



THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT
THE SENATE
OFFICIAL REPORT



Fourth Session

Wednesday, 1st October, 2025 at 9.30 a.m.

PARLIAMENT OF KENYA

THE SENATE

THE HANSARD

Wednesday, 1st October, 2025

*The House met at the Senate Chamber,
Parliament Buildings at 9.32 a.m.*

[The Speaker (Hon. Kingi) in the Chair]

PRAYER

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM
AT COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Clerk, do we have quorum?

(The Clerk-at-the-Table consulted the Speaker)

Serjeant-at-Arms, kindly ring the Quorum Bell for 10 minutes.

(The Quorum Bell was rung)

Serjeant-at-Arms, ring the Quorum Bell for a further 10 minutes.

(The Quorum Bell was rung)

Hon. Senators, we now have quorum.

Sen. (Dr.) Boni and Sen. Mundigi, kindly take your seats.

Clerk, proceed to call the first Order.

NOTICE OF MOTION

APPROVAL OF SEN. CONSOLATA NABWIRE WAKWABUBI, MP
TO SERVE IN COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE

Sen. (Dr.) Khalwale: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to give Notice of the following Motion-

THAT, notwithstanding, the resolution of the Senate made on 12th February, 2025 on the approval of Senators to serve in various Standing Committees of the Senate and pursuant to Standing Orders No.197, 199 and 228,

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following nomination by the Senate Business Committee, the Senate approves the nomination of Sen. Consolata Nabwire Wakwabubi, MP to serve in the Standing Committee on National Cohesion, Equal Opportunity and Regional Integration and the Select Committee on Delegated Legislation.

I thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Next Order.

QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

QUESTIONS

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Senators, we have eight Questions today. We expect two Cabinet Secretaries to appear before Plenary for purposes of responding to those eight Questions. One Question is directed to the Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife and seven Questions are directed to the Cabinet Secretary in charge of Education.

I am informed that the Cabinet Secretary in charge of Education is already in the building. Therefore, we will start with the questions directed to the Cabinet Secretary for Education.

We will start with Question No.87 by the Senator from Muranga County, Sen. Joe Nyutu.

Sen. Joe Nyutu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir---

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Senator, let me first confirm if indeed we have the Cabinet Secretary for Education in the House.

Clerk, can you confirm that?

(The Clerk-at-the-Table consulted the Speaker)

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Thank you.

[The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba) was ushered into the Chamber]

Hon. Cabinet Secretary, welcome back to the Senate Plenary. You have seven Questions to respond to this morning. We will start with Question No.087 by the the Senator for Muranga County, Sen. Joe Nyutu.

(Interruption of Questions)

Yes, Senator for Nairobi City County?

POINT OF ORDER**NON-APPEARANCE BEFORE THE SENATE BY
THE CABINET SECRETARY FOR DEFENCE**

Sen. Sifuna: Mr. Speaker, Sir, perhaps you could guide whether we are also expecting the Cabinet Secretary for Defence because she was scheduled to appear.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Indeed, the Cabinet Secretary for Defence was scheduled to appear today, but she indicated through a letter that she will be engaged in a security meeting this morning. That letter was processed through the Senate Business Committee (SBC). It was found valid and, therefore, she was excused from attending today's session, but indeed we had expected her to appear before us this morning.

Sen. Sifuna: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is very frustrating for me as a representative of the people. Except for going to her house, I do not know how else I will reach the Cabinet Secretary for Defence.

We, as the leadership of Nairobi, all the 19 of us elected to Parliament; the Senator and the 18 colleagues from the National Assembly, wrote a letter to the Cabinet Secretary regarding the ongoing recruitment process. This letter was dated 16th September and was delivered on the same day to the Ministry of Defence headquarters.

Up to today, the Ministry has not seen it fit at all, just as a matter of courtesy, to address the concerns that have been raised by Members of Parliament who represent the people. We have taken further steps. We have done press conferences and alerted this Cabinet Secretary on the urgency of the matter because this recruitment is going on as we speak.

The central issue is just one. We, in Nairobi, feel that we are being discriminated against. In all other counties, recruitment is happening at the sub-county level. Nairobi has 17 constituencies, but they have lumped recruitment into three centres; considering the population of Nairobi and the biggest youth bulge is here in the City. The biggest problem of unemployment is here in the City. When an opportunity such as the recruitment into our defence forces arises, we feel that our young people in Nairobi should be given a fair chance. Now, if we have taken the courtesy and steps to write to the Cabinet Secretary, she does not have the courtesy to write back to the representatives of the people. We are not writing these letters for ourselves.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not have a child who is old enough to go to the Defence Forces. Indeed, my colleagues and I are not doing this for any of our family members. It is for the people that we represent. Could the Cabinet Secretary at least have the courtesy? Just the way she has written a letter saying she does not want to or is not able to come to the Senate today, I believe she can be courteous enough to originate correspondence to respond to the representative of the people of Nairobi.

I was waiting for her this morning and these are the frustrations we go through as representatives of the people. We write, you do not respond. We do press conferences, no response. I wait for you where the people send me to wait for you, you do not show up. Now, my only option is to find out where she lives and go wait for her at the gate. What else am I supposed to do because it is very frustrating?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I hope in the letter that she has sent you, she has indicated when next she will be available. Honestly, this is a live matter. When will it ever be resolved? If she is not here today to give answers to the people of Nairobi, when will it be resolved? After the recruitment is done? It is very unfortunate. I hope that this House can record my disappointment and that of the people of Nairobi that she has failed to show up this particular morning.

Thank you for this opportunity.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Yes, Sen. Boni.

Sen. (Dr.) Khalwale: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I must first apologise that I was summoned to another meeting in the middle of the SBC meeting and, therefore, did not have an opportunity to raise this before the Committee. Just like the Senator for Nairobi City, I was truly waiting for the Cabinet Secretary on the very important issue that opportunities for children to join the military are being sold for up to Kshs300,000 or Kshs400,000.

There is an old man in Kakamega by the name of Maurice Mate, who owns a bull worth Kshs250,000. He came to me and said: "I need Kshs400,000. Please, give me the Kshs400,000, my bull is worth Kshs250,000 and you will have helped me with the difference." I asked him, what is the problem? He said, "I have been asked to go buy a chance in the military."

So, we want the Cabinet Secretary to clarify whether chances of going into the military are up for sale or is on merit. If it is on merit, what is that merit?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, some of the children from upcountry who have spent all their time here in Nairobi do not even speak their vernaculars, but their parents registered them in Bungoma, Busia and other counties to get Identity (ID) cards. When they want to access recruitment here, they are told to go back to their homes, yet the only thing that connects them to their so-called homes is their IDs. Why are these children being sent upcountry instead of being recruited from Nairobi, where they were born, bred, schooled and grew into adulthood? They only went home to pick their ID cards.

Thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Thank you. Hon. Senators, we have eight Questions to be responded to.

Yes, Sen. Abbas.

Sen. Abass: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the same, I asked for the same thing from the Cabinet Secretary for Defence in July this year. I received a response on 25th July, 2025 that was written by the Cabinet Secretary. It has been appearing in the papers that this has been postponed several times.

This morning, I came to ask the same question, but it was not in the Order Paper. So, there is a concern on the Cabinet Secretary for Defence to at least be able to appear in this House as planned. This is the third time now that this Question is deferred.

I wanted to bring your attention on that, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Thank you, hon. Senators, for your concerns. Senator for Kilifi, do you have something to say before I give direction on this matter?

The Senate Minority Leader (Sen. Madzayo): Asante, Bw. Spika. Najiunga na wenzangu kuhusu uandikishaji kazi kwa vijana walioko manyumbani wakitafuta kazi katika Jeshi na vile polisi.

Inasikitisha kwamba ikiwa Kaunti ya Kilifi imepangiwa kuchukua watoto kama mia tatu, katika orodha ya watu wanaochukuliwa kutoka Kilifi, Magarini watachukuwa wawili, Malindi mmoja, Ganze wawili, Kilifi South mmoja. Katika zile nambari wameziandika elfu kumi ambazo watachukuwa watoto kazi, inachukuliwa namna gani ikiwa Kilifi kwa jumla watachukua watoto kama kumi pekee?

Kilio kama hiki kuja Seneti ni jambo la kusikitisha hata zaidi ikiwa Waziri anayehusikana na mambo ya kuwaajiri vijana katika kazi ya Jeshi au polisi kukosa kuja ndani ya Bunge la Seneti kujibu maswali. Hususan sisi tukiwa ndani ya Kilifi, tuko na malalamishi mengi kuhusu vile vijana wanaajiriwa. Watu wa Kilifi wanakosa nafasi zao katika kuajiriwa ndani ya Jeshi na vile vile katika polisi.

Asante.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Senator for Nairobi City County, you have said that recruitment is ongoing? I thought it is supposed to happen between 13th and 15th October, 2025.

Sen. Sifuna: Mr. Speaker, Sir, let me confirm the dates because the advertisement was put out on 14th September, 2025. We took that step that I have referred to, to write to her immediately the next day, 15th September, 2025 as leaders of Nairobi and we have not been responded to; it is almost two weeks now.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Now, in that letter, she had requested to appear on 4th November, 2025, which is way after the recruitment exercise. Now, with the concerns that have been raised, it will be more appropriate to engage the Cabinet Secretary before the recruitment exercise. The problem we find ourselves in is that we are going to Busia County on Monday and after Busia, we are going on recess until 28th October.

I will try to work with the Secretariat to see if we can have her in Busia for purposes of just handling the issues surrounding the recruitment, because that is the only opportunity we can get to engage her. The other questions may be responded to when we are back from the recess. This one cannot wait because once we resume, the exercise will have already taken place and, therefore, it will be overtaken by events.

Sen. Sifuna: Mr. Speaker, Sir, thank you for that direction. However, I am just a bit skeptical because the headquarters of the Ministry of Defence are in Nairobi. If we are not able to secure her attendance in Nairobi, I do not know how much we can expect---

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): We will put our best foot forward.

Sen. Sifuna: Very well, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Thank you.

(Resumption of Questions)

So now, let us proceed to hear the responses from the Cabinet Secretary in charge of Education.

Sen. Joe Nyutu, proceed.

Sen. Joe Nyutu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir, for the very wise direction that you have given. It must be noted that we do not ask these questions just for the sake of it; the question that had been put by the Senator for Nairobi City County is very important especially for the fact that it was not supposed to be overtaken by events.

Having said that, these are my questions for the Cabinet Secretary in charge of Education.

Question No.087

PRACTICAL LEARNING FACILITIES AND ROLE DEFINITION
OF JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

(a) Why are Junior Secondary School (JSS) teachers being assigned subjects outside their areas of specialisation, considering the impact this has on instructional quality, content accuracy and learners' preparedness for senior secondary pathways?

(b) What measures has the Ministry put in place to ensure clear role definition and manageable workloads for JSS teachers, who are currently compelled to also teach in the primary section, despite the already high demands at JSS level?

(c) Could the Cabinet Secretary also indicate how many practical learning facilities such as science and Information Communication and Technology (ICT) labs and workshops, have been constructed or equipped for JSS and clarify how practical components are being delivered in schools lacking such infrastructure?

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Senators, we will have 20 minutes per Question. The Question by Sen. Joe Nyutu started running at exactly 10.00 a.m. So, at 10.20 a.m., we will stop and move to the next Question.

Hon. Cabinet Secretary, you may now proceed to respond.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir and Hon. Members. Thank you Senator for Murang'a County for the Question.

In response to the first part of that question; junior school curriculum came with new learning areas. However, most of these learning areas are related to the areas of specialisation of the teachers currently deployed or posted to junior schools.

To address the gap in instructional quality and content, the Government has undertaken the following measures-

(1) Retooling all the teachers engaged in junior school on pedagogy and content: All teachers in junior school have been retooled to fully equip them with the necessary pedagogical skills to handle the new learning areas in the junior school curriculum. The retooling exercise covered pedagogy and content in all the learning areas.

(2) Adopting targeted recruitment and redeployment criteria: The Government has adopted a targeted recruitment and deployment approach that accords priority to the needy areas of learning. In the latest recruitment exercise deployment programmes, teachers of science, mathematics and technical subjects were given priority to bridge the shortage of teachers in the said learning areas. This has gradually addressed the shortage of teachers in the sciences, technical, mathematical and languages in junior school.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, for part (b) of that question is on the measures that the Ministry has taken. The Government, through the Teacher Service Commission (TSC) has put in place the necessary administrative structures to ensure that teachers deployed to teach in

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junior schools are allocated workloads based on the areas of specialisation as well as the staffing norms of the junior school.

All teachers deployed in junior school have well-defined job description outlining their teaching and co-curricular activities. Due to the reduction in the number of classes in primary schools, the staffing position in the primary section is optimal and there are no cases of teachers in junior school being compelled to teach in the primary section.

For part (c) of that question, as I have already indicated in the previous answers that I have given, the Government has constructed 23,000 classrooms and has taken all deliberate steps to increase infrastructure to create an enabling learning environment in our junior schools. This includes the construction of 23 classrooms that have been constructed in order to take care of grade nine. The goal is to ensure that as more resources become available, we progressively enhance the infrastructure in our junior schools in terms of science and ICT labs, as well as workshops.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, currently, junior schools that do not have purpose-built laboratories have dedicated rooms that have been equipped to support practical components of the learning areas. We have directed junior schools to utilise the infrastructure repair, maintenance and improvement vote of their capitation to purpose-build rooms that serve as laboratories for practical learning. This vote consists of Kshs4,000 per learner per year.

In terms of learning materials for practical lessons, the capitation per learner has Kshs1,200 for practical and Kshs450 for laboratory materials. These resources are intended to ensure that all schools have adequate facilities for practical lessons.

As a Ministry, we are working to mobilise resources from the exchequer and other partners to ensure that we achieve the optimal number of laboratories and workshops for even more seamless teaching and learning in our junior schools.

I submit.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Joe Nyutu, do you have any supplementary questions? You may proceed, please.

Sen. Joe Nyutu: Thank you Cabinet Secretary for your response. However, there are seven learning areas in junior school and every secondary school teacher who is deployed to teach in the junior secondary is specialised in two learning areas. Most of the junior secondary schools will have at most two junior secondary school teachers. Now that we have three cohorts in junior secondary school that is, grades seven, eight and nine, how are the two teachers expected to handle three cohorts with the seven learning areas?

Lastly, regarding the practical aspect of learning; ICT and science laboratories, the Cabinet Secretary has given a good answer about an allocation made per student in order to facilitate these labs. However, most of these allocated funds are never disbursed in full or at the right time to schools. Where does that leave our learners with the technical aspect of their curriculum?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Cabinet Secretary, you may proceed to respond.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): Mr. Speaker, Sir, that is why we say that the Government has taken the retooling exercise of

teachers in order to ensure that we have sufficient numbers trained in the areas of specialization, so as to handle those specific curriculum areas.

We have done that and increased the employment of teachers in junior schools. Out of 76,000 teachers that were employed in the last one year, 62,000 of those were allocated to junior school. We are also in the process of employing another 24,000 teachers to be able to reduce that gap. We are working towards ensuring that we have an optimal number in the junior school to cover those learning areas of our children.

On the issue of the figures of ICT labs, what happened is that when we were analysing to determine how many classrooms and instruments were required to ensure that we have sufficient classes for grade nine, out of the 23,000 classrooms that were done, some of them were on the basis of the labs and ICT rooms that were required. That is part and parcel of the programme that was done to ensure that we have adequate facilities, infrastructure and instruments in those schools.

Thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Maanzo, proceed.

Sen. Maanzo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. With tremendous respect to the Cabinet Secretary and the senior learned friend, part (c) of the question is very specific. How many practical learning facilities, meaning science and ICT labs, are there across the country? Having an ICT or science practical laboratory means having a laboratory with equipment. Could the Cabinet Secretary go into that detail because, as far as I know, we do not have such a facility in Makueni County?

I do not know where they have done them in the country and their budget if he has any budget. If so and since they have been implementing this for years, when is he going to implement this and what are the statistics?

I thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Boni, proceed.

Sen (Dr.) Khalwale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. Allow me to congratulate the Cabinet Secretary; when I follow him, he is committed and his pronouncements have remained professional.

Whereas you have told us that you are going to recruit around 24,000 teachers, for which we are happy, and given that in my office in Kakamega County alone, I have a list of 6,300 teachers who are hoping that I can help them to get employed--- Can you confirm that it is not the Ministry's policy that the only people who should benefit from the recruitment are children who are trained and qualified in science-related courses?

If that is the case and as you have directed in the current recruitment, what is the fate of the others who are educated and trained by the Government in non-science-related courses? Are you telling them that their future has collapsed? Will they ever be employed or do you want them to be employed abroad, as the Cabinet Secretary for Labour and Social Protection has been cheating people that they can employ people abroad? These are serious, practical issues.

More so, Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have children who are now---

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Boni, you have asked your question. You are now giving a speech.

Sen. (Dr.) Khalwale: Allow me just to press it a little bit, so that the voters know that we are alive to their problems.

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Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have young adults aged 40, 41, 42 and 43 years, who have been waiting to be employed, yet there is a rule in the Ministry that once you are 45 years and above, you cannot be employed. Where will these young people go?

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Senator for Nairobi City County, please proceed.

Sen. Sifuna: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the past two weeks, the Ministry of Education has conceded that when they were doing an audit of schools, they had audited 12,000 schools out of the 17,500 and found that there were 50,000 ghost students. In fact, the Principal Secretary (PS) for Education, Prof. Bitok, was before the National Assembly and he confirmed that the problem was most rampant in secondary schools.

The Ministry sent money to these schools, so, they know the schools and the ghost students. Can the Cabinet Secretary tell us today the names of those schools and the persons who withdrew that money because by my mathematics, if you are sending Kshs16,000 as capitation, then the country has lost almost Kshs1 billion in that financial year alone from these ghost students. Who are these people who are withdrawing this money?

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Mwenda Gataya, please, proceed.

Sen. Gataya Mo Fire: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. *Bwana* Cabinet Secretary, I have been to quite a number of schools where I have found Junior Secondary School (JSS) classes mixed with the primary schools. There is a lot of confusion in those primary schools where you find a graduate teacher is under the headship of a Primary 1 (P1) teacher. There is a lot of confusion. What are you doing to make sure that you establish an independent JSS structure, where we have a JSS, which is on its own, without necessarily having been put in a primary school?

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Catherine Mumma, please, proceed.

Sen. Mumma: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir, for the opportunity to ask a question. I welcome the CS to the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, my question to the CS is, would you kindly tell the Senate whether your Ministry has been allocated adequate budget to ensure that no school in Kenya is disadvantaged for lack of resources and capitation? If the budget that you have been given is not adequate, what conversation are you having to ensure that you get this budget because we have a responsibility to ensure that no child suffers, particularly in a discriminatory manner where some are assisted and others are not?

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Senator for Nandi County, please proceed.

Sen. Cherarkey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I would like to ask the Cabinet Minister for Education what his position is, because most of these challenges stem from the running and effectiveness of junior secondary schools.

What is the Ministry's position on the independence and governance structure of managing junior secondary schools, noting that it is distinct between lower primary schools and upper primary schools? Could you clarify, noting that the JSSs have been on the streets demanding that they need to be managed independently?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to inform the Government Chief Whip that there is no one cheating anybody. *Kazi Majuu* is a reality. I will take him to some classes after this session.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Mbugua, kindly proceed.

Sen. Mbugua: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. Hon. CS, a recent inspection of many schools across the country reveals that laboratories and the learning facilities which are being put up do not have a universal design and the majority of them are not accessible to the special needs teachers. What is the Ministry doing to ensure that the special needs teachers who go to the normal schools are catered for and they benefit from these facilities?

Thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. CS, you may now proceed to respond.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): I would like to start with Sen. Maanzo's question. The question is specific and I indicated that all our junior schools have either a purpose-built laboratory or a converted classroom for teaching practical components. Those that do not have purpose-built laboratories are being considered as resources become available. However, so far, 20,926 of our junior schools have either purpose-built laboratories or classrooms converted into laboratories that can be used for practical lessons.

The recruitment of the 24,000 teachers is one that is targeted to ensure that we bridge the gap of the teachers that we do not have in junior school. That gap shows that out of the requirements that we have, 60 per cent of them are STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) -required teachers. So, in the recruitment, at least 60 per cent of those would be science or STEM trained teachers and the rest will be those trained in arts and other social sciences. So, it is not that there is one group that will completely not get employment, it is just that there is a discrepancy. It is an analysis that has been done to show we get the teachers that we need progressively because next year we also have a plan of employing another 16,000 teachers. So, we will be able, progressively, to ensure that as we train our teachers, we are able to employ them.

This last week we held a conference of all the stakeholders in the education sector and the question we asked ourselves is, where should we start? Should we start from the admissions? Secondly, what the universities or the colleges have or should we start from what we require from the market? This is so that we train our graduates for jobs that are required in the market and are industry-linked. That conversation is now taking place, so that we have a comprehensive policy where we are training for available jobs. This will ensure that we do not train, for example, 100,000 teachers when we require 35,000 teachers or 500, when we require 1,500 per year.

This will enable us to have a policy that is informed by data, in order for us to ensure that we do not have some sectors having an oversupply of the particular careers and others we have an undersupply. That conversation is now being heard between all stakeholders in the education sector, in order for us, going forward, to have a comprehensive and coherent policy that is end to end.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. CS, you have three minutes to conclude.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): To Hon. Sifuna's question, after the Auditor-General flagged out that she had done a forensic audit for the last four years where they discovered discrepancies, as a Ministry, we decided in this third term, to only release resources to schools where we have verified the number of students that have been enrolled. That exercise is ongoing.

We have done 75 per cent of it. We have about 25 per cent to go. Those anomalies are now being discovered. We will not be able to give you the full analysis as we speak until we complete. However, once we complete, we will analyse. For example, if resources were sent to a bank for school “X”, we will have to find out who signed for those resources from that bank and action will be taken because that is criminal. That is the reason we are doing this verification, in order for us to know how many students we have and how many learners we have in each stage.

That question is tied to Sen. Mumma's question on the basis of the budget. The budget to our Ministry is based on the number of students that we have. We have a policy of Kshs1,540 for primary schools, Kshs15,000 for junior schools, and Kshs22,200 and something for secondary schools.

If we do not have proper numbers, then we cannot push for a proper budget. That is why when we submit our budget to Parliament and the National Treasury, it is slashed because all of us, as a Government, do not agree on what the actual number of students is. That is why we decided to do a verification exercise, so that we know for sure the number we have. This is so that when we submit our budget, it will not be subject to slashing because the numbers will be known by everybody. This is going to help us make those decisions and it is a good exercise. Where some people have committed any sort of offense, action will be taken against them.

On the question of JSS teachers' independence; the Presidential Working Party which gave the recommendations for reforms in the sector recommended that we have a comprehensive school for all the primary and junior schools under one body. That is how the domiciling of junior schools was taken to primary schools and not the senior schools.

Therefore, we are working on the basis of the Presidential Working Party's recommendation. However, the amendments to the laws and the Sessional Paper are ongoing. The drafting is also ongoing. Once that is done and goes through the Cabinet, it will be presented to Parliament for action. At that point, an analysis can be done to see what can be done in that space because we are in the process of reforms, which is still ongoing.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the issue of special needs and what is being done on it; there are specific schools that have special needs infrastructure. We give them funds to support them in order to get instruments and the facilities that they require on top of the figure that we give them. For example, in secondary schools, the figure is Kshs22,000, but if we have a special needs child, Kshs32,000 is added to them, so that what is required can be built in those specific schools they are in.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): We move to Question No.089 by the hon. Senator for Tharaka Nithi.

Question No.089

DEPLORABLE CONDITION OF AMENITIES IN PUBLIC
PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA

Sen. Gatya Mo Fire: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. My question is-

(a) What is the Ministry doing to address the deplorable condition of amenities in many public schools and secondary schools countrywide that often contributes to uncondusive learning and development for learners?

(b) What other strategies, apart from reliance on the National Government Constituencies Development Fund (NG-CDF), does the Ministry have to improve infrastructure in these schools?

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Cabinet Secretary, you may now respond.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I beg to respond to those two questions together, if I may be allowed.

As I have already indicated and as we all know, the Government's policy of 100 percent transition means that there will be additional pressure on school infrastructure as enrolment continues to grow. In addition to reliance on NG-CDF, the other measures that the Government has taken to develop and maintain infrastructure in our schools include the following-

We secure targeted budgetary allocations for infrastructure development and improvement. For example, in this financial year, the Ministry has allocated Kshs1.3 billion to support infrastructure development in schools countrywide.

Secondly, we mobilise resources from development partners such as the World Bank and global partnerships for education to support infrastructure development, as was the case with grade nine classrooms that were supported by World Bank. We are currently working with other partners such as the Kuwaiti Fund and the Safaricom Foundation for school infrastructure development.

There is an allocation of a vote for infrastructure development and maintenance in the capitation that is disbursed to schools. In junior schools, for example, Kshs4,000 per learner is earmarked for infrastructure development and in secondary schools, Kshs5,000 is earmarked for repairs maintenance and improvement.

The Ministry also encourages alumni led infrastructure development initiatives through community contribution programmes. Schools through their alumni can engage stakeholders to raise funds or contribute materials and labour for improving amenities, thereby fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility within the community.

Partnerships with county governments also support education programmes. For example, in May this year, the Ministry entered into an intergovernmental partnership agreement with county governments to support the education budget in programmes such as bursaries.

For resources to have an impact in the development and maintenance of infrastructure, it is critical that they are utilised prudently. In this regard, the Ministry has invested in enhancing the capacity of boards of management for schools to ensure that they oversee prudent utilisation of resources and to also empower them to undertake resource mobilisation. The successful completion of the 23,000 classrooms that were done for grade nine was done through the partnership of the national Government and the decentralisation of the infrastructure development into those schools, so that they could own the work that was being done.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Gataya.

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Sen. Gataya Mo Fire: I have heard some beautiful measures from the Ministry, but if indeed these measures have been in place for these years, then one would be interested to know why we have dilapidated public schools across the country.

Recently, we were treated to news from some parts of Tharaka-Nithi County where some mud schools were paraded by media houses. Those schools are not even fit for human habitation. They are quite a number and I am happy because I know the Cabinet Secretary sent a team to Tharaka-Nithi. He confirmed about 46 schools where children are not supposed to be schooling. If these measures have been in place, what does the Ministry do to make sure that there is equitable distribution of the so-called measures?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have heard the Cabinet Secretary speak of a Kshs1.3 billion budget for the Ministry of Education. Is he privy to the information on the amount that Tharaka-Nithi will be allocated to address the urgent situation on the ground because those schools are supposed to be condemned?

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Mandago?

Sen. Mundigi.

Sen. Munyi Mundigi: Asante, Bw. Spika. Kwanza, ninampongeza Waziri wa Elimu kwa sababu wakati alikua akifanya kazi kwa KenGen, aliilainisha. Na wakati ameenda kwa Wizara ya Elimu anajaribu kuilainisha.

Swali langu liko upande wa elimu kwa zile pesa zinapeanwa, ni bajeti haijatosha kwa sababu tumeona kwa shule nyingi, *capitation* imechelewa? Utapata kuna pesa ya mambo ya *emergency*. Upepo unaweza kupata shule nyingi hazijapanda miti. Sijui kama una uhusiano na Waziri anayeshughulikia mambo ya mazingira kama vile upanzi wa miti ili shule zote zipande miti kwa sababu ya *climate change*.

Mfano ni upepp uliovuma pande za Mbeere South na North katika Kaunti ya Embu na kuharibu paa za madarasa. Wakati huu watoto wanateseka, kwa mfano, katika shule za msingi za Karura na Gatete. Imefika nimeomba pesa kidogo na jana nikaenda huko. Watoto wameacha shule na wakati huu wanapongoja mitihani wameanza kufanya kazi zisizoeleweka---

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): What is your question?

Sen. Munyi Mundigi: Swali langu ni kutaka kuuwa Waziri wa Elimu atasaidia shule za Gatete na Karura namna gani ili ziweze kupata mabati kutokana na pesa ile ya *emergency* ama ni National Treasury haijakupea pesa?

Sen. Abass: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. It seems as if this country was not even prepared for the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) programme. If you go to my place, Wajir, and even the other areas related to Mandera and Garissa, the situation is pathetic especially in terms of infrastructure.

Grade Nine learners will be sitting for exams. There is not a single lab and there are very few classes. In every sub-county today, the Government has constructed Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVETs) centres, yet there is no equipment and up to now they are not operational. When you ask them what is happening, they have been told that the equipment is expected from China or wherever. Some of them do not even have the students.

There was infrastructure development with the Kenyan Government and the World Bank that has been done for the last three or four years. Up to now, most of the contractors have not been paid. What happened? Why was this money not paid?

Where is this equipment that they are waiting for, I do not know from China or wherever? The TVETs have not been opened. The CBCs in my county have very few classes. Just one or two classes and the students have just become too many.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Abbas, what is your question?

Sen. Abass: Why has the money not been paid and the TVETs not yet equipped? What is the situation?

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Senators, let us avoid speeches; straight and direct to your question. That way, we will save a lot of time and allow many Senators to ask questions.

Sen. Wakili Sigei: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I will avoid any speech. My question, supplementary to the question by Sen. Gataya, is the basis upon which the Ministry permits additional registration of either primary or secondary schools when we have got these statistics of institutions which are in deplorable situations and not even fit for habitation.

Secondly, the CS is able to give us statistics of the institutions which require special attention like the ones which Sen. Gataya has requested as well as others across the country, including in the County of Bomet.

Sen. Kathuri: Thank you, Hon. Speaker. We are really constrained to ask direct questions because sometimes we build a case, so that we are able ask the question.

Since we are really struggling in this country with the Ministry of Education, since I joined Parliament in 2013, we have only had one chair of the Education Committee, I mean, a Member of Parliament for Tinderet, Hon. Melly, for 10 years. For almost 15 years, we have not been able to sort that mess. Regardless, that has been there for 15 years. That is historic. He has the memory of the institution for the 13th year and we have not been able to sort education issues.

Every time they summon the CS in the Committee of Education in the “lower” House, you can see that Committee struggling to address issues on education. That is why this Senate can handle these issues if the CS gives us time to engage. The Committee on Education and other leaders like us, can do a lot for the Ministry of Education.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, for example, right now we are going to the close of the National Government Constituencies Development Fund (NG-CDF) in June this year. The NG-CDF has been supporting schools, including Tharaka Nithi County where Sen. Gataya Mo Fire comes from. They have not been able to manage the infrastructure of those schools.

Hon. CS, now that the NG-CDF that has been supporting you is coming to an end, what strategy do you have to do infrastructure in those schools?

Secondly, the free primary and secondary education needs some certain budget---

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Senator, you know that in our Standing Orders you are entitled to ask one question.

Sen. Kathuri: Hon. Speaker, as a Nchuri Ncheke elder, kindly let me ask this last one.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): I am afraid our Standing Orders do not recognise Nchuri Ncheke.

Sen. Kathuri: Maybe at some point Nchuri Ncheke is not recognised in this Senate.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Conclude, hon. Senator.

Sen. Kathuri: Hon. Speaker, it is because of these bursary funds. For example, the money with the MPs is almost Kshs15 billion. How much money do you need to get Hon. CS to give the capitation in full or to deliver free primary and secondary education?

Can we move all these bursaries from these other MPs, National Government Affirmative Action Fund (NGAAF) and county governments and give you all that money, so that you can distribute it directly to schools? Do you feel you can do that, so that we do not lock all these funds to come to the Ministry and then you give all the schools free primary and secondary education?

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Proceed, Sen. Mumma.

Sen. Mumma: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. My question takes into account the fact that the bulk of the education function is with the national Government. Also, that in the last three or four months, we have been discussing the multiple parallel programmes around education by the NG-CDF, yourselves, the President, philanthropists such as Wings to Fly Scholarship Programme, governors and others.

Is the national Government deliberately doing something to audit all funding that we have in these multiple streams with a view to streamlining and consolidating these funds to ensure that they are better used for delivery of the right to education in an equitable manner to all students in Kenya?

Sen. Consolata Wakwabubi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. My question is pegged on the implementation challenges in regard to funding gaps, infrastructure challenges and teacher gaps.

We are in a world of technology; that is a techno-savvy season. Hon. CS, what strategies does the Government have to invest in digital infrastructure such as computers, labs, workshops and anything in relation to that? Regarding Competency Based Education (CBE), we need the compliance to the infrastructure that will be laid.

Finally, still on infrastructure, I would like to ask what strategy the Government has regarding occupation, safety and health frameworks, to ensure reasonable safety, hygiene and security measures to protect learners and workers in the institutions.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Consolata, I allowed you to get away with that, but according to our Standing Order, you are entitled to ask only one question.

Sen. Consolata Wakwabubi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am guided.

Sen. Miraj: Asante, Bw. Spika. Swali langu kwa Waziri ni hili: inakuwaje majengo mapya yanajengwa kwa mashule ilhali shule ambazo zimekuwa kutoka kitambo ziko katika hali ambayo imedorora?

Nitakupa mfano wa shule ya Jamvi La Wageni, Likoni na Shule ya Peleleza. Watoto kutoka Pwani wanaendelea kupata majibu duni na bado tunakubali Hazina ya *National Government Constituencies Development Fund* (NG-CDF) na hazina zingine nyingi kuleta majengo mapya, ilhali zile zilizopo ziko katika hali ngumu. Je, tunataka

kuendelea na mviringo wa matokeo duni ama tunataka kusaidia watoto wetu ili wawe na maono mazuri na msingi mwema katika maisha yao?

Asante.

Sen. Korir: Thank you very much, Hon. Speaker, Sir. Could the Ministry of Education come up with a policy that regulates the mushrooming of these schools? They should focus on improving the existing infrastructure.

Sen. (Dr.) Khalwale: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am a bit worried about the 33,000 primary schools where this facility has been constructed. According to data from the Ministry, we have a total of 35,570 primary schools in this country, of which, 11,000 are private. This means that the Ministry has 23,000 primary schools.

So, if the Cabinet Secretary has constructed classrooms in 33,000 schools, that means a whopping 10,000 are ghost schools. Cabinet Secretary, what is the reliability of your answer? If you stand by the fact that you have constructed classrooms in 33,000 primary schools, my question is: which are these 10,000 ghost primary schools? I am on the page of the Ministry that I am referring to.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Cabinet Secretary, you have five minutes to respond. Proceed.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will start with the question raised by Sen. (Dr.) Khalwale. We have constructed 23,000 classrooms. Those classrooms are not in 23,000 schools. Some schools required four classrooms, others five and others two depending on the streams that they had. Each classroom required to hold 45 students. So we have not constructed 23,000 classrooms in 23,000 schools.

Next is the question from Tharaka Nithi. The response is that we have constructed 218 classrooms. We noticed mad walled institutions and as a Ministry, we sent a team to do an analysis. The report came back and we are working towards allocating some of the resources we have to some of those schools. We will do it like an affirmative action because for the last few years, no infrastructure or development has taken place in that particular area. We are doing something about it. That is why we sent a team there and the leaders wrote a letter indicating the specific schools that needed support. So far, we have constructed 218 classrooms in that place.

My next response is with respect to Sen. Muniy Mundigi's question. Yes, we have partnership with the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry. We do tree planting under a programme called Elimu Trees to ensure that trees are planted in all our schools. This exercise is done continuously and we will continue to do it in those areas.

As a Ministry, however, we do not have an emergency kitty where we can quickly release resources for schools whose roofs have been blown off. The only way out is for the money to come from the infrastructure fund. If the infrastructure resource is not given like it has not been given for the last two years, then the Ministry's hands are tied. This means that it cannot handle those emergencies.

The questions by Sen. Abass were in two parts. We constructed 189 classrooms in Wajir, 175 classrooms in Mandera and 132 classrooms in Garissa. As I said, we continue to ensure that we have adequate infrastructure in the institutions for the students.

The other question was on the Technical and Vocational Education and Training centres (TVETs) that are supposed to be equipped. My response is that it is Government

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policy that each constituency has a TVET institution. So far, we have constructed 252 TVETs in those constituencies and some of them are very well equipped while others are awaiting equipment ordered from China. We all know that the process of getting grants, loans and the equipment takes time. However, some of those TVETs are already allocated or listed awaiting the particular equipment to come, depending on the area of specialization. Once they get here, they will be delivered to those TVETs. Something in that space is also being done to ensure that our TIVETs are equipped sufficiently to support the current enrolment.

Indeed, as a Government, we now have a policy to increase the enrolment of our TVET trainees from the 297,000 that were there in 2022 to the 700,000 we currently have to hopefully two million by the end of 2026. With that, we will take as many young people as possible into those institutions.

Sen. Wakili Sigei, my learned friend, asked about the additional registration statistics when we already have these institutions that are not well taken care of. My response is that in the verification exercise that we are currently undertaking, part of the information that we are collecting is the number of students in each of those institutions and the status or the state in which those institutions are.

This information is what will now give the Government data to enable it make a policy on whether some of those schools have got any basis to remain registered or whether some of those students should be moved from one school to another. If they are moved, we will have institutions that are optimal in terms of the right number of teachers and the right number of students. We are doing something about that.

That exercise had not been done, previously. Applications used to come to the Ministry on the basis that there is a school that needs to be registered and the registration was done if it met the criteria. Over time, the statistics have indicated that some of those institutions have less than ten students. We have a school with less than ten students and five teachers which is not optimal.

That is why we are doing the verification exercise. This will give us the opportunity to interrogate the schools and the institutions that we have. We will then see if some of them will remain, be merged or separated. So, we are doing something in that space as well.

The next question was on NG-CDF and the fact that it is now undergoing a process and it might not be there or it might be there. If for any chance NG-CDF is not there, then the Ministry will request that the funds that NG-CDF is now using to support it be allocated to the Ministry. With that, the Ministry will continue with the infrastructure development and distribution of bursaries that is currently being done by the NG-CDF.

We are undertaking the verification exercise and we also want to undertake an audit of all the money that is utilised in the sector. This is in terms of all the bursaries that are given by various government agencies, so that we can get a figure to know how much is it exactly we are spending in the sector for education. So that compared, we can then analyse to find out with the number of learners that we have, if we pooled all these resources together, can we then have a completely free education for our children?

This is because to date, there is nowhere you can get the total figure. Other than the Kshs702 billion that the Government allocates in the budget, there is no other centre

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where you can get a centralized figure to say this is the amount of money that is being utilized totally in the education sector. So, we want to do an audit first, then that audit will be able to give us the data that we require to push for probably the consolidation of all these amounts into one kitty, and then we have that kitty running the sector.

It is work in progress; it is a conversation that we need to all have to see how we sort out that problem. As the Senator here said, these are problems that have been there for a very long time, and we have really not gotten the answers to them. We are trying to find out what is the best way to do this in order to ensure that we resolve the financial challenges that face this sector. We are doing something about it as well.

Also, to Sen. Consolata's question, we are undertaking a new platform in the Ministry called the Kenya Education Management Information System (KEMIS). We want this Ministry to have one single center or one single source of truth. We want everything that happens in the sector to have a module in that system so that we can collect and link what we are doing and we can see each other. For example, if you have 12 million students, when you are buying or supplying books for a subject, that subject should only have 12 million books, because we do not normally have a situation where this information is at the same centre. You would find perhaps when you have five million students, you are supplying seven million books, so that there is a gap and there is a waste of resources that needs now to be utilized optimally.

So, we are doing something, utilising AI to ensure that going forward, we are able to utilize the resources that are available in the digital sector to make decisions that are data-based and evidence-driven.

To Sen. Miraj's question, it is true that because of this disconnect, where one arm is not seeing the other, we are finding things happening that otherwise, if we were operating not in silos, would be much more optimal in the utilization of the resources that we have. This is why we are saying we want to come up with that particular platform, so that even if you are a donor or you are somebody doing anything for the education sector, you plug in into the module and the Ministry and the Government can see what you are doing, including feeding of children and all the other activities that take place by individuals in the sector.

The policy is the same thing that I think I have explained. Sen. Joyce had requested whether we have a policy to bring all these things together, and we are working on it. It is the same question that I think I have responded to. Thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Senators, we will move to Question No.101 by the Senator for Bomet County, the Hon. Wakili Hillary Sigei.

Hon. Senator, you may proceed to ask your Question.

Question No. 101

STATE OF INFRASTRUCTURE AT
BOMET UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Sen. Wakili Sigei: Thank you, Hon. Speaker. I also want to thank the Cabinet Secretary for availing a response to the Question, which I am straightaway going to ask. This is Question No.101.

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(a) Could the Cabinet Secretary provide a detailed assessment of the current state of infrastructure at Bomet University College and disclose the status of all ongoing infrastructural development projects for lecture halls, workshops, hostels, and other essential academic and support facilities?

(b) What steps has the Ministry taken to ensure that the college has adequate and suitable land to meet its current and future development needs, and could the Cabinet Secretary specifically indicate whether consideration can be made for acquisition of parcels of land from the neighbouring institutions?

(c) Could the Cabinet Secretary disclose the current status of the process for granting a charter to Bomet University College and provide the projected timelines for the conclusion of this process?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Now, Hon. CS, your written response is fairly long. You may wish to paraphrase it in the interest of time. You may proceed. It has already been circulated to all hon. Senators.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): Yes, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will try and do that.

I beg to reply.

(a) The assessment of the current status of Bomet University infrastructure, you will find that under paragraph 35, attachment number BUC1, and in that attachment, you will see the number of the lecture rooms that the institution has. There is item and then there is the number. You can leave the capacity and the size. We have a total of 58 in terms of lecture rooms, lecture theatres, assembly, auditorium, science laboratory, demonstration firms, workshops, micro-teaching lab, GIS lab, and computer lab. There is a total infrastructure of 58.

In terms of what is currently being undertaken in terms of infrastructure by the college, the number is indicated in attachment number BUC2. Basically, the projects that are being undertaken as we speak include the tuition block, which is at 98 per cent complete. Then we have the library block, which is at 95 per cent complete. We have the multipurpose hall. It is at 92 per cent complete. We have hostels that are at 4 per cent complete. We have civil works around the college that are 65 per cent complete. There is the borehole drilling, elevator tank, service tank, and reticulation is at 60 per cent complete and the research centre is at 91 per cent complete. There is a figure there that is indicated under paragraph 39.

Now, on the proposed construction of the block, the administrative block, lecture theater and associated works, you would find that the administration block is currently at 98 per cent complete, having utilized a total of Kshs120 million out of the Kshs137 million allocated.

The project that has been allocated Kshs55 million this financial year in order to cover the shortfall that is remaining, and Kshs40 million is supposed to come from the Government, while Kshs15 million will be sourced from ANA. The proposed construction of the extension of the ablution block, the works are at 91 per cent done at a total cost of 11.9 per cent. The amount already paid is Kshs6 million. There is a balance of Kshs5 million, which has been budgeted for, and that project is also ongoing.

(b) The steps that the Ministry has taken to ensure that the college has adequate and suitable land. Now, the details on the table there indicate how much land the university already has, and the university in Bomet town itself has a total of 56.5 acres of land. That is those three particular blocks. One is 4.7 hectares, another one is 15.7, and the other one is 2.5 hectares, making a total of 56.5 acres when you convert.

They also have another 44 hectares, equivalent of 108.7 acres in a place called Sigor. However, the university is also discussing with the following institutions in order to expand the land, that is, St. Michael's Secondary School, Imarisha Sacco Grounds, Bomet TTC and the prison's open land space next to it.

Even as they do that, however, let us just confirm that the institution has sufficient land as per the Commission for University Education (CUE) requirements that requires a university to have a minimum of 52 acres. The institution has sufficient land as per the Commission for University Education (CUE) that requires a university to have a minimum of 52 acres. As I said, it has 56.5 acres and another 108.7 acres.

(c) The other important part is on the question of the charter. The institution has been working with CUE and they have had back and forth. The last engagement was CUE going there on 19th August, 2025. That is when the Commission visited to find out whether they had met requirements of various inspections that CUE had done.

They came back and they are currently undertaking an analysis of that report. It is projected that subject to the positive findings by the CUE, the college will be awarded its charter before end of this year. That will depend on the analysis of the visit by the CUE.

I thank you.

[The Speaker (Hon. Kingi) left the Chair]

[The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri) in the Chair]

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Thank you, Cabinet Secretary.

Sen. Wakili, do you have the two supplementary questions?

Sen. Wakili Sigei: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have got more than two, but I know that I can only be allowed to ask two. Therefore, I will ask the two questions in order of their priority.

The first one is on specific questions at paragraph 38 on project works that were retendered. There is an indication in the response by the Cabinet Secretary under Item D that hostels are at 4 per cent completion. That must be misinformation because I am a resident of Bomet.

I am not aware whether there has been any foundation stone laid for hostels within the university other than a budgetary allocation and an advert that went out in the mainstream media sometimes back on the Affordable Housing Programme (AHP) that the university was allocated 800 hostels. Could the Cabinet Secretary clarify for purposes of public consumption so that we get the right information?

Secondly, under paragraph 42 on details of land ownership by the university, I do not know whether the Hon. Cabinet Secretary is aware that Kericho/Bomet Town Plot No.437 is a subject of an active court case and whether the Ministry is involved in it. I

would also like to know the options available regarding protection of the public interest in that particular case that is ongoing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I will pass the third question to Sen. Joyce Korir to ask as a supplementary question because---

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Do not bring your tactics otherwise I might also not give her the opportunity.

Sen. Wakili Sigei: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Cabinet Secretary, you may answer those two supplementary questions before we take more from Members.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, regarding the question of hostels being at four per cent completion, the information we got is that only excavations were done, accounting for the figure of four per cent because construction has not started. Only excavation was done thus accounting for four per cent.

Sen. Wakili Sigei: If, indeed, the information is that excavation has been done, where is that? Is it within the institution or elsewhere?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I do not want the Hon. Cabinet Secretary to be misled because this is something that---

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Sen. Wakili, you know that even in court, you do not interrupt the judge. Let us give the Cabinet Secretary time to answer your two supplementary questions. If you are not satisfied, I am here to help you. Therefore, do not be in any hurry.

Hon. Cabinet Secretary, you can conclude.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, that is the information that was supplied to us from the university. I can write back to the university on the basis of us getting further details on what this four per cent comprises.

Similarly, we are not aware of the court case relating to Block 437. We will also write to them then write to the Senator to inform him of what we would have found out and thereafter do a follow-up.

That is the information that we got from the institution itself. However, we undertake to verify it.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Sen. Wakili, can that matter rest at that point?

Sen. Wakili Sigei: Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. With a lot of respect, I appreciate the responses by the Hon. Cabinet Secretary who is my good friend. Therefore, I know he has given the information that is available.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): I am aware that he is also your senior.

Sen. Wakili Sigei: Yes. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Cabinet Secretary, this is my advice. You have your team, including the Director of Education in Bomet County. Just by a call, they can tell you. After making a physical visit to the university, they can give you a report even tomorrow so that you communicate to the Senator. Since you have your team there, they do not need to do a lot of letters. Your team on the ground can do that work for you.

Sen. Cherarkey, do you have a supplementary question on this particular question?

Sen. Cherarkey: Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, but before I ask my supplementary question, it should go on record that the Cabinet Secretary did not provide an answer on JSS governance structure. He either ignored or did not want to answer.

My only supplementary question on this matter is this. As much as we are discussing about infrastructure in the universities, what is the current situation of infrastructure in the universities and budgetary allocations for both infrastructure and industrial action or strikes that we are witnessing in the country? He should also give us an update of the ongoing lecturers' strike across the country.

I yield, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Proceed, Sen. Beatrice Akinyi Ogola.

Sen. Ogola: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, my question is on the issue of adequate and suitable land.

Cabinet Secretary, what measures has the Ministry put in place to ensure that our schools get their titles in order to secure parcels of land that they have because that is a recipe for hostility in the neighbourhoods? In my home sub-county called Ndhiwa, there is a school called Buru Atego Primary School that has no title and they are ever squabbling. It appears the management of the school is not able to deal with the issue of the title.

Specifically, what are you doing other than the generalities of schools should get titles?

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Hon. Senators, as much as practically possible, let us ask supplementary questions that are related to the primary question. Honestly speaking, I do not know whether the Cabinet Secretary has an answer on that school, unless you are now giving him some work to do so that he reports back to you?

Sen. Ogola: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, with all due respect, I stand guided, but I needed general measures that they have on titling. I do not think he would need to prepare for that because the Ministry must have a policy and way of working---

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Did you mention a school in Ndhiwa?

Sen. Ogola: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, that was an illustration to build up on to my concern, but I stand guided. The Ministry must have measures in place on the issue of titling in schools.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Would it be better if you ask that question to the Cabinet Secretary next time specifically on titling? I am trying, so that other Senators who have questions have an opportunity to get the responses.

Proceed, Sen. Sifuna.

Sen. Sifuna: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this morning has been an illustration of how incomprehensible this Government runs its affairs. We have a Cabinet Secretary who cannot ask for a photograph of the excavation that has been done at the Bomet University College. He is just listening to stories and telling us, he will write letters.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Sen. Sifuna, I already gave guidance on that issue.

Sen. Sifuna: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is good that you gave that guidance, but we must continue to express outrage. This is not how to run a government.

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The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Can you now ask your question?

Sen. Sifuna: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, my question is related to something that---

(Sen. Cherarkey consulted loudly)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I will not allow myself to be heckled.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Order, Sen. Cherarkey! You are out of order. I gave guidance on that matter and that should rest.

Sen. Sifuna: In fact, the Senator who is heckling me himself---

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Do not listen to the Senator, Sen. Sifuna. Just proceed and ask your question, Senator.

Sen. Sifuna: No, no, no! The Senator has also expressed frustration---

(Sen. Cherarkey spoke off record)

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Sen. Cherarkey, I will throw you out of this Chamber right away.

Sen. Sifuna: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. Can I proceed?

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Proceed.

Sen. Sifuna: The Senator has also expressed frustration that the Cabinet Secretary has not answered his questions. Even for me, I am not satisfied with the answers that are being given, but let me say this.

I pity the Senator for Bomet County. He is focusing on infrastructure, lecture halls, workshops and all these other things. We have all these things at the University of Nairobi. The lecturers at the universities are on their third week of strike.

Education is not just about these things we build. It is a whole sort of ecosystem that you build together. When will this Government start respecting the proceeds of legal processes, such as collective bargaining agreements? What is the latest problem the Cabinet Secretary can tell us today? Why are the lecturers on the streets for three weeks?

The students have told us that if the matter is not resolved today, they will join the strike. What is going on? First-year students have reported to the universities and there are no classes. They are also on the streets. What sort of Government is this?

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Sen. Sifuna, I had directed that we ask questions related to the primary question. That is a very pertinent issue that you are raising, which can even stop this House from proceeding to the afternoon. I request you to even adjourn the House. You have those powers so that we can discuss this matter comprehensively.

Sen. Sifuna: No. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. The Cabinet Secretary is here; do not protect him. Let him answer these questions from the representatives of the people.

Even Sen. Cherarkey asked about the strike. These things are correlated matters. Let him tell us if we are safe or the students will be here. He is here. This Government is overprotected by the Speakers in this House. Let him answer the questions.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Sen. Sifuna, you are out of order. You know I am always very lenient with you. Now you are trying to test my coolness.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I will attempt to answer those questions.

On the question of infrastructure, of course, we have deficiencies in infrastructure funds and we have a lot of incomplete projects in our institutions.

The Ministry, in the Department of Higher Education alone, requires close to Kshs9 billion to complete the stalled projects. These resources are not available and we keep lobbying the National Treasury so that we can get as much resources as possible to undertake the construction of those particular structures.

Your second question was on the strikes. I will answer them together with Sen. Sifuna's concern. However, I just wish to state that earlier I provided a response on the JSS governance by referring to the Working Party recommendations and the fact that the Bills are undergoing the processes that are required in order for them to be submitted eventually to Parliament, where they would then have legislative powers.

Sen. Beatrice Ogola's question on the titles, we have recommended and requested the institutions that do not have titles---

(Sen. Sifuna spoke off record)

I am answering that question; I am coming to it.

On the institutions that do not have titles, we have recommended and requested them to work with the Ministry, and where they have difficulties, we will work with the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development to ensure that all our institutions have titles, in order to protect them from land grabbing. So, that is the policy. We discovered that they had some challenges and, therefore, decided to support them through the Attorney General (AG) and the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development to ensure that every institution has its land titles.

Now you ask: Why are the lecturers on strike? The lecturers are on strike precisely because of three different issues arising from three different Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs). The first issue was the CBA of 2021/2025 for which they went on strike last year and we had a negotiation and a return-to-work formula. Under that return-to-work formula, in the Financial Year 2024/25, Kshs4.3 billion was supposed to be paid to them to cover months to June, 2025. That Kshs4.3 billion was paid.

The next amount that was to be paid was Kshs2.73 billion for the Financial Year 2025/2026 and this was supposed to be paid in July, 2025. That is the amount that delayed and because of that delay, they issued a strike notice. Two days into that notice, the Kshs2.73 billion was paid. Under the 2021-25 CBA, the balance of Kshs2.73 billion is to be paid in June, 2026. So far as the CBA for 2021-2025 is concerned, the issues have been addressed.

The second issue that they raised in order for them to issue that strike was on the CBA of 2017-2021. Under that CBA, they argued that there was an amount of Kshs7.9 billion that was to be paid. However, the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC) informs us that that amount of Kshs7.9 billion has been paid to the extent of Kshs7.2 billion, leaving a balance of Kshs624 million.

So, there is a question of how much is outstanding between what the unions are asking for and what the Government is saying is owed. For that reason, the teams went to court and the court ordered that the strike be injuncted, they go to a conciliator and have this amount verified, after which the settlement of it can be agreed on. So, there is an order stopping the strike, that we can submit.

The third issue that they raised is the issue of the CBA of 2025-2029. We had agreed that this CBA needs to be negotiated at the beginning of the cycle. The beginning of the cycle, of course, is 2025/2026 Financial Year. So, we have from June 2025 to June 2026. That is the cycle of these negotiations. The negotiations begin, they are concluded, then the CBA is signed for the cycle of 2025-2029. They were saying that this cycle has not begun, it has delayed but they have been having meetings and they have had two meetings so far. So in essence, there has not been a delay.

The negotiations and discussions are going on to see the real point of what the issue is, but this country being what it is, the facts are crowded in the noise. So, anyway, the short and long of it is that the negotiations are ongoing. We are going to have a court appearance on the 6th October, 2025, to confirm whether that conciliation process has taken place and what the outcome of it is. However, the real issue is the 2017-2021 CBA, in which the verification of how much money is due in order for us to move to the next stage of how it is going to be settled is what is pending.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, that is the reason the lecturers are on strike.

I submit.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Hon. Cabinet Secretary, I advise that you give the same information. You have communicated to the country, but when there is an issue, the best thing is to communicate, so that Kenyans can know what is happening.

We will move to the next Question by the Senator for Kilifi County, Sen. Justice Madzayo.

Question No.102

HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES
AMONG GIRLS IN KILIFI COUNTY

The Senate Minority Leader (Sen. Madzayo): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. I have a few questions to the Cabinet Secretary.

(a) What are the key factors contributing to the high school dropout rates among girls in Kilifi County, particularly those affected by poverty, early pregnancies and domestic caregiving responsibilities?

(b) Why does Kilifi County continue to face challenges in ensuring that pregnant and parenting girls return to school despite the existence of supportive policies and programmes?

(c) What specific interventions has the Ministry of Education implemented to address these challenges and support girls at risk of dropping out of school in Kilifi County?

(d) How is the Ministry collaborating with parents, local chiefs, school boards and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to overcome socio-cultural barriers that hinder girls' education?

(e) What measures has the Ministry put in place to promote and integrate community-based support systems such as mentorship programmes, counseling services and local partnerships to enhance retention and re-enrollment of vulnerable girls in schools?

I thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Hon. Cabinet Secretary, you can respond to those questions.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to reply.

(a) The cases of girls dropping out of school in Kilifi County have been the result of a number of factors, including poverty that leads to school-going children to resort to work instead of education. This makes them vulnerable to early pregnancies, which undermine their academic progression.

According to the National Council for Population Development (NCPD), the cases of teenage pregnancies in Kilifi County stood at 9,578 in 2019. Some of the factors leading to these cases are practises such as *disco matanga*, drug and alcohol abuse and general poverty, which made the girls vulnerable.

The other causes include inadequate parental guidance, inadequate parental involvement in the lives and education of their children, inadequate community awareness and involvement in the fight against sexual and gender-based violence and incest, which sometimes goes unreported; poverty and parental inability or failure to provide basic needs for their children; poor leadership on children's protection rights and negative peer influence and pressure.

Due to the multifaceted interventions by the national Government and county governments, and other actors such as the Plan International, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Tiko, the number of teenage pregnancies in Kilifi County has reduced to 6,545 in 2024. Indeed, the NCPD has identified Kilifi County as one of the success stories in the fight against teenage pregnancies.

We continue to implement interventions to ensure that these cases become a thing of the past. Eliminating these cases is a key to achieving a primary to secondary transition rate of 100 per cent from the current 99.16 per cent. Kilifi County has a transition rate of 99.16 per cent.

(b) The Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior and National Administration implements the National School Re-entry Programme, which allows teenage mothers to return to school after childbirth. The implementation of this policy, however, has faced challenges such as low parental awareness, general poverty, which makes teenage mothers resort to work, as I have indicated, to provide for their offspring and the lack of childcare services.

(c) Our interventions have included the following-

(1) Implementing the 100 per cent transition policy and working with local administration to ensure that all persons of school-going age are in schools. The current transition rate in Kilifi County stands at 99.16 per cent.

(2) The provision of a Elimu and Wings to Fly Scholarships to support vulnerable girls.

(3) The promotion of menstrual hygiene support to help reduce school absenteeism and teenage pregnancies.

(4) Strengthening guidance and counselling and life skills programmes in schools.

(5) Conducting gender sensitisation and awareness programmes in schools to help with that reduction.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, may I be allowed to answer (d) and (e) together? The Ministry collaborates with local leaders through community engagement NGOs, which work with the Ministry. We also actively involve parents, chiefs and village elders in discussion and programme implementation to foster community-wide understanding of the importance of girls' education. In collaboration with partners, we also organise capacity-building forums where local leaders and community members are trained and empowered to become advocates for girls' education. This helps them to change perceptions and address resistance to girls attending schools.

During annual general meetings in schools, Ministry officials sensitise parents and guardians on the importance of girls' child education. In addition, schools' boards of management are inducted on these matters as well. Our approach emphasises community-based support through mentorship programmes. Local leaders, such as chiefs, are involved in mopping up the girls who have dropped out of school to re-enrol.

I submit.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Senate Minority Leader, do you have any supplementary questions?

The Senate Minority Leader (Sen. Madzayo): No.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Okay, good.

Sen. Sifuna Edwin, proceed.

Sen. Sifuna: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this Parliament has equipped the Government with legal mechanisms to deal with some of these problems. First, it is still a crime in this country to engage in sexual relations with any person below the age of 18 years. My expectation, therefore, would be, if the Ministry tells us that there are 6,545 cases of teenage pregnancies, which is still a crime, they should show us commensurate numbers of prosecutions, not these stories we hear of sensitising the community.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, under Article Two of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, even if you want to hide behind Customary Law, it says, "Any law, including customary law, that is inconsistent with this Constitution is void to the extent of that inconsistency."

My question to the Cabinet Secretary is, how many people have been prosecuted in Kilifi County for the offence of statutory rape under your leadership?

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Sen. Samson Cherarkey.

Sen. Cherarkey: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the challenges that *Waziri* has highlighted are across the country. He has highlighted challenges that are facing children going to school in Kilifi County, especially the girl-child.

A few weeks ago, there was a case of prayers for food. What is the Ministry doing, apart from these challenges, to address the issue of school feeding programme, not only in Kilifi, where children have to shout Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, for them to get something to eat? What is the Ministry doing to ensure that every child, from Nairobi, Kilifi, Meru, Nandi, and across the nation, accesses proper school feeding programme, so that they can be attentive in class and increase transition and turn out?

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Finally, he should give us the interventions. Are they working in collaboration with National Government Administration Officers (NGAO), so that they ensure 100 per cent transition rate of our children?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I yield.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Sen. Abdillahi Abdulrahman.

Sen. Miraj: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. Is the Cabinet Secretary aware that Kenya is ranked second, globally, as a leading country with child parents? Two, is he agreeing with me that young parents or child parents are a constituency in itself, and that the Children Act cannot be a remedy to the disease that we are facing as a country?

It is time for the Ministry to speed up and help me as a sponsor of The Care and Protection of Child Parents Bill, so that we speed it up at the National Assembly for concurrence, so that it becomes an Act of Parliament, so that it remedies all that is happening within our counties, given that Kilifi is no longer the leader in child parents. The statistics given by Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) is that the Maa Community is now leading with child parents.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Ask the question. What do you need to be assisted to know?

Sen. Miraj: My questions are three---

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): No, you cannot---

Sen. Miraj: In one, I am asking the Cabinet Secretary if he agrees that the child parent is a constituency in itself, and it needs an independent law to remedy the problem that we are facing, given that we are ranked second globally with children, with child parents' children.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Well noted. Sen. Madzayo, now you have a supplementary question.

The Senate Minority Leader (Sen. Madzayo): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The Cabinet Secretary has said that the Ministry has provisions for Elimu and Wings to fly scholarships. Could he be in a position to give a list of names of those students from Kilifi who have benefited from these Wings to fly scholarships?

Secondly, on the promotion of menstrual hygiene support to the girls, would he be kind enough to name the schools where they have been supplied to?

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Cabinet Secretary, we start with the owner of the question, Sen. Madzayo and then you respond to the others.

In just a minute, Sen. Beatrice, let us first get the response. We have like 10 minutes to conclude with the Cabinet Secretary for Education.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): On Sen. Madzayo's supplementary question, we do not have the data right here with us, but we undertake to supply that data on the Elimu and Wings to Fly scholarships; the names and the beneficiaries of the students from Kilifi, and also the schools to which these facilities for menstrual support have been supplied to. We undertake to do a letter and submit that report to you.

On Sen. Sifuna's question on the number of cases that have been prosecuted, this is to inform the Senate that the cases are prosecuted by the Director of Public

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Prosecutions (DPP). We do not have the numbers as we speak, but we can get in touch with the DPP and supply the data to the Senate of the cases that they are currently undertaking relating to the sexual offences and teenage pregnancies of the children across the country, including Kilifi. We undertake to supply that particular data because it was not really part of this Question.

Sen. Cherarkey asked the question on access to food. Currently, the Government is having a school feeding programme where we are feeding 2.6 million children across the country. However, statistics indicate that we need to be able to feed up to 10 million children, but the resources and the budget is not available to meet that number. We keep enhancing that number and will continue working with the Government to ensure that that number increases to the 10 million target.

With respect to the issue of the school feeding programme and religion in Ganze, that was highlighted, that particular project and programme is under investigation as we speak. The Government has stopped that particular sponsor from continuing to supply or to feed the children in that particular area until we get to the bottom of the matter.

I submit.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): The last two questions from Sen. Beatrice Akinyi.

Sen. Sifuna, your question has been answered. We just wait for the---

Sen. Sifuna, I think we are really digressing on these issues. When the Cabinet Secretary commits, actually what we should ask is when. Cabinet Secretary, when will you provide those lists to Sen. Madzayo and Sen. Sifuna for prosecution?

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in seven days' time. May I answer the question to--- We, as a government --

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The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): A commitment on the list?

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): Yes, within seven days.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Okay, fair enough.

What is your response to the question from Sen. Miraj?

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): Yes, for Sen. Miraj, we as a government, will support any initiative and any particular programme that will protect our children. So, we will work with you to give you the necessary support for that Bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Sen. Beatrice.

Sen. Ogola: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. On the issue of the ---

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): You know, we ask only one supplementary question.

Minority Leader, you have 30 seconds. Minority Leader, you are not there to direct the Chair on what to do. You are the Minority Side, but not to direct the speaker. You are not my Minority Leader.

(An hon. Senator spoke off record)

You lead your team, not the Chair.

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Sen. Sifuna: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would pray that you do not get upset because this is a very delicate conversation that we are having. Actually, the point that I wanted to make is that the Ministry of Education is a custodian of our children.

Knowing what happens in some of these areas, you might not find a complainant. Our expectation is that the Ministry is a complainant. The Ministry has figures; 6,000 teenage pregnancies in Kilifi. They are the custodians of the data of the victims. So, for somebody to refer us to the DPP, is to be disingenuous. They should be the ones actually being the complainants in these cases. That is the point that I wanted to make.

The Cabinet Secretary is trying to run away. They are the ones--- If they have the data of the victims, how can they not have the data of the perpetrators, unless this Ministry does not understand how pregnancies occur?

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Sen. Sifuna, but he has 6,500 early pregnancies. I think the figures are not accurate because like Meru, we have a serious problem. Yesterday, I saw Meru is leading in this thing. So, you need to also confirm the figures and give us the list. It is higher than 6,000.

Proceed, Sen. Beatrice.

Sen. Ogola: Hon. Deputy Speaker, I was amazed that my Secretary General (SG) is talking about a way in which pregnancies occur. I only know of one way.

That is beside the point. My point back to this question, on the dropout rates and particularly those affected by poverty. My question to the Cabinet Secretary (CS) is: Does the Ministry have specific affirmative measures that they put in place on the urban poor?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am mentioning the urban poor because their challenges are peculiar to other areas. When you look at the hierarchy of needs, it would not matter that somebody would be looking for education if they cannot get food to eat.

So, I am asking the CS what measures they have in addressing the urban poor challenges in our country.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Sen. Consolata Nabwire, please, proceed.

Sen. Consolata Wakwabubi: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

My question is on the low retention and school dropouts, especially in Bungoma County, which is due to abject poverty, menstrual hygiene and many other related cases.

I would like to ask the CS, *Bwana Migos*, to substantiate the fact about the implementation of the Children's Act, 2022 that protects the best interest of the child in regard to provision of free primary education, secondary education, care and protection. So many school-going children are suffering in Bungoma because of the laid-down reasons, and there is also a lot of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) cases, which are prevalent in Bungoma County. So, kindly help us understand the strategies that the Ministry has put in place to curb this anomaly.

I submit.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Hon. CS, answer those three questions as we conclude.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): The strategy to increase and retain a high number of children in schools will include provision of school feeding programs in those poor areas.

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We also have low-cost boarding schools that we encourage to allow the children to be in boarding institutions, and provision of bursaries to those parents or to those homes that are needy. That helps with the retention across the country, whether it is in Kilifi or Bungoma, and even areas of urban poor.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Sen. Beatrice, please, proceed.

Sen. Ogola: I know the CS has talked about the general measures, but I was very specific to the urban poor, which have peculiar challenges. Are there any affirmative measures other than the general measures the Ministry has?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in the rural setup, I could expound, there are social networks that these families have, but the urban poor lack those networks that could assist them. So, does the Ministry have specific measures that are specific to the urban poor?

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Hon. CS, please, proceed.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): I was just consulting, but the strategies that I have indicated are across the board. They are not different from the specific strategies that you are asking for, whether it is in the urban poor or not. When we do school feeding programmes, they retain the students the same way, whether it is in the rural areas or in the urban areas. When we give bursaries and provide sanitary wear, it is the same thing. So---

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Sen. Beatrice, that is not how we conduct business, honestly speaking. If you are not satisfied, just visit his office, and discuss issues on the urban poor and the rural poor. The office is open. Is that not so, CS?

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): Yes, it is.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Yes, have a cup of tea with the CS and discuss. That is a general thing that can help this country. Let us just not pressure to get questions now.

Thank you. If he was prepared, he could have come with that answer. To be fair, either you bring a question or visit the Ministry, to discuss with the technical team and give them advice, so that you can help our country. In my opinion, I should not give you another chance.

The Chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee on Education, requested for a minute to give an update on the Committee work, and I would like to give you this chance.

Sen. Montet Betty: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. I take this opportunity to thank Hon. CS for appearing before this House this morning. I would also like to tell the House that the Hon. CS has taken action on a stalemate which has been there. We had 41 pending Statements for the Ministry, and we had a retreat with the Ministry last weekend. The Hon. CS has committed to work with the Committee. That is a concern which a Senator had raised here.

I would like to reassure the House that the Hon. CS has committed to work with the Committee, and he has already started. We had our first retreat with him and his team over the weekend in Mombasa. He committed that the answers which were pending, 41 in number, were going to be answered. I would like to confirm to the House that, that has already been done. So, I want to sincerely thank the Hon. CS, and ask him to continue with that spirit, so that together we can serve the people of Kenya.

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Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): The Chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee on Education, there are various issues which have been raised by Members. Therefore, since you have good working chemistry, also assist the Members with the questions that they have asked and the timelines, so that we can continue to move forward.

When I spoke, I said that there is another Committee in the other House, which has failed to unlock a few things which the Senate Committee can do. So, we are ready to support you. We meet at the Liaison Committee, and as the Chairperson, I am ready to support your Committee to assist the country on matters of education.

Sen. Montet Betty: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to reassure you that I believe that the CS is in a position to sort us out as a Senate.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Hon. CS, thank you for your time and for answering the many questions. Do not tire to respond to the Senate. The Senate is a House of reason. You can assist this country in a very big way, even in unlocking the support you need in the budget. We are almost there. The Senate can also participate in the budget making process. I am aware that we can achieve that.

So, thank you for coming this morning, and all the best in your endeavours.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. (Dr.) Julius Migos Ogamba): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir and Members. I am grateful.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, may I say something before I go?

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Yes, please, go ahead.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): Let me say that because of the fact that we work for the learners in this country, we need all the support we can get, including ideas. If there is a suggestion that you can give us to resolve some of the issues that we know exist, we should be able to work together to ensure that we have that, so that we can have a good system working for our children. So let us continue working.

We are happy to answer the questions, and get a way forward in some of the challenges that we face as a country. It is not you versus us. We are in this together, because these are our children across the board. So, we have an obligation and a responsibility just to ensure that we get the right solution to the problems that we have, because they affect all of us.

Thank you so much. I am grateful.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Thank you, *Waziri*, for that suggestion.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): May I say that the idea to do an audit of the bursaries came from the Senate Standing Committee on Education. When we met at the retreat, Sen. Mumma and the Chairperson suggested that it was important for us to know. Therefore, when we work like that and a directive is given, it is easier for us to implement and get a solution for it.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Before you leave, that matter was also my concern. That is the best thing you can do for us. Do the audit as quickly as possible, so that we see how those figures can be streamlined by the Ministry of Education.

Thank you and all the best. God bless you.

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The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

[The Cabinet Secretary for Education (Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba) was ushered out of the Chamber]

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): We have three other questions; Nos.081, 083 and 083 by Sen. Karen Nyamu. Since she is not here and she has not given any responsibility, I will drop those questions.

Question No.081

CONSTRUCTION OF ADEQUATE LEARNING
SPACES IN SCHOOLS

(Question dropped)

Question No.082

INTERVENTIONS BY MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
ON BUDGET SHORTFALL FOR FPE, TEACHERS AND
SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

(Question dropped)

Question No. 083

MEASURES TO PREVENT WITHHOLDING OF CERTIFICATES
AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECTION 10(1)(B) OF KNEC ACT

(Question dropped)

The next Cabinet Secretary to appear is the Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife. I am told she is around and Sen. Joyce Korir is here. Kindly usher in the Cabinet Secretary.

We have just one question and it will take us 25 minutes to clear, then we can go to the next business.

*[The Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife
(Hon. Rebecca Miano) was ushered into the Chamber]*

Hon CS, the Senate will be engaging you for around 25 to 30 minutes on this question. We only have one question from Sen. Joyce Korir, MP, Question No. 066.

Sen. Joyce Korir, proceed to ask your question.

Question No.066

CURRENT STATUS OF TOURISM SECTOR IN KENYA

Sen. Korir: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, for giving me this opportunity. I welcome the hon. Cabinet Secretary to this House. My Question is-

(a) What is the current status of the tourism sector in Kenya and how do recent trends in tourist arrivals compare between domestic and international visitors?

(b) What factors have contributed to the recent decline in international tourism arrivals, particularly in contrast with the performance of other East African destinations?

(c) Finally, could the Cabinet Secretary specify the strategies the Ministry is implementing to enhance Kenya's global tourism competitiveness, including steps taken to strengthen partnership with the international airlines, promote new tourism products, and leverage digital platforms for marketing?

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Hon. Cabinet Secretary, you can respond.

The Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife (Hon. Rebecca Miano): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir and hon. Members. I wish to respond to question No.066 by Sen. Joyce Korir, MP.

On (a), the current status of tourism sector in Kenya and how recent trends in tourist arrivals compare between domestic and international visitors; the parameters highlighted demonstrate a good performance of the sector in 2024 as compared with 2023 figures.

In terms of international arrivals, Kenya welcomed approximately 2.4 million international tourists in 2024, marking a 14.6 percent increase from 2.089 million international arrivals recorded in 2023.

In terms of tourism earnings, the sector's earnings rose to Kshs454 billion in 2024, reflecting a 19.7 percent growth compared to the previous year's Kshs3.77 billion.

On cruise tourism, it notably experienced a 163 percent surge, with 6,561 tourists arriving in 2024, up from 2,490 in 2023.

In terms of domestic tourism; domestic tourism bed nights occupancy is estimated to have grown by 12 percent, from 4.6 million in 2023 to 5.1 million in 2024. This rise was occasioned by improved business environment, domestic travellers, presumably encouraged by factors such as promotional campaigns, other incentives and a growing interest of Kenyan citizens to participate in domestic tourism.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the number of domestic tourists does not include those that stayed in unregistered establishments and, therefore, the number of domestic tourists is significantly higher. This strong performance is attributed to a combination of factors, including enhanced air connectivity, the simplification of visa process through the Electronic Travel Authorization System (ETAS) and improved collaborative marketing efforts between the national Government, county governments and private sector.

There was also focus on new products segments and renewed traveller confidence to the Magical Kenya brand. It is worth noting that domestic tourism has played a stabilising role during global travel downturns. As international travel normalised in

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2024, domestic tourism continued to grow, showing that both segments complement each other in building the sector's resilience.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, with regard to question (b) on what factors have contributed to the recent decline in international tourist arrivals, particularly in contrast with the performance of other East African destinations; my response is that Kenya did not record a decline in international tourist arrivals in 2024. On the contrary, the country posted the highest ever inbound arrivals and earnings in over a decade, and this performance is even better than pre-Covid.

The country outperformed many regional peers in key indicators and in terms of the East Africa Community (EAC), Kenya recorded the highest numbers. It is worth noting that Kenya has maintained the fifth overall position as a tourist destination in Africa, both in 2023 and 2024 consecutively and position number two in sub-Saharan Africa. This is evidenced by the data outlined in the table in the response showing that Kenya was a strong number five.

In comparison with other EAC destinations, the country has led in international arrivals. In 2024, we had 2.4 million arrivals, followed by the United Republic of Tanzania at 2.1 million, Mauritius 1.3 million, Rwanda 1.3 million and Uganda 1.3 million. Kenya was also fourth position in Africa in the countries that surpassed the pre-COVID arrivals by a bigger margin, as demonstrated in the next figure. You can see that Kenya surpassed pre-COVID figures by 11 percent. The country also witnessed improvement in the level of Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) in the tourism sector compared with other African countries. We have demonstrated that in the figures that are shown there.

Hon. Speaker and Members, Kenya continues to assert its superiority in the regional tourism landscape. This achievement underscores the country's strategic positioning as EAC's leading tourism hub, driven by its diverse offerings, ranging from world-renowned wildlife, the safaris, pristine beaches at the coast, to vibrant cultural experiences and robust meetings, incentives, conferences, exhibitions popularly known as the MICE sector.

The country's well-developed tourism infrastructure which consists of international marketing efforts and commitment to safety and sustainability has further cemented its appeal to global travelers. While at that, I would like to add that the 2025 performance indications as of now, show that we continue to have a positive performance in the tourism sector.

Question (c) requires that we specify the strategies the Ministry is implementing to enhance Kenya's global tourism competitiveness, including steps taken to strengthen partnerships with international airlines, promote new tourism products and leverage digital platforms for marketing.

Hon. Speaker, the Government has adopted a comprehensive and future-oriented strategy to reposition Kenya as Africa's most appealing tourism destination. The approach is to closely collaborate and partner with other enabling Ministries, departments and agencies, and the private sector, such as travel agents, tour operators, airlines, counties, and even other service providers to grow tourism sector earnings to Kshs1 trillion annually by the year 2027/2028, with 5.5 million international arrivals and 7.5 million domestic bed nights.

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The key interventions being implemented are as follows-

Number one is strengthening global air connectivity and entry processes. We have seen newly introduced scheduled connections into Kenya by international airlines such as AirAsia, Flydubai, Air Indigo, Oman Air and Brussels Airlines have expanded Kenya's global access points.

Just last night, we received the first ever flight direct from Saudi Arabia and a few weeks ago, the first flight direct from Angola. Therefore, this has helped the open skies policy with more access into Kenya not only in Nairobi but in Mombasa.

Number two, the rollout of the Electronic Travel Authorisation System (ETAS) in 2024 has streamlined visa issuance, reduced barriers to entry and has made Kenya more visa open.

Number three, Turkish Airlines has been granted the necessary licenses to resume flights to Mombasa, Kenya. Currently, we have seven frequencies per week. This means that tourists using these airlines can fly directly to Moi International Airport in Mombasa from Istanbul. The introduction of the transit visa is also expected to tap into a huge potential market to grow arrivals into Kenya for the short-term visitors who are there during their transit.

The Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife is also part of an interagency committee comprising Ministers for Interior, Roads and Transport, and National Treasury and Planning with relevant agencies to continuously improve traveller facilitation and experience at our major points of entry. This composition of the committee culminated into signing of a service charter among all the service providers at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA). We have since seen improved service and better streamlined passenger experiences.

The second strategy is product diversification and destination development. Kenya is broadening its tourism offerings beyond the traditional wildlife and beach products. For a very long time, Kenya has been boxed into one narrative of safari and beach. However, focus is shifting to niche segments such as cultural heritage tourism, adventure tourism, which is actually gaining a lot of traction, biking, hiking and extreme sports.

We have seen medical and wellness tourism especially targeting the African and Asian markets. We have cruise tourism, and like I have said, it saw a huge increase of about 163 percent growth in 2024. This signals are revitalised cruise tourism sector in Kenya. We have leisure travel, business and leisure tourism that goes together with the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions ((MICE) tourism, which contributed to 27 per cent of all tourism arrivals in 2024.

A new segment that has come in is education tourism, attracting a lot of tourism in the region. With regard to Sports Tourism, Kenya being the home of champions, is attracting quite a lot of tourism, including athletics, golf, world rally championships and others. We have special occasions and wedding destinations especially at the coast. This has become a favorite destination for weddings and honeymoons.

One of the latest products is agro-tourism. We have seen visitors wanting to see; especially tea and coffee, the product right from the farm to the table and to the cup. This is gaining traction. Gastronomy, the whole issue of culinary experience and halal tourism is also popular. Others are city breaks, events and festivals.

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Recently, during the lunar eclipse, we launched astro-tourism because Kenyan skies have been said to be the VVIP of the cosmos and many travellers are targeting star-gazing and the whole of the sky space. With that, we will have many products on offer. However, safari and beach will continue to be key drivers of tourism numbers for Kenya even as we diversify into other products that Kenya has to offer and we have elaborated on those products.

The country, through the Ministry, is also developing and supporting new products and innovations such as development of viewpoints and observation decks to allow visitors to appreciate the landscapes, such as the Great Rift Valley, mountains and hills. We also have increased investments by global hotel chains across the country, particularly along the Kenyan Coast. We have just come back from the Kenyan Coast Investment Conference and we saw a lot of potential at the coast.

We also have world-class mountain climbing, trekking, hiking and curated man-made attractions to complement the nature-based attractions. We have training and certification of various categories of guides by region and product as well as establishment of tourism product clubs to enhance public-private sector collaboration.

Item number three is leveraging digital marketing and smart technologies. Under the Magical Kenya brand, the Kenya Tourism Board has expanded digital footprint, leveraging social media, influencer partnerships and targeted content to reach high potential markets. Investment in smart tourism platforms including AI-driven approaches is on-going to personalise and optimise visitor experiences.

[The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri) left the Chair]

[The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma) in the Chair]

The local youth are being supported to develop tourism-related digital innovations that enhance discovery and bookings. We have seen a lot of Kenyan content and creatives in the social media. The Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife is establishing a Youth in Tourism and Conservation Innovation Hub to empower youth as agents of change in the tourism sector. This hub will be a central point for coordinating youth-led tourism initiatives.

The other initiatives include supporting Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) and job creation in line with the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA). The Ministry is supporting community-based tourism initiatives, equipping operators, artisans and guides with training, financing leakages and market access. We are working with county governments to bring more rural and peri-urban areas into the tourism ecosystem. MSMEs and youth entrepreneurs are also being empowered to create income-generating tourism services and experiences and this is in partnership with the relevant ministries.

Other policy interventions and initiatives that are on-going is establishment of national tourism amenities. This initiative involves enhancing tourism infrastructure across all circuits to improve visitor experience, comfort and accessibility, safety, security and overall sector sustainability. We are also enhancing---

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Hon. Cabinet Secretary, since we already have that presentation, I request you to summarise the remainder of the information because Members would want to ask questions.

The Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife (Hon. Rebecca Miano): Yes. The other policies we have are enhanced coastal beach management, capacity building in the tourism sector, strengthening tourism policy, regulatory and governance under the on-going review of the Tourism Bill and the Wildlife Conservation Bill, enhancing safety and security in tourism zones and fostering partnerships and collaborations. These initiatives are structured to ensure that as tourism grows, it uplifts Kenyan lives across all regions and income levels which is the heart of the BETA which the Ministry is implementing. It is my hope that this response will clarify the information that was in this question. We have had very good performance in the tourism sector in Kenya.

Thank you, Madam Temporary Speaker.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Thank you, Hon. Cabinet Secretary. Hon. Senators, I will declare a little interest. Hon. Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Miano was my classmate and roommate at the Parklands campus. You can see how thorough the brief is, though you, Members, will determine if she has adequately answered the questions.

Hon. Korir, you have two supplementary questions to add then the Cabinet Secretary can answer.

Sen. Korir: Thank you very much Madam Temporary Speaker. Allow me to congratulate the Hon. Cabinet Secretary for the elaborate response to the questions that I raised.

Indeed, she is trying her best, though we still have a long way to go. This is because the international arrivals are still at 2.4 million; the fourth one is at 8.9 million and the third one is at 10.2 million. We are still behind compared to the first world countries. However, she has tried her best.

Madam Temporary Speaker, allow me to ask a supplementary question. How is the Ministry working with other agencies to counter the negative international perception about Kenya's safety as a destination? The other issue is whether there is a framework to support MSMEs in the tourism value chain? Thank you.

The Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife (Hon. Rebecca Miano): Thank you, Madam Temporary Speaker and Members. The Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife is working closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government and other relevant ministries, including the foreign missions. We do that to ensure that the narratives that could mislead our visitors are well countered with factual information and data. We are in consultation with missions of the countries where we have seen travel advisories or other information that present our country in a lens that is not correct. This is bearing quite a lot of fruit and a lot has to be done.

Also, the ultimate is enhanced marketing and to showcase the products that Kenya has. Lately, we have also seen increased endorsements and testimonials from the visitors themselves, who come in and give a description of what they found in Kenya. We are also conducting exit interviews from our visitors, and we believe that all these efforts are going to change the narrative.

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We also would like to recognise the effort by His Excellency, who is our tourism ambassador 001. In every international forum where he goes, he has a statement about Kenya and Kenyan tourism products. This has really cemented Kenya's position and the world has noticed what Kenya has to offer. We have the tourism regulated enterprises that are working together with the tour operators and the Kenya Tourism Federation (KTF). All these collaboration and partnership is steadily, but consistently bringing the right narrative that Kenya should have.

In terms of the MSMEs and opportunities, we have a partnership with the Ministry of MSMEs and cooperatives to see how we can support ecotourism, ecologies, establishments that are startups, and that is helping. The other support is classification and accreditation of the smaller hotels and establishments so that we can give them the validity to welcome international visitors. We have tourism regulated enterprises which recognise MSMEs in the ninth schedule, such as curio dealers, local boat operators, home stays, among other stays.

If you look at the manifesto that the government is implementing, the Broad-Based Government, there is an undertaking to support at the BETA, such as the startups. In terms of access to financing, we have organisations like the Kenya Development Corporation (KDC) that offers affordable and accessible financing for startups. So, this space is one of our focus areas, so that nobody is left behind.

I thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Hon. Senators, now we move to questions by Senators. Please, remember the rules, so that everybody can have a chance. One question per Senator. Go straight to the question so that everybody gets a chance. Sen. Osotsi, please proceed.

Sen. Osotsi: Thank you, Madam Temporary Speaker. I must acknowledge that was a very comprehensive response. However, in the strategies, I did not see a strategy around how to leverage our various diplomatic missions for the purpose of promoting tourism. I have had an opportunity---

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): The question, Sen. Osotsi. Do not be tempted to go that way.

Sen. Osotsi: It is coming. I had an opportunity to visit a number of very strategic embassies and I was disappointed that nothing happens in those embassies in relation to promotion of tourism. My question to the CS is; what arrangement is there between her ministry and the ministry of foreign relations on the matter of promotion of tourism in this country?

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Two more questions for the CS to answer and then we take another final set.

Sen. Miraj, please proceed.

Sen. Miraj: Asante Bi. Spika wa Muda. Kwanza, ningependa kumpongeza Waziri kwa kazi nzuri ambayo anaifanya. Lakini pia ningependa kuuendeleza mjadala ambao tulikuwa nao kule Mombasa wakati tulikuwa tunapokea ile meli ya watalii. Kulikuwa na hitilafu ya malipo ya wageni wanapokuja. Wageni wengi walikuwa wanabaki katika meli. Walishindwa kushuka na kutumia pesa waliokua nazo. Je, kama Wizara, mmefikia wapi kuona ya kwamba wageni wote ambao wanawasili na zile meli za kitalii wanaweza kushuka bila vikwazo ili tuweze kuzipata zile pesa? Asante.

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The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Sen. Oketch, please proceed.

Sen. Oketch Gicheru: Madam Temporary Speaker, I have always noted that whenever the Cabinet Secretary comes here - and I note this with serious concern - that successive ministries of tourism have over the years not budgeted for investments in tourism in the western Kenya region. The western would be Nyanza and the traditional western counties as we know them. Even in the presentation that has been given here, despite it being in depth as we have heard, I did not hear of any investment targeted towards this area.

Therefore, my question is, how has this particular Ministry included, in its development budget funds for western region, tourism and particularly looking at areas such as Lake Victoria in general where there is serious maritime opportunity, Ruma National Park in Homa Bay, Mt. Elgon in Bungoma County, Webuye Falls and even where I come from in Migori County, Thimlich Ohinga. What are the strategies and is there a proper coordination of the investment funds with county governments, so that as Senators, we can track and trail that kind of investment to boost tourism in that area?

Thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): CS, you may answer those then we take the next ones.

The Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife (Hon. Rebecca Miano): Thank you, Madam Temporary Speaker and Members. It is true that our diplomatic missions in various countries are the front line or point of access into those countries. Whereas we have trade attachees, we are proposing to have tourism attachees to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

We are, however, cooperating with Kenyan missions in scouting for opportunities to participate in tourism expos in those countries to showcase Kenyan tourism products, negotiate bilateral air service agreements and even MoUs in tourism promotion in those particular countries. We have various forums like the World Trade Market that is held in London every year. We work together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the mission in the UK to participate and we are already planning for that. Berlin is another one and many others.

We have also proposed a framework that we have sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of closer collaboration, and that also includes using online platforms and a digital tool that we are coming up with called *Kuza Utalii*, where missions can then utilise that to market our country. So, we will continue working closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and our missions abroad to ensure effective marketing for our country.

The next question is about the cruise tourism. When we welcomed the cruise ships earlier this year, several challenges were identified that stopped visitors disembarking from the vessels and getting into Mombasa and other areas. The main one was the requirement to apply for an Electronic Travel Authorisation (eTA) individually on arrival.

His Excellency the President gave us a directive to work with cruise lines and the Directorate of Immigration Services (DIS) to utilise the information already available and the manifest, so that by the time they arrive, their immigration documents and eTAs have been processed. That will enable them to have already planned tourism circuits the whole day.

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Mheshimiwa tumefanya mengi kutatua changamoto hiyo ambayo tulielezwa kuihusu siku hiyo. Rais alituamuru tuhakikishe kwamba hayo yametatuliwa.

Nina furaha kukujulisha kuwa kupitia DIS, mambo hayo yametatuliwa. Kuanzia mwezi wa kumi hadi mwezi wa tatu ambapo ni wakati wa kuja kwa meli na *cruise ship*, tunatarajia kupata wageni wengi kutoka kwenye meli kwenda mjini na kufanya safari zingine kama vile kuzuru Tsavo na sehemu zingine.

The next question was on the Western Kenya Tourism Circuit. Last year in 2024, especially on 27th September, which was World Tourism Day (WTD), we unveiled nine tourism circuits across the country, that included the Western Kenya Tourism Circuit. We are working together with the county governments, because of the devolved functions, to map out tourism attraction centres per circuit, so as to develop and market them at the national level using the Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) and other facilities that we have.

In terms of the Western Kenya Tourism Circuit, we have very unique products. Last year, we spent a whole week at the Western Kenya Tourism Circuit. That was towards the end of September. We showed the country and the world what is found there.

In August this year, we spent two full days at Ruma National Park and the wider Nyanza region. I would like to say that there is still a lot to be done. However, we need very close collaboration with the counties and other Ministries to continue packaging the Western Kenya Tourism Circuit properly. That is part of our circuits which we will not leave behind.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Hon. Cabinet Secretary, when answering the other questions, please, note that I took an interest in what Sen. Oketch raised. He asked how much budget your Ministry has put aside for the Western Kenya Tourism Circuit. You will answer that question when answering others.

Let us have the next set of questions, beginning with Sen. Cherarkey.

Sen. Cherarkey: Madam Temporary Speaker, mine is a straightforward question. Is there a policy by the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife on the use of sportsmen and sportswomen? For example, on Arsenal FC jerseys, it is written “Visit Rwanda.” When our athletes were running in Tokyo, there was no indication that people should visit Kenya. What is the partnership or is there a policy in place?

I yield, Madam Temporary Speaker.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Next is Sen. Faki.

Sen. Faki: Madam Temporary Speaker, first, I wish to commend the Cabinet Secretary for elaborate responses she has given. I also commend her because of resumption of some international flights to Mombasa such as Turkish Airlines, Rwanda Air and Uganda Airlines.

Going forward, we expect to have British Airways and KLM on the queue. My question is with regard to Mama Ngina Waterfront Park. During your last visit to this Chamber, you indicated that plans were underway to hand over Mama Ngina Waterfront Park to the County Government of Mombasa. How far have you gone with that? It is a big problem for the people of Mombasa because whenever they want to host their events, they have to run to the Ministry for permission before using Mama Ngina Waterfront Park, yet it belongs to the County Government of Mombasa.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Proceed, Sen. Kisang.

Sen. Kisang: Madam Temporary Speaker, I also join my colleagues in commending the Cabinet Secretary for elaborate answers. However, it appears that they focus more on tourism and neglect wildlife. The reason I am saying this is because the people of Elgeyo-Marakwet County along Kerio Valley are suffering because of elephants that have destroyed our mangoes and orange trees. It appears there is no budget that has been allocated to Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) for compensation.

I would like to find out from the Cabinet Secretary what plans they have in place to ensure that the people of Elgeyo-Marakwet County are compensated because elephants have destroyed their crops. We are talking about the Government's BETA, yet we do not assist those at the bottom. What plans do you have to ensure that Rimoi National Reserve is fenced by the national Government in conjunction with the County Government of Elgeyo-Marakwet, otherwise, the elephants might be used as food?

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Proceed, Sen. Mandago.

Sen. Mandago: Madam Temporary Speaker, I am wondering whether there is shortage of meat in Elgeyo-Marakwet. We know very well that there are tasty goats in Baringo.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Sen. Mandago, would you kindly ask your question?

Sen. Mandago: Madam Temporary Speaker, my question to the Cabinet Secretary is about sports tourism. I can see sports tourism is part of the strategies to expand the menu in tourism. What is the Ministry doing for sports tourism particularly athletics because that is what can open up Elgeyo-Marakwet, Nandi, Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia counties?

As they do that, Madam Temporary Speaker---

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): It is only one question please.

Sen. Mandago: I am still continuing with the question because it is long.

In 2018/2019, there was a provision in the budget of the Ministry for feasibility study for cable cars from Iten to Kabarnet with a possibility of being extended to Isiolo. I would like to know from the Cabinet Secretary whether that is still in plan.

In relation to the issue of elephants, I would like to know what will happen to a mother who was killed by elephants in Ganze---

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Sen. Mandago, I have indulged you in two questions. Cabinet Secretary, you will answer two questions only; the one on cable cars and the other one on sports tourism.

I am told Sen. Faki will ask a question on behalf of Sen. Madzayo.

Sen. Faki: Asante, Bi. Spika wa Muda, kwa kunipa fursa ya kuuliza swali kwa niaba ya Sen. Madzayo.

Mhe. Waziri, kumekuwa na uharibifu wa ndovu katika maeneo ya Ganze katika Kaunti ya Kilifi. Jana, kuna mtu aliyekanyagwa na ndovu kisha akafariki saa nane. Uharibifu huo umeongezeka na sasa wakaazi wa huko wako tayari kuchukua mishale na mikuki na kuingia msituni.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Sen. Faki, please, ask the question.

Sen. Faki: Je, Wizara imechukua hatua gani kukabiliana na kero la ndovu wanaoharibu mimea na ambao sasa wameanza kuua wananchi katika eneo la Ganze?

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Finally, Sen. Consolata then the Cabinet Secretary will answer.

Sen. Consolata Wakwabubi: Madam Temporary Speaker, my concern is about two recipes for tourism development. That is about peace and security diplomacy as key recipes for tourism and wildlife development. I would like the Hon. Cabinet Secretary to tell us what the ministry has put in place to secure and protect Kenya's territorial integrity, especially along our borders, because those are the avenues through which most tourists enter our country.

On the same wavelength, I come from Bungoma County, where we have---

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Sen. Consolata, you are guided by the rules. It is one question. Have you asked the question?

Sen. Consolata Wakwabubi: Madam Temporary Speaker, I am guided, although it was the same.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): No, just one question. That is the rule.

Sen. Consolata Wakwabubi: Thank you, Madam Temporary Speaker. I submit.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Thank you, Senator.

Hon. Cabinet Secretary, you have under seven minutes to answer all those questions.

The Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife (Hon. Rebecca Miano): Temporary Speaker and hon. Members, in terms of the budget, I do not have the exact figures today, but I would be willing to look at that.

The next question---

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Could you submit that budget in the next two weeks?

The Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife (Hon. Rebecca Miano): Yes, Madam Temporary Speaker.

The next question was on the partnership we have with sportsmen and sportswomen to promote tourism. Currently, we have arrangements with the sportsmen and sportswomen to be Kenya's tourism ambassadors. Some of them include Eliud Kipchoge, Faith Kipyegon and others. We are also supporting them when they go to those events. We go behind the Magical Kenya brand, including financial support. We have seen that sports tourism is one of the next frontiers in Kenya's tourism.

In that regard, we want to promote actively a high-altitude training center to the international tourists, encouraging them to come and interact with our athletes, talk to them, eat with them, touch them and that interaction is gaining traction. We will work together with the Ministry of Sports to ensure that the product is well developed.

I was asked about the partnership that we have seen in other countries. On those partnerships, we have done our research and have information; they are quite costly. Some of the partnership costs up to Kshs4 billion annually. We are at this stage evaluating which ones can have the highest impact, with the best affordability. We have a lot of expressions of interest. Together with the relevant Ministry and other Government authorities, we are careful, trying to see what will be best for Kenya.

On Mama Ngina Water Front Park, consultations are still ongoing between the county government and the national Government. We shall ensure that we hasten the discussions. We were there over the weekend. We need to develop Mama Ngina

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Waterfront Park for functions and tourism activities. It is a very premium location, but we will hasten the consultations and the action plan that needs to follow. I undertake to do that.

In terms of human-wildlife conflict, I want to assure the hon. Senator that we have not neglected the wildlife segment. It is one of our priorities. The Ministry receives about Kshs950 million annually since His Excellency got into office. He has prioritised the human-wildlife conflict issues, both in terms of mitigation and compensation. We will be glad to have specific discussions with Elgeyo-Marakwet.

On Rimo National Reserve, we are working with the county government to address the human-wildlife conflict. We have a directive about the fencing and there are discussions ongoing with the National Treasury in order to provide a budget. Indeed, we are in touch with the county government that has invited us. At the earliest opportunity, we shall be visiting Elgeyo Marakwet.

On all these issues, we have the review of the Wildlife Conservation Bill that is ongoing so that we streamline these human-wildlife conflict issues, including the compensation, public awareness and education. Employment of more rangers has also happened. For the first time in 10 years, last year we had a pass-out parade of 1,270 rangers, which was historic because that had lagged for 10 years.

We also have other projects like fencing in the hotspots, and that takes me right straight to the question about the human-wildlife conflict in Kilifi County. We were recently in Kilifi together with all the leaders to discuss the matters of human-wildlife conflict. His Excellency the President has also guided us and we are working on how to fence that area.

We know that, particularly, the population of elephants has increased, and therefore, the conflict has increased, but we are taking all measures to manage the conflict that has ensued.

Thank you, Madam Temporary Speaker.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Hon. Senators----

(Sen. Consolata Wakwabubi spoke off record)

Which question? The cable car?

Sen. Consolata, what was your question? Just say which one it was so that it can be answered.

Hon. Cabinet Secretary, you may proceed.

Sen. Consolata Wakwabubi: Madam Temporary Speaker, it was on territorial integrity, the safeguards put in place by the Ministry.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Hon. Cabinet Secretary, you can proceed and respond to the two questions.

The Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife (Hon. Rebecca Miano): Madam Temporary Speaker, I beg your pardon. The standards for the cable car are yet to be finalised by the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KeBS). We are following that in consultation with other stakeholders. I will go back and find out where the process has reached. It is one of those things that can really promote tourism.

On territorial security, we are in consultation with the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Interior and National Administration, together with the Tourism Police Unit. We have been having regular consultation, realising that security is one of the requirements for tourism. Every tourist who leaves their country to travel to another always looks at the security issues. Therefore, that is on our highest radar in consultation with all the relevant authorities.

Thank you, Madam Temporary Speaker.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Thank you, Hon. Cabinet Secretary, for answering all the questions that were put before you. We can now release you and move on.

*[The Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife
(Hon. Rebecca Miano) was ushered out of the Chamber]*

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Hon. Senators, we will defer Orders 8, 9 and 10 because the movers are not here.

MOTION

NOTING OF REPORT OF THE PARLIAMENTARIANS DIALOGUE AT THE AFRICA CLIMATE SUMMIT, 2023

THAT, the Senate notes the Report of the Proceedings of the Parliamentarians' Dialogue at the Africa Climate Summit, 2023 held in the National Assembly Chamber, Parliament Buildings, Nairobi, on 3rd – 6th September, 2023, laid on the Table of the Senate on Wednesday, 2nd October, 2024.

(Motion deferred)

MOTION

NOTING OF REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF FP-ICGLR HELD IN DRC

THAT, the Senate notes the Report of the consultative meeting of the Executive Committee of the Forum of Parliaments of the Member States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FP-ICGLR) held in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) from 22nd to 24th January, 2025, laid on the Table of the Senate on Tuesday, 23rd September, 2025.

(Motion deferred)

MOTION**ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL TEACHING AND
REFERRAL HOSPITALS IN KENYA**

THAT, AWARE THAT Article 43 (1) (a) of the Constitution of Kenya provides that every person has the right to the highest attainable standard of health, including reproductive health care;

NOTING THAT in Kenya, we have five National Teaching and Referral hospitals with Kenyatta University Research and Teaching Hospital in Kiambu County and Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital in Eldoret, Uasin Gishu County being the only ones outside Nairobi County;

CONCERNED THAT the bed capacity, medical equipment and human capital in these National Teaching and Referral hospitals are not sufficient to absorb all the patients seeking specialized treatment;

FURTHER CONCERNED THAT many Kenyans with critical health conditions travel long distances in order to access specialized services in Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital in Eldoret or Nairobi where the other four National Teaching and Referral hospitals are located, leading to high cost of travel, augmented disease and in some cases deaths along the way;

NOW THEREFORE, the Senate urges-

- (1) The Ministry of Health to –
 - (i) Establish National Teaching and Referral hospitals in the Coast, Eastern, North Eastern, Nyanza and Western regions; and
 - (ii) fully equip the National Teaching and Referral Hospitals with modern medical equipment, medical supplies and personnel; and
- (2) The County Governments to allocate more funds to their respective health docket to adequately facilitate their County Level 5 and Level 6 hospitals in order to enhance provision of critical health services to reduce the demand for such services from the National Teaching and Referral Hospitals.

(Motion deferred)

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Next Order, please.

MOTION**WELFARE OF INTERNS WORKING UNDER
THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

Sen. Cherarkey: Thank you, Madam Temporary Speaker. I beg to move-

THAT, AWARE THAT, the Public Service Commission (PSC) has provided internship opportunity to many youths in various Government Departments and Agencies for a period not exceeding one year pursuant to

Guidelines on Management of the Public Service Internship Programme of October, 2019;

APPRECIATING THAT, since its inception, the internship programme in Kenya has been instrumental in providing practical experience to graduates, enhanced employability, offered networking opportunities and has on a number of occasions led to full-time jobs to graduates;

CONCERNED THAT, internship opportunities are limited in number, skewed in distribution across Government Departments and Agencies, lack clear pathway to permanent employment, have inadequate opportunities for skill development due to the short duration that they are offered and that the stipend offered to PSC interns is insufficient with an average stipend ranging from Ksh. 15,000 to Ksh. 30,000 per month which is not sustainable especially to interns living in major cities like Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu where the cost of living is too high;

Madam Temporary Speaker, as I move the Motion, now, therefore, we should increase the stipend offered to this---

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Sen. Cherarkey, you are not discussing, you are reading the Motion as is. Please, read it as is.

Sen. Cherarkey: My reading culture is different, Madam Temporary Speaker. Your Clerks-at-the-Table do not understand me. I am reading everything that is here. Okay, let me read. I think the Kenyan style is that you must look at it as you read. Let me do so.

NOW THEREFORE, the Senate resolves that the Cabinet Secretary for Public Service and Human Capital Development in consultation with the Public Service Commission reviews the Guidelines to the Public Service Internship Programme of October, 2019 with a view to: -

(1) Increase the stipend offered to interns to cushion them against the high cost of living; and

(2) Put in place mechanisms to promote and reward innovation by interns.

Madam Temporary Speaker, let me make a few comments on this. Article 55 of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 has specifically dealt with the youth issue. One year ago, we had a youth revolution and uprising of Generation Z. One of their concerns was opportunities, both employment and any other opportunity that would make life bearable for them, considering that most of them have gone to school. In fact, what the young people are advocating for is already in our Constitution. It is for us to implement it.

In Article 55, and I am pleased that you are a learned senior in this profession, one of the roles of the Government is to provide access to relevant education and training, which is being done. We had that discussion today, the entire morning. Secondly, they must have opportunities to associate, be represented in political, social, economic and other spheres of life. Thirdly, they should have access to employment. Finally, they should be protected from harmful cultural practises and exploitation.

Therefore, the Constitution has provided what we should do for the young people. One of them provide access to employment. However, we cannot hire all of them due to population explosion. We are approaching a population of 55 million people. Yesterday, I mentioned something about the Japanese two-child policy. Many people were bashing

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me. I said if you give birth to two children, the Government should take care of your two children. However, if you add the third and the fourth one, you should take care of them yourself. This would ensure we have quality life. You can see how Japanese have operated. I know that as Africans, our wealth is in children. The more children you have, the more your wealth, which is not the situation now. That is why we are straining most of education and health facilities.

My proposal is that, since we have population explosion in this country, let us adopt the Japanese two-child policy. The Government takes care of your two children. If you add the third and the fourth, and many others, then you take care of your children. It boils down to the opportunities that we have in this country.

ADJOURNMENT

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Mumma): Hon. Senators, it is now 1.00 p.m., time to adjourn the Senate. Sen. Cherarkey will have 15 minutes to continue moving the Motion when scheduled next in the Order Paper.

The Senate, therefore, stands adjourned until Wednesday, 1st October, 2025, at 2.30 p.m.

The Senate rose at 1.00 p.m.