Meshack Onyango, a commissioner with the Commission on Revenue Allocation said that the new constitutional dispensation dictates that people must fully participate in the budget making process as stipulated in the constitution (Article 201) to ensure openness and accountability.

"The constitution provides room for public participation in the county budget making process in order to enhance ownership, participation, monitoring and evaluation, openness and transparency and accountability," said the commissioner adding that this will give room for harmonization to avoid duplication and wastage of resources.

He said that the objective of the consultative forum is to sensitize stakeholders on the budget making process, utilization of income and ex-

penditure.

"Such forums will also enable residents to identify challenges facing various sectors in respective Counties as well assist in the prioritization of projects that will be included the government budget during the 2012/2013 and 2014/2015 financial years," he explained.

The commissioner assured Busia residents that the new constitution guarantees equitable distribution of resources adding that since independence Kenyans have been depending on the central system of government which promoted skewed funding as far as development was concerned.

"The new constitution will ensure equitable distribution of resources to all the regions. The new constitutional dispensation has also come up with a policy to address the issue of the marginalized," said the commissioner.

The consultative forum was attended by Busia DC Mwiandi Gitonga, Nambale DC Francis Lenyangu, Bunyala DC Ali Khaliff, Samia DC Joseph Rotich Busia Mayor Imelda Obwana and local leaders among others..

## Nacada's Nyeri headache

By MORRIS GITHENYA

THE National Authority on Drug Abuse (NACADA) has revealed that many alcoholic drink outlets in the country are operating without valid licenses.

Inspectors from the authority revealed that a majority of outlets were sharing one license contrary to provisions of the Alcoholic Drinks Control Act.

The team led by Kiragu Wachira who is a legal officer with NACADA said that during a recent crackdown in Nyeri, one license kept circulating to hoodwink the inspectors that all premises had valid license issued by the Authority.

Wachira at the same time accused the police of flouting the law saying that most police canteens were not only operating beyond the licensed hours but had been leased to individuals contrary to the laid down procedures.

"The facilities are packed by those charged with the responsibility of enforcing the law even after the expiry of licensed hours," he explained.

A visit in one police canteen established that revelers who included outsiders were taking beer with the full knowledge of the police officers on duty.

"The canteens should be shut down as they were serving the interests of investors and not the police department as intended," said the lawyer.

In Kakamega county it was reported that busaa brewers were unwilling to discard the practice on the pretext that their forefathers had pronounced a curse on those who go against their will to denounce the traditional beer.

"Nearly 90 percent of brewers interviewed claimed that they risk dying if they abandon art they were introduced to by their grandfathers before they died," he said.



## Fish farming enriching communities

By JOHN NYAMBUNE

MANY communities and families are now better off thanks to the fish farming project under the Economic Stimulus Programme (ESP).

The project started in 2009, has helped put up over 40,000 fish ponds in 140 constituencies in the country at about Kshs.1.12 billion, or Kshs.8 million per constituency.

The project has greatly enhanced fish production for subsistence consumption and commerce in the country.

Additionally, it has improved environmental conservation and eased pressure on traditional fish sources: rivers, lakes and the ocean.

A senior official at the Ministry of Fisheries Prof. Charles Ngugi reveals that production at fish farms had shot up from 1,000 metric tonnes in 2009 to 9,000 metric tonnes in 2010. This year, he adds the ministry projects a production of 15,000 metric tonnes.

Kenya, he says has a potential of producing over 20,000 metric tonnes of fish from fish ponds if aquaculture is fully embraced.

The current production, he says is still very low because the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) recommends capita consumption of fish per person at 8.5 kgs.

"We are still miles away because on average every Kenyan consumes 4 kgs of fish annually," says the fisheries secretary.

The ministry, he disclosed has



Mabua Youth Group assists a farmer harvest fish in Kakamega County.

launched an eat fish campaign to popularize fish as a delicacy across the country and ensure a ready market for farmers who have embraced fish farming as a business.

Highly nutritious feeds, he says are a necessity for success in aquaculture in Kenya. A proper feeding regime ensures that fish are ready for sale in good time.

However, the high cost of feeds has pushed many farmers away and derailed the expansion of aquaculture programme in the country.

Nevertheless, the government has procured machines to process fish feeds and reduce the cost of feeds in order to promote aquaculture.

The fisheries Secretary says the machines are being distributed to farmers in clusters to enable produce feeds for their fish.

The move, he says is aimed at reducing the cost of feeds to bring more farmers on board.

He attributes the high prices to lack of enough feed manufacturers

in the country adding that the government has encouraged millers to produce more feeds for supply to farmers.

Speaking during a tour of fish ponds sponsored by ESP in Kakamega County, Prof. Ngugi said there was ready market for fish in the country urging farmers to produce more for local consumption and export market.

He said fish farming was quickly gaining popularity even in the most unlikely places. Kakamega

County for example which is known for its production of indigenous chicken, a delicacy among the Luhya community has now embraced fish farming.

At least one in every ten households has a fish pond for production of table fish and for sale.

Kakamega County Deputy Fisheries Officer Mr. Jonathan Masaba says through the Economic Stimulus Project, 2,700 ponds have been constructed in the country's nine constituencies.

Mr. Masaba adds that the government engaged and paid youth to do the ponds while at the same time supplied fingerlings and feeds to farmers to start the project.

So far all the farmers who benefited from the project have harvested fish weighing 200g-700g and earned money which they have ploughed back into the project.

Apart from creating employment for the youth, most farmers in the area have now seen the benefit of rearing fish since it takes only 6-8 months to harvest and has a ready market.

But this was not easy, according to the fisheries officer. Introducing fish in poultry dominated land was not without challenges.

"We took time to sensitize farmers on the economical and health benefits of fish before they embraced aquaculture," he says.

Through eat fish campaigns, farmers in the area have been taught on how to cook and serve fish which is a rich source of proteins

## Ababu accused of playing politics with CDF

By NYAKWAR ODAWO

THE Budalangi Constituency Development Fund (CDF) Committee has been accused of selective allocation of funds to projects in the constituency.

Crucial projects prioritized by the community have been denied funding as allocations go to projects that serve political interests of the area MP Ababu Namwamba. At Nabutswi primary school in Sisenye sub-location, Bunyala North location, pupils have been forced to learn under trees due to lack of classrooms.

The school with a population of 151 pupils had submitted a proposal of Kshs700, 000 to the Budalangi CDF committee during the last financial year to facilitate in the construction of modern classrooms but no response has been forthcoming.

The school head, Cornel Obanda says that parents too have been reluctant in contributing money towards

the construction of an ECD class that has been turned into a head teacher's office since the school has no administration block.

He says that teachers have to mark the children's books under the trees due to lack of a staff room.

"Understaffing is also a challenge because the school has only four teachers," says the school head, adding that the school requires at least two more teachers to handle the growing school population considering that the nearest school is four kilometers away from the village.

The area civic leader Samuel Juma Magoba accuses the current CDF committee of handling the allocation of CDF kitty like a personal property hence considering only areas where they feel the area MP enjoys political support and sidelining areas that are perceived as strongholds of his opponents.

"CDF is taxpayers' money. Therefore there is need for equitable allocation

of resources without bias," says Magoba, adding that Busia County Council had chipped in to save the pupils by providing desks for the ECD class.

However, Budalangi CDF committee chairman John Mango refutes the allegations terming claims that the school has been denied funding as malicious. He says that the proposal by the school management committee has already been approved and that the school has been allocated a total of Kshs700,000 that will facilitate in the construction of at least two classrooms.

"As a committee we have already approved the proposal forwarded to us. We have issued a postdated cheque of Kshs700, 000," says the CDF chairman, adding that the committee will allocate more funds in the next financial year to facilitate the construction of more classrooms as well as an administration block and staff room.



Mr. Ababu Namwamba.







# Urban Areas and Cities

INTRODUCTION

THE planning and management of cities and urban areas in Kenya has in the past been overwhelmed by a formidable combination of challenges and strains. Factors that range from lack of clear cut criteria of establishment, management, unprecedented urbanization coupled with high population growth rates, poor domestic policy performance and the associated debt burdens have had devastating impact on urban development policies and strategies. This has been aggravated by the absence of a legal framework to facilitate and promote the growth of physically, socially and economically sustainable urban settlements. It is against this that The Constitution 2010, directed parliament to enact legislations with the first year to entrench the governance and management of Urban Areas and Cities.

On the 26th, August, 2011 parliament passed - the Urban Areas and Cities Act, 2011.

The Act is a major development in the implementation of the constitution and management of towns in the country.

It provides for;

- (a) Classification of areas as urban areas or cities
- (b) Governance and management of urban areas and cities

- (c) Promotion of accountability to the County government and residents of the urban area or city
  - (d) Institutionalised active participation by its residents in the management of the urban area and city affairs
  - (e) Efficient and effective service delivery
  - (f) Clear assignment of functions
- Classification of Urban Areas and Cities

The law classifies Urban Areas and Cities into three categories

- (i) Cities
- (ii) Municipalities
- (iii) Towns

Cities

City status is conferred. It is done by the President on approval of the senate. Before conferment, the Urban area must meet the following criteria

- (a) population of at least 500,000 residents based on the latest census report
- (b) Has an integrated urban area or city development plan
- (c) Has demonstrated capacity to generate sufficient revenue to sustain its operation
- (d) Has good systems and records of prudent management
- (e) Has the capacity to effectively and sufficiently deliver

CITY SERVICES

Planing and Development Control  
Traffic Control and Parking  
Water and Sanitation  
Street Lighting  
Outdoor Advertising  
Cemeteries and Crematoria  
Public Transport  
Libraries  
Storm Drainage  
Ambulance Services  
Health Facilities  
Fire Fighting & Disaster Management  
Control of Drugs  
Sports and Cultural Activities  
Electricity and Gas Reticulation  
Abattoirs  
Refuse Collection  
Solid Waste Management  
Air Polution  
Child Care Facilities

Pre-Primary Education  
Local Distributor Roads  
Conference Facilities  
Community Centres  
Five Star Hotel  
Guest Houses  
National Hospital  
Referral Hospital  
County Hospital  
University  
Constituent University Campuses  
Polytechnic  
Training Institute  
National School  
County School  
Stadium  
National Stadium  
International Airport  
Airport  
Airstrip  
National Theatre

Theatre  
Library Service  
Administrative Seat  
Financial Hub  
Diplomatic Hub  
Consulate  
Museum  
Historical Monument  
Fire Station  
Emergency Postal Services  
National TV Station  
Regional Radio Station  
Community Radio  
Casinos  
Funeral Parlour  
Cemetery  
Recreational Parks  
Management of Markets  
Marine Water Front  
Animal Control and Welfare  
Religious Institution

- (c) Participation by residents in the governance of urban areas and cities

Principles

The act sets out principles to govern urban areas and cities. They include:

- (a) Recognition and respect for the constitutional status of county governments
- (b) Recognition of the principle and agency relationship between the boards of urban areas and cities and their respective county governments including
- (i) The ability by the board to discharge functions delegated by the county government
- (ii) Financial accountability to the county government
- (iii) The governance by each board

- (f) Has institutionalised active participation by its residents in the management of its affairs
- (g) Has infrastructural facilities, including roads, street lighting, markets and fire stations and adequate capacity for disaster management
- (h) Has a capacity for functional and effective waste disposal

Conferment of City status

The conferment process is to be preceded by an application made by the board of a municipality to the executive committee. The executive committee has powers to approve or reject the application. However on approval, the county governor has

review meets the criteria for classification as a city, the county governor forwards the recommendations to the county assembly for approval and for onward transmission to the senate for consideration.

The senate has to approve the recommendations and forward the resolution to the President before any conferment is done.

The Act has created three Cities; Nairobi as the Capital City, Mombasa and Kisumu.

Management and infrastructure in the capital city

Nairobi being the capital city is required to sustain the following;

- (a) The seat of the national government
- (b) Offices of diplomatic missions



*The process of streamlining the management and operation of urban development has begun with the enactment of the ‘Urban areas and Cities Act, 2011’. The criteria of classification, management and governance, the functions as well as transitional arrangement are all looked at under the Act. In this issue OCHANDA GIDEON gives highlights of the provisions of the Act.*

to constitute an ad hoc committee to consider the recommendation and advice as appropriate.

The ad hoc committee comprises of representatives from the following institutions

- (a) The Institution of Surveyors of Kenya
- (b) The Kenya Institute of Planners
- (c) The Architectural Association of Kenya
- (d) The Law Society of Kenya
- (e) The association of urban areas and cities.
- (f) The institute of Certified Public Accountants of Kenya
- (g) The business community.

In the event that the ad hoc committee resolves that the municipality under

- (c) Efficient transport network connecting to rural areas, towns and other local, regional and international cities
- (d) Commerce and industry

Management of Cities

The cities are to be managed by the county government but administered by

- (i) corporate boards
- (ii) City Mangers
- (iii) County Public Service

The board is to comprise of not more than eleven members, six of whom are appointed through a competitive process by the county executive committee, with the approval of the county assembly while five are nominated by;

- (a) An umbrella body representing professional associations in the area
- (b) An association representing the private sector in the area
- (c) A cluster representing registered associations of the informal sector
- (d) A cluster representing registered neighbourhood associations
- (e) An association of urban areas and cities and appointed by the county executive committee with the approval of the county assembly

The executive committee must uphold the principle of two thirds gender rule and ensure representation of persons with disability, youth and marginalised groups.

The board is a body corporate and serves for a term of five years on a part time basis. It is to hold its sittings once in every three months.

One qualifies to be appointed to the board only if he/she is;

- (a) Kenyan citizens
- (b) ordinarily resident or has a permanent dwelling in the city
- (c) carries a business in the city
- (d) Has lived in the city for at least five years

Functions of the board

The mandate of the board includes

- (a) Overseeing the affairs of the city or municipality
- (b) Develop and adopt policies, plans, strategies an programmes and set targets for delivery of services
- (c) Formulate and implement an integrated development plan
- (d) Control land use, land sub division, land development and

zoning by public and private sectors for any purpose including industry, commerce markets, shopping and other employment centre, residential areas, recreational areas, parks, entertainment, passenger, transport, agriculture and freight and transit stations within the framework of spatial and master plans

- (e) promote and undertake infrastructural development and services within the city or municipality
- (f) Develop and manage schemes including site development in collaboration with the relevant national and county agencies
- (g) Maintain a comprehensive database and information system of the administration and provide



Nairobi

- (h) public access
- (h) Administer and regulate its internal affairs

The board has powers to:

- (a) Exercise executive authority
- (b) Ensure provision of services residents



# Cities Management

- (c) Impose such fees, levies and charges
- (d) Promote constitutional values and principles
- (e) Ensure the implementation and compliance with policies formulated by both the national and county government
- (f) Make by-laws or make recommendations of issues to be included in the by-laws
- (g) Ensure participation of the residents in decision making, its activities and programmes
- (h) Exercise such powers as may be delegated by the county executive committee

**City Manager**  
The city manager has powers to implement decisions and functions of the board and is answerable to the Board

**Qualification for appointment**  
To qualify for the position of a city manager, the applicant must have the following qualifications:

- (a) Be a Kenyan Citizen
- (b) Hold a degree from recognised university in Kenya or its equivalent
- (c) Has proven experience of not less than five years in the administration and management either in the public or private sector

**Municipalities**



**City Hall**

**Criteria and conferment process**  
The County Governor has the discretion to elevate a town into a municipality in line with the resolutions the county assembly.

**A town can be conferred into a municipality status if**

- (a) The population stands at 250,000 residents according to the latest census report

MUNICIPAL SERVICES		
Planing and Development Control Traffic Control and Parking Water and Sanitation Street Lighting Outdoor Advertising Cemeteries and Crematoria Public Transport Libraries Storm Drainage Ambulance Services Health Facilities Fire Fighting & Disaster Management Control of Drugs Sports and Cultural Activities Electricity and Gas Reticulation Abattoirs Refuse Collection Solid Waste Management Air Noise	Child Care Facilities Pre-Primary Education Local Distributor Roads Conference Facilities Community Centres Hotel Homestays Guest Houses County Hospital Constituent University Campuses Polytechnic Training Institute National School County School Municipal Stadium Stadium Airport Airstrip National Theatre Theatre Library Service	Administrative Seat Financial Hub Museum Historical Monument Fire Station Emergency Preparedness Postal Services National TV Station National Radio Station Regional Radio Station Community Radio Casinos Funeral Parlour Cemetary Recreational Parks Management of Markets Marine Water Front Animal Control and Welfare Religious Institution Organised Public Transport

- (b) Has an integrated development plan
- (c) Has demonstrated revenue collection or revenue collection potential
- (d) Has demonstrated capacity to generate sufficient revenue to

**Towns**  
Town status is to be conferred by the governor in consultation with the county executive committee if an area meets the following criteria

- (a) Has a population of at least



Mombasa City Hall

- (e) sustain its operations
  - (f) Has the capacity to effectively and efficiently deliver essential services to its residents
  - (g) Has institutionalised active participation by its residents in he management of its affairs
  - (h) Has sufficient space for expansion
  - (i) Has infrastructural facilities including but not limited to street lighting, markets and fire stations
  - (j) Has a capacity for functional and effective waste disposal.
- Management of Municipalities**  
Municipalities are to be managed by similar boards as cities. However, the board is to consist of nine members, four of who are appointed and five elected.

**Management of Towns**  
Towns are to be managed by committees appointed by the governor in consultation with the county executive committee. The Town committee is not a body corporate. There is also a Town Administrator appointed on a similar manner as city manager to perform functions determined by the Town Committee.

**Citizens participation in Urban areas and Cities**  
Public participation is guaranteed in the law. The residents have an obligation to:

- (a) deliberate and make proposals to the relevant bodies or institutions on the provision of services
- (b) issues for inclusion in county policies and county legislation
- (c) national policies and national legislation
- (d) annual budget estimates of the county and of the national government
- (e) development plans of the county

- (i) and the national government plan strategies for engaging the various levels and units of government on matters of concern to citizens
- (ii) monitor the activities of elected and appointed officials of the urban areas and cities, including members of the board of an

- (d) urban area or city receive representations, including feedback on issues raised by the county citizens, from elected and appointed officials.
- Further citizens have the right to
- (a) Contribute to decision making processes of the city or urban area by submitting written or oral presentation or complaints to a board or town committee through the city or municipal manager or town administrator
  - (b) Prompt responses to their written or oral communications
  - (c) Be informed of decisions of a board, affecting their rights, property and reasonable expectations
  - (d) Regular disclosure of the state of affairs of the city or urban area including its finances

A city or an urban area is to develop a system of governance that encourages participation by residents in its affairs and can create appropriate conditions for participation in

- (i) the preparation, implementation and review of integrated development plan
- (ii) the establishment, implementation and review of its performance management
- (iii) the monitoring and review of its performance
- (iv) the preparation of its budget
- (v) making of strategic decisions relating to delivery of service

**Transition from the current Local Authorities**  
During the transition, the following activities will be carried out.

- Assessment of the existing urban areas and cities in order to ascertain whether they meet he criteria for classification and to be classified accordingly.
- All rights, assets and liabilities shall stand repealed after the next first elections
- All directions, resolutions, orders, authorization, licenses and permits will continue as though they are issued under new arrangements.
- Members of staff appointed or seconded to the current Local Authorities are to be seconded or deployed to the new system.
- The new bodies will inherit all the legal rights currently under the L.As.
- Mombasa and Kisumu existing city status to be cities in the new arrangement.

TOWN SERVICES		
Street Lighting Cemeteries and Crematoria Libraries Health Facilities Sports and Cultural Activities Abattoirs Refuse Collection Solid Waste Management Air Noise Child Care Facilities	Pre-Primary Education Community Centres Homestays Polytechnic Training Institute County School Airstrip Unclassified Roads Museum Historical Monument	Postal Services Regional Radio Station Community Radio Funeral Parlour Cemetary Recreational Parks Management of Markets Marine Water Front Animal Control and Welfare Religious Institution