Weak counties need time to run effectively

By HENRY OWINO

As Kenyans embrace the devolved system of government, fears abound as to what measures have been put in place to ensure weak counties run effectively.

While it is apparent that devolution has been designed to transfer decision-making and resources from the centre to the grassroots, it is indisputable that the counties are not equal in terms of capacity and thus cannot be expected to grow at the same pace.

However, this is not the first time Kenya is implementing a devolved system of government. At independence, the same system was adopted with seven autonomous regional governments, each with the Executive, a Legislative Assembly in the form of regional assemblies and an independent public service.

For example; the city of Nairobi was an extra-provincial region headed by an elected Mayor of the City Council. However, this system was abandoned almost immediately by the KANU government which preferred a highly centralized system.

Today the country has reverted to this form of government but this time under multiparty system of government thanks to the new constitution.

Under the Constitution, there are two levels of governments created on an equal basis. These are the County and National governments. The Constitution further divides Kenya into 47 counties with clearly defined geographical boundaries. The boundaries of each of the county have been drawn by the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) as provided for by the Constitution.

Despite the Constitution creating the two levels of government and 47 counties, Kenya is still a unitary state. Although the two levels are distinct, they are required to respect each other and work in harmony. It therefore means that the relationship between the two must be consultative and cooperative. Neither the County nor the National Government is senior or superior to the other.

The two governments and institutions established under them are required by the Constitution to facilitate public participation. The two levels have democratically elected representatives and autonomous political authority. The elected representatives include the senators, National Assembly members, the President, the Governors and County Assembly members.

The elected representatives include the senators, National Assembly members, the President, the Governors and County Assembly members. The two levels have democratically elected representatives and autonomous political authority. The elected representatives include the senators, National Assembly members, the President, the Governors and County Assembly members.

The two levels have democratically elected representatives and autonomous political authority. The elected representatives include the senators, National Assembly members, the President, the Governors and County Assembly members.

The Transition Authority must thus entrenched these very attributes in its working style, even as it navigates politically explosive issues. The Authority established in late June 2012, has been slow on the uptake, but has recently begun to register a presence. It is required to resolve many devolution landmines, a number of which were deferred by the Committee of

Kenya transits to devolved Govt

By THE LINK TEAM

It is all systems go as the country adopts a devolved system of government with one national government and forty-seven county governments.

The new system is anchored in the Constitution. Article 6 (2) of the Constitution states that the two levels of government are distinct and interdependent and that they shall conduct their mutual functions on the basis of coordination and cooperation.

The national government on the one hand is to focus mainly on policy formulation while the county governments are to largely dwell on policy implementation.

The Constitution has also spelt out resources to be used by each of the governments in discharging their respective functions. The Constitution further envisages the transfer of some of the functions currently performed by the national government to the County governments. Also to be transferred are assets and liabilities, human resources, pension, staff, benefits of employees of the government and the local authorities and public records.

The Transition to Devolved Governments Act (see special report on Page 16) provides a framework for a coordinated transition to devolved governments pursuant to section 15 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution.

And as we transit to cooperative and consultative devolved government under the article 189 of the Constitution, it is highly anticipated that the political system which has for years entrenched nepotism, cronyism and led to an adversarial governance style is set to change.

The Authority established in late June 2012, has been slow on the uptake, but has recently begun to register a presence. It is required to resolve many devolution landmines, a number of which were deferred by the Committee of
From page 1 representatives in each of the forty-seven counties.

The two levels of governments have a clear mandate to provide a range of significant services as outlined in the Fourth Schedule of the Constitution. Both governments can be taken to court or take others to court. The two governments have powers to control own budget and accounts and the ability to make and enforce local legislation. Citizens access to government services at either level is guaranteed.

The ambitious county governments therefore seek to ensure that development and resources are not skewed in favour of any regions. In some regions, resources have been used in such a way that they have not been beneficial to the residents. It is thus expected that the new leaders will focus on reviving collapsed industries such as KICOMI in Kisumu County, Rivatex East Africa Limited in El-doret, Usain Gishu County among others. The industries are expected to generate income for the counties.

Kinuthia Wa Mwangi, chairman of Transition Authority says that most counties will take three to five years to become fully operational. He adds that transition in most cases takes time before it finally matures to the expected level.

"Not all counties will develop and grow at the same pace. You must understand that some regions were ignored by the previous regimes for a long time due to single party dic-
tatorship. I am happy that the Con-
stitution has entrenched devolution which will ensure that resources are distributed equally across the re-
gions," Kinuthia said.

He notes that some regions in Coast, North Eastern, Nyanza, and Eastern provinces are still under-
developed due to poor leadership. “Unlike Nairobi and Central prov-
ince, counties in such regions will have to be assisted to bring them at par with the rest of the country,” Kinuthia suggested.

"Each county is faced with its own challenges; infrastructure, re-
sources availability, circulation of funds, leadership and management skills," He clarified. Some will de-
velop faster than others and slowly depending on the challenges and pri-
orities at stake," Kinuthia reiterated.

The Authority has not provided public in-
formation on the status of implementa-
tion of the moratorium. It has not pro-
vided mechanism through which citizens can engage in the process. An asset stripping is rumoured to be in high gear. Media reports indi-
cate that some local authorities plan to sell off assets to pay off debts to statutory institutions such as the NSSF and NHIF without first justi-
fying how statutory deductions were applied.

Human resources capacity

A policy framework needs to be for-
mulated to guide national and county governments in organizational struc-
ture and design, workload analysis, job analysis and job evaluation have not been developed. This policy will be useful in determining appropriate organizational structures, optimum staffing and grading of positions. It should also provide a framework of uniform norms and standards for regulation of appointments, confir-
mation of appointments, disciplinary control and removal of persons hold-
ing or acting in county public offices.

The norms and standards shall compliance with among others, Article on National Values and Principles of Governance. Article 41 on Labour Relations, Article 56 on Minorities and Marginalised groups, Article 230 on the Salaries and Remunera-
tion Commission, Article 232 on the Values and Principles of Public Serv-
cice and Article 236 on Protection of Public Officers.

Besides matching staffing with functions, other norms and standards in respect of staffing will include prescribed qualifications and fair administratively. Others will be benchmarks in the form of ratios or percentages that will be useful cri-
teria in determining the number of offices to be established or abolished or the diversity of Kenya’s commu-
nitites in appointments. In order to ensure harmony and standardization between national and county levels of government, these norms and standards will as much as possible be aligned to the applicable laws and regulations in respect of every national government level, and to the constitutional provi-
sions on public service.

Mr. Kinuthia, the Authority has yet to formulate a policy for county. Gov-
ernment Act gives the Authority the mandate to recruit the county offic-
ers in the interim to prepare for the operationalization of the County government.

Transition is a critical time in terms of assets and liabilities track-
ing. Experience has demonstrated that transitions are used by unscrupu-
ulous individuals to strip public assets. To prevent this there is urgent need to compile an inventory of all assets and make these lists available to the public for transparency purposes.

The Authority should have a framework that would allow ongoing public stakeholder involvement and information sharing in the Transition process to achieve among other ob-
jectives:

• An inventory of and public assets
• Ensure vetting of all public offic-
ers to be redeployed
• Effective transition of the status of county transition
• Public stakeholder input into sec-
tor functional assignment policy
• Effective transition of Local Au-
thorities
• Responsiveness to public con-

GOVERNANCE

Kenya transists to devolved system of government

He pointed out that most provin-
cial hospitals are now changing the status of their facilities to be referral hospitals. This is because all referral health facilities would be under the national government funding and not county. Another area of contention is which schools shall be manned at the county level and those that would be in the Provincial Administration. It is however clear that all early child-
hood education (ECD) schools will under the county government.

According to Kinuthia “With the passage of the Urban Areas and Cities Act, the existing lo-
cal authorities cease to exist. So there is not much that will interest the county executive. In the media reports indicate that some authorities have achieved its goals and fully op-
erational with much assistance from national government” Kinuthia as-
serted.

From page 1 Experts and the Task Force on De-
volved Government (TDG) due to their explosiveness.

The authority has been keen on en-gaging the presidential government to embrace change and to disarm its natural resistance through negotiated compromise. The recently assented National Government Coordinator (NGC) Minis-
tery Act 2012 is an example of this. The sole objective of the Act is to enable the Office of the President to retain the Provincial Administration under the guise of the national government administration.

County Transition process has succeeded in preparing the policy and some of the legislation to bring Counties to life. Several ministries have in turn commenced their county transition process.

While achieving some progress on the policy and legislative front, the process is marred by below par perfor-
mane of key transition institu-
tions especially the Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA), Minis-
tery of Finance, Parliament, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Af-
airs, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) and the Office of the President. If not re-

dressed, these failures will under-
mine the efficiency of devolution-
ning County governments and devolu-
tion as a whole.

Gaps

The resolve by the Transitional Au-
thority’s to endorse the National Government Coordination Act in its status then was erratic and not in the spirit, letter and language of the Constitution. In so doing the Act of

Weak counties need time to run effectively

enforces the Constitution on at least the following grounds.

The National Government Co-
orrelation Act fails to clarify which functions the national government administration shall coordinate below the county level. There is am-
biguity on functions; the Act seeks to

retain discrentional presidential powers contrary to the Constitution which takes a functional approach.

Article 186 and 187 of the Con-
stitution provide for the functional assignment and transfer of functions between national and county govern-
ment. The Transition to Devolved Government Act 2012; assigns the Transition Authority the responsibil-
ity to facilitate and coordinate the analysis and phased transfer of func-
tions through the ongoing functional assignment process not the National Government.

The Act has pre-empted the func-
tional assignment process and in sup-
porting this Act the authority is un-
dermining its own statutory mandate. Secondly, the Act does not justify the cost of maintaining a parallel ad-
ministrative structure alongside the county administrative structure es-
pecially at sub county level. Article 201 (d) of the Constitution provides that public money shall be used in a prudent and responsible way and the office of the President should be well advised to ensure the restructuring of the provincial administration does not impose a double cost burden to the Citizen.

Thirdly, Article 174 (c) gives powers of self governance to the peo-
ples and seeks to enhance their partic-
ipation in decisions affecting them. In supporting this Act the Transition Authority has opted for a piecemeal approach that allows it to sidestep the larger issue of redeployment of gov-
ernment staff.

Unlike the Committee of Experts and the Task Force on Devolved Government before it, the Authority has launched headlong into its tran-
sition activities without providing a clear roadmap of how these will feed into the larger implementation proc-
ess.

The authority has failed to iden-
tify the contentious issues which would undermine the process. These include rationalization of national government institutions, many of which must be scrapped as their func-
tions will be taken over by the county governments and because of existing functional overlaps; the rationalization of staff, the transfer of assets; the bequeathing cost of government and need to prevent transfer of corruption to county level. The Transition Au-
.thority is ambling along dangerously under the apparent misconception that these issues will resolve them-

selves or that they can avoid unprop-
lar and difficult decisions.

This is a hot matter that requires proper strategy and wide consulta-
tion to be done successfully. A coun-
try government would want to know the rationale behind phasing transfer of functions. For example why is it that Nairobi, Kisumu, Mombasa, Nakuru and Usain Gishu Counties that are the first to get the health function transferred to and not Wajir?

Assets and liabilities

The Authority is required to provide a mechanism for scrutiny of public assets and is empowered to reverse any irregular transfer of assets. The Authority has not provided public in-
formation on the status of implementa-
tion of the moratorium. It has not pro-
vided mechanism through which citizens can engage in the process.

An asset stripping is rumoured to be in high gear. Media reports indi-
cate that some local authorities plan to sell off assets to pay off debts to statutory institutions such as the NSSF and NHIF without first justi-
fying how statutory deductions were applied.

Human resource capacity

A policy framework needs to be for-
mulated to guide national and county governments in organizational struc-
ture and design, workload analysis, job analysis and job evaluation have not been developed. This policy will be useful in determining appropriate organizational structures, optimum staffing and grading of positions. It should also provide a framework of uniform norms and standards for regulation of appointments, confir-
mation of appointments, disciplinary control and removal of persons hold-
ing or acting in county public offices.

The norms and standards shall compliance with among others, Article on National Values and Principles of Governance. Article 41 on Labour Relations, Article 56 on Minorities and Marginalised groups, Article 230 on the Salaries and Remunera-
tion Commission, Article 232 on the Values and Principles of Public Serv-
cice and Article 236 on Protection of Public Officers.

Besides matching staffing with functions, other norms and standards in respect of staffing will include prescribed qualifications and fair administrative action. Others will be benchmarks in the form of ratios or
The Ministry of education plans to minimize its expenditure on education to allow the digitization of the entire school curriculum by 2015, enabling students to access lessons from anywhere.
MEET John Kinuthia. He is 15 years old and lives in Koinocho, an informal settlement in Nairobi. As his age mates go to look for education-believed to be the key to success, the form two students in a city school also leave for school but immediately turns to Dandora, the largest dump-site in the city.

“I normally join men, women and children scurrying about the garbage. We don’t even have gloves or anything for protection. All we have are hooks, for fishing out items and plastic bags to bring the wares to buyers.”

Kinuthia then rummages through the mounds of garbage for plastics, clothes, shoes or anything that he can sell for little money. The items either make it to factories for recycling or, in the case of clothes, cutlery, electronic and the household goods, they are resold in the streets.

“I have been forced to drop out of school because my single mother can no longer afford it. Although primary education is free, parents are expected to buy uniform and desk for their children and contribute to school projects,” Jemima Wambui is Kinuthia’s Mother. “I wish he could go back to school. Unfortunately I have no earnings and mainly sell chapatis to fend for my two children which is simply not enough because I have to clothe, feed them and pay the rent,” she adds.

Bonventure Odhiambo is Kinuthia’s neighbor, also 15 and out of school. I dropped out of school after the death of my grandmother in Western Kenya, where I was living before. I had to join my mother in Nairobi, and now spend my days watching my young sisters. There is no space in the informal settlement for them to play.

Selina Atieno, their mother, could not raise the money to buy a desk and new uniform. The school also required his birth certificate before he could be enrolled in standard eight. Unfortunately the process of getting him a birth certificate also proved cumbersome to her. Selina wishes to see her Kinuthia, her firstborn in school.

Just like Selina or Mama Othis as she is referred to while at the dump, earning barely enough to pay rent and buy food and water for the family. Together with their neighbours, they have no access to basic sanitation or health services; open drains along the roads flow with filth. They are lucky to have water points, but lack electricity.

John Webootsa is a local priest and Educator. “This area has only two public primary schools, serving only a small fraction of the population of this area. Parents have to struggle to send their children to the informal schools, which are privately run. This makes about 30 per cent of children in this informal settlement not to go to school at all. Most of them will end up at the dumpsite, because after all they must earn a living somehow. In fact, child prostitution and child marriage are so common here,” he said.

According to urban data, wide disparities in children’s rates of survival and nutritional status have resulted in unequal access to services. Yet even this information is often hard to find. Further data and analysis are needed to address the needs of these impovished and excluded urban children.

“I am therefore asking the government to allocate more resources for children in informal settlements,” said a statement from the government.

In 2002, the government introduced free primary education that saw enrolment rates double. In 2007, the government further waived the tuition fee in secondary schools, a move that was aimed at making the secondary education at least affordable. Unfortunately, the current harsh economic time, makes education to remain a pipe dream to children from families with low income.

Malachi Motano tells a story of a young boy that as his peers go to school, he goes to a dumpsite to eke his living.
New education system underway

By HENRY OWINO

The Link, April 2013

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

The education sector in Trans Nzoia County is set to benefit from an initiative that seeks to involve the community in education services to complement government efforts.

Speaking during a three day seminar held in Kitiile town under the theme: "Shaping Transparency and Accountability in the Education Sector", Philip Odete of Transparency International-Kenya revealed that Trans Nzoia County is a among three counties in Kenya where a feasibility study to engage the community was carried out.

"As a result it was revealed that the education sector in Kenya suffers a lot. We therefore came up with this forum to help us strategize and bring out clear structures of engaging the community in complementing the activities of the government and three counties Trans Nzoia, Kwale and Nakuru were selected for this feasibility study. They have signed the education development pact and are on their way to implementing it," said Mr. Odete.

He added that the public doesn’t know that they have a right to access information, and how procurement should be done and therefore lack the capacity to monitor, eradicate and incompetent staff, apathy and the lack of a law that governs this activity. The stakeholders need to take a look on the issues raised and how best to manage them and make adherence to good governance and other anti corruption standards attractive and non-adherence to the same expensive – both at the individual, institutional and sector levels.

PLANS are underway to roll out the proposed new education system of Education for All (EFA) goals in Kenya. The education system is aimed to replace the current 9.4 national curriculum.

The current system was intro-duced in 1985 to provide primary and students with necessary basic skills necessary for self-employment in voca-tional skills.

The new system is in its final stages of review and would provide children with the capacity to pursue a career of their choice depending on talents and abilities with practical skills. It is hoped that the system will prepare them for work or for higher education.

The 2,6,6,3 system of education requires a child to have; Two years of Pre-Primary schooling before joining Primary school for Six years (3 years lower and 3 years upper), Six years in Secondary (3 years junior and 3 years senior) and two years of middle level institutions or at least three years of University training.

The curriculum will be aligned to the requirements of Vision 2030 to equip learners with both theory and practical skills.

Currently, the curriculum does not provide enough practical skills and thus learners have been forced to enroll for middle level training.

This information is contained in the tenth edition of Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on behalf of international community, agencies, institutions, governments and other people.

The 2014 report reveals that one third of school leavers in Sub-Saharan Africa fail to complete primary school and lack the skills for work. It also emphasizes on the need to put education to work by investing in skills that target young people.

It further explains that over 56 million school leavers aged between 15 to 24 in Sub-Saharan Africa have not even completed primary school and need alternative pathways to acquire the basic skills for employment and prosperity. This number is equivalent to one in three of the region’s youth population.

Again in Africa, around two-thirds of the population is under 25 years old. In the world, an eighth of young people is unemployed, a quart er are trapped in jobs that keep them on the periphery of the job market. As the effects of the global economic crisis continue to be felt, the severe lack of youth skills is more damaging than ever before.

Despite significant progress in enrolling several children in school in many countries due to Education for All (EFA) goals, the report indicates that few are on track to meet the six EFA goals set in the year 2000. The goals were declared in Dakar, Senegal and some countries are a long way behind the schedule needed to attain universal primary education by 2015.

The report was monitored against six Education for All (EFA) goals, the report indicates that few are on track to meet the six EFA goals set in the year 2000. The goals were declared in Dakar, Senegal and some countries are a long way behind the schedule needed to attain universal primary education by 2015.

The report was monitored against six Education for All (EFA) goals, the report indicates that few are on track to meet the six EFA goals set in the year 2000. The goals were declared in Dakar, Senegal and some countries are a long way behind the schedule needed to attain universal primary education by 2015.

The report was monitored against six Education for All (EFA) goals, the report indicates that few are on track to meet the six EFA goals set in the year 2000. The goals were declared in Dakar, Senegal and some countries are a long way behind the schedule needed to attain universal primary education by 2015.
Nambale residents to sue their CDF managers

By NYAKWAR ODAWO

NAMBALE residents have threatened to move to court to recover Ksh 42.6 million from the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) committee.

The residents through the “Nambale Citizens Action Group” said that they will not sit and watch as public funds are diverted for personal use.

They accused the committee of failing to consult them in the management, implementation and development of various projects in the constituency.

In a letter dated December 6, 2012 and addressed to the National CDF board through their lawyer and copied to Nambale CDF committee chairman and the District Commissioner, the citizen action group claimed that the committee cannot account for Ksh 42.6 million based on the National Taxpayers Association findings.

“Failure on the part of the CDF committee to account for the said project funds, we shall be left with no option but to institute legal proceedings against the entire CDF committee and any other personality to recover the said funds,” said Odima.

According to the NTA monitoring and evaluation report, a total of Ksh 7.7 million was wasted on badly implemented projects during the 2006/2007 financial year representing 7 percent of the total CDF funds allocated to the monitored projects.

During the same financial year, a total of Ksh 5.4 million was wasted on abandoned projects representing 1 percent of the total CDF funds allocated to the monitored projects whereas a total of Ksh 3.1 million was unaccounted for representing 7 percent of the project funds.

The NTA’s assessment of Nambale CDF had not only exposed poor project implementation, it had as well revealed a worrying trend of where elected leaders concentrate resources in areas that overwhelmingly elected leaders concentrate resources.

“The data indicates that the teachers may be in school but still do not appear in class to teach,” said the statement.

However contacted for comment, the Nambale legislator Chris Okemo’s personal assistant Javan Obore rubbished the claim saying the move had been politically instigated by the sitting MP’s political opponents out to soil his development record for their own political mileage.

“All roads lead to Nambale but today no one was being served as the council services suffered a paralysis occasioned by striking workers demanding wage arrears of more than shs 7m.”

GOVERNANCE

Counties set to establish Public universities

By PETER MUTUKU

PLANS are underway to establish public universities in all counties following the enactment of the University Act 2012.

According to the immediate former chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Education David Koech, the new law will help increase access to higher education at the county level.

Dr Koech says the new law not only seeks to increase the number of universities in the country but also outlines measures that will lead to improvement of the quality of education offered by the institutions.

“The new law will see all counties have colleges to enable the inhabitants to access education in their locality,” Koech adds.

He is optimistic that the new law will help revolutionize higher learning education sector and improve education standards in the country.

The new law provides guidelines for establishment, accreditation and governance of public and private universities, proposes creation of Commissions for University Education as a successor to the current Commission for Higher Education.

Koech calls on the universities and colleges to maintain higher standards in their programmes and produce graduates who can compete globally.

“Our universities should uphold quality in their programmes and I would like to encourage universities to offer skills that are of international standards,” he advices.

He notes that the new law creates room for the channeling of more funds towards research and innovation saying it suggests the two percent of the revenue be invested in research.

It also establishes the Universities Fund and spells out the procedure for admitting Government sponsored students to public universities and colleges.

The Commission for University Education has been entrusted with the mandate to promote the objectives of the university education, advice the cabinet secretary on university education policy issues, promote and assure quality of university education.

In addition the commission will monitor and evaluate the state of university education systems in relation to the national development goals.

The commission has also been vested with powers to license any institution responsible for the administration of student funding.

Meanwhile, teachers have been blamed for poor performance registered in public primary schools in national examinations.

A report compiled by the National Taxpayers Association (NTA) cites high rates of absenteeism among teachers among factors that have contributed to poor performance in public primary schools.

Parents who took part in the study accused teachers of boy-cotting lessons, a vice which left students ill prepared for national exams.

According to the School Report Card, a report that captures parents’ views of how well their children’s schools are performing, 45 percent of teachers do not appear in class to teach.

“The data indicates that the teachers may be in school but still do not appear in class to teach,” said the National Taxpayers Association (NTA) School Report Card project officer Wolde Wesa.

The report further points to fears of insecurity in schools among parents where children, especially girls fall victim to sexual harassment.

“The Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and other arms of the Government should protect children,” Wesa said.

He said some of those entrusted to mentor, protect, teach the children turn against them by abusing them sexually.

The report also noted that some regions like Wajir have primary schools without classrooms or proper sanitation.

The scorecard, he said will provide parents with an instrument to help them get more involved in the management of their children’s education.

The school report card, he added will also be a forum for parents to give feedback to agencies responsible for the administration of education.

Mr Peter Kubebe, the NTA chairman said there was a poor link between parents and school management, this, he said has reduced the capacity to provide quality education.

The Report Card was officially launched by George Opiyo of the Quality Assurance and Standards Department in the Ministry of Education.
Government urged to equip rural schools with facilities

By BEKADZO TONDO

THE Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) has challenged the government to improve the deplorable state of the rural primary schools in marginalized parts of the country.

The KNUT called on the government to improve conditions in the rural primary schools, which are equipped with essential facilities such as enough classrooms, staff houses, desks and other requirements.

Mr Safari said the government primary schools located in the rural parts of Kilifi County have been performing poorly in national exams as they lacked the necessary facilities.

He singled out KwaDada primary school in Vitengeni division which has been operating without toilets since the school was started seven years ago.

He made the remarks when the school received a boon towards the construction of an early childhood classroom, toilets and rain water harvesting tank and a greenhouse for farming project.

The projects are jointly funded by the Safaricom foundation, Coca Cola Company, Tanga Tanga Tales foundation and the Kenya Literature Bureau at cost of Ksh 3.3 million.

Mr Safari was accompanied by the union official in charge of Vitengeni zone Mr Mwahoa Kungo noted with great concern that the school only has three teachers employed by the government who are expected to serve a student population of 240 pupils.

-“KwaDada primary school located in the remote parts of Kilifi county has been operating with only two teachers. It is unfortunate that students in this school are expected to compete equally with other well equipped schools in national examinations,” said Mr Safari.

Mr Safari said the school does not have a single permanent classroom and that children were learning in makeshift structures while in some instances learning takes place under trees.

The Knut official said that most teachers posted to the school seek transfers as they are unable to cope with the harsh living conditions.

The school head teacher Mr. Thomas Mwaringa said the school lacks better housing structures and poor communication network both by road and mobile telecommunication network coverage.

“Teachers in this school are really experiencing many challenges as we lack proper housing structures and the communication network is also bad,” said Mr Mwaringa.

Mr Mwaringa said the enrolment of the pupils to the school has been low as most pupils drop out due to lack of proper sanitation facilities.

He further said the pupils risk being bitten by snakes as they have to go to the bushes to respond to the call of nature.

“Proper sanitation facilities like toilets are very essential for any learning institution and since my school lacks such facilities most the girls end up abandoning school,” said Mwaringa.

The head teacher appealed to charitable organizations to assist the school to construct better classrooms, buy desks for the children and build better housing units for the teachers.

Ms Mwalimu Sacco, said the societies have been exploring and diversified avenues for mobilization towards the Sacco’s growth and development.

She said with the construction of an early childhood classroom the society had diversified its members and their efforts in building community, democracy and peace.

“Saccos have been exploring and seeking ways of diversifying their financial products and services by offering affordable mortgages, microfinance services and should review their approaches through business process re-engineering and innovativeness,” Nyakenyanya said.

The PS noted that the Sacco movement in the country had mobilized immense savings, stressing that it had more potential to increase the savings envisaged in vision 2030.

He asserted that under the economic pillar, the societies played a strategic role of creating a vibrant and globally competitive financial sector and enhanced high levels of savings aimed at mobilizing financial resources for the country’s investment needs.

The PS who was accompanied by the Chairperson of Mwalamu National Sacco Shen Motuka, the Sacco’s Chief Executive Officer Joshua Ojail, Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Co-operatives (KUSCCO) representative Ewylene Chepchup, supervisory committee members and delegates commended the Society for opening the Kisii branch saying it was a way of increasing public awareness on co-operatives.

Saccos, noted Nyakenyanya contributed to social economic development, achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and promoted global network of cooperatives.

The PS challenged the society’s leaders to embrace prudent business and commercial practices to reflect team work and members aspirations towards the Sacco’s growth and development.

He noted the success of the Sacco relied on its leaders and loyalty by members and lauded Mwalamu national Sacco officials and members for collaborating to realize positive development.

“Good leadership has helped to foster confidence and trust in the cooperatives societies, leading to an increase in membership from 8 to 10 million in a short period,” noted Nyakenyanya.

Ojail noted the Sacco had opened branches in Kisumu, Webuye, Kisii, Mombasa, Kitui, Upper Hill Nairobi, Muru, Nakuru and Eldoret owing to increasing demand of services and products by members.

Motuka noted the Sacco was expanding rapidly and would venture into insurance industry and other mortgage services to her members affordably, saying the members were suffering seeking the service in commercial banks which charged high interest rates.

He urged members to save and invest in the Sacco, noting that unlike commercial banks, they were assured of dividends annually to boost their morale.

The project was supported with financial grants disbursed under the Japanese government Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP).

Kilifi District Public Health Officer Mr Vincent Iduri thanked the Japanese government for the timely donation.

Mr Iduri said maternal deaths in the area remain high as expectant mothers have been unable to access proper maternal services.

He said most expectant mothers die out of complications arising at child birth as majority deliver at homes with the help of traditional birth attendants who lack skills.

“Kilifi district has been losing many expectant mothers every year due to lack of maternal services within their reach. Most of them rely on the traditional birth attendants who lack the professional skills,” said Mr Iduri.

He made the remarks when the health center at St. Teresa Catholic church in Vitengeni division.

Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) officials led by National Chairman Wilson Sossion (center) sing after addressing the press last year.

Illegal firearms pose threat to peace

By AGGREY BUCHUNJU

THE proliferation of firearms in some regions is beginning to raise concern.

There are several areas across the country where illegal possess- sion of firearms is rife and thus a cause for worry among commu- nities and security officials.

Leaders from the affected ar- eas now want the government to embark on a drive to ban the ex- ercise with a view to ensuring that the firearms in illegal hands are surrendered to the authorities concerned.

Former Kwanza MP Dr. Noah Wekesa has called for the imme- diate halt of illegal activities in communities in possession of illegal firearms across the country.

Wekesa, whose constituency is prone to insecurity, says that the disarmament of the commu- nities perceived to possess the il- legal weapons will help beef up security ahead of the polls.

He expressed concern over the rising number of firearms in illegal hands saying the general election may be in jeopardy if the situation is not arrested.

For the country to be totally freed from the menace, Weke- sa said that the disarmament exercise should not be confined to Nairobi and the Delta but should be extended to other ar- eas suspected to be in danger as a result of the illegal firearms. Un- like other political leaders who vehemently resist deployment of military operation in their areas, Wekesa welcomed the operation in his county.

The cabinet minister said that he was ready to welcome mili- tary operations in his area as long as the exercise is done in a hu- mane manner.

“I will have no problem with the exercise if the military per- sonnel can embrace and value human rights principles,” he added.

Wekesa pointed out that lead- ers do not like military opera- tion in their areas because of the interference by the security officers employ while on such important mission.

The immedi- ately arrested groups at the same time cautioned political leaders in the country against is- suing inflammatory statements. They urged political leaders avoid inciting their supporters because what they say may build or disturb peace.
The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) was passed into law in December 2003 with the aim of devolving some funds to the grassroots so that people at the grassroot level would have a say in development.

The CDF Act, 2003 provided that the government sets aside at least 2.5 percent of its ordinary revenue for disbursement under the CDF program. Three quarters of the amount has always been divided equitably between Kenya’s 210 constituencies while the remaining quarter has been disbursed based on poverty index to cater for poor constituencies.

Since its inception in 2003, CDF has facilitated a transfer of over Kshs 70.956 billion from the central government to 210 different constituencies. These funds are earmarked to finance the implementation of public projects that have contributed towards the overall socio-economic development of Kenya as a country.

However, in the past CDF has continued to operate in very contentious and unconstitutional circumstances. Parliamentarians have chosen to ignore these facts simply because the status quo benefits them. Misappropriation of CDF cash is well documented and the misuse of taxpayers’ money at the grassroots is getting worse even as Kenyans adopt a devolved system of governance.

In line with the new constitution, the Ministry of Finance took a clear stance on the CDF in the Budget Policy Statement (BPS) 2012/2013. The Budget policy statement proposes that the CDF be incorporated into the revenue of the County governments as an additional grant on top of the allocation to be determined by the CRA formula.

The BPS correctly recognizes that CDF as was structured has no constitutional basis. Article 1 (4) of the new constitution clearly indicates that the sovereign power of the people is exercised at the grassroots level and at the county level. The Ministry of Finance is therefore correct in proposing a grant to County governments in which Members of the National Assembly will have limited role unlike before. Article 175 (a) further provides that Members of the National Assembly in which the sovereign power of the people is exercised at the grassroots level would have a say in development.

Since its inception in 2003, CDF has facilitated a transfer of over Kshs 70.956 billion from the central government to 210 different constituencies. These funds are earmarked to finance the implementation of public projects that have contributed towards the overall socio-economic development of Kenya as a country.

However, in the past CDF has continued to operate in very contentious and unconstitutional circumstances. Parliamentarians have chosen to ignore these facts simply because the status quo benefits them. Misappropriation of CDF cash is well documented and the misuse of taxpayers’ money at the grassroots is getting worse even as Kenyans adopt a devolved system of governance.

In line with the new constitution, the Ministry of Finance took a clear stance on the CDF in the Budget Policy Statement (BPS) 2012/2013. The Budget policy statement proposes that the CDF be incorporated into the revenue of the County governments as an additional grant on top of the allocation to be determined by the CRA formula.

The BPS correctly recognizes that CDF as was structured has no constitutional basis. Article 1 (4) of the new constitution clearly indicates that the sovereign power of the people is exercised at the grassroots level and at the county level. The Ministry of Finance is therefore correct in proposing a grant to County governments in which Members of the National Assembly will have limited role unlike before. Article 175 (a) further provides that Members of the National Assembly in which the sovereign power of the people is exercised at the grassroots level would have a say in development.

Since its inception in 2003, CDF has facilitated a transfer of over Kshs 70.956 billion from the central government to 210 different constituencies. These funds are earmarked to finance the implementation of public projects that have contributed towards the overall socio-economic development of Kenya as a country.

However, in the past CDF has continued to operate in very contentious and unconstitutional circumstances. Parliamentarians have chosen to ignore these facts simply because the status quo benefits them. Misappropriation of CDF cash is well documented and the misuse of taxpayers’ money at the grassroots is getting worse even as Kenyans adopt a devolved system of governance.

In line with the new constitution, the Ministry of Finance took a clear stance on the CDF in the Budget Policy Statement (BPS) 2012/2013. The Budget policy statement proposes that the CDF be incorporated into the revenue of the County governments as an additional grant on top of the allocation to be determined by the CRA formula.

The BPS correctly recognizes that CDF as was structured has no constitutional basis. Article 1 (4) of the new constitution clearly indicates that the sovereign power of the people is exercised at the grassroots level and at the county level. The Ministry of Finance is therefore correct in proposing a grant to County governments in which Members of the National Assembly will have limited role unlike before. Article 175 (a) further provides that Members of the National Assembly in which the sovereign power of the people is exercised at the grassroots level would have a say in development.

Since its inception in 2003, CDF has facilitated a transfer of over Kshs 70.956 billion from the central government to 210 different constituencies. These funds are earmarked to finance the implementation of public projects that have contributed towards the overall socio-economic development of Kenya as a country.

However, in the past CDF has continued to operate in very contentious and unconstitutional circumstances. Parliamentarians have chosen to ignore these facts simply because the status quo benefits them. Misappropriation of CDF cash is well documented and the misuse of taxpayers’ money at the grassroots is getting worse even as Kenyans adopt a devolved system of governance.

In line with the new constitution, the Ministry of Finance took a clear stance on the CDF in the Budget Policy Statement (BPS) 2012/2013. The Budget policy statement proposes that the CDF be incorporated into the revenue of the County governments as an additional grant on top of the allocation to be determined by the CRA formula.

The BPS correctly recognizes that CDF as was structured has no constitutional basis. Article 1 (4) of the new constitution clearly indicates that the sovereign power of the people is exercised at the grassroots level and at the county level. The Ministry of Finance is therefore correct in proposing a grant to County governments in which Members of the National Assembly will have limited role unlike before. Article 175 (a) further provides that Members of the National Assembly in which the sovereign power of the people is exercised at the grassroots level would have a say in development.

Since its inception in 2003, CDF has facilitated a transfer of over Kshs 70.956 billion from the central government to 210 different constituencies. These funds are earmarked to finance the implementation of public projects that have contributed towards the overall socio-economic development of Kenya as a country.

However, in the past CDF has continued to operate in very contentious and unconstitutional circumstances. Parliamentarians have chosen to ignore these facts simply because the status quo benefits them. Misappropriation of CDF cash is well documented and the misuse of taxpayers’ money at the grassroots is getting worse even as Kenyans adopt a devolved system of governance.

In line with the new constitution, the Ministry of Finance took a clear stance on the CDF in the Budget Policy Statement (BPS) 2012/2013. The Budget policy statement proposes that the CDF be incorporated into the revenue of the County governments as an additional grant on top of the allocation to be determined by the CRA formula.

The BPS correctly recognizes that CDF as was structured has no constitutional basis. Article 1 (4) of the new constitution clearly indicates that the sovereign power of the people is exercised at the grassroots level and at the county level. The Ministry of Finance is therefore correct in proposing a grant to County governments in which Members of the National Assembly will have limited role unlike before. Article 175 (a) further provides that Members of the National Assembly in which the sovereign power of the people is exercised at the grassroots level would have a say in development.

Since its inception in 2003, CDF has facilitated a transfer of over Kshs 70.956 billion from the central government to 210 different constituencies. These funds are earmarked to finance the implementation of public projects that have contributed towards the overall socio-economic development of Kenya as a country.

However, in the past CDF has continued to operate in very contentious and unconstitutional circumstances. Parliamentarians have chosen to ignore these facts simply because the status quo benefits them. Misappropriation of CDF cash is well documented and the misuse of taxpayers’ money at the grassroots is getting worse even as Kenyans adopt a devolved system of governance.

In line with the new constitution, the Ministry of Finance took a clear stance on the CDF in the Budget Policy Statement (BPS) 2012/2013. The Budget policy statement proposes that the CDF be incorporated into the revenue of the County governments as an additional grant on top of the allocation to be determined by the CRA formula.

The BPS correctly recognizes that CDF as was structured has no constitutional basis. Article 1 (4) of the new constitution clearly indicates that the sovereign power of the people is exercised at the grassroots level and at the county level. The Ministry of Finance is therefore correct in proposing a grant to County governments in which Members of the National Assembly will have limited role unlike before. Article 175 (a) further provides that Members of the National Assembly in which the sovereign power of the people is exercised at the grassroots level would have a say in development.

Since its inception in 2003, CDF has facilitated a transfer of over Kshs 70.956 billion from the central government to 210 different constituencies. These funds are earmarked to finance the implementation of public projects that have contributed towards the overall socio-economic development of Kenya as a country.

However, in the past CDF has continued to operate in very contentious and unconstitutional circumstances. Parliamentarians have chosen to ignore these facts simply because the status quo benefits them. Misappropriation of CDF cash is well documented and the misuse of taxpayers’ money at the grassroots is getting worse even as Kenyans adopt a devolved system of governance.

In line with the new constitution, the Ministry of Finance took a clear stance on the CDF in the Budget Policy Statement (BPS) 2012/2013. The Budget policy statement proposes that the CDF be incorporated into the revenue of the County governments as an additional grant on top of the allocation to be determined by the CRA formula.

The BPS correctly recognizes that CDF as was structured has no constitutional basis. Article 1 (4) of the new constitution clearly indicates that the sovereign power of the people is exercised at the grassroots level and at the county level. The Ministry of Finance is therefore correct in proposing a grant to County governments in which Members of the National Assembly will have limited role unlike before. Article 175 (a) further provides that Members of the National Assembly in which the sovereign power of the people is exercised at the grassroots level would have a say in development.

Since its inception in 2003, CDF has facilitated a transfer of over Kshs 70.956 billion from the central government to 210 different constituencies. These funds are earmarked to finance the implementation of public projects that have contributed towards the overall socio-economic development of Kenya as a country.

However, in the past CDF has continued to operate in very contentious and unconstitutional circumstances. Parliamentarians have chosen to ignore these facts simply because the status quo benefits them. Misappropriation of CDF cash is well documented and the misuse of taxpayers’ money at the grassroots is getting worse even as Kenyans adopt a devolved system of governance.

In line with the new constitution, the Ministry of Finance took a clear stance on the CDF in the Budget Policy Statement (BPS) 2012/2013. The Budget policy statement proposes that the CDF be incorporated into the revenue of the County governments as an additional grant on top of the allocation to be determined by the CRA formula.

The BPS correctly recognizes that CDF as was structured has no constitutional basis. Article 1 (4) of the new constitution clearly indicates that the sovereign power of the people is exercised at the grassroots level and at the county level. The Ministry of Finance is therefore correct in proposing a grant to County governments in which Members of the National Assembly will have limited role unlike before. Article 175 (a) further provides that Members of the National Assembly in which the sovereign power of the people is exercised at the grassroots level would have a say in development.

Since its inception in 2003, CDF has facilitated a transfer of over Kshs 70.956 billion from the central government to 210 different constituencies. These funds are earmarked to finance the implementation of public projects that have contributed towards the overall socio-economic development of Kenya as a country.

However, in the past CDF has continued to operate in very contentious and unconstitutional circumstances. Parliamentarians have chosen to ignore these facts simply because the status quo benefits them. Misappropriate
By LINK CORRESPONDENT

RESIDENTS of Bondora in Kaloleni District of Kilifi County have threat- ened to destabilise operations at the Athi River mining company if the management fails to address pollution. The residents said their numer- ous pleas to the company which also processes cement and lime products to control dust emissions have not born any fruit.

Recently, the residents staged a peaceful demonstration and protested against the dust emissions which had exposed them to health risks. The resi- dents led by Mr Emmanuel Chengo demanded that the company lawyers M/S Mohamed/Mutiga convene an urgent meeting and resolve the stale- mate. “As residents of Bondora who have been adversely affected by the dust emissions, we have resolved to seek redress with the company law- yers to help find a lasting solution to the problem,” said Mr Chengo.

Speaking to The Link after the demonstration Mr Chengo said people in the area have incurred huge losses owing to the dust being emitted from the cement. He said their coco- nut trees have dried up as effects of the dust take a high toll on them. “Most of us have developed chest complaints after inhaling the fine dust,” said Mr Chengo.

An officer at the National Envi- ronmental Management Authority (NEMA) at Kilifi confirmed that they had undertaken an environmental impact assessment and established that the dust emission proof gadgets fitted at the factory were defective.

The official who declined to be mentioned said they had compiled their report and wanted the company to correct the anomaly or completely shut down the factory.

He said they had submitted the re- port to the director of Compliance and Enforcement Mr Benjamin Langwan who is to give direction on the matter.

The residents however accused politicians in the area of failing to act despite their incessant pleas against the company.

Mr Chengo said Article 4 of the Constitution guarantees them the right to clean environment and thus they will not rest until the problem solved.

Meanwhile, parents and pupils at Kwadadu Primary School in Vihiga Division of Kilifi County are in pathetic state when the school required at least seven teachers is currently operating with three TSC teachers who include the head teacher, his deputy and one teacher. Communication network re- mains poor and the road leading to the school is impassable.

The Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) now wants the government and other well wishers to help refurbish the school to create a conducive environment for learning.

Led by the chairman for Kilifi branch Mr Humphrey Safari, the union says that many teachers posted at the school seek transfers as there are no houses to accommodate them.

“Many teachers have declined their appointments as the school is tucked away in the interior and there are no rental houses to accommodate teachers,” said Mr Safari.

The school head teacher Mr Thomas Mwaringa points out the school lacks proper sanitation facilities adding that the pupils learn in makeshift structures.

The director of public affairs and communication in Coca Cola in charge of Central, East and West Af- rica Business Unit Ms Norah Odweso noted that many schools in rural parts of the country have been neglected. Ms Odweso said that the gov- ernment has failed to equip learning institutions in the rural areas and chil- dren learn in deplorable conditions.

“It is a pity to find a school like KwaDadu in pathetic state when it is located about 120 Kilometers away from Mombasa City,” said Ms Odweso.

The director said though the gov- ernment introduced the Free Primary Education Program in 2003, most pa- pils in remote parts the country have no access to education. Ms Kamän- the noted that education levels in the semi-arid parts of Kilifi County are still very low adding that retrogressive cultures have been a major barrier.

She said statistics of the 2009 na- tional census showed that only 10 per- cent out of the over 1.1 people in Kilifi county had attained secondary educa- tion with about 3 percent of the popu- lation achieving tertiary education.

Kenya tipped to industrialize by 2030

By NYAKWAR ODAWO

THE government through the Ministry of State, Planning, National Development and Vison 2030 is in the process of finalizing the County Develop- ment profiles that will provide baseline information on the de- veloped units.

Planning PS Eng. David Stowa said the overarching objective of vision 2030 is to transform Kenya into “a middle-income rapidly industrializing country offering all its citizens a high quality of life in a cleaner environment” by the year 2030.

“The vision gives priority to enabling sectors such as infra- structure, quality public service, security, science and technol- ogy, land reforms and energy as well as macro-economic sta- bility,” said the PS, adding that for the first time in the history of this nation, the government intends to consult Kenyans on the best ways to mitigate the ef- fects of climate change through planning.

The minister said the first Medium Term Plan under Vision 2030 has had a major impact in the lives of Kenyans through the provision of good roads, electricity, education, health, water and irrigation, youth and women’s programmes among others.

“We cannot afford to lose that momentum. It is therefore appropriates that as a nation we begin thinking and planning for the five-year period from 2013, with Vision 2030 in mind,” said the PS.

He said the Constitution of Kenya has created a two- tier structure of government at the national level and specified the distribution of functions between the two lev- els of government.

Every county will have its own strategic plan, therefore there must be some synergy between counties and between county governments and the na- tional government,” he said.

He added that the constitu- tion further requires engage- ment of the public in policy for- mulation, in order to promote participation of the people, good governance, integrity, transpar- ency and accountability and sustainable development which he noted are some of the key na- tional values to be achieved.

The government said that all the stakeholders in all the counties that their input to the second Medium Term Plan will be taken consideration and will form part of the medium term targets that the national government will aim to achieve during the period between 2013 and 2018.
PROFESSIONALS from Sirisa constituency in Bungoma County have welcomed the split of the constituency which paved way for an additional Kabuchai constituency.

Led by a lecturing Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) Mr Bramuel Kundu, the professionals say the split has come at an opportune time when the county is braking itself for a devolved system of governance.

Mr. Kundu says that the area has continued to lag behind in development and thus the additional constituency will help accelerate development in the area.

Mr. Kundu laments that due to irresponsible political leadership in the past, the western part thus now Sirisa constituency lacks adequate health and education institutions.

Kundu claims that the area has only seven secondary schools which he adds that are old fashioned.

“There are only seven secondary schools whose buildings need to be refurbished since they are in a pathetic state,” he says.

Kundu at the same time discloses that the constituency has no colleges save for Lwamandary youth polytechnic which he points out cannot cater for hundreds of pupils who complete primary and secondary levels of education and thus majority have been unable to pursue higher education.

The constituency Kundu says needs an MP who can prioritize middle level colleges and lobby public universities to establish branches in the area.

Consequently the university lecturer appeals to area residents to elect a focused person who can articulate and pursue their interests as first MP from the area.

“The area needs a leader who can advocate for more schools and colleges so that many people can access education,” he says.

Sirisa constituency is one of the three constituencies that were split into two in Bungoma County by the deflectant Andrew Ligale Interim Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC).

The other two constituencies in Bungoma County that were split are Kimilili and Webuye constituencies.

Mr. Kundu claims that the area has hence become at an opportune time when the professionals say the split has come at an opportune time when the county is braking itself for a devolved system of governance.

The professionals note that the constituency has no colleges save for Lwamandary youth polytechnic which he points out cannot cater for hundreds of pupils who complete primary and secondary levels of education and thus majority have been unable to pursue higher education.

The constituency Kundu says needs an MP who can prioritize middle level colleges and lobby public universities to establish branches in the area.

Consequently the university lecturer appeals to area residents to elect a focused person who can articulate and pursue their interests as first MP from the area.

“Kipau village is one of the largest villages in Garsen Constituency and it has over 1000 households and thus it could be targeted politically,” said Mr Golo.

Statistics from the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) indicate that Garsen constituency registered 28,714 voters which translated to 66 percent of the targeted voters. Kipau village account for 15,500 which is the highest in the constituency.

Golo which registered 19,374 voters accounts for 61 percent of the targeted voters while Itu recorded 24,949 forming 74 percent of the targeted.

According to the coordinator of IEBC North coast region Ms Anastacia Mutua, most residents of Kilengwani and Kipini had lost identity cards during the clashes that hit the area between August and September and thus did not participate in the registration process.

Ms Mutua said most of the residents at Kilengwani and Ozi had their IDs burnt while others lost vital documents while fleeing the area.

The coordinator said no one had displaced in the clashes something that automatically denied them the opportunity to register as voters.

Residents of Kilengwani and parts of Kipini and Ozi lost their IDs in the clashes and thus were unable to register as voters.

Meanwhile, the business community in the region has complained of low business due to the rising cases of insecurity.

The traders said since March last year, security has deteriorated to alarming levels and about 150 people killed.

Led by Mr. Gilo Shangui, who is a businessman in Oda village, majority have been forced to close down their businesses for fear of attacks by criminals.

“Business people in Tana delta district have really incurred huge losses since the beginning of this year due to lack of insecurity,” said Mr Shangui.

The traders who were speaking to The Link at Tarasia trading center complained that the tribal clashes pitting the Orma and Pokomo had worsened the declining standards of security in the area.

“Since March when clashes started between the Ormas and the Pokomos, our business has really been affected forcing majority of us to shut down,” said Mr Shangui.

The traders further said that the local people had fled the area in large numbers and this has denied them customers.

A spot check at Tarasia, Ogad and Oda trading centers in Garsen had established that majority of the people had fled with their belongings.

Mary Olwari who was among the people fleeing said she was forced to abandon her home at Tarasia to join her husband at Mpekpeton.

“I decided to move with my three children to Mpekpeton after the area became hard hit by clashes,” said Mary.

Grace Gaya said she was moving from Oda to join her relatives in Malindi for fear of being attacked.

The government has deployed enough security officers who have established camps at different joints while others are on patrol and thus there is no need to panic” said Mr Rotich.

The commissioner said they have been meeting as security agencies in the area to hold peace meetings with the people so that people could coexist harmoniously.

“One of the most important thing at the moment is to build peace among the Orma, Wardes and the Pokomos so that they can live in harmony as that was the only solution to address the crisis facing the county,” said Rotich.
New Parliament Speaker should fit Marende shoes

FOR the last five years, Kenya has had lively and enjoyable parliamentary sessions. This is not to imply that there were no dark moments. Increasing of salaries by MPs and irregular amendments to the constitution to safety cushion them, were not among the great moments.

Nevertheless, led by Kenneth Marende, who was sworn in as the Speaker in January 2008 in the heat of the post-election violence, the 10th Parliament has recorded its own history. Marende, who holds a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Nairobi, is hailed for injecting sobriety into parliamentary debates. It should be remembered that he won the seat amid a tough contest from his rival Francis Olie Kaparo who was then fronted by PNU.

But despite having won courtesy of majority support from OD M-allied members of Parliament, Marende was never biased in his rulings, and Justin Muturi, the new Speaker, should learn from his conduct of motions and rulings.

One outstanding and most praised ruling by Marende was during the dispute between ODM and PNU in reference to the list of nominees to key constitutional offices; Chief Justice, Attorney General, Director of Public Prosecutions and Director of Budget.

The context and conflict was about the constitutionally or otherwise of Kibaki’s appointment of persons to these offices. It will be remembered that it was at this point that Marende led the legislative arm of the Government to the right path of upholding the law as the Constitution provided.

According to the provisions of the repealed Constitution, it was the duty of the executive alone to appoint persons to these offices. But the Constitution of Kenya (2010) gave the legislature an important role of approving or disapproving appointments made by the President.

Marende’s ruling on Thursday, February 18, 2011 had been anxiously awaited by MPs. Challenging PNU’s argument that it was only the courts that could interpret the constitution, Marende said that he had the jurisdiction to interpret specific constitutional issues to ensure Parliament business was not paralysed.

He neither nullified nor upheld the appointments. Instead he referred the matter to a parliamentary committee and consequently threw the challenge back to Kibaki and Raila to solve it amicably. This appeared to be the best decision by the Speaker, as it was evident that no side of the coalition was favoured.

This is precisely what our new must emulate. In situations where there seems to be a conflict of laws, it is my opinion that Marende’s past record must be referred to. In situations where the MPs appear to be irrational and self-centered in making and unmaking the laws, the rules of natural justice, fairness, sobriety and open-mindedness must be fulfilled.

Kenyans are looking forward to a National Assembly and Senate where the Speaker shall be neutral and fair in all matters.

Concerned Kenyan, Via e-mail


to solve it amicably. This appeared to be the best decision by the Speaker, as it was evident that no side of the coalition was favoured. This is precisely what our new must emulate. In situations where there seems to be a conflict of laws, it is my opinion that Marende’s past record must be referred to. In situations where the MPs appear to be irrational and self-centered in making and unmaking the laws, the rules of natural justice, fairness, sobriety and open-mindedness must be fulfilled. Kenyans are looking forward to a National Assembly and Senate where the Speaker shall be neutral and fair in all matters.

Concerned Kenyan, Via e-mail

Level of police training is really deficient, uncertain

RECENT events cast doubt on the quality and efficacy of training of police officers.

I highly doubt whether the police are well prepared to protect the lives of civilians, leave easy prey to criminals?

Cases of thugs ambushing armed police and escaping with their loaded guns are on the rise.

Not long ago in Trans-Nzoia County, two policemen that had gone to lay an ambush on a wanted criminal were outnumbered by the very criminal and killed.

I have always imagined that a loaded gun is supposed to be handled in a given way so that in the event that the trigger goes off accidentally by standers are not hurt.

It was this thinking during the recently concluded elections when a police officer ‘accidentally’ shot and killed a presiding officer. Were they attacked or was the officer doing with his blazing gun pointed at the chest of the presiding officer?

These days, it is not uncommon to see police on patrol take turns to enter wineries and spirits dem not to quench their thirst or to look for criminals but to collect the daily protection fee! With the protection fee having been pocketed, the men in uniform gleefully look the other way as ‘Mututho’ laws are broken with reckless abandon.

Traffic police are even worse. Images of a traffic officer being beaten by a driver some time back clearly shows that these officers lack sufficient training. This comes after dozens of recruits got themselves in a trap laid by a battalion of ethnic militia in the Baragoi massacre and got killed.

I have always imagined that these offices lack sufficient training and regular practice in physical engagement and are easy prey to touts and drivers and other members of the public.

And the police do not help amend all this negativity, what with a majority of them still taking bribes. We hope that the on-going police reforms will also include reviewing the training curriculum. Police are society’s watchmen and need to be at their best.

Concerned Kenyan, Via e-mail

Condom advert overvalued disloyalty

I HAVE read many articles supporting the withdrawn condom advertisement. They argue that disloyalty is rampant and if the advert is withdrawn, HIV/AIDS would spread uncontrollably among couples. But withdrawing the offensive advert does not mean condoms are banned and those who use them know exactly where to get them. How would me praising the advert feel if they found a condom in their wife’s handbag?

Though Kenyans seem to have forgotten that HIV exists, the National AIDS Control Council (NACC) should not appear to promote infidelity by wives disguised as anti-Aids drive. NACC should only create awareness and leave people to decide how to act and should not force condoms down our throats.

Families are the building blocks of the society. Without strong family units, society is doomed. Thus anything that would be in conflict with family values should be avoided, more so which would appear to encourage infidelity by wives.

Concerned Kenyan, Nairobi

New government must do away with hunger

FOOD insecurity has been a major problem in Kenya, where majority of people live below poverty line. There is no gainsaying that many Kenyans cannot afford a square meal a day.

Food insecurity is contributed by various factors including drought and corruption. Many people who live in arid and semi-arid areas encounter drought frequently. It is evident that if food insecurity is dealt with, the country will move forward. The first thing that people usually think about is food. Without adequate food people can’t do much.

We can only hope that the incoming government will tackle with seriousness the problem of food insecurity. It is sad that some Kenyans still sleep on empty stomachs in this day and age.

Agriculture should be boosted in all possible ways. The government, through the Ministry of Agriculture should work hard to ensure that every part of this country is green with food crops. We don’t want to hear cases of deaths from hunger again.

Concerned Kenyan, Nairobi
UNIDO establishes food-processing plants in Western Kenya

By TITUS MAERO

THE Japanese Government and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) have established three small-scale industries in Western Kenya to process different food products using soya beans.

The UNIDO projects coordinator Dr Josephine Ongoma has said the industries are expected to encourage small-scale Kenyan entrepreneurs to buy similar machines and venture into processing soya beans.

Ongoma, pointed out that the three industries based in Kisumu, Migori and Malakisi make thousands of tons of soya beans to make them operate at full capacity noting that there is need for the local farmers to produce more of such produce.

Addressing Soya Beans Farmers at Chakol Division in Teso District, Ongoma said each machine costs about Ksh 2 million adding that there is need to increase the acreage of Soya Beans to create wealth and employment in western Kenya.

UNIDO is here to showcase machines that any entrepreneur can acquire and venture into processing of different products from Soya beans, added Ongoma.

The official noted that the machines in Kisumu processes milk products for the urban consumer while the Migori and Malakisi machines make soya beans flour for rural people to blend with other food stuff and to enhance the nutrition.

She said the small scale industries funded through the Ministry of Industrialization will be run by Kenya Industrial Research Development Institute (KIRDI) to assist Kenya to start rural based industries to develop the areas identified.

She further said it is possible for individual farmers and organizations to invest in the same type of machines and start to process soya beans and put their products in the market.

“These areas have high potential for production of soya beans and therefore I appeal to farmers to plant the crop in order to sustain the machines”, she said adding that those who acquire the gadgets can locate them anywhere.

John Achacha, a KIRDI official who accompanied Dr Ongoma said the three industries are an example of what the government intends to do to spread small scale industries in all counties to spur economic growth and create employment in rural areas.

An Agronomist from Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI), Kakamega Centre Mr Michael Akwale said that the Centre Director Dr Francis Mayekhi, said his organization in collaboration with International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (ICTA) and the Ministry of Agriculture have developed high yielding quality soya bean seeds through members of community based organizations known as OKOA to sell to farmers in Western Kenya to boost production of the crop.

Akwale said that through KARI Seed Unit, KARI Kakamega had assisted farmers to multiply clean soya bean varieties recommended in Western Kenya Region adding that this came up after farmers had mixed all the varieties they had received earlier.

He said that Obanya Soya bean crop was initially started in the area to enrich the exhausted soil and reduce striga weed but farmers continued planting of the crop without knowledge of its viability, and ended up mixing it with the traditional varieties.

“The problem caused their crop not to fetch much money as different buyers interested on particular varietes,” Akwale said adding that after sorting out the problem, farmers have a ready market and must therefore produce enough soya beans to sustain the three industries in Western Kenya.

Akwale told farmers that western Kenya had been allocated a big portion of the soya beans to produce and supply to the industries and cautioned that unless the local farmers produced the quota they have been allocated, other farmers from Central Rift Valley had agreed to supply their quota to supply the industries with the raw material required.

Mr Orolo at the same time said western Kenya is required to produce 3,240 tonnes, Nyamira (537) Rift Valley (133), Central (100) and Eastern (199). A local farmer and coordinator of OKOA organization Mr Disamus Okale, who grows more than three acres of the crop, urged his counterparts to produce quality soya beans to supply the industries.

“We have been crying over lack of a market and now we have regular buyer through UNIDOR and others, it is up to us to produce enough soya beans,” he said at the occasion that was also addressed by ICTA official Mr Robert Marga, Mr John Muka- llama and the Chairman of Western Grain Growers Association Mr Dohi Okalo who said farmers in Teso are expected to harvest 45 tonnes of the first quality seeds which his organization gave them to propagate and sell to other farmers in the region.

Encouraging farmers to grow the crop, Okalo said Soya beans is a highly nutritious crop grown in Western Kenya and parts of Eastern, Rift Valley and Central provinces and named some of the varieties as Gazelle, SB 3 and SB 19.

Child abuse rampant in Busia County, says official

By NYAKWAR ODAROW

BUSIA County registered a total of 4,000 child neglect cases last year, the director of child services has said.

Addressing stakeholders at a Busia hotel recently, the Director of Child Services, Mr. Edward Karisa said his department had registered the rising child neglect cases in the County to poor parental skills, ignorance of the child rights, polygamous marriages and poverty.

He said children whose mothers are inherited widows are the hardest hit by the vice because the widows are quickly abandoned once the responsibility of raising the children becomes a reality.

“Cases of defilement are on the rise not only in Busia County, but the whole country. In 2013 cases of defilement were handled out of which 112 had been finalized with the sentences being meted on the off-enders ranging from life imprisonment to three years for child offend- ers,” said the director.

The director further attributed ris- ing child neglect cases to complacency on the part of parents and school heads who shield the perpetrators after being bribed by the officers, poor investigations and hence weak prosecution leading to acquittal of the culprits and lack of coordination among judicial stakeholders in the provision of efficient justice to the af-fected children.

“Alcohol and drug abuse have also contributed to the child abuse including incest, defilement and neglect. The situation is grave in Teso district where alcohol abuse is a long time cultural activity and the community does not consider it a crime,” said Hassan.

Hassan added the National Coun-cil for Children’s Services created by the Children Act 2001 will exercise general supervision and control over planning, financing and coordination of child rights and welfare activities to ensure children are protected from abuse and neglect.

“According to the 2009 census, the population of Kenya stands at 38.8million with children translating to 26.6million which represents 53 percent whereas the population of Busia County was 0.7million out of which 0.3 million of the population were children representing 48.8per-cent,” he said.

The National Council for Children Services chairperson Helen Waweru who also addressed the occasion said cases of sexual abuse targeting children have been on the rise in the country up the variant government and UNICEF study revealing that one in every three girls and one in every five boys aged between 18 and 24 have been sexually abused before reaching 18 years.

The council chair added that the grim picture is worsened by the fact that most of the cases are perpetrated by family members, neighbours and people who are supposed to be trusted to care for the children such chiefs, teachers, medical staff and security personnel.

“Most cases of child abuse and ne-glect go unreported due to the culture of silence mainly blamed on stigma and cultural beliefs,” according to the chairperson adding that the media is one of the key stakeholders in child protection.

Residents irked by council’s move to halt funding

By BEKADZO TOND0

KILIFI residents have protested the Kilifi County Council’s move to halt the funding of 31 community projects that were initially allocated soya beans by the Local Authority Transfer Fund (LATF).

The residents say that they were not involved in the council’s decision to change from the agreed plan and were only notified of the new development during a meeting at the council to approve new projects that were slated for implementation.

The county clerk Mr Elijah Mun-gaya said the council had invited two representatives from each ward to approve projects to be funded through LATF during the 2013/2014 financial year.

However, trouble started when the department of local government and community services proposed projects that had not been proposed at the grassroots level.

Led by Mr. Edward Karisa, the ward representatives demanded to know the rationale behind the seek- ing of proposals at the ward level over projects that had been approved.

“The council staff visited us in our respective wards and requested us to submit our project proposals but we are shocked to learn that all the projects we recommended will not receive funding,” said Mr Ka- risa.

Efforts by Mr. Kazungu to ex- plain why the projects had been changed fell on deaf ears.

“After we receive the project proposals, the council forwarded the list to various government ministries for technical advice only to be dropped at this point,” said Mr Kazungu.

Civil civic leaders led by Kaya Fungo and the Kilifi County Board of Development Chairman Mr Mwangi Akhwalde said the council’s decision was an attempt by the local authority by the basic advice they receive from different ministries to avoid wastage of funds.

“We are concerned that most of the cases of project proposals by residents at the ward level have now been changed and we want to know why the work was not consulted on the same,” said Mr Mwangi.

However the chairman to the council Mr Anthony Kinji denied claims that the council was forcing projects on the communities.

“Every action by the local authority is based on the basic advice they receive from different ministries to avoid wastage of funds but even after the consultation, the council is forced to alter initial plans,” said Mr Kinji.
Kaya elders roped in bid to conserve sacred forests

BY BEKADZO TONDO

KAYA elders have formed a council to promote the protection and conservation of sacred forests in the area.

The council, known as the Kilifi County Kaya Elders Council (KCK-EC) will work closely with the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage to ensure the cultural values of the Mijikenda communities in coast region are conserved.

Led by the council chairman Mr Hussein Matsila they expressed dismay over the massive destruction of sacred forests in Coast region and said they will not relent in their bid to protect them.

“We have witnessed massive destruction of the protected forest cover in coast region and the council will now try to put measures in place to conserve them,” said Mr Matsila.

They made the remarks at Coast Development Authority social hall in Kilifi town after attending a four days workshop for the Kaya elders coordinated by World Wide Fund for nature (WWF) in collaboration with Coast Forest Conservation Unit (CFCU).

According to the land laws Kaya shrines like the kaya forest due to failure to incorporate the Kaya elders.

Mr Kimaru said the government through the Ministry of Culture and National heritage has not been able to effective gazette the forested shrines like the kaya forest due to failure to incorporate the Kaya elders.

The government has ever however come up with a 2 years program that seek to build the capacity of Kaya elders from Kilifi, Lamu and Lamu counties so that they have powers to manage the gazetted forest covers mostly the Kayas,” said Kimaru.

The officer said apart from capacity building the Kaya elders, there was need to bring the elders a group so that they can be recognized by the government and have official say in the forests management.

“As a sponsor of this project we noticed the importance of bringing the Kaya elders into a group to do some capacity building on the members to know their roles in forest protection and conservation management process it is very clear that they have been left behind in the entire management,” said Mr Kimaru.

The council adviser Mr. Daniel Mwawara lamented that private developers had encroached into kaya forest land and destroyed the forest covers.

Mr Mwawara from Kaya Madzimuya in Rabai gave an example of Kaya Chonyi KayaKambie and Kaya bendjike in Rabai which had been encroached by residents who had cleared the indigenous trees to create room for farming and residential sites.

He said the government needs to protect and conserve the forest covers mostly the kaya shrines but we cannot be effective due to the biting poverty and support from the government,” said Mr Mwawara.

Mr Mwawara said the Kaya elders should be empowered financially to play effective roles in the conservation of the forests.

He said though most Kaya elders are elderly people in the society they do not receive the Ksh.1500 monthly stipend for the elderly through the senior citizens payment program.

He said the council needs to support them to effectively protect and conserve the forests and protect them from wanton destruction.

Kenya performs poorly on corruption index

BY AGGREY BUCHUNJU

KENYA still ranks high in corruption related matters both globally and in Africa.

The Transparency International (TI) global movement against corruption has ranked Kenya number 139 out of 176 countries in the global Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2012.

Based on expert opinion, countries are scored from 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). Kenya scored 29, indicating a continued deterioration of the anti-graft war.

The CPI measures the perceived levels of public sector corruption in countries worldwide.

In the report released last December, two thirds of the 176 countries ranked in the 2012 index scored below 50. Kenya scored 27 and thus fell way below the 50 percent mark, an indication that public institutions need to be more transparent and officials more accountable.

It is imperative to note that only five of the 48 African countries ranked in the 2012 CPI were found to be cleaner than Kenya.

The index is expected to thus the least corrupt country in Sub-Saharan Africa was Botswana which was ranked number 30 with a score of 65 marks.

Other African countries that scored above 50 include Cape Verde which scored 60, Mauritius which scored 57 and Rwanda which scored 53. Among the East Africa Community countries Burundi was the most corrupt country followed very closely by Kenya.

Kenya is also among the 35 lowest scoring countries failing in the category of countries widely perceived as either endemically corrupt or failed. Lack of progress in tackling graft is however being blamed on lack of political will and the slow pace of reforms in critical sectors despite implementation of the constitution of Kenya 2010.

TI-Kenya Executive Director Mr.Samuel Kimeu said that Kenya’s poor ranking was an indication that reforms brought in by the constitution of Kenya 2010 have not yet yielded fruits in the fight against corruption.

Consequently, Kimeu urged the political and economic elite to allow enforcement institutions to do their work without interference.

“Our main problem remains lack of enforcement. There are still too many unresolved scandals. If perpetrators of corruption go unpunished, it is unlikely that Kenya will ever get corruption under control,” he observed.

Kimeu lauded the reforms in the Judiciary saying that they hold great promise if sustained and scaled up.

He however lamented that the delay in reforming the police force where highest incidences of bribery are encountered saying the move was greatly hampering the fight against corruption and cementing doubts on official commitment to fight corruption.

“Comprehensive reforms in the public sector are also needed especially as devolution kicks in post the 2013 general elections,” he added.

The CPI 2012 results demonstrate that Kenyans despite the Government’s declaration of zero tolerance to corruption and implementation of the constitution of Kenya 2012, continue to pay the highest cost of the vice.

Corruption generally comprises of illegal activities which are deliber-ately hidden and only come to light through scandals, investigations or prosecutions.

The National Government Coordination Bill that seeks to retain chiefs and their assistants in their current roles contravenes the will of Kenyans.

When Kenyans overwhelmingly voted for the Constitution of Kenya 2010, they sealed the fate of the provincial administration in the devolved government structure. The people of Kenya particularly ordinary citizens thought time had finally come for them to do away with the administra-tors who were fond of abusing power and corruption.

For many years the chiefs and their assistants had used the colonial Chief’s Act to grab property and mis-handle people with impunity.

The removal or redelopment of the provincial administrators as en-shrined in the Constitution of Kenya 2010 thus came as a big relief to Kenyans who had already lost confidence in the colonial oriented, dictatorial and highly corrupt administrators.

The area also records high rates of absenteeism and truancy as pupils provide labour in the vast green grams, maize and cotton fields.

“IT is shocking that one of the girls was said medical to a parent at the school, another one to a local business man while a third one eloped with a tout. The fourth aged 17 is said to have been impregnated by a Class Seven school mate,” said Mwembeni.

A 10 year old boy had stayed out of school for many years where he was engaged in business and only re- sponded late to school.

A teacher who requested anony-mity said though the school has 334 pupils, the number de-clines with time and in some years, the school can even count an average of 200 pupils.

Department hunts for parents accused of child neglect

By PETER MUTUKU

THE children department in Embu has launched a manhunt for 17 parents accused of neglecting and abandoning their children.

Embu West District Children Officer Irene Komu said that the department plans to apply for warrants of arrest against 11 women and seven men for allegedly failing to show up in her office and violating the rights of the minors.

Speaking to the media in her office, Ms Komu said the move seeks to protect the rights of children and thus individuals who infringe on the rights of children will not be tolerated.

She warned that individuals who defy summons by her office will face the law and urged them to come and provide information.

“It is unconstitutional for any parent to abandon a child on whatever circumstance, be it economic hardship or by virtue of parents separation. It is the responsibility of the parents to take care and provide for their children,” said Komu.

She said the Constitution guarantees the right of every child and all parents must abide by the law.

Ms Komu spoke as Children office- rers assisted by local Provincial administration helped to rescue four school girls who had been married off in Makama area, Mbeere South District.

Two girls who are in Class Seven and Class Eight at Ndune Primary School were already pregnant upon their rescue.

Area Children’s Officer Grace Mwawara said the Kaya elders have formed a council to provide information that had established that one of the girls had been defiled while examinations on others will be conducted later.

The officer lamented that early marriages are deeply rooted in the area and are being conducted secretly. She said the department has been working closely with the teachers to sensitize the girls on pregnancy and life skills.

The area also records high rates of absenteeism and truancy as pupils provide labour in the vast green grams, maize and cotton fields.
Ahadi opposes hefty retirement packages

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

AHADI Kenya Trust has strongly opposed the proposed hefty retirement package for President Kitui, Prime Minister Raila Odinga, VP Kalonzo Musyoka and other State officer’s.

The Non-Governmental Organisation Executive Director Stanley Kamau said the proposal should be rejected and instead be awarded to the old people in the country who are languishing in poverty.

He noted that many poor old people have been suffering for lack of basic needs like food, water and shelter and urged the Government to set such amount of money that the retired fund introduced few years ago never materialized.

“We know many of these old people are retired officers who have served the country for many years. Why are the rich receiving such huge amount of money while the people are left suffering? They receive very little pension which is not enough. The funds for the age never reach there,” said Kamau.

He was speaking at Mweiga-Township, Kieni West district in Nyeri County during the end of the year function organized by Purity Care Foundation.

The function organized by Purity Care Foundation was attended by over 220 senior citizens who were treated in music and funfair before being given donations.

The foundation Chief Executive Joyce Kairu urged Kenyans to join hands in caring for the aged.

“We would like the government to implement fully the pilot project of the elderly so that the old can benefit. They are suffering so much since they also need healthcare and basic needs,” said Kairu.

The Bill proposing the send off package would also benefit House of Sacco.

The former Vice Chairman of the National Assembly Mr. Ibrahim Diba.

The civic leader said stray elephants sometimes lack water within the national park as a lasting solution to the human and wildlife conflict problem.

Mr Mwambire who is also the county councillor for Vitengeni ward said apart from the wildebeests destroying farm crops they also pose danger to the human lives.

The civic leader said stray elephants last year killed a woman who was walking to fetch water and injured another.

He said the area has not been secure enough for people to go on with their daily activities including going to their farms as the animals can ambush them any time.

“I think the best solution to control human and wildlife conflicts is for KWS to erect an electric fence around the national park so that residents can continue with their lives without fear of attack by the marauding wild beasts,” said Mr. Mwambire.

The idea to erect the electric fence around the national park was welcomed by Ganze District Commissioner Mr. Ibrahim Diba.

Mr. Diba said wild beasts normally sneak out of the national park to search for water and food and said if the area gets fenced off the problem could be solved.

The administrator said the animals sometimes lack water within the parks due to drought and said there was need for KWS to construct water pans and avail more water sources for the beasts.

“The few water pans found within the national park normally dry up during drought periods and thus the wild animals are forced to look for alternative ways of getting the commodity thus their sneaking out,” said Mr. Diba.

Mr Diba urged KWS personnel to intensify their patrols along the park boundaries to control the wild beasts from sneaking into farms.

He said that could serve as a temporary solution in controlling the human wildlife conflict which is normally experienced in some part of Ganze district.

“As KWS looks for a long lasting solution to control human and wildlife conflict within the borders of Tsavo National park, the KWS asked the former Vice Chairman of the National Assembly Mr. Ibrahim Diba to carry out a pilot project of erecting electric fence within the park,” said Mr Diba.

Influx of illegal firearms pose threat in Kilifi

By BEKADZO TONDO

THE government has beefed up security along border points to stem influx of illegal firearms in the country.

Kilifi County Commissioner Mr Erastus Ekidor said most illegal firearms sneak into the country through the porous Somali border end up in wrong hands and in most cases are used to fan criminal activities.

“Criminal gangs such as Al Shabab have taken advantage of the porous border point between Kenya and Somalia to sneak arms which are later used to fan crime in the country” said Mr Ekidor.

He said the government is working closely with the contractors who have been awarded contracts to build security matters to the police.

“The other project include the setting up of a 2.6-kilometre rural access road from Bakiri –Nabuku town. The project will ensure a 13 km rural access road to connect the existing road network, dispensaries, improvement of drainage systems and open spaces and garbage collection among others.,” said Ekidor.

The works officer at the same time urged local residents to act as watch-dogs by monitoring the activities of both the project management committees from their respective areas and any other contractors who are to avoid shoddy work on the projects that were started in July 2012 and expected to be completed by July 2013.

The rural access roads being undertaken include a three kilometre road in Busia, 1.5 kilometre road in Busia –Bunala in Busia constituency and a 2.6-kilometre rural access road from Bakiri –Nabuku town in Yumula constituency in Lamu county.

The other project include the construction of a paediatric ward at Thika Level Five hospital which when completed is expected to serve the locals who had been travelling all the way to Thika Regional Referral hospital for medical attention,” he said.

“Once completed, the health facility will save the locals especially the low income sections of the society from travelling all the way to Thika Regional Referral hospital,” he said.

KWS urged to curb human wildlife conflict in Ganze

By BEKADZO TONDO

KENYA Wildlife Services has been challenged to erect an electric fence around the Tsavo East National Park to contain the wildebeests within their restricted zones and curb human and wildlife conflicts.

Leaders from Ganze district argued that lack of water sources within the park had forced the wildebeests mostly elephants to sneak out to search for the essential commodity.

Led by former Mitangani Ward councillor Mr. Mangi, the local leaders told the Park of the hardships the local people are facing due to the wildebeests which sometimes lack water within the national park as a lasting solution to the human and wildlife conflict problem.

Mr Mangi who is also the county councillor for Vitengeni ward said apart from the wildebeests destroying farm crops they also pose danger to the human lives.

The civic leader said stray elephants last year killed a woman who was walking to fetch water and injured another.

He said the area has not been secure enough for people to go on with their daily activities including going to their farms as the animals can ambush them any time.

“I think the best solution to control human and wildlife conflicts is for KWS to erect an electric fence around the national park so that residents can continue with their lives without fear of attack by the marauding wild beasts,” said Mr. Mangi.

The idea to erect the electric fence around the national park was welcomed by Ganze District Commissioner Mr. Ibrahim Diba.

Mr. Diba said wild beasts normally sneak out of the national park to search for water and food and said if the area gets fenced off the problem could be solved.

The administrator said the animals sometimes lack water within the parks due to drought and said there was need for KWS to construct water pans and avail more water sources for the beasts.

“The few water pans found within the national park normally dry up during drought periods and thus the wild animals are forced to look for alternative ways of getting the commodity thus their sneaking out,” said Mr. Diba.

Mr Diba urged KWS personnel to intensify their patrols along the park boundaries to control the wild beasts from sneaking into farms.

He said that could serve as a temporary solution in controlling the human wildlife conflict which is normally experienced in some part of Ganze district.

“As KWS looks for a long lasting solution to control human and wildlife conflict within the borders of Tsavo National park, the KWS asked the local leaders to carry out a pilot project of erecting electric fence within the park,” said Mr Diba.

Ahadi opposes hefty retirement packages

The former Vice Chairman of the National Assembly Mr. Ibrahim Diba.

The civic leader said stray elephants sometimes lack water within the national park as a lasting solution to the human and wildlife conflict problem.

Mr Mwambire who is also the county councillor for Vitengeni ward said apart from the wildebeests destroying farm crops they also pose danger to the human lives.

The civic leader said stray elephants last year killed a woman who was walking to fetch water and injured another.

He said the area has not been secure enough for people to go on with their daily activities including going to their farms as the animals can ambush them any time.

“I think the best solution to control human and wildlife conflicts is for KWS to erect an electric fence around the national park so that residents can continue with their lives without fear of attack by the marauding wild beasts,” said Mr. Mwambire.

The idea to erect the electric fence around the national park was welcomed by Ganze District Commissioner Mr. Ibrahim Diba.

Mr. Diba said wild beasts normally sneak out of the national park to search for water and food and said if the area gets fenced off the problem could be solved.

The administrator said the animals sometimes lack water within the parks due to drought and said there was need for KWS to construct water pans and avail more water sources for the beasts.

“The few water pans found within the national park normally dry up during drought periods and thus the wild animals are forced to look for alternative ways of getting the commodity thus their sneaking out,” said Mr. Diba.

Ahadi opposes hefty retirement packages

The former Vice Chairman of the National Assembly Mr. Ibrahim Diba.

The civic leader said stray elephants sometimes lack water within the national park as a lasting solution to the human and wildlife conflict problem.

Mr Mwambire who is also the county councillor for Vitengeni ward said apart from the wildebeests destroying farm crops they also pose danger to the human lives.

The civic leader said stray elephants last year killed a woman who was walking to fetch water and injured another.

He said the area has not been secure enough for people to go on with their daily activities including going to their farms as the animals can ambush them any time.

“I think the best solution to control human and wildlife conflicts is for KWS to erect an electric fence around the national park so that residents can continue with their lives without fear of attack by the marauding wild beasts,” said Mr. Mwambire.

The idea to erect the electric fence around the national park was welcomed by Ganze District Commissioner Mr. Ibrahim Diba.

Mr. Diba said wild beasts normally sneak out of the national park to search for water and food and said if the area gets fenced off the problem could be solved.

The administrator said the animals sometimes lack water within the parks due to drought and said there was need for KWS to construct water pans and avail more water sources for the beasts.

“The few water pans found within the national park normally dry up during drought periods and thus the wild animals are forced to look for alternative ways of getting the commodity thus their sneaking out,” said Mr. Diba.

Ahadi opposes hefty retirement packages

The former Vice Chairman of the National Assembly Mr. Ibrahim Diba.

The civic leader said stray elephants sometimes lack water within the national park as a lasting solution to the human and wildlife conflict problem.

Mr Mwambire who is also the county councillor for Vitengeni ward said apart from the wildebeests destroying farm crops they also pose danger to the human lives.

The civic leader said stray elephants last year killed a woman who was walking to fetch water and injured another.

He said the area has not been secure enough for people to go on with their daily activities including going to their farms as the animals can ambush them any time.

“I think the best solution to control human and wildlife conflicts is for KWS to erect an electric fence around the national park so that residents can continue with their lives without fear of attack by the marauding wild beasts,” said Mr. Mwambire.

The idea to erect the electric fence around the national park was welcomed by Ganze District Commissioner Mr. Ibrahim Diba.

Mr. Diba said wild beasts normally sneak out of the national park to search for water and food and said if the area gets fenced off the problem could be solved.

The administrator said the animals sometimes lack water within the parks due to drought and said there was need for KWS to construct water pans and avail more water sources for the beasts.

“The few water pans found within the national park normally dry up during drought periods and thus the wild animals are forced to look for alternative ways of getting the commodity thus their sneaking out,” said Mr. Diba.
EGERTON University is the overall winner in the Ministry of the East African Community’s (EAC) college-level University Social media challenge.

The four-month campaign workshop was organized by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology. The seminar saw many activities through a range of activities including debating, poetry, themed events, games, environmental cleanup exercises, sports, community outreach, and public forums among other disciplines.

The workshop also provided students with opportunities to share information on EAC integration and its benefits. Currently, many students from Kenya’s universities are said to be more enlightened on matters of integration on the East African Community (EAC). This is courtesy of social media campaigns that proved popular with many students.

Students then shared their activities photos on Facebook that generated comments and conversations around the EAC. Egerton University student leader, Raphael KyeeMbatha steered the institution to glory after he emerged the overall winner in the challenge that was conducted through the social media platform-face book, twitter and Instagram.

“Within nearly 70 million students in the region, the tools shade some insights on sensitization process benefits and opportunities available to us upon graduation within the region,” explained the deputy Secretary General East Africa Community students union (EACSU).

On engagement through face book, Mumba explained that he has embarked on sensitizing students in the connect vuka border page on the need of the integration process and the various opportunities there in.

“I sparked debates on the various challenges of the EAC integration process and the way the ministry could tackle them to realize its ultimate goal of integration,” he said and added:

“The response was diverse and promising. I also engaged my Egerton students’ civil society and asked them questions about the EAC to the vuka border page administrators.”

During EAC week, the Bsc Tourism and Hospitality Management engaged the students in various activities which were creative in nature to make our university win the ultimate price. A road show was organized and staging at different points of the university with motored of total number of 8 cars.

Activities ranged from clean-up exercises, debates, agricultural activities, swimming competitions all in the EAC week. Other activities in which the students were engaged included participating in the EAC environment day where students planted trees seedlings in the environs of the university.

The university also collected 6600 petitions with Maseno University coming second with only 3000 petitions for their EAC week

Egerton University EAC champions will now enjoy a fully paid tour around the EAC partner states including Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, and Kenya where they will visit major universities.

Maseno University the first runners up was, followed by Moi University and lastly the University of Nairobi. Other universities that were invited to take part in the challenge are; Kenyatta University, Daystar University, Africa Nazarene University, Catholic University, Kenya Methodist University.

Others were Kenya Polytechnic College University, Narok University College, Multimedia University College KCA University, and St Paul University also participated.

At the award ceremony, EAC Minister, Musa Sirma noted that the objective of the challenge which was launched in September, 2012, was to create awareness among university students aged between 18 and 35 years on the benefits of the federation.

Dubbed Connect, Vuka Border, the campaign utilized social media platforms specifically twitter, facebook and blogs to engage students of the partaking universities.

“This campaign has offered the youth an opportunity to identify themselves with the ongoing regional programmes, raise issues affecting them and share their experiences,” said Permanent Secretary, Ministry of EAC, ChiobiShakaba. During the campaign period, students from the competing universities held week-long sensitization activities at their respective institutions on the benefits and opportunities of EAC under the theme Connect, Interact, Innovate.

Activities included public speaking and poetry nights, games, environmental cleanup exercises and door to door sensitization programmes. The students documented them through pictures, video and blog and shared them on social media platforms.

The universities were judged on the creativity, relevance and how much they shared popularized their activities on the social media platforms. In addition to this, the students collected petitions which they managed to present to their respective Vice Chancellors to entrench EAC week into their calendars.

While Egerton University bagged a total of 6,229 petitions, Maseno University collected 3,511, Moi University 2,488, and the University of Nairobi 365. Deputy Director of Social affairs, Kennedy Nyambati says according to recent studies, 85 percent of University College students in Kenya are on Facebook.

“Facebook therefore provides the best platform for creating awareness and educating university students on the EAC integration process,” Nyambati noted. Adding that the challenges faced should be aimed at encouraging university students to support EAC integration programme.

“Challenge the students to petition their respective universities to include the EAC Week as an annual calendar activity. This way, we shall achieve our vision,” he proposed.

Egerton scoops the EAC social media platform award

By HENRY OWINO

By AGGREY BUCHUNJU

THE National Government Coordination Bill that seeks to retain chiefs and their assistants in their current roles contravenes the will of Kenyans.

When Kenyans overwhelmingly voted for the Constitution of Kenya 2010, they sealed the fate of the provincial administration and devolved government structure.

The people of Kenya particularly ordinary citizens thought time had finally come for them to do away with the administrators who were fond of abusing their power.

For many years the chiefs and their assistants had used the colonial Chief’s Act to grab property and mis-handle people with impunity.

The removal or redeployment of the provincial administrators as envisaged in the Constitution of Kenya 2010 thus came as a big relief to Kenyans who had already lost confidence in the colonial oriented, dictatorial and highly corrupt administrators.

To snick chiefs and their assistants into the supreme law without appropriate legislation geared towards re-forming them is tantamount to main-taining the status quo.

Immediate former Internal Security minister Mr. Katoo ole Metito should be made aware that the otherwise good name of the Government has for long been tarnished by such chiefs and their assistants.

At least 90 percent of the chiefs and their assistants have performed their duties without due regard to the law of the land and human rights. Many chiefs and their assistants are arrogant, bossy, greedy and lack even the slightest courtesy for all Kenyans with an opportunity to tell the Government to weed out the wicked ones among them.

The people of Kenya particularly ordinary citizens thought time had finally come for them to do away with the highly corrupt administrators.

Kenyans with an opportunity to tell the other branches of the Government to weed out the wicked ones among them.

“The government has remained impervious to our pleas on the manner in which benefits of pensions and other benefits to retirees were recently noted. The government described the current pension laws in the country as archaic since they are ‘oppressive, retrogressive and do not reflect the current trends of economic situations in the country, since they cannot qualify to get the old age benefit’,” the retirees added.

The over 7,000 pensioners affiliated to the Kenya Association of Retired Officers (KARO) as the umbrella body complained that the government has failed to clearly come out on the issue of retirees.

Pensioners demand review of scheme

THE government pensioners are demanding for an immediate review of their monthly pension scheme to enable them cope with the rising cost of living.

According to Mr. Gichohi, while speaking in Nyeri town. In the memorandums, the Association described the current pension laws in the country as archaic since they are ‘oppressive, retrogressive and do not reflect the current trends of economic situations in the country, since they cannot qualify to get the old age benefit’.

The government pensioners are demanding for an immediate review of their monthly pension scheme to enable them cope with the rising cost of living.

Bill defies the will of Kenyans

THE National Government Coordination Bill that seeks to retain chiefs and their assistants in their current roles contravenes the will of Kenyans.

When Kenyans overwhelmingly voted for the Constitution of Kenya 2010, they sealed the fate of the provincial administration and devolved government structure.

The people of Kenya particularly ordinary citizens thought time had finally come for them to do away with the administrators who were fond of abusing their power.

For many years the chiefs and their assistants had used the colonial Chief’s Act to grab property and mis-handle people with impunity.

The removal or redeployment of the provincial administrators as envisaged in the Constitution of Kenya 2010 thus came as a big relief to Kenyans who had already lost confidence in the colonial oriented, dictatorial and highly corrupt administrators.

To snick chiefs and their assistants into the supreme law without appropriate legislation geared towards re-forming them is tantamount to main-taining the status quo.

Immediate former Internal Security minister Mr. Katoo ole Metito should be made aware that the otherwise good name of the Government has for long been tarnished by such chiefs and their assistants.

At least 90 percent of the chiefs and their assistants have performed their duties without due regard to the law of the land and human rights. Many chiefs and their assistants are arrogant, bossy, greedy and lack even the slightest courtesy for all Kenyans with an opportunity to tell the Government to weed out the wicked ones among them.

The people of Kenya particularly ordinary citizens thought time had finally come for them to do away with the highly corrupt administrators.

Kenyans with an opportunity to tell the other branches of the Government to weed out the wicked ones among them.

“The government has remained impervious to our pleas on the manner in which benefits of pensions and other benefits to retirees were recently noted. The government described the current pension laws in the country as archaic since they are ‘oppressive, retrogressive and do not reflect the current trends of economic situations in the country, since they cannot qualify to get the old age benefit’,” the retirees added.

The over 7,000 pensioners affiliated to the Kenya Association of Retired Officers (KARO) as the umbrella body complained that the government has failed to clearly come out on the issue of retirees.

Pensioners demand review of scheme

THE government pensioners are demanding for an immediate review of their monthly pension scheme to enable them cope with the rising cost of living.

According to Mr. Gichohi, while speaking in Nyeri town. In the memorandums, the Association described the current pension laws in the country as archaic since they are ‘oppressive, retrogressive and do not reflect the current trends of economic situations in the country, since they cannot qualify to get the old age benefit’.

The government pensioners are demanding for an immediate review of their monthly pension scheme to enable them cope with the rising cost of living.
INTRODUCTION

The Transition to Devolved Government Act, No. 1 of 2012, is a facilitative law of transition to county governments. It is a fulfillment of the Constitution schedule 6, section 15 that mandates parliament to enact a legislation that transfers functions to counties in phases. It recognizes that after the elections, the county governments will become operational, the functions of the counties domicile in the national government as it inherits the functions of the old central government. In order not to have county governments in place without functions, the Act provides for the requisite phased transfer of functions and has created a Transition Authority to manage the process for three years.

The Transition Authority

The Authority has been vested with powers to facilitate and coordinate the transition to the devolved system of government. In doing so, the Authority is to

(a) facilitate the transfer of functions and powers between the national and county governments as outlined in the constitution
(b) determine the resource requirements for each of the functions
(c) develop a framework for comprehensive and effective transfer of functions
(d) co-ordinate with the relevant authorities
(e) assist in the development of the budget for county governments during the first phase of the transition period;

(ii) establish the status of ongoing processes, development programmes and, projects and make recommendations to pave way for the co-ordinated management, reallocation or transfer to either level of government during the transition period; and
(iii) ensure successful transition to devolved system of government;

(c) prepare and validate an inventory of all the existing assets and liabilities of government, other public entities and local authorities;

(f) make recommendations for the effective management of assets of the national and county governments;

(g) provide mechanism for the transfer of assets which may include vetting the transfer of assets during the transition period;

(h) develop criteria to determine the transfer of functions from the national to county governments, including:

(i) criteria to guide the transfer of functions to county governments;

(ii) criteria to determine the transfer of previously-shared assets, liabilities and staff of the government and local authorities;

(i) carry out an audit of the existing human resource of the government and local authorities;

(j) assess the capacity needs of national and county governments;

(k) recommend the necessary measures required to ensure that the national and county governments have adequate capacity during the transition period to enable them undertake their assigned functions;

(l) co-ordinate and facilitate the provision of support and assistance to national and county governments in building their capacity to govern and provide services effectively;

(m) advise on the effective and efficient rationalization and deployment of the human resource to either level of government;

(n) submit monthly reports to the Commission for the Implementation of the Constitution (CIC) and the Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA) on the progress that has been registered in the implementation of the transition to the devolved system of government;

(a) gather relevant information, including requisition of reports, records, documents or any information necessary in the discharge of its duties;

(b) compel the production of any information necessary in the discharge of its duties;

(c) interview any person, groups or members of organizations or institutions;

(d) hold inquiries and investigations;

(e) make recommendations and facilitate the distribution of assets to the National and County Government; and

(f) undertake any activity necessary to effectively carry out its functions.

Powers of the Authority

The Authority has powers to

(a) gather relevant information, including requisition of reports, records, documents or any information necessary in the discharge of its duties;

(b) compel the production of any information necessary in the discharge of its duties;

(c) interview any person, groups or members of organizations or institutions;

(d) hold inquiries and investigations;

(e) make recommendations and facilitate the distribution of assets to the National and County Government; and

(f) undertake any activity necessary to effectively carry out its functions.

Qualification of Chairperson and Members

To qualify for appointment as a chairperson, the applicant must

(a) hold a masters degree from a recognized university

(b) have a distinguished career in senior management position in either private or public sector

(c) hold at least fifteen years post qualification professional experience

(d) satisfy the requirements of Chapter six of the Constitution

Members of the authority on the hand require

(a) a degree from a recognized university

(b) a distinguished career in their respective field

(c) at least ten years post qualification professional experience

(d) satisfies the requirements of Chapter six of the Constitution

The law disqualifies applicants who are:

- members of Parliament or County Assembly;
- members of governing body of a political party;
- elected or nominated member of a local authority;
- members of a Commission established under the Constitution;
- undischarged of bankrupt;
- removed from office for contravening the Constitution or any other law;
- Unable to meet any statutory obligations.

The law provides for the appointment of a secretary who is the accounting officer responsible for—

(a) the implementation of the decisions made by the Authority;

(b) the formation and development of an efficient administration;
Transition to devolved Government

To qualify, the applicant must have at least—
(a) a masters degree from a recognized university
(b) ten years experience in a management position.

Guiding Principles
In performing its functions, the Authority is to be guided by principles which include:
- Accountable to the people and ensure their participation
- Facilitate the transition in a transparent, objective and fair manner
- Promote and sustain fair procedures in its operation
- Non partisan and non political in its operations
- Apply and promote national values

Constitutional Implementation
Commission is mandated to monitor and oversee the transition process to devolved government.

Transition phases
Transition is to be done in two phases: phase one meant the period between 9th March, 2012 (when the act commenced) and the date of the first elections. Phase two means the period between the date of the first elections and three years after the elections.

Guiding Principles
In performing its functions, the Authority is to be guided by principles which include:
- Accountable to the people and ensure their participation
- Facilitate the transition in a transparent, objective and fair manner
- Promote and sustain fair procedures in its operation
- Non partisan and non political in its operations
- Apply and promote national values

Constitutional Implementation
Commission is mandated to monitor and oversee the transition process to devolved government.

Transition phases
Transition is to be done in two phases: phase one meant the period between 9th March, 2012 (when the act commenced) and the date of the first elections. Phase two means the period between the date of the first elections and three years after the elections.

The progress report includes—
- status on transfer of functions
- any impediments to the transition programme
- recommendation to address outstanding issues identified by the Authority; and
- any other information of concern relating to the functions of the Authority.

The law stipulates that subsequent reports after the first elections are to be submitted to Parliament and to the relevant county assemblies and county executives committees.

Assets and Liabilities
Assets and liabilities of any state institution or local authorities is not allowed to be transferred without the permission of the Authority. During phase one, the authority has to consult with National Treasury, the Commission on Revenue Allocation, the Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Lands before any assets and liabilities are transferred.

In phase two, the authority has to consult with National Treasury, the Commission on Revenue Allocation and the Cabinet Secretary responsible for matters relating to intergovernmental relations and lands.

Criteria for transfer of functions
Functions to the County governments are to be transferred subject to:
- (a) Existence of a legislation in relation to the function applied for;
- (b) Existence of a framework for service delivery to implement the function;
- (c) Whether a county government has identified or established administrative units related to the function;
- (d) Whether the county government has undertaken a capacity assessment in relation to the function;
- (e) Arrangements for and the extent of further decentralization of the function and provision of related services by the county government;
- (f) The availability of the required infrastructure and systems to deliver the function;
- (g) The presence of the necessary financial management systems;
- (h) An approved plan in relation to the function; and
- (i) any other variable as may be prescribed after consultations between the Authority, county governments and the Commission for the Implementation of the Constitution and the Commission on Revenue Allocation.

Nairobi City Hall. This is where Nairobi Governor Dr. Evans Kidero will be housed.

Charles Nyachae, CIC chairman
Micah Cherserem, CRA chairman

In phase one, the Authority is to:
(a) audit assets and liabilities of the government, to establish the asset, debts and liabilities of the government;
(b) audit assets and liabilities of local authorities, to establish the asset, debts and liabilities of each Local Authority;
(c) audit local authority infrastructure in the counties, to establish the number and functionality of plant and equipment in Local Authorities;
(d) audit the government infrastructure in the counties, to establish the number and functionality of plant and equipment for the purpose of vesting them to either level of government;
(e) audit the government staff in counties, to establish the number of staff in each county by cadre, grades, gender, age and qualification;
(f) audit the Local Authority staff in the counties, to establish the number of local authority staff in each county by cadre, grades, gender, age & qualification;
(g) facilitate civic education, to ensure civic education on devolution is commenced and co-ordinated;
(h) facilitate the initial preparation of county budgets, to ensure such budgets are agreed upon;
(i) facilitate the preparation of county profiles, to ensure that the profile of counties are produced published and publicized;
(j) carry out an analysis of functions and competency assignment and ensure plan for distribution of functions and competency is published necessary Acts amended;
(k) provide mechanism for closure and transfer, of public records and information;
(l) facilitate the development of county public finance management system;
(m) provide a mechanism, for the transition of government and local authority employees;
(n) provide for a mechanism for the transfer of government net assets and liabilities to national and county governments;
(o) provide mechanisms for transfer of assets and liabilities which may include setting transfer of assets during the transitional period;
(p) provide for a mechanism that will secure assets and liabilities held by the Local Authorities; and
(q) provide for a mechanism to ensure civic education on Revenue Allocation.

In Phase Two, the Authority undertakes the following activities:
(a) complete any activity that may be outstanding from Phase One;
(b) oversee the transfer of functions from the national government to the county government;
(c) facilitate the county governments to implement the performance of their functions;
(d) any other activity that may be necessary to enable county governments carry out their functions.

Procedure for Transfers
In at least 30 days before the practical measures to build the capacity of the county to enable the transfer take place within the shortest time possible.

Criteria for transfer of functions
Functions to the County governments are to be transferred subject to:
- (a) Existence of a legislation in relation to the function applied for;
- (b) Existence of a framework for service delivery to implement the function;
- (c) Whether a county government has identified or established administrative units related to the function;
- (d) Whether the county government has undertaken a capacity assessment in relation to the function;
- (e) Arrangements for and the extent of further decentralization of the function and provision of related services by the county government;
- (f) The availability of the required infrastructure and systems to deliver the function;
- (g) The presence of the necessary financial management systems;
- (h) An approved plan in relation to the function; and
- (i) any other variable as may be prescribed after consultations between the Authority, county governments and the Commission for the Implementation of the Constitution and the Commission on Revenue Allocation.

Nairobi City Hall. This is where Nairobi Governor Dr. Evans Kidero will be housed.

Charles Nyachae, CIC chairman
Micah Cherserem, CRA chairman

In phase one, the Authority is to:
(a) audit assets and liabilities of the government, to establish the asset, debts and liabilities of the government;
(b) audit assets and liabilities of local authorities, to establish the asset, debts and liabilities of each Local Authority;
(c) audit local authority infrastructure in the counties, to establish the number and functionality of plant and equipment in Local Authorities;
(d) audit the government infrastructure in the counties, to establish the number and functionality of plant and equipment for the purpose of vesting them to either level of government;
(e) audit the government staff in counties, to establish the number of staff in each county by cadre, grades, gender, age and qualification;
(f) audit the Local Authority staff in the counties, to establish the number of local authority staff in each county by cadre, grades, gender, age & qualification;
(g) facilitate civic education, to ensure civic education on devolution is commenced and co-ordinated;
(h) facilitate the initial preparation of county budgets, to ensure such budgets are agreed upon;
(i) facilitate the preparation of county profiles, to ensure that the profile of counties are produced published and publicized;
(j) carry out an analysis of functions and competency assignment and ensure plan for distribution of functions and competency is published necessary Acts amended;
(k) provide mechanism for closure and transfer, of public records and information;
(l) facilitate the development of county public finance management system;
(m) provide a mechanism, for the transition of government and local authority employees;
(n) provide for a mechanism for the transfer of government net assets and liabilities to national and county governments;
(o) provide mechanisms for transfer of assets and liabilities which may include setting transfer of assets during the transitional period;
(p) provide for a mechanism that will secure assets and liabilities held by the Local Authorities; and
(q) provide for a mechanism to ensure civic education on Revenue Allocation.

In Phase Two, the Authority undertakes the following activities:
(a) complete any activity that may be outstanding from Phase One;
(b) oversee the transfer of functions from the national government to the county government;
(c) facilitate the county governments to implement the performance of their functions;
(d) any other activity that may be necessary to enable county governments carry out their functions.

Procedure for Transfers
In at least 30 days before the practical measures to build the capacity of the county to enable the transfer take place within the shortest time possible.

Criteria for transfer of functions
Functions to the County governments are to be transferred subject to:
By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

THE judiciary anticipates to handle a minimum of 500 election related cases. According to Lady Justice Helen Onyenu who is a member of the Judicial Working Committee on Election Preparations, the number of aggrieved parties seeking legal redress could also rise due to increased public confidence in the judiciary.

Amidst concerns that the judiciary expects to face in elections related matters is increase of a number of cases due to increased number of political positions being offered which are a total of six in number, she explains.

She however says that all election related disputes will be settled within six months after the election date, and some judicial officers have been appointed for this purpose. Judicial officials are also under instruction to be more gender sensitive while handling political gender violence cases.

Lady Justice Onyenu said that women are more vulnerable especially during the electioneering period.

By AGGREY BUCHUNGU

A CHURCH minister has attributed the myriad problems facing Kenyans to the country’s political leadership. According to the minister, the politicians’ activities and utterances in most cases attract God’s wrath.

 Bishop Arua was categorical that Kenyans suffer from a range of issues including poverty, hunger, insecurity and unemployment because the politicians have little regard for the church, mosque and even songs that are meant to praise and worship God. He reprimanded politicians and their supporters across the paraphrasing hymns to do so as they perpetrate evil acts that divide and enrage the people of God.

“Allowing churches to be used by politicians as campaign fields for their personal gains or to achieve the purpose for which they were constructed,” Bishop Arua said.

He further invited all church leaders across the denominational divide not to allow politicians to use churches as battlegrounds for personal gains or party rally.

“The politicians have little regard for the church, mosque and even songs that are meant to praise and worship God. They should not use churches as battlegrounds for personal gains or party rally.”

By PETER MUTUKU

INSTITUTIONS that offer degrees through universities that are not accredited have a chance to lose their license and额度 funding or a three year jail term. This follows the enactment of universities Act 2012 which seeks to regulate the operations of these institutions.

The new law also requires that the Cabinet Secretary in charge of Higher Education publishes in at least three national newspapers, the lists of universities accredited to undertake university education in Kenya. The publication is to be done at the beginning of every year and every quarter of the year after that. Foreign universities would be required to submit proof of accreditation from their countries of origin.

Higher Education Minister Prof Margaret Kamar says the new law comes at an opportune moment to help the Government to monitor for foreign universities. “This provision would strengthen our surveillance on foreign universities,” said the minister.

There have been cases of universities not accredited offering degree courses to unsuspecting students but the trend may soon be a thing of the past once the law becomes operational.

The law, which provides for the establishment, accreditation and governance of public and private universities, establishes the Commission for University Education as a successor to the current Commission for Higher Education. The new law also seeks to regulate the location of university campuses and compels universities to have a student’s body, elected by students.

Under the new law, students with disciplinary cases have a reprieve as they can now get legal representation through the provision during the execution of their cases. The Act establishes the Universities Fund and also provides for procedure for placement of the Government sponsored students to universities and colleges.

In the Act, both the chancellor and the vice chancellor in public universities are to serve for a term of five years and shall be eligible for a further term of five years.
By PETER MUTUKU

THE Municipal Council of Machakos has unveiled its Strategic Plan which seeks to foster a steady service delivery in the devolved unit.

The Clerk S.A. Abdullahi says the plan outlines a clear picture of the current status of the council and future aspirations of the local authority.

The clerk said the council is currently faced with inadequate staff, lacks scheduled council committee meetings and has weak communication mechanism.

They said that other challenges facing the council include mismanagement of council resources, poor maintenance of public utilities, poor management of garbage collection, delays in completion of projects, selective enforcement of council by-laws, failure to complete LASDAP Projects and the culture of business as usual among councilors and staff.

He said the council is currently reviewing its by-laws to align them with the requirements of Vision 2030.

He said the council will strive to provide an enabling environment that promotes investment and Local economic development.

“The council will strive to play its role in the attainment of the millennium development goals and Kenya Vision 2030,” he added.

The clerk said that the council enjoys overwhelming goodwill from the public and plans to tap on its strategic location along Nairobi Mombasa highway to attract more investments in the area.

He said the council was exploring Public Private Partnership ships to help promote investment in the area.

The clerk at the same time said that the council had enhanced its governance structures by creating institutions that bring checks and balances.

He said the proposed development of technio city is likely to enhance investment in the area and urged local investors to explore the opportunities.

Mr Abdullahi further listed inadequate funds from Central Government, review of the Local Government Act to address the new constitution, implementation of the Nairobi Metropolitan development plans, implementation of the new labour laws, review of Council boundaries among the emerging issues that must be accorded priority.

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

ROAD accidents have reduced by 20 per cent after the Traffic Act became operational in December.

Traffic Police Commandant Benson Githinji said recently that after the laws were enforced at the beginning of December, the accidents have reduced but the department will seek to bring them down further.

So far over 20,000 people have been arrested in court and over Ksh 30 million collected in form of fines for flouting the new traffic rules.

However, he said over 3,000 people have died on the Kenyan roads including drivers, passengers, boda bodas operators and pillion cyclist.

Githinji who was accompanied by the head of the (NRSC) secretariat Cosmas Ngeso was speaking during a meeting between members of the National Roads Safety Council (NRSC) and stakeholders at Nyeri Information hall.

At the same time, the commandant warned traffic bosses and OCPDs that firm action will be taken against those who engage in corruption saying they will face the full force of the law.

“The law has been empowered constitutionally over the traffic matters in their areas of jurisdiction to warn them that they will face the full force of the law if they will not work as per the law,” he added.

He warned that traffic officers who solicit for bribes on the roads that they will not be spared adding that few traffic officers have been arrested taking bribes and actions taken.

Githinji said that more changes are in the offing following the appointment of the new inspector of police.

The meeting involved matatu operators, law enforcement including OCPDs and traffic base officers.

Similar meetings have been held in Muranga, Kisumu and Nakuru counties.

The commandant urged the drivers and pedestrians to be extra careful in order to save lives.

“We shall not allow vehicles to be driven like rockets. I want to warn them that they will face the music if arrested,” he cautioned.

He warned boda boda operators that they will face the full force of the law if arrested driving while drunk.

Meanwhile, the government pensioners are demanding for an immediate review of their monthly pension scheme to enable them cope with the rising cost of living.

The over 7,000 pensioners affiliated to the Kenya Association of Retired Officers (KARO) as the umbrella body complained that their plight has been left unabridged even after making numerous demands unto the government.

The Association’s officials led by their National Executive Officer Karuga Gichohi said that the ever rising costs of living have almost turned some of its members beggars, despite the nation building roles they played during their terms in office.

“The government has remained indifferent to our plea on the memorandum on ‘payment of pensions and other benefits to retirees’ we recently wrote to the Minister for Finance Njeru Gitahi and are yet to get a response,” added Gichohi while speaking in Nyeri town.

In the memorandum, the Association described the current pension laws in the country as archaic since they are ‘oppressive, retrogressive and do not reflect the current trends of paying pensions to retired public servants.’

The retirees also protested to the minister in the same memorandum that they should have their pensions regularly reviewed in tandem with the prevailing economic situations in the country, since they cannot qualify to get the old age cash transfer currently of Ksh 1,500 and which is likely to be increased.

The officials said that most of those who retired more than 13 years ago are grappling with a mere Ksh 2,500 to Ksh 4,000, going by the low salaries they receive at that time.

The officials also noted though the new constitution has adequately addressed the plight of the elderly people under the Specific Application of Rights, it has failed to clearly come out on the issue of retirees.

By BEKADZO TONDO

THE government has launched in investigations into the killing of 12 elderly people in bizarre circumstances on claims of practicing witchcraft in Ganze District of Kilifi County.

Vihiga District Officer Mr Vincent Kibara said that stern action will be taken against individuals behind the inhumane act.

Mr Kibara said at least two elderly people in Ganze district are killed every month adding that since the beginning of this year about 20 elderly people have lost their lives in mysterious acts.

“The government has launched investigations into the killing of elderly people in Ganze district so that we can get into the root cause of the beastly acts,” said Mr Kibara.

The officer made the remarks at a rescue center which houses suspected wizards at Mrima wa Ndege in Ganze.

Mr Kibara said close family members were conspiring to kill their elderly relatives under the guise that they were practicing witchcraft.

He said in most cases family members would collaborate with the police to give information which could help arrest the suspects.

The chairman of Ganze District Cultural Association Mr. Kenga Mangi condemned the killings of the elderly people.

Mr. Mangi who coordinates the rescue center said the killings are unfortunate adding that most acts are executed by the youth.

He said the abandonment of the Mijikenda culture and traditions by most families had contributed to the ill treatment accorded to elderly persons in the community.

“Old people develop grey hairs and red eyes are mostly targeted for killing as the youth associate their old age to witchcraft,” said Mr Mangi.

Mr Mangi said the rescue centre was established to provide refuge to the aged people who flee from their homes upon being suspected as wizards.

He however said the centre is also involved in reuniting the elderly persons with their families.

The DO blamed the vice to the low literacy levels in the area adding that in some cases the youth want to disinherit their aging parents.

State issues stern warning to Kilifi witch-hunters

THE government has launched in investigations into the killing of 12 elderly people in bizarre circumstances on claims of practicing witchcraft in Ganze District of Kilifi County.

Vihiga District Officer Mr Vincent Kibara said that stern action will be taken against individuals behind the inhumane act.

Mr Kibara said at least two elderly people in Ganze district are killed every month adding that since the beginning of this year about 20 elderly people have lost their lives in mysterious acts.

“The government has launched investigations into the killing of elderly people in Ganze district so that we can get into the root cause of the beastly acts,” said Mr Kibara.

The officer made the remarks at a rescue center which houses suspected wizards at Mrima wa Ndege in Ganze.

Mr Kibara said close family members were conspiring to kill their elderly relatives under the guise that they were practicing witchcraft.

He said in most cases family members would collaborate with the police to give information which could help arrest the suspects.

The chairman of Ganze District Cultural Association Mr. Kenga Mangi condemned the killings of the elderly people.

Mr. Mangi who coordinates the rescue center said the killings are unfortunate adding that most acts are executed by the youth.

He said the abandonment of the Mijikenda culture and traditions by most families had contributed to the ill treatment accorded to elderly persons in the community.

“Old people develop grey hairs and red eyes are mostly targeted for killing as the youth associate their old age to witchcraft,” said Mr Mangi.

Mr Mangi said the rescue centre was established to provide refuge to the aged people who flee from their homes upon being suspected as wizards.

He however said the centre is also involved in reuniting the elderly persons with their families.

The DO blamed the vice to the low literacy levels in the area adding that in some cases the youth want to disinherit their aging parents.
Food security kitty receives a major boost

By HENRY OWINO

THE country’s food security kitty has received a boost of Ksh 617.6 million from Japan.

The money has been channelled towards projects to be implemented by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The projects are; the Japanese Grant Assistance for the Rural Water Supply in Baringo County and Food Security Project for Underprivileged Farmers.

The Rural Water Supply aid is currently supporting Phase I project in Kinu and Mwingi districts from 2006-2008. Phase II of the project was started four years ago with a Bill of Quantity valued at Ksh 360 million while the current Bill of Quantity from the Ministry of Public Works stands at Ksh 369 million.

“It is wrong on the part of the National Taxpayers Association to claim that the difference of Ksh18 million has gone to waste as the said project is at the completion stage,” said Kwena.

He at the same time took issue with the NTA over claims that some Ksh 50 million that had been channelled towards the Rural Electrification programme could not be accounted for.

“The said fund is available and we have availed an official receipt from the Kenya Rural Electrification and other documents acknowledging the receipt of the amount,” he said.

The chairman invited all other persons wishing to pay a visit to any of the CDF projects to verify and obtain all the correct facts regarding Butula CDF projects.

However, the CDF committee accused a section of local politicians of taking advantage of the report to spread malicious rumours aimed at tarnishing the name of the committee and the outgoing MP Alfred Odhiambo during their political campaigns.

“The National Taxpayers Association is being used by my political rivals in the area to hold a smear campaign against me. When I was elected the area MP, I made sure all the projects initiated by the former legislator, Christine Mango were completed before I started embarking on new projects which I believe have been done well,” said the former legislator, adding that the National Taxpayers Association should work as an independent entity instead of being used by politicians to spoil the names of others.

Butula CDF committee refutes NTA report

By NYAKWAR ODAWO

BUTULA Constituency Development Fund (CDF) committee members have rebuffed claims contained in a report by the National Taxpayers Association (NTA) that some Ksh 36 million for Butula constituency development funds cannot be accounted for.

Addressing members of the press at the CDF boardroom recently, the CDF members led by Butula Constituency Development Fund committee chairman Andrew Kwena refuted the NTA report saying that no project funds had been misappropriated as stated.

“As the chairman of Butula Constituency Development Fund committee, I want to state that no project funds had been misappropriated as stated in the recent National Taxpayers’ Association report. The government had dispersed funds to facilitate the completion of all incomplete projects and other ongoing projects and as a committee we utilized the said funds,” said the CDF committee chairman.

Among some of the projects that the National Taxpayers Association claimed to be non-existent was Benga Technical Institute, a project that was started four years ago with a Bill of Quantity valued at Ksh 360 million while the current Bill of Quantity from the Ministry of Public Works stands at Ksh 369 million.

“The National Taxpayers Association claim that the difference of Ksh 18 million has gone to waste as the said project is at the completion stage,” said Kwena.

He at the same time took issue with the NTA over claims that some Ksh 50 million that had been channelled towards the Rural Electrification programme could not be accounted for.

“The said fund is available and we have availed an official receipt from the Kenya Rural Electrification and other documents acknowledging the receipt of the amount,” he said.

The chairman invited all other persons wishing to pay a visit to any of the CDF projects to verify and obtain all the correct facts regarding Butula CDF projects.

However, the CDF committee accused a section of local politicians of taking advantage of the report to spread malicious rumours aimed at tarnishing the name of the committee and the outgoing MP Alfred Odhiambo during their political campaigns.

“The National Taxpayers Association is being used by my political rivals in the area to hold a smear campaign against me. When I was elected the area MP, I made sure all the projects initiated by the former legislator, Christine Mango were completed before I started embarking on new projects which I believe have been done well,” said the former legislator, adding that the National Taxpayers Association should work as an independent entity instead of being used by politicians to spoil the names of others.

Kieni farmers’ set to benefit from centre

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

KIEI farmers have benefited from a Ksh 2 million Information Centre project where farmers can get the latest farming information.

The Ksh 2 million Information centre was put up with assistance from Help Self Help Centre (HSHC), a Non-Governmental Organisation from Scandinavian countries.

The centre based in Narumoru town, three kilometres away from computers which are all connected to the internet where farmers can browse to get latest farming trends.

The ultra modern Information centre for use by local farmers was opened by Kieni East DO Deborah Mwararia who said the farmers will get the latest information on soil fertility, modern farming techniques, climate change, pests and emerging crop diseases and how to control them.

“The DO challenged the farmers from the area and the larger Nyera County to embrace use of modern farming technologies in order to boost food production and reap maximum benefit,” Mwararia said.

The DO observed that the centre will enable farmers to keep abreast to the latest advancements in farming so that they are able to make informed choices on what to produce after accessing possible incomes and costs involved,” Mwararia said.

The centre is connected to an internet application by M-farm Company that gives updated prices of most farm commodities, where farmers can get from the internet or via Short Messaging Service at a subsidized price of Ksh 1 from their mobile phones,” said the manager.

He added, “This, ensures that farmers are kept abreast on the best prices for their produce through the updates from M-FARM.”

The project manager added that the centre serves as a training ground for the farmers on basic computer, internet and mobile phones.

The project manager also challenged farmers to make the best use of the facility as it would help them improve on their farming practices and thus improving on their livelihoods.

The Project Manager Charles Karuhunja said the centre would be run by two ICT officers who assist the farmers in their queries and find solutions from the relevant sources and has capacity to serve 1,000 farmers.

“The centre is connected to an internet application by M-farm Company that gives updated prices of most farm commodities. Farmers can get from the internet or via Short Messaging Service at a subsidized price of Ksh 1 from their mobile phones,” said the manager.

Food security kitty receives a major boost

By HENRY OWINO

THE country’s food security kitty has received a boost of Ksh 617.6 million from Japan.

The money has been channelled towards projects to be implemented by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The projects are; the Japanese Grant Assistance for the Rural Water Supply in Baringo County and Food Security Project for Underprivileged Farmers.

The Rural Water Supply aid is currently supporting Phase I project in Kinu and Mwingi districts from 2006-2008. Phase II of the project was started four years ago with a Bill of Quantity valued at Ksh 360 million while the current Bill of Quantity from the Ministry of Public Works stands at Ksh 369 million.

“It is wrong on the part of the National Taxpayers Association to claim that the difference of Ksh18 million has gone to waste as the said project is at the completion stage,” said Kwena.

He at the same time took issue with the NTA over claims that some Ksh 50 million that had been channelled towards the Rural Electrification programme could not be accounted for.

“The said fund is available and we have availed an official receipt from the Kenya Rural Electrification and other documents acknowledging the receipt of the amount,” he said.

The chairman invited all other persons wishing to pay a visit to any of the CDF projects to verify and obtain all the correct facts regarding Butula CDF projects.

However, the CDF committee accused a section of local politicians of taking advantage of the report to spread malicious rumours aimed at tarnishing the name of the committee and the outgoing MP Alfred Odhiambo during their political campaigns.

“The National Taxpayers Association is being used by my political rivals in the area to hold a smear campaign against me. When I was elected the area MP, I made sure all the projects initiated by the former legislator, Christine Mango were completed before I started embarking on new projects which I believe have been done well,” said the former legislator, adding that the National Taxpayers Association should work as an independent entity instead of being used by politicians to spoil the names of others.

Kieni farmers’ set to benefit from centre

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

KIEI farmers have benefited from a Ksh 2 million Information Centre project where farmers can get the latest farming information.

The Ksh 2 million Information centre was put up with assistance from Help Self Help Centre (HSHC), a Non-Governmental Organisation from Scandinavian countries.

The centre based in Narumoru town, three kilometres away from computers which are all connected to the internet where farmers can browse to get latest farming trends.

The ultra modern Information centre for use by local farmers was opened by Kieni East DO Deborah Mwararia who said the farmers will get the latest information on soil fertility, modern farming techniques, climate change, pests and emerging crop diseases and how to control them.

“The DO challenged the farmers from the area and the larger Nyera County to embrace use of modern farming technologies in order to boost food production and reap maximum benefit,” Mwararia said.

The DO observed that the centre will enable farmers to keep abreast to the latest advancements in farming so that they are able to make informed choices on what to produce after accessing possible incomes and costs involved,” Mwararia said.

The centre is connected to an internet application by M-farm Company that gives updated prices of most farm commodities. Farmers can get from the internet or via Short Messaging Service at a subsidized price of Ksh 1 from their mobile phones,” said the manager.

He added, “This, ensures that farmers are kept abreast on the best prices for their produce through the updates from M-FARM.”

The project manager added that the centre serves as a training ground for the farmers on basic computer, internet and mobile phones.

The project manager also challenged farmers to make the best use of the facility as it would help them improve on their farming practices and thus improving on their livelihoods.

The Project Manager Charles Karuhunja said the centre would be run by two ICT officers who assist the farmers in their queries and find solutions from the relevant sources and has capacity to serve 1,000 farmers.

“The centre is connected to an internet application by M-farm Company that gives updated prices of most farm commodities. Farmers can get from the internet or via Short Messaging Service at a subsidized price of Ksh 1 from their mobile phones,” said the manager.

He added, “This, ensures that farmers are kept abreast on the best prices for their produce through the updates from M-FARM.”

The project manager added that the centre serves as a training ground for the farmers on basic computer, internet and mobile phones.

The project manager also challenged farmers to make the best use of the facility as it would help them improve on their farming practices and thus improving on their livelihoods.
By BEKADZO TONDO

RESIDENTS of Coast Province can now access higher education with ease following the upgrading of two constituent colleges into fully fledged public universities.

And while leaders welcome the move, they feel that the absence of institutions of higher learning in the area had contributed to the high rates of education dropouts.

Led by the Minister for Fisheries Development Mr Amason Kingi, failure to establish universities was to blame for the little attention that resi-
dents have accorded to education in the area.

The leaders however challenged local students to make use of the two public universities to get high and quality education.

They spoke as President MwaiKibaki awarded a charter to the Pwani University which was a constituent college of Kenyatta uni-
versity, thus making it a fully fledged university.

Kibaki said that the same time directed the Ministry of land to resolve a land dispute between the university and a group of squatters saying that the new university can start offering its higher education programs effectively.

“I have today awarded a charter to the Pwani University which started 25 years ago as Kilifi Institute of Agriculture and which in 2007 was upgraded to a constituent University college under Kenyatta University,” said President Kibaki.

The head of state called for the immediate resolution of the land dispute which has seen squatters occupying part of the university’s land.

The fate of the 308 squatters who are occupying about 45 acres of the university land now hangs in the balance as they may soon be rendered landless.

The squatters through their Mtaani/Kisumu Ndogo Kiiboni up grading scheme project have however move to court to block their eviction from the land claiming they legally owned it.

The matter is still pending at the Malindi high court in the hearing and determination of the case.

He further said the University which has a program of Marine Sciences has to allow access to the ocean to enable the institution undertake marine science research pro-
grams.

The CEO, spoke at Nyakoe hotel, Kilifi County during the graduation of 112 agents who had undergone a two-week Course on Executive Cer-
tificate of Proficiency (ECOP) in insurance, sponsored by the Authority in collaboration with the Insurance College and Association of Kenya Insurers (AKI) among other players.

The Officer accompanied by IRA Board chairman, Steve Mahinda and AKI chair, Mark Obuya urged the agents to be honest and display professionalism to maintain the image of the industry which has been tarnished by unscrupulous agents who mislead clients for their selfish gain.

“The industry has rules and regula-
tions which govern it. The agents know them and should not flout them with impunity,” stated Makoe.

Launching the ECOP programme in Kilifi County, Mahinda asked the agents to ensure houses, adding that the industry was poised to grow from 3 percent to a double digit and con-
tribute immensely to the nation’s at-
tainment of vision 2030.

Mahinda noted that Malaysia, with a population of 30 million people had engaged 120,000 agents in insurance industry, noting that it had boosted the country’s economy owing to high penetration in rural areas.

The chairman pointed out that the Authority was training agents to sell insurance policies and services na-
tionally and globally.

Kisii Central District Commis-

sioner Philip Soi who represented County Commissioner, Lydia Mu-
ruki urged players in the industry to weed out imposters who had tainted the image of the industry.

Soi observed that quacks had in-
vaded the industry and conned unsus-
pecting members of the public, who now have a negative perception to-
wards the agents and the companies, leading to the low penetration.

“The Coast Province is one of the regions in the country which did not have a public university since the na-
tion attained its independence but to-
day am happy to award charters to two college universities in the area making them fully fledged universities,” said Kibaki.

President Kibaki said that the remaining will be trained relying on availability of training facilities to improve on their education standards.

Mr Kingi who talked on behalf of the community said the elevation of Pwani University College for five years before it attained its current sta-
tus.

He said the awarding of the charter to the two colleges in the region will open up the education potential of the local people and residents must make maximum use.

“The awarding of charters to the two university colleges in the region is a big achievement for the coastal populace. Dr. Kingi said that the university in Malindi high court awaiting hearing from the land claiming they legally owned the land but which in 2007 was upgraded to a constituent College.

Kamar thanked the management of Kenyatta which had mentored Pwani University College for five years before it attained its current status.

Retirements Benefits Authority

By BEKADZO TONDO

THE Kenya National Union of Teachers KNUT has launched a massive campaign to recruit more members to the union.

The assistant Secretary General of the union Mr Mudzo Nzili told teachers that the strong union has more powers to fight for their grievances.

He made the remarks during the burial ceremony of the late KNUT Kilifi branch Treasurer Daniel Kititi at Kinongi village at Kilifi/Pwani University.

Mr Mudzo said through unity, teachers have a strong bargaining power which can help them realise their goals.

“We must unite if we want to win the war for better remunera-
tion and working conditions and therefore I urge teachers to regis-
ter with KNUT in large numbers,” said Nzili.

He said teachers who are not union members risked losing bene-

fis awarded to members in the event of a Common Bargaining Agreement.

Mr Nzili called on other union members at County level to cooperate fully with KNUT to champion the teachers’ course.

Speaking at the same gathering, Ganze District Education Of-
ficial Mr Julius Chonga urged the Ministry of Transport to be firm in implementing the Road Safety Rules to save the lives of Kenyans.

He said many Kenyans including teachers had lost their lives through road accidents, most of which could be avoided.

“We have had accidents that were avoidable. Some were caused by drunken drivers and others by unqualified drivers. If the traf-
cic police department is firm, the death toll can be greatly reduce,” he said.

“The awarding of charters to the two university colleges in the region is a big achievement for the coastal populace. Dr. Kingi said that the university in Malindi high court awaiting hearing from the land claiming they legally owned the land but which in 2007 was upgraded to a constituent College.

Kamar thanked the management of Kenyatta which had mentored Pwani University College for five years before it attained its current status.

He said the awarding of the charter to the two colleges in the region will open up the education potential of the local people and residents must make maximum use.

“The awarding of charters to the two university colleges in the region is a big achievement for the coastal populace. Dr. Kingi said that the university in Malindi high court awaiting hearing from the land claiming they legally owned the land but which in 2007 was upgraded to a constituent College.

Kamar thanked the management of Kenyatta which had mentored Pwani University College for five years before it attained its current status.

He said the awarding of the charter to the two colleges in the region will open up the education potential of the local people and residents must make maximum use.

“The awarding of charters to the two university colleges in the region is a big achievement for the coastal populace. Dr. Kingi said that the university in Malindi high court awaiting hearing from the land claiming they legally owned the land but which in 2007 was upgraded to a constituent College.

Kamar thanked the management of Kenyatta which had mentored Pwani University College for five years before it attained its current status.

He said the awarding of the charter to the two colleges in the region will open up the education potential of the local people and residents must make maximum use.

“The awarding of charters to the two university colleges in the region is a big achievement for the coastal populace. Dr. Kingi said that the university in Malindi high court awaiting hearing from the land claiming they legally owned the land but which in 2007 was upgraded to a constituent College.

Kamar thanked the management of Kenyatta which had mentored Pwani University College for five years before it attained its current status.

He said the awarding of the charter to the two colleges in the region will open up the education potential of the local people and residents must make maximum use.

“The awarding of charters to the two university colleges in the region is a big achievement for the coastal populace. Dr. Kingi said that the university in Malindi high court awaiting hearing from the land claiming they legally owned the land but which in 2007 was upgraded to a constituent College.

Kamar thanked the management of Kenyatta which had mentored Pwani University College for five years before it attained its current status.

He said the awarding of the charter to the two colleges in the region will open up the education potential of the local people and residents must make maximum use.

“The awarding of charters to the two university colleges in the region is a big achievement for the coastal populace. Dr. Kingi said that the university in Malindi high court awaiting hearing from the land claiming they legally owned the land but which in 2007 was upgraded to a constituent College.

Kamar thanked the management of Kenyatta which had mentored Pwani University College for five years before it attained its current status.

He said the awarding of the charter to the two colleges in the region will open up the education potential of the local people and residents must make maximum use.

“The awarding of charters to the two university colleges in the region is a big achievement for the coastal populace. Dr. Kingi said that the university in Malindi high court awaiting hearing from the land claiming they legally owned the land but which in 2007 was upgraded to a constituent College.

Kamar thanked the management of Kenyatta which had mentored Pwani University College for five years before it attained its current status.

He said the awarding of the charter to the two colleges in the region will open up the education potential of the local people and residents must make maximum use.

“The awarding of charters to the two university colleges in the region is a big achievement for the coastal populace. Dr. Kingi said that the university in Malindi high court awaiting hearing from the land claiming they legally owned the land but which in 2007 was upgraded to a constituent College.

Kamar thanked the management of Kenyatta which had mentored Pwani University College for five years before it attained its current status.

He said the awarding of the charter to the two colleges in the region will open up the education potential of the local people and residents must make maximum use.

“The awarding of charters to the two university colleges in the region is a big achievement for the coastal populace. Dr. Kingi said that the university in Malindi high court awaiting hearing from the land claiming they legally owned the land but which in 2007 was upgraded to a constituent College.

Kamar thanked the management of Kenyatta which had mentored Pwani University College for five years before it attained its current status.

He said the awarding of the charter to the two colleges in the region will open up the education potential of the local people and residents must make maximum use.

“The awarding of charters to the two university colleges in the region is a big achievement for the coastal populace. Dr. Kingi said that the university in Malindi high court awaiting hearing from the land claiming they legally owned the land but which in 2007 was upgraded to a constituent College.

Kamar thanked the management of Kenyatta which had mentored Pwani University College for five years before it attained its current status.

He said the awarding of the charter to the two colleges in the region will open up the education potential of the local people and residents must make maximum use.

“The awarding of charters to the two university colleges in the region is a big achievement for the coastal populace. Dr. Kingi said that the university in Malindi high court awaiting hearing from the land claiming they legally owned the land but which in 2007 was upgraded to a constituent College.

Kamar thanked the management of Kenyatta which had mentored Pwani University College for five years before it attained its current status.

He said the awarding of the charter to the two colleges in the region will open up the education potential of the local people and residents must make maximum use.

“The awarding of charters to the two university colleges in the region is a big achievement for the coastal populace. Dr. Kingi said that the university in Malindi high court awaiting hearing from the land claiming they legally owned the land but which in 2007 was upgraded to a constituent College.

Kamar thanked the management of Kenyatta which had mentored Pwani University College for five years before it attained its current status.

He said the awarding of the charter to the two colleges in the region will open up the education potential of the local people and residents must make maximum use.
By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

WOMEN groups turn to agriculture to boost income

Most women groups in the country have resorted to borrowing loans from the Women Enterprise Funds to invest in agricultural projects.

The Women Enterprise Funds CEO Samuel Wainaina said most of the women have started agricultural projects as the main income generating activities followed by trade projects.

He said the projects are helping the women earn good profits within a short period and are able to repay the loans since it is a revolving fund.

“About 30 percent of those borrowing money have invested in agricultural projects while others are in trade. The women are very much attracted to agricultural activities like farming because of the quick return,” he said.

Wainaina was speaking in Nyeri town solution to agricultural injustices valued at Ksh 10.8 million to over 200 women groups from Makueni, Mururu and Nyeri town constituencies.

Since inception in year 2008, a total of Ksh 2.7 billion has been loaned to thousands of women groups countrywide.

The loans have helped to improve their incomes and also improve their families. We deal with organized women groups. Some groups have been borrowing even Ksh 50,000 and repaying back on time, he said.

The CEO said the Fund is targetting to give Ksh 1.1 billion loans to over 9,000 groups by the end of this financial year.

Wainaina added that the women have been trained on entrepreneurship in order to spend the money wisely and also to invest wisely.

He, however, lamented that some constitutions which have been affected by insecurity like Bura, Galole and Turkana among others have been delisted, the loans by 15 percent and hopes the security will improve.

Meanwhile, taxpayers will now be able to pay their taxes at the touch of a button. The Kenya Revenue Authority has introduced the Internet Tax Payment System (ITax) which seeks to ensure that all taxes are paid electronically.

Families benefit as well, simple and secure and will deal with domestic taxes only. “It is well enabled to register online, file your tax, and pay and make inquiries online with real time monitoring accounts,” said Korne.

It will also get rid of past challenges faced by taxpayers especially in regard to compliance with tax regulations and facilitating them with convenient inquisition of their records.

According to the officer, the authority plans to launch other initiatives like mobile banking and internet banking. He said that so far only four banks have adopted the system but they are still recruiting more banks.

Korne, however urged taxpayers to stop registering for pin number cyber abuse and to report the same email address to register all clients which in most cases leads to confusion.

He revealed that KRA will licence intermediaries and tax agents like ICPAK and LSK to issue pin numbers to customers.

Lawyers demand implementation of reports

By BEKADZO TONGO

The Authority shall, in every three months, submit a progress report to Parliament and to the relevant County Assemblies and County Executive Committees.

A commissioner to the Authority Mr. M. Omara said that the relevant County Assemblies and County Executive Committees.

A commissioner to the Authority M. Omara said that the relevant County Assemblies and County Executive Committees.

A commissioner to the Authority Mr. M. Omara said that the relevant County Assemblies and County Executive Committees.

A commissioner to the Authority Mr. M. Omara said that the relevant County Assemblies and County Executive Committees.

A commissioner to the Authority Mr. M. Omara said that the relevant County Assemblies and County Executive Committees.

A commissioner to the Authority Mr. M. Omara said that the relevant County Assemblies and County Executive Committees.
Othaya Tea farmers record a boom in UK supermarkets

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

IRIA-INI Tea Factory in Othaya has so far sold about 2,000 kilograms of ready-made tea to UK supermarkets since last year.

The factory board chairman Hutchison Wanjohi said the farmers have earned Ksh 1.06 million after the kilogramme of green leaf and a one kilogramme bag goes for Ksh 558.40.

Speaking during this year’s Annual General meeting, the chairman said he hoped this will go a long way to boost the farmer’s revenue in future especially if more kilogrammes are sold in the market outlet.

“The tea production is however faced with challenges since our average production per bush was 1.2 Kgs which is well below the 2.5 Kgs per bush. We urge all our growers to improve the general tea husbandry in order to improve production and quality,” he added.

During the last financial year, a total of 12.6 million Kgs of green leaf were delivered for processing at the company’s factory producing 2.9 million Kgs of made tea. This is higher compared to the previous year’s level of 11.2 million Kgs of green leaf delivered.

Last year, the company was able to pay farmers Ksh 672.4 million for the green leaf delivered. This payment was higher than the previous year’s payment of Ksh 552.2 million.

Meanwhile, Gitagi Tea Factory in Othaya has embarked on a major exercise that seeks to modernize its plant to enhance production of high quality tea.

The factory board chairman Peter Mwangi said the factory has also embarked on a programme which will help in minimizing cost of production. Some of the initiatives which are being undertaken include replacement of asbestos roofing in the main production building with zinc iron sheets in the main factory building and extension offices.

Speaking during this year’s Annual General Meeting, the chairman said the factory has continued to re-invest in old factories to enhance better production and delivery of green leaf.

“We also had the gravity water project which was implemented to help reduce on cost of pumping water to the factory,” he added.

He said there are problems in generation of Hydro power with companies like Chang’a, Iria-ini, Gathuthi and KTDA which will become an alternative source of energy as well as income.

Last year, crop production at the factory was higher than that of the previous year of 11.02 million Kilogrammes for processing to the company than 9.8 million Kgs.

The company was able to pay farmers Ksh 606,1 million for the green leaf delivered.

And, Gatanguru Tea Factory in Murang’a County has set aside Ksh 2.4 million to be paid out to farmers in dividends. The board of the factory unanimously endorsed the payments following the good performance of the company.

Speaking during the Annual General Meeting, the chairman of the board Samuel Mugiu said this is the first and final dividend payment of 2.5 per cent to be paid as a final dividend to all ‘Class B’ shareholders.

This is equivalent to Ksh 0.125 (12.5 cents) per share.

“The tea business continues to be a promising venture and in order to sustain the good performance of the board, the management has put in place strategies to ensure the future is well secure for our shareholders,” added the chairman.

Mugiu said the factory plans to invest in Mini Hydro Power projects, wood fuel plantations and diversify their range of products as the key areas they are focusing on.

“Arising from escalating cost of inputs, the company continues with the automation of various processes to enhance capacity, improve on efficiency and mitigate against rising costs,” he added.

The company has progresively automated their processing capacities and last year, they rolled out Electronic Weighing Solution in the leaf collection area which is expected to improve efficiency and reduce the leaf collection costs.

Last year, the crop production for the year increased by 9.09 per cent compared to the previous year.

Over 14.4 million Kgs of green leaf were delivered last year compared to 13.2 million Kgs delivered in year 2011. The company was able to make a payment to the farmers of Ksh 765.4 million for the green leaf delivered which was higher than Ksh 677.1 million paid in year 2011.

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

Tea production in the country has recorded an increase of nine percent in the last five months. The Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) National Chairman Peter Kanyayo attributed the increase to favourable climatic conditions resulting from good rains in the tea growing areas.

He said after the application of the fertilizers, the tea crop responded well due to good rains which led to increase in production of green tea.

The chairman therefore said the farmers might perform more at the end of the financial year if the trend continues. Kanyayo said the increase has been recorded in all the 65 factories countrywide.

He was speaking at Ragati Tea Factory in Nyeru County after he held a meeting with zone IV tea directors from all the five factories.

“Kenyans have been many challenges including the rising of production costs since the cost of electricity has gone high,” he lamented. Kanyayo added that the cost of farm inputs has also gone up which is a setback to the sector.

“But the factory has trained farmers on the good agricultural practices. The farmers have also been urged to plant more trees in the tea bushes in order to curb natural calamities like frost which hit the country early this year. We want them to plant more trees to be able to cope with climate change,” he added.

So far all the 65 factories have bought 600 acres each and planted their own indigenous trees with most of the factories achieving more than 20 per cent.

“All the factories in Meru County have achieved 100 percent tree planting in these acreages of lands. This is the way to move as the indigenous trees will help curb climate change,” he added.

He said the planting of trees will help to conserve environment and at the same time acquire fuel for tea processing. To curb the high cost of electricity, several factories have started their own hydro power project like the Gura Hydro Power project which will start soon.

“The Ksh 1.3 billion project involving five tea factories like Gaturu, Iria-ini, Chang’a and Gathuthu will produce five mega watts which will be used by the factories and then the balance will be sold to Kenya Power,” the chairman said.

This will help farmers to save a lot and earn more money since about Ksh 9 is used to process one Kilogramme of green tea which is very much expensive. Meanwhile, Keni farmers have benefited from a Ksh 2 million Information Centre where farmers can get the latest farming and marketing information.

The Ksh 2.0 million information centre was put up with assistance from Help Self Help Centre (BHC), a Non-Governmental Organisation from Scandinavian countries.

The centre based in Naramo town is equipped with modern computers which are all connected to the internet where farmers can browse to get latest farming trends.

The centre also serves as a training ground for the farmers on basic computer, internet and mobile phones use.

The ultra-modern Information centre is for use by local farmers was opened by Kiira East DO Deborah Mwasanya who said the farmers will get the latest information on soil fertility, modern farming techniques, climate change, pests and emerging crop diseases and how to control them.

The DO challenged the farmers from the area and the larger Nyeri County to embrace use of modern farming technologies in order to boost food production and reap maximum benefits.

Mwaria said that use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) was the only way to go as farmers could get updates on the latest farming trends and emerging markets for their produce.

“There is need for farmers to keep abreast to the latest advancements in farming so that they are able to make informed choices on what to produce after accessing possible incomes and costs involved,” Mwaria said.

The DO observed that the centre was one of a kind in the country and challenged local farmers to make the best use of the facility as it would help them improve on their farming and marketing produce thus improving on their livelihoods.

The Project Manager Charles Kanjua said that the centre would be run by two ICT officers who assist the farmers in their queries and find solutions from the relevant sources and has capacity to serve 1,000 farmers.

“The centre is connected to an internet application by M-farm Company that gives updated prices of most farm commodities where farmers can get from the internet or via Short Messaging Service at a subsidised rate,” he said. The centre 1, Ksh 2 from their mobile phones, said the manager.

He added, “This, ensures that farmers are kept abreast on the best prices for their produce through the updates from M-FARM.”

Your support as our reader or advertiser ensures that the stories matter - the stories that help people make decisions about their education, health, governance, their livelihood, and their communities - reach them in a simplified but factual way.

How to Advertise

Send us the details of what you want advertised and we’ll do the rest. These can be sent in electronic form as e-mail attachments or in diskettes/CDs as well as hard copies.

Our advertising rates are as follows:

- Full page colour Kshs. 72,000
- Full page black and white (inside) Kshs. 40,000
- Half page (Black and White) Kshs. 20,000
- Quarter page inside Kshs. 10,000
- The Link Classified Kshs. 4,000
- Front Page Earpiece (colour) Kshs. 8,000
- Front page strap Kshs. 6,000
- Back Page strap Kshs. 4,000
- Back Page Earpiece Kshs. 7,000
- Front Page Solus (colour) Kshs. 20,000
- Back Page Solus (colour) Kshs. 15,000

Special Rates

We offer very special rates for advertisement of charitable activities programmes or services. To get special rates, contact the Editor or the Editorial Assistant.

The details should be mailed to the Editor, P.O. Box 7438, 00200, Nairobi, Kenya. Telephone 020-601776, 020-3572365. You can also email us at thelink@wananchi.com or icad@wananchi.com.

NOTE: All payments should be made through cheques, payable to: Institute for Civic Affairs and Development (ICAD).
Sugar industry faces bleak future over wrangles

By AGGOREY BUCHUNU

A PROVINCIAL administrator has decried the incessant wrangles among sugar firms in Western province over the now diminishing raw material.

The Western Provincial Commissioner Mr. James Ole Serian lamented that the warts pitting sugar factories were impacting negatively on the future of the sugar industry in the region.

Ole Serian who was speaking in webuye town recently noted with disappointment that the sugar wars are disastrous to the economy and the residents’ socio-economic development.

“I am indeed sad to note that the wars are increasingly becoming untenable. We must do something to reverse the trend or else the sugar industry will suffer irreparable losses,” the pc said.

The pc consequently announced drastic measures which he said are aimed at thwarting sugar wars among sugar firms once and for all in the region.

He added that the wars have been spreading to the hinterlands.

The agriculturist underscores the need to sensitize farmers on the need to obtain certificated cultivars from Kenya Agricultural Research Institutes (KARI) and other established nurseries.

It is evident that access to quality planting materials is a major constraint and efforts must be made to ensure that quality planting materials are affordable and accessible to farmers, to enhance mango production and higher income,” the pc said.

Other notable challenges include pests and diseases resulting to high cost on pesticides and other chemicals thus affecting mango productivity and quality of fruits respectively.

Extend-ers, to enhance mango production in the eastern region has slightly 92,650 mango trees census report carried out in Eastern Province by Institution Development and Management, income from mango farming was contributing 12 percent annually.

According to a baseline survey of mango trees censuses carried out in Eastern Province by Institution Development and Management, income from mango farming was contributing 12 percent annually.

Production of mango in the Eastern province generating household income in lower eastern region.

The findings reported the entry of young generation into mango farming being out of their conscious realization of the economic benefits from the farm enterprise, which the survey says were behind massive planting of modern grafted mangoes in the recent years in the region.

Out of 2,761,929 mango trees in Eastern province, 9 percent of the mango trees have been planted in the last seven years, by the current generation of farmers, who have easily adopted initiatives to improve mango farming,” the survey revealed.

Makueni county with a total of 1,469,625 mango trees from its 28,696 farmers, led in 2010 mango production in the Eastern province.

With substantial growth in mango subsector in recent past years, farmers are focused on cultivation of improved commercial varieties referred as grafted mangoes, unlike indigenous ones.

Apple mango is widely grown and common favourite in farmers in eastern region due to its high market demand.

Other improved varieties and common within the region and notably Makueni County, are Tommy, Kent Ngowe, Peach, Van Dyke, Boribo and Batavi.

“The high production of Apple, Tommy, Kent and Ngowe mango varieties is good news for processors and fresh market players given their unique market characteristics,” the researchers add.

The survey predicts that in the next four years mango production in Eastern province will almost double the current outputs.

However the survey reports a changing trend in recent years that there has been expansion in mango cultivation especially in Eastern province.

Coast province which was hitherto considered as the home of mango growing has been overtaken by eastern province.

The survey rates the Coast province a distance second, with Eastern province been home of largest mango trees population in the country, which stands at three million mango trees planted at 42,000 hectares, while coast province has mango trees population of 1.4 million.

With substantial growth in mango sector in recent past years, farmers are focused on cultivation of improved commercial varieties referred as grafted mangoes, unlike indigenous ones.

Apple mango is widely grown and common favourite in farmers in eastern region due to its high market demand.

Other improved varieties and common within the region and notably Makueni County, are Tommy, Kent Ngowe, Peach, Van Dyke, Boribo and Batavi.

“The high production of Apple, Tommy, Kent and Ngowe mango varieties is good news for processors and fresh market players given their unique market characteristics,” the researchers add.

The survey predicts that in the next four years mango production in Eastern province will almost double the current outputs. However the researchers regret that most of planting materials are sourced from farmers’ own farms and notably obtained from already grafted mango varieties.

The sugar industry needs to sensitize farmers on the need to obtain certificated cultivars from Kenya Agricultural Research Institutes (KARI) and other established nurseries.

As the country is geared to vision 2030, the survey advises for greater private participation especially in processing of mango products to enhance value addition.

It further calls for enforcement of Kenya Mango Producers and Marketing Association to play an active role in getting prospective investors in the mango sub sector in the eastern region.

Government through the ministry of agriculture and partners has several projects undertaken to boost mango production in the eastern region among them National Agricultural and Livestock Expansion Programme (NAP) and the Kenya Agricultural Productivity and Agribusiness Project (KAPAP) where mango farmers have been assisted in cultivation of improved mangoes.

With the challenges that come with the marketing of mangoes and post harvest losses due to the mango fruit’s perishability, partners and local leaders are looking for possibilities of establishing a fruit processing plant at the lower eastern province.

Mangoes move Makueni to national fame

By MALACHI MONTANO

FARMERS in Makueni are adopting modern mango farming in agribusiness, a new venture that is shaping livelihoods in most families in the County.

The county has for the last three years reported massive planting of new mango trees attracting attention of agriculturists in the county.

According to a baseline survey of mango trees census report carried out in Eastern Province by Institution Development and Management, income from mango farming was contributing 12 percent annually.

Having been introduced into the country at coast province in the 14 century from India and Pakistan during ivory and slave trades before it started spreading to the hinterlands, the mango sub sector have been growing very slowly.

However the survey reports a changing trend in recent years that there has been expansion in mango cultivation especially in Eastern province.

Coast province which was hitherto considered as the home of mango growing has been overtaken by eastern province.

The survey rates the Coast province a distance second, with Eastern province been home of largest mango trees population in the country, which stands at three million mango trees planted at 42,000 hectares, while coast province has mango trees population of 1.4 million.

With substantial growth in mango sector in recent past years, farmers are focused on cultivation of improved commercial varieties referred as grafted mangoes, unlike indigenous ones.

Apple mango is widely grown and common favourite in farmers in eastern region due to its high market demand.

Other improved varieties and common within the region and notably Makueni County, are Tommy, Kent Ngowe, Peach, Van Dyke, Boribo and Batavi.

“The high production of Apple, Tommy, Kent and Ngowe mango varieties is good news for processors and fresh market players given their unique market characteristics,” the researchers add.

The survey predicts that in the next four years mango production in Eastern province will almost double the current outputs. However the researchers regret that most of planting materials are sourced from farmers’ own farms and notably obtained from already grafted mango varieties.

The sugar industry needs to sensitize farmers on the need to obtain certificated cultivars from Kenya Agricultural Research Institutes (KARI) and other established nurseries.

As the country is geared to vision 2030, the survey advises for greater private participation especially in processing of mango products to enhance value addition.

It further calls for enforcement of Kenya Mango Producers and Marketing Association to play an active role in getting prospective investors in the mango sub sector in the eastern region.

Government through the ministry of agriculture and partners has several projects undertaken to boost mango production in the eastern region among them National Agricultural and Livestock Expansion Programme (NAP) and the Kenya Agricultural Productivity and Agribusiness Project (KAPAP) where mango farmers have been assisted in cultivation of improved mangoes.

With the challenges that come with the marketing of mangoes and post harvest losses due to the mango fruit’s perishability, partners and local leaders are looking for possibilities of establishing a fruit processing plant at the lower eastern province.
Ganze farmers demand compensation from KWS

By BEKADZO TONDO

FARMERS in Ganze have suffered high losses following the destruction of their crops by marauding elephants. About 300 households have already lost their crops, with only 50 percent of the farms remaining intact.

According to the vice chairman of Kilifi county council Mr. Teddi Mwambire, the farmers have already suffered huge losses due to the continued destruction of their crops by elephants.

He said the marauding elephants from Tsavo West national park have invaded farms in Midogomani and vitengeni and destroyed maturing maize crops, among others.

Mr. Mwambire acknowledged that the attacks by elephants have affected farmers’ crop yields and have led to many of them being unable to make a living.

He further urged farmers to intensify their efforts to meet government and district targets to ensure that it can continue to receive sufficient rainfall for the crop season.

A worker at Ragati Tea Factory in Nyieri County package tea for sale.

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

Tea production registers a boost in the last five months

TEA production in the country has recorded an increase of nine percent in the last five months.

The Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) National Chairman Peter Kanyago attributed the increase to favourable climatic conditions resulting from good rains in the tea growing areas.

He said after the application of the fertilizers, the tea crop responded well due to good rains which led to increase in production of green tea.

The chairman therefore said the farmers are poised to have a good harvest which he estimated at about 1.3 billion pallets.

However, there has been many challenges including the rising of production costs since the cost of electricity has gone high, he lamented.

Kanyago added that the cost of farm inputs has also gone up which is a setback to the sector.

“But the factory has trained farmers on good agricultural practices. The farmers have also been urged to plant more trees in the tea bushes in order to curb natural calamities like frost which hit the country earlier this year,” he added.

He further said that only 65 factories are countrywide.

So far all the 65 factories have bought 600 acres each and planted their own indigenous trees with most of the factories achieving more than 20 percent.

“All the factories in Meru County have achieved 100 percent tree planting in these acreages of lands. This is the way to move as the indigenous trees will help curb climate change,” he added.

He further said the planting of trees will help to conserve environment and at the same time acquire fuel for tea processing.

To curb the high cost of electricity, several factories have started their own hydro power project like the Guru Hydro Power project which will start soon.

“The Ksh 1.3 billion project involving five tea factories like Gathuhu, Irisi, and Chinga and Gathuthi will produce five mega watts which will be used by the factories and then the balance will be sold to Kenya Power,” the chairman said.

This will help farmers to save a lot and earn more money since about Ksh 9 is used to process one kilogramme of green tea which is very much expensive.

Mr. Mwambire added that the factories have already harvested 25 percent of the market which is round about 10.8 million to over 18 million.

Meanwhile, most women groups in the country have harvested 25 percent of the market which is round about 200 women groups from Mukurweini, Mathira and Nyeri town constituencies.

Since inception in year 2008, a total of Ksh 2.7 billion has been loaned to thousands of women groups countrywide.

“The KWS should install an electric fence in the area that borders the Tsavo West National Park to find a lasting solution to the menace,” said Mr. Diba.

Ganze District Commissioner Mr. Ibrahim Diba had earlier blamed the lack of enough water sources inside the park for the spoiling of the wild beasts. Mr Diba said prolonged drought had made the water points in the national park to dry up and thus wild animals were straying in search of the commodity.

“The Wild animals stay because all the water sources in the park have dried up owing to the prolonged drought period,” said Mr Diba.

Photo:Joseph Mukubwa

Busia cane farmers promised cheap loans

By NYAKWAR ODIAWO

THE Kenya Sugar Board through Agricultural Finance Cooperation (AFC) plans to disburse Ksh 1.3 billion to farmers in Busia County to boost cane production.

The programme funded by European Union (EU) takes effect immediately and is aimed at making cane farmers in the region self-reliant without relying on government.

Addressing stakeholders during a field day at St Mary’s primary school in Nambyale recently, the AFC managing director Lucas Messo said over reliance on millers for the provision of farm inputs has left majority of farmers in the area reeling in abject poverty due to the losses.

He said the loan facility will help farmers reap highly from their produce and minimize losses incurred due to poor land preparation.

The Managing Director said the loans will be advanced at the rate of 5 percent payable in five year-term, of three installments phase.

The installments, he added will account for 40 percent of the first harvest, 30 percent of the second harvest and 30 percent third harvest.

Messo, however, challenged farmers in the sugarcane-rich Busia County to seize the opportunity to expand and modernize their farming techniques for maximum output.

He said that the programme has been aligned with vision 2030 and the Millennium Development Goal on food security.

Messo further said the loan will be awarded based on an individual farmer’s need and the acreage under cane production with an acre attracting as much as Ksh 55,000.

The Kenya Sugar Board (KSB) Chief Executive Officer Ms Rosemary Mikok urged cane farmers in Busia to exploit the opportunity to help boost their cane production as currently local demand had outstripped supply.

The Sugar Board boss said that farmers, regulators and millers should unite for the success of cane farming in the larger Busia County.

She encouraged farmers to form groups to enable them qualify for loans disbursed to cane farmers.

“The Kenya Sugar Board is rolling out a plan to fund millers to support farmers who have no little needs but are supplying cane on contract basis,” said the CEO.

At the same time, the Kenya Sugar Board boss said the board is developing a national cane policy which will ensure farmers get access to the right quality of seed to increase on their yields.

Mikok however urged the sugarcane farmers to practice Agri-business ventures.

The cane farmers expressed satisfaction saying the loan facility was long overdue and vowed to intensify their efforts to meet the local demand.
Othaya coffee farmers settle for global market

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

Othaya Coffee Farmers Cooperative Society has identified more than four foreign countries where they will be selling their coffee directly.

Speaking during this year’s Annual General Meeting, the chairman Newton Ndiritu said the society with the assistance of Kenya Cooperative Coffee Exporters (KCCE) has identified several direct markets in United States of America, Switzerland, Korea and Norway.

The society started selling the coffee late last year at the mentioned countries and expected to get good returns.

The chairman said many other countries such as China, France and Germany have expressed interest to buy their coffee.

“The challenge is now unto us since we are facing low production and therefore I urge you farmers to work hard so that you may increase production and satisfy the growing demand for our coffee,” the chairman told the farmers.

The coffee production for the last one year stood at 1.7 million Kilogrammes, which was a decline from the previous year, largely blamed on adverse weather conditions during the year.

He said that farmers had received an advance payment of Ksh 15 per Kg against their total production as at 12th January 2013.

“We are now using our coffee mill which has helped to reduce significantly production losses and the coffee for 2012/2013 is being processed,” said the chairman.

The society is also in the process of computerizing all its 19 coffee factories in Othaya by the end of the year 2013/2014.

“Once the computerization is completed, members would be served at their various factories instead of traveling long distances to the headquarters at Othaya town,” he added.

However, the society is faced with many challenges including coffee hawking and thefts.

He lamented that some members continue to hawk their coffee which is a great threat to the society.

“Hawking encourages theft of coffee from the shambas. This is a trend that must be stopped under all costs since its illegal business. Members should decide on what action should be taken against the coffee hawkers and those who divert their coffee to other cooperative societies,” he added.

The chairman urged the Government to help curb the menace.

KTDA starts a multi-million hydro power project

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

A MULTI-MILLION power project initiated by four tea factories and the Kenya Tea Development Agency has been started in Nyandarua County.

The Ksh 1.3 billion Gura Hydro Power project which was commissioned recently is expected to generate five megawatts of electricity (green energy) for the factories.

Four tea factories including Chinga, Gathuthi, Gitugi and Iria-ini and KTDA are involved in the project which is set to be completed by the year 2014.

KTDA chairman Peter Kanyago said the project will enable the factories diversify their revenue sources since the factories require only 2.8 megawatts and the remaining 2.2 megawatts will be sold to Kenya Power. He added that hydro power development uses renewable energy (green energy) thus the projects have the potential to benefit from carbon credit revenue.

Nine other small hydro power projects countrywide are also in the pipeline as KTDA Power Company moves to mobilize resources to enable all the 65 tea factories diversify their business and generate additional revenue.

He said investments in the small hydro power plants is a strategy meant to mitigate the rising costs of production particularly in labour and electricity which keep rising every year.

“The revenue generated will be shared between the tea factories and the Kenya Power Company who are the shareholders,” he said.

The chairman who was accompanied by KTDA CEO Lerionka Tiampati said each of the KTDA factories spends between Ksh 35 and Ksh 40 million annually on power costs, adding that energy (electrical and thermal) accounted for about 30 per cent of the operational costs for the tea factories with electricity alone accounting for 17 per cent.

Nationally, over Ksh 2 billion is paid as electricity tariffs per year by the factories. Tiampati said the construction work to be undertaken by officials/ contractors VS Holdings of Sri Lanka is set to begin immediately after the ground breaking ceremony.

The excess power generated from the Gura Project would be sold to the national grid and the benefits would then be passed over to the small scale tea farmers through their factory companies.

The CEO said that KTDA was also exploring other sources of renewable energy like wind and solar power to supplement and augment the energy needs adding that the company has identified the Muchimukinca Wind project which had the potential to produce 24 megawatts of power.

Meanwhile, KTDA (Holdings) Ltd has set up the KTDA Power Company to manage and run hydro plants on behalf of the regional power companies. Through the management agreement KTDA Power Company has equity investment. Nine regional power companies have been formed covering all factories.

The regional power companies will own the Small Hydro Projects.

A farmer Joseph Nderitu lauded the project saying the farmers will earn more money instead of relying on tea.

Coffee farmers prepare parchment coffee in Othaya. The coffee will be sold directly in the foreign markets. Photo: Joseph Mukubwa

Rice farmers irked by embezzlement of funds

By NYAKWAR ODAWO

RICE farmers in Western Kenya have protested against the alleged mismanagement of millions of shillings belonging to their Cooperative Society.

The irate farmers allied to the Bunyala Irrigation Scheme in Bungoma County accused management of defrauding the society of a total of Ksh. 7.5 million during the 2010/2011 financial year.

The money is part of Ksh. 42 million disbursed to the society through the Economic Stimulus Programme (ESP) and Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) to support rice farming in the region after floods caused unprecedented havoc in Budalangi leaving farmers reeling in debts which were later waived by the government.

Speaking to The Link at the Bunyala Irrigation Scheme office, the farmers accused Magombe Multipurpose Cooperative Society top leadership of defrauding them.

Reliable sources within the Irrigation Scheme indicate that the society received a total of Ksh.36.6 million through the Economic Stimulus Programme to facilitate the purchase of farm input and another Ksh. 5.4 million from Food and Agricultural Organization.

The irate farmers said that about Ksh 12 million had been set aside to aid in the purchase of farm inputs but only Ksh. 4 Million of the Ksh 12 million cannot be accounted for.

The farmers at the same time revealed that the out-grower extension officers have been embezzling Ksh. 30 Million is experiencing challenges due to lack of funds to pay labour.

The cooperative society owes two contractors a total of Ksh 0.7 million since the last crop season, said the rice farmers.

“We want Magombe Multipurpose Cooperative Society disbanded forthwith and stern legal action taken against the officials who have embezzled our funds,” said one of the farmers who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The alleged corruption at the farmers’ rice scheme has prompted the National Irrigation Board to dispatch a team of investigators to establish the truth of the matter and take the necessary action against those involved.

However, when contacted for comment over the alleged corruption, the Cooperative chairperson Christopher Gunyi said the cooperative society was facing serious financial problems but the scheme was running smoothly.

The Chairman urged farmers to direct their focus on profitable strategies to enrich their farming through value addition during this 21st century.
**Managerial skills critical in health sector**

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

FOR a long time, the Kenyan health sector has been grappling with gaps in leadership, management and governance. The situation has been aggravated by poor service delivery that has in past characterized most health facilities.

However, the sector is likely to change as the health practitioners can now enhance their managerial skills at Kenya Institute of System Health and Management (KIHSM) in Nairobi. The institution would enable the health-experts gain the necessary leadership and management skills as they work alongside the government.

The training is seen as a major boost to the sector as it will create room for promotions and better pay. Doctors and nurses have always opted to either work in private hospitals or seek employment in foreign countries for better payments. In fact, it is said Kenya has the best trained doctors in the continent but majority practice in foreign countries.

Mark Bor, the Kenya’s Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation said human capacity building is critical to motivate health-workers. “Many health facilities have been shut down due to poor management skills and bad governance. Disparities serving patients at the village level are the most affected,” Mark Bor explained.

The PS disclosed that the two Ministries of Health in conjunction with other partners have agreed to spearhead efforts towards reviving the facilities. He stated it would help revamp already dilapidated health facilities in the country and prevent the shutting down of others.

“As you may be aware, the mission of the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation is to provide effective leadership and participate in provision of quality Public Health and Sanitation services. These are: Equitable, responsive, accessible and accountable to Kenyans,” explained the PS.

“For the Ministry of Medical Services, it is much the same; to promote and participate in the provision of high quality curative and rehabilitative medical services to all Kenyans,” add- ed the PS. He further emphasized on the need for the health workers to embrace the principles of effectiveness, quality, responsiveness and accessible health services. “Management is key to effective service delivery in any institution. Poor management was to blame for the frequent strikes in the hospitals that leave patients suffering,” the Minister reiterated.

Many health facilities have been shut down mainly due to mismanage- ment. With the devolution in place, every county will be expected to manage their own facilities with very little help from national government.

Mary Ngari the Permanent Secre- tary in the Ministry of Medical Serv- ices, stated that a report on Manage- ment and Leadership Development Gaps for Kenya Health Managers carried out between 2007 and 2008, revealed that the health sector domi- nated the government’s recurrent budget, with 18 per cent of entire re- current expenditure being channelled towards referral hospitals.

Ngari further pointed out health systems generally remain weak cou- pled with operational and manage- ment inefficiencies, poor quality of service and poor capacity planning budgeting and management.

The PS said Kenya Institute of Health Systems and Management (KIHSM) has been established to of- fer the LMG skills to all health work- ers with regular refresher courses at least after every two years. She made the remarks as at close of the four days conference where she emphasized on the need to double up proper manage- ment at all levels.

Dr Shahnaz Shariff, the Director of Public Health said, Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH), the biggest refer- ral health facility in East and Central Africa, is the only hospital headed by qualified Chief Executive Officer (CEO) as its manager.

Dr Shariff applauded the manager for good management leading to im- proving health services to patients and better equipment for the facility.

“Before then KNH used to be an unimaginable place to be admitted for any treatment due to the bad smell, few beds in wards and demotivated health workers. But today things have changed hence importance of having qualified and experienced manag- ing leaders such big institutions,” Dr Shariff reflected.

“Let me say here that in any serv- ice delivery, the best part of it comes from software not hardware. So, with all good physical structures in place and no human resource and govern- ment support, nothing much can be achieved,” Dr Shariff observed.

**Kiener farmer’s set to benefit from centre**

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

KIENER farmers have benefited from a Ksh 2 million Information centre where farmers can get the latest farming and marketing information. The Ksh 2 million info- rative centre was put up with assist- ance from Help Self Help Centre (HSHC), a Non -Governmental Organisation from Scandinavian countries.

The centre based in Narumoru town is equipped with modern computers which are all connected to the internet where farmers can browse to get latest farming trends.

The centre also serves as a train- ing ground for the farmers on ba- sic computer, internet and mobile phones use.

The ultra modern Information centre for use by local farmers was opened by Kiener East DO Deborah Mwararia who said the farmers will get the latest information on soil fertility, modern farming tech- niques, climate change, pests and emerging crop diseases and how to control them.

The DO challenged the farmers from the area and the larger Nyeri County to embrace use of modern farming technologies in order to boost food production and reap maximum benefits.

Mwararia noted that use of In- formation Communication Tech- nology (ICT) was the only way to go as farmers could get updates on the latest farming trends and emerging markets for their pro- duce.

“There is need for farmers to keep abreast to the latest advance- ments in farming so that they are able to make informed choices on what to produce after accessing possible incomes and costs in- volved,” Mwararia said.

The DO observed that the centre was one of a kind in the coun- try and challenged local farmers to make the best use of the facil- ity as it would help them improve on their farming and marketing produce thus improving on their livelihoods. The Project Manager Charles Kahunja said that the centre would be run by two ICT of- ficers who assist the farmers in their queries and find solutions from the relevant sources and has capacity to serve 1,000 farmers.

“The centre is connected to an internet application by M-farm Company that gives updated prices of most farm commodities where farmers can get from the internet or via Short Messaging Service at a subsidized price of Ksh 1 from their mobile phones,” said the man- ager.

He added, “This, ensures that farmers are kept abreast on the best prices for their produce through the updates from M-FARM.”

The project manager added that the centre not only serves as an information sharing platform for farmers but also provides up to date information on crop diseases surveillance and forest destruc- tion. He however observed illit- eracy and low levels of education amongst local farmers were major challenges of the project but were quick to add that those who could not grasp the concepts of the project were advised to seek assistance of fellow farmers or from learned relatives on the information they needed.

**SUBSCRIPTION FORM**

Please accept my/our subscription to The Link for the period of …………………… months

dating from …………………… to ……………………

I/We …………………………. of P.O. Box ……………………

Code ………………… Town ………………… Tel No. ………………… Street …………………

Building ………………… Floor ………………… Room No. ………………… Mobile …………………

Email: …………………………. have paid Kshs. ………………………….

Attached, please find money order No ………………………….…….

Signature and /or stamp of client: ………………… Date …………………

Back issues No/Months: ……………………………

Fill in this form and attach a postal money order of Kshs. 660 and post back to:-

Institute for Civic Affairs and Development

P.O. Box 7438 - 00200 Nairobi

Photo/Henry Owino

Ministry of Public and sanitation and World Health Organizations representatives and motor bike riders demonstrate safety helmet safety wearing.

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA
The drastic cuts on AIDS funding last year has been recorded to have pushed the number of deaths to 150 people in the region. According to Lucy Kangara, media coordinator of Dedan Kimathi University, Community Outreach and Linkages department, more people continue to lose their lives with more than 91,000 adults becoming infected in year 2011. “Stagnating funds or backtracking by international donors of HIV/AIDS treatment risks undermining years of positive achievements and will cause many unnecessary deaths,” she says.

About 80,000 deaths are reported every year in the country due to AIDS. She noted that if the funds are reduced, there will be impact on other sectors like Agriculture, industry, public service, education and informal sector due to lack of labour adding that it would cause a serious damage to the agriculture sector in those countries that rely on manpower for production.

Donor countries that have cut funding include Portugal, Greece and Spain among others. The stakeholders including the government have been urged to continue lobbying for more funding since the disease was declared a national disaster in 1989.

Shamton Waruru from Partners Link which is an NGO says that the Ksh 85 billion set aside in the health sector last year by the Government is still not enough despite the 74 per cent of the budget going to the HIV/AIDS.

“But I urge donors not to impose prohibitive conditions on the funding including on issues that touch on homosexuality which remains unacceptable in our culture,” she added.

Christine Njogu, Central Nairobi Aids Council coordinator said to eliminate stigma, the donors and the government must continue investing in the disease both at the grassroots and national level.

“We must lobby the Government to take this as a priority and invest in it. Our prevalence rate is about 4.9 per cent,” she added. Njogu said they will continue working with stakeholders and other NGOs to end the disease.

The debate was attended by community based organization members, stakeholders and several NGOs from the five counties of Central region.

Businesses in Tana River perform dismally

By BEKADZO TONDO

The business community in Tana River County has been hit hard by the stagnation in growth in the recent past. The traders said since March last year, security in the area has deteriorated to alarming levels and cited the bloody clashes which left more than 150 people dead.

Led by Mr. Gilo Shungi, a businessman at Oda village, they have been forced to close down their businesses for fear of attacks.

“Business people in Tana Delta district have really incurred huge losses since the beginning of this year due to lack of security,” said Mr. Shungi.

The traders who spoke at Tarasa trading center complained that the clashes pitting the Orma and Pokomo communities had worsened the security situation in the area.

“Since March when clashes started erupting among the Ormas and the Pokonomos, our business has been affected to the extent that some of us are closing down” said Mr. Shungi.

He said that most boda boda operators have fled the area due to insecurity and so has residents who have sought refuge in neighbouring areas.

The traders further said that the mass exodus of people from the area has virtually rendered them jobless. A spot check at Tarasa, Ngao and Oda trading centers in Garsen established that people had fled from the area and were crowding at Tarasa trading center.

Mary Okwiri who was among the people fleeing said she was forced to abandon her home at Tarasa to join her husband at Mpeketoni.

“My home is at Tarasa but I have decided to flee with three children to Mpeketoni where my husband works,” said Ms Okwiri.

However Tana River county commissioner Mr. Joseph Rotich urged area residents not to flee their homes as the government had deployed enough security officers.

Mr Rotich confirmed that there had been mass exodus of people mostly from Kipao, Ngao, Oda, Tarasa and other villages in Garsen but said the residents were just doing so out of panic and fear.

“The government has deployed enough security officers who have established camps at different joints while others are on patrol and therefore there should be no panic,” said Mr. Rotich.

The commissioner said they have been meeting as security agencies in the area to hold peace meetings with the people so that people could co-exist as one.

“The most important thing at the moment is to build peace among the Orma, Wardlei and the Pokomo so that they can live in harmony as that was the only solution to address the crisis facing the county,” said Rotich.

The Link, April 2013

Fear as cuts on AIDS funding take toll

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

The IFJ urged accountability for the failure by Governments and the UN to address the stigma and violence against journalists, which remains a frequent feature in the last decade and which is more alarming.

An estimated 1.6 million Kenyans were living with HIV in year 2011 with approximately 6.2 per cent of the adult population being HIV infected. According to the figures released by the National Aids Control Council (NACC) the number of people living with HIV/AIDS is estimated to be 1.6 million people or 6.2 per cent of the adult population. NACC however noted that the number of people who are still unaware that they are HIV positive is alarming.

The situation is so desperate that the government has been urged to continue lobbying for more funding since the disease was declared a national disaster in 1989. Shomton Waruru from Partners Link which is an NGO says that the Ksh 85 billion set aside in the health sector last year by the Government is still not enough despite the 74 per cent of the budget going to the HIV/AIDS.

“But I urge donors not to impose prohibitive conditions on the funding including on issues that touch on homosexuality which remains unacceptable in our culture,” she added.

Christine Njogu, Central Nairobi Aids Council coordinator said to eliminate stigma, the donors and the government must continue investing in the disease both at the grassroots and national level.

“We must lobby the Government to take this as a priority and invest in it. Our prevalence rate is about 4.9 per cent,” she added. Njogu said they will continue working with stakeholders and other NGOs to end the disease.

The debate was attended by community based organization members, stakeholders and several NGOs from the five counties of Central region.

Media targeted for more attacks last year

By AGGREY BUCHUNJU

The media have been targeted for more attacks last year has been described as one of the bloodiest years for journalists and media workers in the world.

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) President Jim Boumelha disclosed that the year recorded 121 killings in targeted attacks and cross fire incidents.

Boumelha further disclosed that thirty three journalists died in accidents or of illness while they were at work thus bringing the total number of deaths to 151.

He said that this terrible number of deaths of members of the Fourth Estate is as a result of a systematic failure by Governments and the United Nations (UN) to fulfill their international obligations to protect and enforce journalists basic right to life.

“The death toll for 2012 is another indictment of Governments which pay lip service to the protection of journalists,” Boumelha said.

He claimed that the high numbers of journalists killed has become a constant feature in the last decade during which the usual reaction from Governments and the UN has been a few words of condemnation, a curtailment of funding and all other conditions that could substantially higher in the next 20 years which is more alarming.

“An estimated 1.6 million Kenyans were living with HIV in year 2011 with approximately 6.2 per cent of the adult population being HIV infected. The situation is so desperate that the government has been urged to continue lobbying for more funding since the disease was declared a national disaster in 1989. Shomton Waruru from Partners Link which is an NGO says that the Ksh 85 billion set aside in the health sector last year by the Government is still not enough despite the 74 per cent of the budget going to the HIV/AIDS.

“But I urge donors not to impose prohibitive conditions on the funding including on issues that touch on homosexuality which remains unacceptable in our culture,” she added.

Christine Njogu, Central Nairobi Aids Council coordinator said to eliminate stigma, the donors and the government must continue investing in the disease both at the grassroots and national level.

“We must lobby the Government to take this as a priority and invest in it. Our prevalence rate is about 4.9 per cent,” she added. Njogu said they will continue working with stakeholders and other NGOs to end the disease.

The debate was attended by community based organization members, stakeholders and several NGOs from the five counties of Central region.

Farmers in Kilifi County advised to exploit the rainy season

By LINK CORRESPONDENT

The government has urged farmers in Kilifi County to prepare their farms early for planting as the rainy season is set to begin. Kilifi county commissioner Mr. Erastus Ekidor said locals should stop depending on irrigation to boost on agriculture output, instead farmers should exploit the rainy season.

Speaking in Kilifi, Mr Ekidor noted with great concern that most farmers in the area had not prepared their farms although the rains are about to start. The commissioner urged agricultural officers to mobilize farmers and educate them on the importance of adopting modern farming techniques to enable them produce more food for domestic use and for sale.

“Agricultural officers have a duty to educate farmers on the importance of adopting modern farming methods so that they can be able to produce more food,” said Mr. Ekidor.

He said Kilifi county which hosts the poorest Ganze constituency in the country must explore ways to improve food and agriculture production.

“Kilifi county is endowed with enormous resources including River Sabaki which can be tapped for irrigation to boost on agriculture output,” said Mr. Ekidor.

Kilifi District Agricultural Officer Mrs Jane Kanuru said there was need for farmers in the area to put measures in place to handle their farms.

The officer lamented that most farmers in district especially in Chonyi’s registered poor harvest due to the prolonged period of drought. She said the area registered total crop failure as the crops weathered before maturity due to the erratic rains.

The Link, April 2013
NYERI County has a new private university.

Fairland University Brade Gate Campus from Uganda will now operate in Kenya after a ground breaking ceremoney officiated by Central PC, Kiplimoigat at Chaka in Kieni East district.

The university when complete is expected to accommodate at least 10,000 students beginning from mid this year (June) which will be the first intake.

The campus will offer degrees in agriculture, education, accounting, business administration with a bias in Agriculture among others.

Fairland Chancellor Prof. Dr.Ranjju Chandrashekhar said the project culminate in the setting up of a fully fledged campus of Fairland University in Nyeri on premises to be acquired in a multi-million project of Brade Gate Industries.

Rugut urged locals to take advantage of such institutions in order to acquire more knowledge.

“Such kinds of developments are reasonably essential for our nation and the neighbouring state. I encourage others who fill they are capable to contemplate on making such strides for the purposes of overall growth of our country.”

The PC said.

It will in the beginning offer courses in agriculture with a bias in poultry farming, Education, accounting and Business Administration. This campus comes barely a month after Kimathi University College still in Nyeri received a charter from President MwaiKibaki to become a fully functioning university.

According to the PC, plans are underway to grant Karatina University College a charter which is also in Nyeri County in the next few months to increase institutions of higher learning in the expansive county.

Executive chairman of Brade Gate Poultry Industries ThuoMathenge where the university is located said the university will solve the socio-economic quandary bedevilling the country through, creating awareness, knowledge endowment, offering employment and eventually poverty eradication through exploitation of the available rich agricultural resources.

“The end result will be to curb rural-urban migration common all over Africa. The university allocated along Kiganjo – Nanyuki highway will also accommodate the larger East African community as it expands its wings,” he added.

Mathenge was honoured with the Doctor of Social Sciences degree (Honoris causa) by the vice chancellor during the function.

Brade Gate Poultry industries which houses the campus is the biggest and the most Ultra-modern poultry industry in East and Central Africa.

It is a community based project working on eradication of Poverty from the community with over 100,000 people depending on the Poultry Industry.

“Poverty has been imminent but now changes are being felt in the community with over 2,000 local employed directly by Bradegate industries and over 50,000 employed indirectly,” said the chairman.

Mathenge who is also the Nyeri aspiring governor added that a thorough research and evaluation on the socio-economic wants of the local Nyeri community and its surroundings identified that Agriculture, like any other industry can change the economic status of the Nyeri County if given the right impetus.

Others who were present include senior officials of the university including Vice Deputy Vice Chancellor Dr.Sandeep Gandhi and Vice Chancellor Dr. Solomon Wakabi.

Funyula benefits from ultra-modern cultural centre

By NYAKWAR ODAMO

THE government has earmarked a total of Ksh1.5 billion towards the construction of a cultural centre at Bumbe.

Funyula Member of Parliament Dr Paul Otonso who is also the minister for Local Government says that once completed, the new cultural centre will help in storing of artefacts in the district adding that the centre will be part of the Western circuit tourism.

Otonso who was addressing residents during the Samia United Cultural Camp held in Funyula town said that the group was determined to make sure that the area was visited regularly.

Samia Bugwe Youth Member of Parliament in Uganda, Julius Maganda who also addressed the occasion on his part said that the town is determined to grow and play a crucial role in the promotion of peacefull co-existence among the cross-border communities.

The legislator at the same time said that the community boasts of 380,000 people in Uganda and 150,000 in Kenya adding that other members are found in Katonga, Zambia and Kagera in Tanzania.

He said that talk is rife between the Government of Uganda and Samia community to be given the go-ahead to have and manage their own Kingdom.

Maganda expressed confidence saying that President Yoweri will approve their request to have autonomy of the Kingdom.

“We have had no King for nearly six decades since Nabongo Omunia of Wangi’s reign came to an end,” he said.

The legislator said that there was urgent need on the part of the two governments to train fishermen from the community and to open up the roads connecting the two border towns in order to boost trade.

Amagoro Member of Parliament Sospeter Ojaamong who is also labour assistant minister on his part praised Samia community for their strong cultural ties and appealed to other cross border communities to emulate them.

Ojaamong said that Busia County is set to benefit a lot under the new system of government taking into account the fact that it has a lot of resources which if properly utilized would go a long way in improving the economic status of the region hence empowering the people.

“Busia County has an edge over other counties because it has a lot of resources which if properly used will empower the people economically hence reducing the current high level of poverty,” said Ojaamong.

Meanwhile, the government through the Busia Youth Enterprise Development Fund has disbursed a total of Ksh17.4 million to seven youth groups and eleven individuals to enable them initiate various income generating activities and become self-reliant.

Addressing the beneficiaries after presenting them with the cheques at the District Information and Documentation Centre’s boardroom at the Busia District headquarters recently, Nambole District Youth Development Officer Bernard Makori urged the beneficiaries to take advantage of the loan facilities and initiate viable income generating activities that will sustain them.

“Utilize the loan you have been given properly and ensure you have invested in the same in viable income generating activities that will at the end of the day earn you a lot of income so that you can become self-reliant considering the high level of unemployment in the county especially among the youth,” said the district youth development officer.

The youth development officer urged the youth groups and those who had received individual loans to ensure they repay the loans in good time so that other groups in the waiting list can as well benefit from the loan and improve on their standards of living.

“I am appealing to you to repay the loan in good time considering that we have a long list of other groups waiting to be funded so that they can also benefit from the same,” said the youth officer, adding that majority of youth groups that had earlier received the loan had declined to repay claiming it was campaign pay.

“Not is not a grant. It is not campaign money either as majorit of you had thought. It is a loan that you must repay so that others can also be funded to enable them engage in income generating activities,” added the youth development officer.

The seven youth groups received total of Ksh350,000 with each of them receiving Ksh50,000 of which a total of Ksh22,500 was deducted to cater for the management fee whereas the eleven individuals received a total of Ksh322,000 minus Ksh28,000 management fees.

The group members interviewed lauded the government for coming up with the initiative saying it has empowem them economically.

“I invested the first loan I took in poultry business which has really sustained me and my family. I completed repaying the loan and I have again re- ceived an individual loan which I will inject into the same business,” said Willbroda Night Adongo, one of the beneficiaries.

Disabled lobby for special ministry

By AGOREY BUCHUNU

PEOPLE with disability now want the Government to create a special ministry for them at both the National and County Government.

They claim that their plight has not been fully addressed by the authorities due to lack of defined policies.

Bungoma District chair of people with disability Mr. Adroni Sakwa blames the persistent suffering of disabled persons on the Government’s failure to create a ministry solely for the constituency.

Sakwa says that creation of a ministry for disabled persons at both the National and County government will lead to clear policies and adequate budgetary allocation for the group. The ministry, Sakwa adds will help to streamline the activities and there will be no disabled persons particularly at the grass root level.

He, however, suggests that the ministry should be headed by people with disability at both governments in order for the group to feel a sense of belonging.

“We have for long been exploited by our leaders who are them-selves able bodied,” the lobby chairman said.

Sakwa laments that donor funds meant for the disabled persons have for years been diverted to other issues by Government officials because the disabled community is not represented by them or even their own in the relevant department.

The scenario, Sakwa adds that has made the disabled persons in the country not to access donor funds and other Government charities planned for them.

Sakwa reiterates that for the disabled persons not to continue being exploited by Government officials there is need to have disabled persons to run and manage their own ministries.

“The disabled account for over 4 million people in the country and we are now demanding that our people should be able to head the ministry that concerns our affairs,” Sakwa says.

Sakwa assured that people who use the disabled persons to access donor funds for their own interest should not be allowed to advance the trade in the new political dispensation.

Consequently Sakwa urges members of the disability community to vote for people who can articulate and address their plight.

“We are now being neglected by elected leaders and let us this time vote for people who can address our needs,” he says.

Sakwa appeals to the disabled community across the country to unite and speak in one voice so as to be heard by the authorities.

According to the constitution (Article 54) the people with dis- ability is entitled to access educa- tional institutions and facilities for personal uses that are integrated into society to the extent compatible with the interests of the person.

In Article 54 (2) states that the State shall ensure the progressive implementation of the principle that at least five (5) percent of the memb- ers of the public in elective and appointive bodies are persons with disability.
Musicians protest over royalties

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

OVER 400 musicians from the Mt Kenya region have protested against what they term as failure by the Music Copyright Society of Kenya (MCSK) to pay their royalties.

The irked musicians who had converged at Nyeri Catholic Cathedral hall said that the society had short changed them and failed to comply with set agreements.

The musicians walked out of the meeting organized by the society in Nyeri claiming that they were not being paid the allowances which were supposed to be accorded to them.

They said they had only received Ksh 1,000 allowance which they said was in contravention of a prior agreement of about Ksh 2,000 during a regional meeting and Ksh 5,000 during an annual general meeting.

A gospel musician Beth Maina said the musicians are suffering in the hands of the society.

“We have been recording our music at a very high cost but the MCSK has failed to meet part of its bargain by paying us,” said Maina.

Maina said they have been paid their dues for the last four years.

“MCSK has been collecting money from the vehicles and different hotels and pubs that play our music but they have not been paying us our entitled royalties. We cannot be working for nothing,” she lamented.

Another musician Peter Kimunu said they would want a fellow musician to be in the society who will understand the problems they go through.

He said the society which is supposed to be helping the musicians was not doing so.

But MCSK chairman Michael Maganizo said that the royalties are paid as per musicians air play adding that most of the musicians complain- ing do not have their music played most.

“We pay the royalties according to the air play the songs get. If your song is not played then we also do not collect money from your song and we cannot pay you,” he said.

Maganizo also said the meeting organized in Nyeri was not a regional meeting.

He added that they had organized the seminar so as to give the musicians on how to make their music get air time.

Columbia University opens first Center for Africa in Nairobi

By HENRY OWINO

COLUMBIA University network of global centers has opened its doors in Nairobi, Kenya as the first institution of its kind in Africa. The Columbia Global Centers- Africa represents an important milestone in the history of Columbia, for it signals a greater level of engagement between the University and the region.

Prof. Kenneth Prewitt, Vice President for Global Centers, said that the university’s decision to establish the center for Africa is part of a far sighted strategy to expand its global impact. He added that the university would create an academic environment informed by perspectives from around the world.

Prof Prewitt revealed that the Global Centers network has been an integral part of the process, by developing regional hubs for Columbia’s research, policy and academic work abroad. He stated that Nairobi centrally located in the region and thus other countries stand to benefit from its academic disciplines.

“The big ambition is to create an intellectual, academic and scholarly community which is globally integrated, and address simultaneously the huge challenges that globalization itself has brought,” explained Prof Kenneth Prewitt, Vice President for Columbia Global Centers.

Dr Belay Begashaw, Director of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Goal for East, and Southern Africa, assumes the directorship of both institutions.

Dr Begashaw disclosed that in several years of impactful engagement with Africa, in recognition of the continent’s role in world affairs, Columbia’s decision to initiate the Center has been highly welcomed by African states in general and by the government, the Government of Kenya, in particular.

To maximize the contribution of its activities, Dr Begashaw said the new institution will be a magnet for leaders from the outset. In the spirit of collaboration, he pointed out that the highlight of past events was a discussion between Columbia University representatives, and leaders from Kenya’s business, political and academic landscape.

Attention focused on defining Columbia’s role in Africa, and potential areas of collaboration, such as the issue of intellectual property rights for African states.

To help create and ensure the new institution is as robust and prosper academically, Prof Prewitt was joined on a panel discussion by Dr Safwan Masri, Director, Columbia Global Centers Middle East, and the Hon Farah Maalim, Deputy Speaker of the Tenth National Assembly of Kenya, alongside Dr Belay Begashaw who moderated the discussion.

Others who engaged with the guests included, Mr Mugokhati, Director, Columbia Global Centers Middle East, and the Hon Farah Maalim, Deputy Speaker of the Tenth National Assembly of Kenya, alongside Dr Belay Begashaw who moderated the discussion.

Coast province in dire need of piped water

By BRIGHTON KAZUNGU

COAST region continue to experience acute water shortages with an estimated 2 million people having no access to piped water in their residential areas.

Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Water and Irrigation Engineer David Stower said the government through the Coast Services Water Board has been able to supply water to about 35 percent of the population which has a population of 3.3 million people as per the 2009 census.

“The government has been able to supply water to about 35 percent of the total population in Coast region which has an estimated population of about 3.3 million people as per the 2009 census and this poses grave challenge,” said Eng. Stower.

Engineer Stower said there is need for the government and the Coast Water Services Board to look for donor funding and explore other potential water sources to improve supply.

He said the current water supply from the Mzima pipeline and the Baricho water pumping station at Langobuya in Malindi cannot adequately meet local demand including a host of hotels and industries.

“Coast province is one of the fast growing areas in terms of industries, hotel establishments and the general growth of the population and unless there are measures to increase water supply, residents will continue to experience acute shortages,” said Engineer Stower.

The PS made the remarks at the Coast main water works station at Baricho in Malindi District where he commissioned major rehabilitation works of the water pumping site.

He said the rehabilitation works which lasted for about two and a half years started in July 2010 with a funding of about Ksh 1 million from the French Development Agency (AFD) and has helped to improve the water supply by 30 percent.

The Engineer said the project has helped increase production capacity to 88 million liters of water per day up from about 58 million liters of water supply before the rehabilitation works.

The PS who was accompanied by the chairman of Coast Water Services Board Mr Anthony Mrima said the rehabilitation works included supply and installation of high lift pumps, construction of a new chlorination mixing and dosing house, supply and installation of borehole pumping sets.

The rehabilitation process also included replacement of transform- ers, switch gears, installation of surge valves and new control panels among others. Engineer Stower said though the water supply had tremendously increased, payment of water bills remains a big challenge.

“Engineer Stower also said that the government was still suffering in failing to pay power bills adding that the MCSK has been paying the allowances which were supposed to be accorded to them.

“We pay the royalties according to the air play the songs get. If your song is not played then we also do not collect money from your song and we cannot pay you,” he said.

Maganizo also said the meeting organized in Nyeri was not a regional meeting.

He added that they had organized the seminar so as to give the musicians on how to make their music get air time.

Mt. Kenya region musicians protest outside Nyeri Catholic Cathedral hall in Nyeri town. They accuse the Music Copyright Society of Kenya of failing to pay their royalties. Photo/ Joseph Mukubwa


"Coast province in dire need of piped water"
Significance of fallen Mugumo tree

By JOSEPH MUKUBWA

The falling of the Mugumo tree in Tetu district, Nyeri County recently is a sign of good things to come in the country.

The Gikuyu and Mumbi Cultural Centre Director General Samuel Kamitha at the same predicted that there will be no violence after the March 4 general elections and so Kenyans should not worry.

Speaking after he assessed the 300-year-old Mugumo tree in Tetu district, Kamitha who was accompanied by several Gikuyu elders said anytime the tree fell was an indication that God had heard prayers by the Kenyan people.

The residents led by the chairman of the Mokomboi Society Pastor Donald Mzungu wondered why the Mugumo tree which fell in Tetu district recently was not protected by several Gikuyu elders who according to them the tree was a sign of good things to come in the community.

“Such games help to kill idle men, they are good for problems like unemployment and other vices. We have seen some developments, which touch on witnesses and even other big things to come. The falling of the Mugumo has a relationship with the prayers and the ICC,” he said.

Kamitha said the exercise was a compliment to God who had answered prayers by the community and Kenyans in general.

“The games are meant to show that voting wisely and by voting good leaders, it is the only way to solve youth problems like unemployment and other vices. The youth must be involved in voting,” said the CBO coordinator Samuel Muchora.

The games were also meant to ensure the youth keep away from alcohol and drugs abuse.

“Such games help to kill idle men and tap talents and are good for recreation. This should be done annually,” he said. Shark Soccer team which emerged the winner after thrashing Ka-bebero 1-0 goals took home prizes and a full soccer full uniform. Kihome and Jigari soccer teams took the third and forth position respectively.

Prominent lawyer Priscilla Nyokabi offered civic education during the half time of the games.

Residents cry foul over grabbed land

By LINK CORRESPONDENT

RESIDENTS of Shariani in Kilifi are up in arms over what they term as an elaborate plot to grab their prime land by prominent people in the country.

The residents led by the chairman of the Shariani Pentecostal church said the residents are tired of losing their land to people who claim to have land officials to acquire title deeds fraudulently and later use the police to evict them.

“As residents of Shariani we are saying enough is enough and we will not allow any strangers to come and claim ownership for the same,” said Pastor Mzanga.

Recently 600 squatter families in the area confronted and chased away private surveyors who had come to survey their 2.05 hectares of land in the company of armed police officers.

The squatters claimed the surveyors had been assigned the task to pave the way for the subdivision of the land by a prominent politician in Mombasa County.

Trouble started when the villagers armed themselves with rude weapons including pangas and confronted the private surveyors and demanded to be told who had assigned them the work.

Pastor Mzanga wondered why the private surveyors had gone ahead to execute the illegality, yet the squatters had a court judgment from the Mombasa High Court restraining any activity in the said land until legal owners of the disputed land are established.

“We have obtained an injunction at the Mombasa high court so that the statement can resolved once and for all,” said Pastor Mzanga.

The children officer appealed to the Mombasa County government to revisit their land by 2010 when the government set up a land office established to settle squatters in the said land since 1952 without any interference from the Government.

“The disclosure was alarming since we have lived at the disputed land until legal owners of the disputed land are established. We have seen some developments, which touch on witnesses and even other big things to come. The falling of the Mugumo tree has a relationship with the prayers and the ICC,” he said.

Pastor Mzungu predicted that God had heard prayers by the community and Kenyans in general.

“The games are meant to show that voting wisely and by voting good leaders, it is the only way to solve youth problems like unemployment and other vices. The youth must be involved in voting,” said the CBO coordinator Samuel Muchora.

The games were also meant to ensure the youth keep away from alcohol and drugs abuse.

“Such games help to kill idle men and tap talents and are good for recreation. This should be done annually,” he said. Shark Soccer team which emerged the winner after thrashing Ka-bebero 1-0 goals took home prizes and a full soccer full uniform. Kihome and Jigari soccer teams took the third and forth position respectively.

Prominent lawyer Priscilla Nyokabi offered civic education during the half time of the games.

Child abusers put on notice

By NYAKWOR ODAOO

THE Butere/Kisii District Children Officer Dishes Otuko has put on notice child abusers saying that they will face the full force of the law.

Otuko who is known to champion children protection services wherever he has worked promised to do his best to work with the public and other agencies to ensure the welfare of the children.

“Children are the future of this country and the nation. They are the ones who will build the future and bring up the new generation. We have seen some developments, which touch on witnesses and even other big things to come. The falling of the Mugumo tree has a relationship with the prayers and the ICC,” he said.

The government will take stern action against anyone who uses their language to harm children in any way. We will not allow anyone to harm our children in schools for a better future,” said Otuko, adding that those who misuse property or finances meant for the orphaned vulnerable children will be dealt with in accordance with the law.

“If my duty to protect children from abuse and neglect and I will continue to discharge my duties without fear or favour regardless of one’s status in society,” he said.

The children officer appealed to Butere/Kisii residents to report any child abuse cases in their respective areas to the police, provincial administration, village elders and others who have the calling for the children.

According to the data availed to The Link, the children officer has handled a total of 2,480 in Nyeri out of which 2,200 cases were handled in court in 2004 and in Busia district, Otuko handled a total of 460 cases with the others out of which 450 cases were handled in court between 2005 and 2006.

The data further showed that between 2006 and 2008, the children officer dealt with a total of 2,900 cases in Bungoma where out of which 280 cases were handled through the court whereas in Kakamigga district, the children’s officer handled a total of 2,000 cases with 250 cases being heard in court.

In Samia district where he worked between 2009 and 2012 until his recent transfer, he has handled a total of 2,610 cases at the office level with 110 cases being taken to court.

THE falling of the Mugumo tree in Tetu district, Nyeri County recently is a sign of good things to come in the country.

The Gikuyu and Mumbi Cultural Centre Director General Samuel Kamitha at the same predicted that there will be no violence after the March 4 general elections and so Kenyans should not worry.

Speaking after he assessed the 300-year-old Mugumo tree in Tetu district, Kamitha who was accompanied by several Gikuyu elders said anytime the tree fell was an indication that God had heard prayers by the Kenyan people.

“Such games help to kill idle men and tap talents and are good for recreation. This should be done annually,” he said. Shark Soccer team which emerged the winner after thrashing Ka-bebero 1-0 goals took home prizes and a full soccer full uniform. Kihome and Jigari soccer teams took the third and forth position respectively.

Prominent lawyer Priscilla Nyokabi offered civic education during the half time of the games.

Residents cried foul over grabbed land

The residents of Shariani in Kilifi are up in arms over what they term as an elaborate plot to grab their prime land by prominent people in the country.

The residents led by the chairman of the Mokomboi Society Pastor Donald Mzungu claimed that influential people among them a governor aspirant in Mombasa county have targeted their land along the beach line.

Speaking to TheLink at the site, Pastor Mzanga of Shariani Pentecostal church said the residents are tired of losing their land to people who con-
Recommendations of Kriegler commission report implemented

By LINK CORRESPONDENT

A n audit on the implementation of Independent Review of Elections Commission (IREC) - the Kriegler Commission report by Transparency International Kenya reveals that most of the recommendations have been implemented.

These include constitutional, legal and policy interventions that have been effected to actualize the Kriegler recommendations.

There have been constitutional and legal changes in line with the first recommendation concerning the constitutional and legal framework, but it has been observed that these can only be effectively implemented if the letter and spirit of the law is observed.

The report notes that the judicial function of interpretation is considered vital to achieving the desired aspirations of the Kenyan people, particularly with regard to elections and its outcomes.

As noted by the Kriegler Commission, the media has great influence and all Kenyans agree that they are highly influential and the public lends credence to what they hear or see reported. As such, the media set the agenda with powerful effects but the audience bears the greatest responsibility depending on how they decode and interpret messages.

Thus, responsible, accurate, timely and veracious information ought to be disseminated to the public at every juncture. In spite of the gravity of their roles, the verdict is that all these stakeholders do not seem to inspire public confidence in their abilities to stand the risk of being seriously criticized.

With the increasing proliferation of media houses owned by politicians’ impurity and professionalism and even political propaganda stand the risk of being seriously compromised hence reversing the gains made so far. Furthermore, the Elections Act focuses on state owned media and the right to equal coverage and accountability. Accountability of private owned media houses is left to Media Council of Kenya to manage through the council’s election coverage guidelines.

On vote counting, tallying and transmission, implementation is very much a work in progress and the new mechanisms are untested.

On the issue of post-election procedures, the consensus is that the pitfalls associated with this stage of the electoral process cannot be clearly foreseen. It can only be anticipated that the number of elective seats would exponentially increase the instances of election suits and that a run-off might practically be very challenging to hold. It is no consolation that the law as it relates to presidential run-off is obscure.

However, not much response was obtained on post-election procedures, the reason being that it is an untested area and a wait and see attitude was the best position that could be taken. Not much preparedness has been exhibited by IEBC and other stake holders in the electoral process.

The audit notes that implementation has not been without challenges and gaps. It was noted that an electronic system is only as good as the person inputting the information. Thus, if the wrong data was fed into the system, the wrong information would be obtained. Delays and clogging of the system cannot be ruled out considering the vagaries of technology.

On the other hand, security for the IEBC staff and polling materials is key and the attack on IEBC officials in Malindi during a mock poll exercise is notable.

There will be about 40,000 polling stations and each would require two police officers and it is obvious that the police may not match this requirement.

An Audit of its Implementation finds that the IEBC intends to live up to its name and to deliver a credible and fair election to Kenyans. However, the report recommends that the management of polling day operations must be well thought out and all technical and other forms of relevant management of polling day operations.

In regard to the issue of the electoral environment, role of political parties, civil society organisations, observers and the media, it is agreed that all these stakeholders are necessary to validate the transparency and legitimacy of the electoral process.

However, this can only be achieved where they conduct their roles professionally and with neutrality. Political parties owe the country a duty to ensure that fair conduct, practice and factual information guide their activities, while civil society organisations and observers are meant to act in a non-partisan manner to ensure that transparency and credibility are built into the process.

The government on its part also owes the electorate a duty to put in place adequate mechanisms for free and fair elections.