



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

THE SENATE

TWELFTH PARLIAMENT – FIFTH SESSION

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, JULY 14, 2021 AT 2.30 P.M.

1. The Senate assembled at thirty minutes past Two O'clock.
2. The proceedings were opened with Prayer said by the Speaker.
3. **COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR - WORKSHOP ON THE PROPOSAL FOR EXPEDITING CONSIDERATION OF BILLS PENDING BEFORE THE HOUSE**

The Speaker conveyed the following communication from the Chair: -

“Honourable Senators,

You may recall that yesterday, I issued a communication to the effect that a half- day workshop for all Senators would be held tomorrow, Thursday, 15th July, 2021 to deliberate on the legislative agenda for the remaining time of the Twelfth Parliament.

The workshop will be held here in the Senate Chamber, Main Parliament Buildings, from 8.00 am to 12.40 pm.

Honourable Senators,

In view of the importance of this meeting, I direct that all Committee Sittings be rescheduled, where practically possible, to enable Honourable Senators to attend this critical meeting.

I thank you.”

4. PAPERS LAID

The following Papers were laid on the Table of the Senate –

- i) Annual Financial Report of the National Police Service Commission for the year 2019/2020.

(The Deputy Senate Majority Leader)

- ii) Report of the Standing Committee on Health on the Community Health Service Bill (Senate Bills No. 34 of 2020).

(Sen. Mary Seneta, MP, on behalf of the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Health)

- iii) The Kenya Mental Action Plan (2021-2025)

(Sen. (Arch.) Sylvia M. Kasanga, MP, while making a Statement pursuant to Standing Order 47(1))

5. STATEMENTS**a) Pursuant to Standing Order 47 (1)**

- (i) Nominated Senator (Sen. Iman Falhada Dekow, MP) made a Statement regarding pernicious influence of social media on Kenyan youth

Thereupon, the Senator informed the Senate that the ICT sector in Kenya has grown rapidly since internet was first launched in the early 1990s. Data released by the Communications Authority of Kenya (CAK) indicate that by December 2018, the total Internet subscription in Kenya stood at 45.7 million (CAK, 2019). The vast majority of them accessed the Internet via mobile phones. The use of social media such as Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram have negative effects on the youth such as depression, anxiety, poor body image, loneliness, and cyber bullying.

The Senator decried the high prevalence of online harassment among Kenyans, with 33% of social media users in Kenya having personally had a negative online experience such as abusive behaviour, offensive name calling, impersonation or purposeful embarrassment in some way. The Senator noted that severe forms of cyber harassment can have serious consequences on the lives of the victims. Some 21.1% of Kenyans have experienced the “more severe” forms of online harassment. More than two thirds (61.3%) of the social media users in urban areas have experienced some type of severe online harassment compared to 38.7% of rural area residents. More than half (55.5%) of the residents of the low-income areas in Nairobi have experienced “more severe” kinds of online harassment, which is more than twice that (22.1%) of those living in the middle-income and high-income areas (22.4%).

She appealed to Kenyan parents to create awareness among their children especially among their teenagers to be mindful of social media habits. Further she appealed to the youth to use social media to connect with people who inspire them, share similar interests, and provide a sense of belonging.

- (ii) Nominated Senator (Sen. Rose Nyamunga, MP) made a statement concerning the insecurity menace caused by the '*Boda Boda*' industry and the resultant effect on the economy.

Thereupon, the Senator informed the Senate that motorcycle business, known as "Boda-boda", has eased the transportation problem of connecting urban and rural areas in Kenya. The industry has gained popularity in both rural and urban areas because of its ability to absorb many jobless youths, easing pressure on the government to find employment for its growing population. The use of boda-boda services is even more prevalent in rural areas where public transport may not be so sophisticated and the roads are not well developed.

The Senator noted that, despite the income potential, the industry has been hit by criminals that use the nimble motorcycles to commit crimes and continued operation of this fast-growing industry without proper and more specific regulation is a ticking time bomb. Recent insecurity incidences of men on *boda boda* snatching phones and handbags from ladies and speeding off, have been reported in several parts of the country and videos of criminals committing crimes on *boda bodas*, have been trending in the last couple of days, the most recent of which involved a police officer who was robbed of his mobile phone in broad daylight while controlling traffic in one of the major roads in the city.

The Senator observed that most Kenyans are scared for their safety and that of their electronic devices when they spot a rider approaching. This is not good. With the large number of both users and income earners depending on this mode of transport, it behooves the government to closely monitor this fast-growing industry as there is at least a total number of 4.8 million people who are dependent on this industry.

She highlighted the need to amend existing pieces of regulation to safeguard the economic gains that this industry has achieved, as the country risks running down the gains the *boda boda* sector hail to achieve if proper regulations are not put in place to address the glaring problems emanating from the sector.

- (iii) Nominated Senator (Sen. (Arch.) Sylvia M. Kasanga, MP) made a statement concerning the Kenya Mental Health Action Plan (2021-2025).

Thereupon, the Senator informed the Senate that a 2017 World Health Organization report ranked Kenya sixth in the highest number of

depression cases among African countries. Estimates point that 20-25 percent of outpatients seeking primary healthcare present symptoms of mental illness at any one time, while government statistics indicate that at least 1 in every 4 Kenyans suffer from a mental illness at one point in their lives. It is estimated that 50% of all mental disorders start by the age of 14 years and 75% by the age of 24 years. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused enormous significant health, socioeconomic and psychological impacts on the population, hence mental health and psychosocial support strategies and measures are critical in the short-term and long-term responses.

The Senator observed that the Ministry of Health had launched the Kenya Mental Health Action Plan (2021-2025) on Wednesday, 9th June, 2021. The plan seeks to provide a framework for both National and County Governments and stakeholders to implement the Mental Health Policy through strategic objectives with specified priority targets and indicators. It will also guide the implementation of recommendations by the Taskforce on Mental Health with strategic actions and investments to bring transformative reforms in the following broad key areas: Policy and Legal reforms; improvement of access to quality mental health services; financial reforms and investments; cross-sectoral mental health reforms and administrative actions.

She commended the Ministry of Health for the effort and its contribution in actualizing the Kenya Mental Action Plan (2021-2025) and tabled the document while urging Senators and members of the Senate Standing Committee on Health to familiarize themselves with its contents.

b) Pursuant to Standing Order 48 (1)

- i) The Senator for Nandi County (Sen. Samson Cherarkey, MP) sought a statement from the Standing Committee on National Security, Defence and Foreign Relations concerning the mounting, regulating and controlling of police road blocks in Kenya.
- ii) The Senator for Nandi County (Sen. Samson Cherarkey, MP) sought a statement from the Standing Committee on Education concerning the failure by the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) to conclude interviews for promotions and employment.
- iii) The Senator for Kericho County (Sen. Aaron Cheruiyot, MP) sought a statement from the Standing Committee on Justice, Legal Affairs and Human Rights concerning the closure of Kericho Law Courts.

6. THE LIFESTYLE AUDIT BILL (SENATE BILLS NO. 36 OF 2021)

(Sen. (CPA) Farhiya Ali Haji, MP)

Order for First Reading read;

Bill read a First Time and committed to the Standing Committee on Justice, Legal Affairs and Human Rights.

7. **THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL (SENATE BILLS NO. 37 OF 2021)**

(Chairperson, Standing Committee on Devolution and Intergovernmental Relations)

Order for First Reading read;

Bill read a First Time and committed to the Standing Committee on Devolution and Intergovernmental Relations.

8. **THE COUNTY GOVERNMENTS (AMENDMENTS) BILL (SENATE BILLS NO. 38 OF 2021)**

(Sen. Moses Otieno Kajwang', MP)

Order for First Reading read;

Bill read a First Time and committed to the Standing Committee on Devolution and Intergovernmental Relations.

9. **THE COUNTY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BILL (SENATE BILLS NO. 6 OF 2021)**

Order for Second Reading read;

Motion made and Question proposed-

THAT, the County Vocational Education and Training (Senate Bills No. 6 of 2021) be now read a Second Time.

(Chairperson, Standing Committee on Education)

Debate arising;

And the time being thirty minutes past Six O'clock, the Temporary Speaker (Sen. Judith Pareno, MP) interrupted the proceedings and adjourned the Senate without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Orders.

10. **SENATE ROSE** - at thirty Minutes past Six O'clock.

M E M O R A N D U M

The Speaker will take the Chair on Thursday, July 15, 2021 at 2:30 p.m.