

National Assembly Eulogises Hbn Justus Murunga; urges County Governments to enhance county health facilities' capacity to handle emergencies

The Speaker of the National Assembly, Hbn Justin Muturi this afternoon led the House in paying tribute to the Late, Hbn Justus Murunga Makokha, who passed on Saturday 14th November, while undergoing treatment at the St. Mary's Mission Hospital in Muiyas, Kakamega County.

Shortly after expressing his condolence message, the Speaker led the House in observing a minute of silence for the fallen legislator for Matungu Constituency. He mourned the lawmaker as a humble, amiable and an active Member in the House Committees he served. Speaker Muturi assured the family of Parliament's support during this period of great sorrow

“To the Parliamentary fraternity, he was a humble, amiable and diligent personality, and an active Member of the Departmental Committee on Agriculture & Livestock, where he passionately advocated for various issues particularly in the Tea and Sugar sectors. He was also a Member of the Committee on Parliamentary Broadcasting & Library.

Members alike poured accolades on their fallen colleague whom they termed as charming, amiable, generous and a dependable Member. Members who had interacted with him also reminisced his deep passion for the people of Matungu Constituency and their welfare. He was also remembered for his commitment to the cause of the Muiyas Sugar company and the unity of the Luhya Community.

They however called on the County governments and health managers to equip all health facilities with basic facilities such as oxygen and ventilators especially given the recent effects of COVID-19 pandemic.

While paying his tribute to the late Member, Rarieda MP, Hbn (Dr.) Ojende Amollo challenged the government to ensure that all health facilities; no matter where they

are located in the country, were well equipped to offer basic medical services to all Kenyans.

"It does not help to only equip our best health facilities in Nairobi, yet we spend a lot of time in our constituencies", noted Hon. Amollo.

On his part, the Leader of the Majority Party, Hon. (Dr.) Amos Kimunya observed that the untimely demise of the Member should serve as a stark reminder to his fellow legislators of their vulnerability, due to the nature of their work especially during these difficult times across the world emanating from Covid-19 pandemic.

He was quick to point out that though he did not wish to speculate on what might have caused the death of Hon. Murunga, it is important that Members take extra caution when interacting with the public during these uncertain times. He called on the Speaker to issue guidelines on the operations of Members' Committee meetings to avert cases of increased transmissions.

"We must be alive to the reality that we are living in very uncertain times and we are called upon to take extra caution", urged Hon. Kimunya.

Other Members who paid their tributes include Muminas MP, Benjamin Washali, Isiolo County MP, Hon. Jaldesa Dada, Kilili MP, Hon. Ddmus Barasa, Hida ma Ravine MP, Hon. Moses Lessonet, Funyula MP, Hon. Wilberforce Oundo, Vhiga County MP, Hon. Beatrice Adagala, Kakamega County MP, Hon. Hsie Mihanda, Kwanza MP, Hon. Ferdinand Wanyonyi, Kikuyu MP, Hon. Kmani Ichung'wa and Mwea MP, Hon. Wachira Kabinga, among others.

They all observed that Hon. Murunga's death was unfortunate, and one that may have been averted if the hospital he was checked into was properly equipped to handle emergencies. They termed their fallen colleague as a principled man who was very firm in what he believed in, besides being a hardworking and visionary leader who relentlessly supported projects aimed at uplifting his constituents. They called on both

the national and county governments to enhance the capacity of health facilities across the country to ensure that emergency medical cases can be attended to expeditiously. In line with the Parliamentary Service Commission's bereavement policy, the Speaker has since set up an Ad-hoc Committee under the Chairmanship of the Majority Party Whip, the Hon. Emmanuel Wangwe, to plan for the interment of the departed legislator.

Prior to his election as a Member of Parliament, the Hon. Mirunga had worked in various institutions including Muni Sugar Company, Phillips (Kenya) Ltd and the Kenya Assemblies of God churches. In 1995, he joined the Embakasi Ranching Company as a Manager where he worked until the year 2003, when he left to engage in private business.

The late Hon. Mirunga became active in national politics in 2007. During the 2017 General Elections, he vied for and won the Matungu Constituency seat on the Amani National Congress (ANC) Party ticket.