



The SENATE

Safeguarding Devolution

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Freedom for County Assemblies, at last

The President assents to the Bill giving County Assemblies financial autonomy as MCAs say the law frees them from dependency on the county executives.



President William Ruto signs into law the County Public Finance Management (Amendment) Bill, 2023 at Homa Bay State Lodge. The Senate Clerk Jeremiah Nyegenye looks on.



President Ruto is joined by political leaders from the Senate, County Assemblies and the Homa Bay County Executive after he signed the Bill into law.

County Assemblies can now enjoy financial freedom following the decision by President William Ruto to sign into law the County Public Finance Management (Amendment) Bill, 2023.

Both Houses of Parliament has unanimously endorsed the Bill, giving the Members of the County Assemblies (MCAs) the much-required space to carry out their mandate as provided for in the Constitution.

The President assented to the Bill, which establishes a robust framework for institutionalising county assemblies' financial independence, during a ceremony at the newly opened State Lodge in Homa Bay County on Wednesday.

The setting of the ceremony couldn't be apt; coming in the midst of grandeur of the 2025 Devolution Conference that took place in the County.

The President also signed into law the County Allocation of Revenue Bill, 2025, which sets the mechanisms on how the devolved units will receive the

Sh415 billion allocated to them in equitable share

The President officially opened the Conference on the same day.

Speaker Amason Kingi hailed the coming into force of the law noting that the Senate continues to provide a platform for county voices to be heard at the national stage.

He said this ensures that development is not dictated from Nairobi, but from every corner of the republic.

"Let it be clear: without the Senate, devolution would be a shell; with the Senate, it has become a shield for the aspirations of all Kenyans," he said, when he addressed the Conference, shortly after the President opened signed the Bill.

"The Senate has championed legislation that have empowered counties, enabling them to operate efficiently," he noted, citing the County Public Finance Laws (Amendment) Act.

"It is a key legislation that guarantees financial autonomy to our County Assemblies and further anchors their role

as bastions of oversight, legislation and representation at the county level. It has finally become a reality, after the Presidential assent."

Mr Seth Kamanza, the chair of the County Assemblies Forum (CAF) described the coming into force of the law as a historic moment for the County Assemblies.

While expressing gratitude to Parliament and the President, he said the new law will liberate MCAs from the control of the county executives, assuring those present that ward representatives will execute their mandate without fear or favour.

"This law will empower us to do our role without fear or favour," said Mr Kamanza, who is also the Speaker of Kwale County Assembly.

The new law creates the County Assembly Fund, which will serve as the repository for all finances channelled to the assemblies. Sources for this fund include allocations from the County Revenue Fund as appropriated by the assembly, as

well as grants, gifts, donations, bequests, earnings from investments, fees, levies, and any other monies accruing to the assembly.

The Clerk of the County Assembly is designated as the fund's administrator and his key mandate will be to ensure that monies are used exclusively for their intended purposes and are properly retained.

The fund may be used for administrative expenses, acquisition and maintenance of buildings and assets and other lawful purposes. Any unused funds at the close of a financial year will not lapse but will instead be carried forward, allowing assemblies to plan without the pressure of year-end spending sprees.

The Clerk is authorised to approve staff expenditures in line with established guidelines.

This formal assent by the President represents a major stride for devolution and legislative independence.

By allowing assemblies to access funds directly from the National Treas-

sure, the reforms empower them to conduct their operations and oversight responsibilities without reliance on county executives.

County assemblies will no longer have to borrow from governors for even minor expenses, freeing them from the days when attending a meeting meant queuing for petty cash at the governor's

office.

Senator Kathuri Murungi, the sponsor of the Bill, cautiously expressed satisfaction with the enactment of the Bill, opting to instead, throw the gauntlet at the feet of the County Assemblies who must now assume their full oversight responsibilities.

He argued law alone is not a silver

bullet.

"This law empowers the MCAs to do their oversight work," he said in an interview with the Senate Weekly.

"We have given our tournament to the County Assemblies. The money going to the counties should be well spent. We want to see minimal audit queries from the Office of the Auditor General. We

want to see that the Sh415 billion allocated to counties is well spent because County Assemblies can make their own decisions and plan for themselves. What we expect is that devolution should really be actualised. If there is any other law that we need, we will be able to do it."

We have strengthened MCAs oversight role – Senator Murungi

Senator Kathuri Murungi was the sponsor of the County Public Finance Management Bill which has since been signed into law, essentially granting County Assemblies the long overdue financial autonomy. In this interview with the Senate Weekly, Senator Murungi, who is also the Deputy Speaker, explains the good things that the new law brings forth.



Senator Kathuri Murungi

Question: How important is this new law?

The good thing about this law is that it has strengthened the oversight responsibility of the county assemblies. It is their mandate and can dictate how they will work without interference from any quarter. For example, before the enactment of the Parliamentary Service Commission Act, Parliament was run by the Executive. That is exactly what has been happening in the County Assemblies for the last 12 years. In the case of Parliament, during those days, if an MP needed anything, either fuel, a sitting of the committee etc, all were approved by the Executive. This is how the county assemblies have suffered for the 12 years of devolution.

We are in the third cycle of devolution. What will be happening is that the County Assemblies will not go kneeling down to the governors to get approval for any expenditure. The Assemblies will be able to plan their annual activities without interference and without any misgivings and without being coerced by the

governors.

As it happens in the National Assembly and the Senate, money is appropriated by the National Treasury to Parliament. Parliament through the Committee on Budget and Appropriations of the National Assembly divides the money between the two Houses. The Clerk of the Senate is in charge of the money given to the Senate. When the money comes to the Senate, all the committees agree on how much each should receive. The committees know their budget every financial year. When they manage their oversight work and their programmes, it is seamless and they are able to do their work without any problem.

Q: Does this law address the main challenges that counties have faced as they implement devolution?

A: There is no law which is ideal. There is no Constitution which is ideal. If you start implementing the Constitution, as



we did the 2010 Constitution, there are so many things that emerge along the way. We are now realising that our Constitution was not done properly.

The Constitution of the United States of America, has been amended almost 200 times, yet the country is a true democracy. Things have changed since 2010 when we enacted our Constitution. From 2001 up to 2010, the situation in the country has changed dramatically and is different from what is happening today. The challenges we have today, including technology, were different from what we enacted in the law that time.

Amendments of the Constitution, the Acts of Parliament, Acts of the Assemblies, we keep modifying depending on the situation that we have.

Q: With this law in place, what do you expect from County Assemblies?

A: We have given our tournament to the county assemblies. The money going to the counties should be well spent. We want to see minimal audit queries from the Office of the Auditor General because the county assemblies have been empowered to do the oversight. We want to see that the Sh415 billion allocated to counties is well spent because County Assemblies can make their own decisions and plan for themselves. What we expect is that devolution should really be actualised. If there is any other law that we need, we will be able to do it.

Q: Will this law help tame corruption in counties?

A: Once the money is allocated to counties and then spent, the only entity which can help us is the Office of the Auditor General. The Office audits the money that has been sent to the public agencies, including counties. Previously we had challenges because the Auditor General was doing the reports and then the reports could lie in Parliament for some years. But now from this financial year, examinations of all the audited books of public entities are for that active financial year. That is where the game-changer is. A court ruled Parliament cannot examine reports of financial statements beyond that financial year. The governor who has been given money in this financial year, 2024/25, their reports will be out in the next two months. Now they can answer their queries when they are in office. Because previously they usually left office like five years before accounting for their actions. We are dealing with active years and we are happy, personally I am happy that every governor will be coming to answer all the queries while in office. So that if there is anything that you have done, misappropriated, there is no time for you to run up and down trying to clear your mess. Now that we have active audits we will see so many cases and so many people being prosecuted. If there is any misappropriation, you will be prosecuted. I hope the recently enacted Conflict of Interest Act will be implemented so that EACC can learn how the public resources are spent.

Senator Mumma view on the quality of Health Service Delivery



Senator Catherine Mumma and other lawmakers join the Deputy President Kithure Kindiki in the closing ceremony of the Devolution Conference.

Senator Catherine Mumma has called on leaders to set aside their political differences and work together to improve the delivery of health services across the country.

The lawmaker likened the provision of effective and efficient healthcare to a Godly act that saves human lives even as she highlighted the Senate's role in supporting health services, pointing to a recent success: the Senate's push to increase the county equitable share from Sh387 billion to Sh415 billion in the 2025/26 financial year. "The Senate has been at the forefront in pushing for the release of functions and funds from the national government as well as for the reduction of wasteful expenditure in counties," said the legislator. She spoke on the sidelines of the 9th Devolution

Conference that ended in Homa Bay last week.

She pledged to the over 11,000 delegates who attended the conference that the Senate would continue to advocate for more funds to counties and also oversee how the resources are managed to ensure Kenyans get value for their money.

The Senator Mumma expressed frustration with the quality of health services in counties which she noted remain in subpar conditions despite the increase in funding, wondering aloud why the quality of care hadn't improved, given the Senate's efforts.

She proposed that health services should be classified as a development expenditure.

"The Senate pushes for more re-



Senator Mumma with National Treasury CS John Mbadi at the Devolution Conference.

sources to counties each financial year. However, the services in the health facilities remain below par. We need to audit health facilities to assess their accountability and implementation of the Public Finance Management Act."

She said there is a need to start discussing the possibility of categorising expenditure on specialised health workers like doctors and nurses as development expenditure, as they are at the core of primary service delivery.

This reclassification would allow the Senate to more easily audit health facilities, ensuring accountability and proper implementation of the Public Finance Management Act.

She also suggested that the salaries of specialised health workers, such as doc-

tors and nurses, be considered a development expenditure, as they are crucial for primary healthcare delivery.

Besides, she advocated for greater transparency and accountability from the political class, stressing the importance of a rights-based approach to service delivery even as she reiterated the need for more funds, the unbundling of functions and funds from the national government, and a reduction in wasteful spending at the county level.

Senator Mumma made the remarks during a side event at the Devolution Conference titled, "Financing people-centred health and the role of public finance management actors and systems in facilitating delivery of health in devolved units."

Senate oversight mandate is not negotiable, Senator Oketch

Senator Eddy Oketch has said the Senate oversight mandate is not a matter of negotiation as it is derived from the constitution.

Speaking during the final panel of the 2025 Devolution Conference in Homa Bay County, the legislator declared the authority of the Senate cannot be altered or diluted by political whims or administrative preferences, citing the Supreme Court decision which reaffirmed the Senate's constitutional power to oversee governors and county executives.

"The role of the Senate cannot be prescribed by anyone other than the Constitution and the court of law," Senator Oketch stated, underscoring the judiciary's critical role in safeguarding devolution and protecting institutional independence.

The lawmaker pledged that the Senate will remain steadfast in advocating for



Senator Eddy Oketch

increased county allocations to bolster service delivery for the people, noting that equitable resource distribution is



Senator Oketch and other participants during one of the panel discussions at the conference.

central to addressing development disparities and ensuring that devolution achieves its intended objectives.

"We will fight for more money for counties, but in the same breath, we will continue to hold governors accountable to the optimal level," he declared, adding that accountability and transparency

are non-negotiable pillars of effective governance.

Senator Oketch also cautioned against viewing devolution solely as a funding mechanism, stressing that its success lies in prudent management of resources, inclusive development planning, and strict adherence to constitutional principles.

Bunge FC dominates Governors in a soccer duel

Bunge FC emerged the overall winner of the Devolution Cup after they thrashed Council of Governors in a thrilling match played at Tom Mboya University ground in Homa

Bay County.

The fixture was part of the dress rehearsal for the 2025 Devolution Conference which ended on Friday.

The lawmakers showed intent from the outset, demonstrating energy, slick

passing, relentless movement and an attacking ruthlessness that ruffled the county bosses. The breakthrough for Bunge FC came early, signalling what was to follow, prowess in pace, positioning and precision. By the interval, the

Mombasa Senator and Bunge FC captain, Mohamed Faki had marshalled his squad to a commanding 3–0 lead. Each goal was met with roars from the stands and celebratory embraces from the jubilant MPs and staff.



1. Senator Mohamed Faki, Bunge FC Captain, shakes hands with Governor Fernandes Barasa, the captain of Council of Governors football team.
2. Senator Samson Cherarkey and Governor Barasa
3. Bunge FC team pose for a picture before the match.
4. Senator Faki, the Bunge FC captain, in action.
5. Hon Omboko Milemba in action.
6. Senator Chararkey joins teammate in celebrating the goals.



1. Bunge FC captain Mohamed Faki celebrates the victory after the match.
2. Senator Faki, Senator Cherarkey and Senator Eddy Oketch pose the picture with an official from Kenya Commercial Bank, one of the sponsors of Conference.
3. Part of the Bunge FC cheering squad in Homa Bay.
4. Senator Mohamed Faki is congratulated by Governor Irungu Kangata (left) and Governor Ochilo Ayacko after the match. The two Governors are also Senators.
5. Senator Faki receives the trophy from Governor Ahmed Abdilahi, the chairperson of the Council of Governors.
6. Bunge FC players savour the victory with the trophy.

Parliament hosts International Youth Day

Parliament buzzed with youthful energy on August 12 as it hosted over 100 young leaders for the annual International Youth Day celebration.

This year's event, dubbed the "Bunge Youth Dialogue," was organised by the Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association (KYPA) as part of their Youth Training Programme on Parliamentary Experience. The goal was to provide the next generation of leaders with a hands-on look at the inner workings of the legislature.

The participants were given practical exposure to parliamentary procedures, debates, and legislative processes, getting a chance to see how laws are made firsthand.

In his State of the Youth Address, Hon Gitonga Mukunji, the Chair of KYPA, who led the day's activities, delivered a message about the vital role young people play in the country.

"The youth are not only the leaders of tomorrow but are also the innovators, workforce, voters, and conversation shapers of today," he declared. His words highlighted the need to involve young people in all levels of decision-making.

The event, a collaboration between Parliament, Mzalendo Trust, The Power of Dialogue Consortium, and Faraja Africa Foundation, brought together youth representatives with a mission to amplify young voices and boost political participation ahead of the upcoming elections.

The dialogue also underscored the importance of integrating youth perspectives into national governance and policy-making.

Several young Members of Parliament, including Hon Suleka Harun, Hon Charles Nguna, and Senator Crystal Asige and Hezena Lemaletian, were present to mentor the participants and engage in the dialogue.

Other young leaders from the Senate and County Assemblies also attended, demonstrating a cross-section of emerging political talent committed to youth empowerment.

As the government also marks International Youth Day with a separate celebration at Masinde Muliro University, Bunge Youth Dialogue served as a powerful reminder that creating inclusive spaces for young people in democracy is not just a good idea—it's a necessity for the future of the nation.



1. Senator Crystal Asige witnesses the swearing in of Mr Yusuf Mugane as the Deputy Speaker of the Youth Parliament. Looking on from left is Mr Anthony Buluma (CEO -KYPA), Hon Gitonga Mukunji, and Mr Daniel Chania, the Deputy Director, Legislative and Procedural Services in the Senate.
2. Mr Ken Babu, the elected Speaker of the youth Parliament consults with Mr Daniel Chania on a procedural issue during the election.
3. Mr Javan Loriko carries the mace to the Chamber followed closely by Youth Parliament Speaker Hon Ken Babu
4. From left, Ms Linda Chavera, Mr Chania, Ms Caroline Cherop, all Parliamentary Officers and Mr Elijah Wangari -Youth Representative, tally the votes during the Youth Parliamentary elections.
5. Members of the Youth Parliament follow the plenary proceedings at the Senate Chamber.



1. Senator George Mbugua and Senator Mohamed Abbas follow proceedings at the Devolution Conference.
2. Speaker Amason Kingi (right), Deputy Speaker Kathuri Murungi and Senator Moses Kajwang.
3. Senator Betty Montent.
4. Senator Mohamed Faki, Senator Boni Khalwale and Senator Samson Cherarkey.
5. Senator Hamida Kibwana and Senator Tabitha Mutinda (right).
6. Senator Julius Murgor and Speaker Kingi.



1. Senator Moses Kajwang shares a light moment with Senator Eddy Oketch on the first day of the Conference.
2. Senator Oketch and Speaker Amason Kingi.
3. Senator Samson Cherarkey shares a joke with Senator Boni Khalwale watched on by Senator Tabitha Mutinda.
4. Senator Julius Murgor shakes hands with Senator Boni Khalwale as Senator Cherarkey and Senator Mutinda look on.
5. Minority Leader Stewart Madzayo (right) in a discussion with Senator Moses Kajwang and Senator Cherarkey.
6. Deputy President Kithure Kindiki speaks to a delegate as Senator Jackson Mandago looks on.



1. Senator Jackson Mandago, Senator Moses Kajwang and Senator Eddy Oketch share a light moment with Medical Services PS Ouma Oluga at the Devolution Conference.
2. Senator Kajwang (left), Hon James Nyikal, the chairman of the Health Committee of the National Assembly, with PS Ouma Oluga.
3. Speaker Amason Kingi looks on as President William Ruto speaks during the Devolution Conference in Homa Bay County.
4. Senate Clerk Jeremiah Nyegenye and Senator Beth Syengo arrive at Raila Odinga Stadium, the venue of the 2025 Devolution Conference, in Homa Bay County.
5. Deputy Speaker Kathuri Murungi leads Senators to the Raila Odinga Stadium, the venue of the Conference.



1. Tharaka Nithi Governor Muthomi Njuki with members of the Council of Governors football team after they lost to Bunge FC in Homa Bay County.
2. Senator Julius Murgor poses for a group photo with parliamentary staff led by Mr Samson Sorobit (centre), Chief Serjeants-At-Arms in the Senate, Homa Bay County.
3. Clerk Jeremiah Nyegenye (4th right) and other Parliamentary staff pose with staff of Longhorn Publishers PLC/ LawAfrica at the Senate. The guests were led by Mr Simon Ngigi, the Chief Transformation Officer at the Company.
4. Clerk Jeremiah Nyegenye with Mr Simon Ngigi, the Chief Transformation Officer, who led the Longhorn Publishers PLC/LawAfrica staff in paying the courtesy call at the Clerk's office at Parliament Buildings.
5. Speaker Amason Kingi addresses the 9th Devolution Conference.

Ugatuji utafaulu kwa uwajibikaji, asema Seneta Mungatana

Magavana wanapaswa kuu-kumbatia uwajibikaji na uwazi iwapo ugatuji utatimiza malengo yaliyokusudiwa, amesema Seneta Danson Mungatana.

Akizungumza wakati wa mdahalo kwenye Kongamano la Ugatuji katika Kaunti ya Homa Bay, Seneta huyo alisisitiza kuwa uwazi na utawala bora si chaguo bali ni muhimu kwa maendeleo endelevu katika Kaunti zote 47 za Kenya.

“Serikali zetu za Kaunti zinapaswa kuelewa kuwa ili kuendeleza maendeleo katika Kaunti zote, usimamizi bora na uwajibikaji lazima vikumbatiwe kikamilifu,” Seneta Mungatana aliwambia wajumbe.

Alieleza masikitiko yake kwamba magavana wengi wanaonekana kutaka kukwepa ukaguzi, hali ambayo ameonya kuwa inahujumu utoaji wa huduma kwa umma.

“Magavana huwa na furaha sana na maseneta wanapopigania kuongezwa kwa mgao wa fedha kwa Kaunti,” alibainisha. “Lakini ghafla hubadilika wanapotakiwa na maseneta wao hao kueleza jinsi mabilioni yanayotumwa kwenye Kaunti zao yametumika. Tunapaswa kuwa wakweli na uwazi uwe asilimia mia moja. Magavana lazima wafahamu kuwa fedha zinazotolewa kwa Kaunti ni za umma na hivyo lazima zitumike kwa uangalifu na busara.”

Seneta huyo pia aliwaonya wakuu wa Kaunti dhidi ya kudharau jukumu la mashirika ya haki za binadamu, akiwahimiza badala yake watoe msaada wa dhiti



Seneta Danson Mungatana achangia kwenye mdahalo wakati wa Kongamano la Ugatuji katika Kaunti ya Homa Bay.

kwa mashirika hayo ili kuimarisha uwajibikaji na kuboresha utawala.

“Magavana wengi hawayapendi mashirika ya haki za binadamu,” Mungatana alisema. “Lazima tubadili fikra zetu na mtazamo kuhusu suala hili. Tunapaswa kuwa na bajeti ya kuyaunga mkono mashirika ya haki za binadamu ili yaweze kutekeleza shughuli zao kwa urahisi. Lazima tuyasaidie ili kuhakikisha utoaji wa huduma na utawala bora kwa ujumla.”

Mshiriki mwenzake kwenye mdahalo huo, Mbunge wa Suba Kaskazini Millie Odhiambo, kwa upande wake amewahimiza magavana kutumia fursa inayotolewa na nafasi zao kuzistawisha Kaunti.

“Magavana wana fursa ya kuzitumia nyadhifa zao kubadilisha mwelekeo wa ugatuji, kutoa maji wa wananchi, kuboresha huduma za afya na kwa ujumla kuinua maisha ya Wakenya,” amesema.

Aidha, ametoa wito kwa wananchi wa kawaida kushiriki kikamilifu katika kuwawajibisha viongozi.

“Tunapaswa kuwawajibisha viongozi. Mabunge yote mawili, Seneti na la Kitaifa yanapaswa kuwawajibisha wataendaji. Pia asasi za kijamii zinapaswa kuwawajibisha wale walioaminiwa na raia kuwahudumia,” alisisitiza Mbunge Odhiambo.

Mdahalo huo ambao uliendeshwa

chini ya kaulimbiu Haki za Binadamu na Haki za Kijamii, uliwashirikisha pia Gavana James Orenge wa Kaunti ya Siaya, Mwenyekiti wa Tume ya Kitaifa ya Jinsia na Usawa Rehema Jaldesa, Afisa Mtendaji Mkuu wa shirika la VOCAL Africa Hussein Khalid, Mwenyekiti wa Young Women Leaders Connect Ruth A. Bolo Okul na mwanachama wa Kenya Law Reform Duncan Okello.

Washiriki wa mdahalo huo kwa pamoja walitoa wito wa kuwa na umakini kutoka kwa taasisi za serikali, asasi za kijamii na wakenya wote ili kuhakikisha uwazi, uwajibikaji na utawala bora kama nguzo za maendeleo endelevu.

Wenyeji wa Homa Bay walifurahia Kongamano la Ugatuji

Wenyeji wa Kaunti ya Homa Bay wameeleza furaha ya kuandaliwa kwa Kongamano la Ugatuji kwenye Kaunti hiyo wakifichua kuwa Kongamano hilo limewapa fursa ya kutangamana na viongozi wao na kufahamu zaidi kuhusu Ugatuji.

Wakizungumza nje na ndani ya Ukumbi wa shule ya upili ya Homa Bay ambako kuliandaliwa Kongamano hilo, wenyeji hao walilitaja kuwa fursa nzuri ya kutathmini ufanisi wa Ugatuji na kuweka mikakati ya kuuboresha kwa manufaa yao.

Walisesema Kongamano hilo limewapa nafasi kuelewa changamoto zinazokumba Ugatuji na mbinu za kuzikabili.

“Pale kwenye ukumbi, majadiliano yamezua maswali kadhaa kwetu, tumeelezwa na kushauriwa kwamba tunafaa kuwa kwenye mstari wa mbele kuliza uwajibikaji na uwazi kutoka kwa viongozi tuliowachagua na wafanyakazi wa umma ambao wamepewa nafasi kusimamia shughuli mbali mbali,” alisema



Naibu wa Rais Kithure Kindiki awaongoza viongozi wengine kwa maombi kwenye siku ya mwisho ya Kongamano la Ugatuji kwenye Kaunti ya Homa Bay.

mkazi mmoja.

Aliongeza, “Kitu kikubwa kinacholeta shida sana hapa Kenya mara kwa mara huwa ni pesa, tumeshauriwa tufuatilie kabisa matumizi ya pesa za serikali, miradi inayojengwa na serikali na utoaji wa huduma kwa wananchi.”

Waliitumia fursa hiyo kuwaomba Maseneta na Waakilishi Wadi kuangazia pakubwa utendakazi wa serikali za Kaunti ili kuafiki matunda ya Ugatuji.

Hata hivyo waliusifia ufanisi waliosema umeshuhudiwa tangu kuanza kufanya

kazi kwa Ugatuji wakisema ipo miradi kadhaa ambayo wameishuhudia nyanjani wakiiomba serikali ya Kitaifa kuunga mkono kikamilifu serikali za Kaunti hususan kwa kutuma pesa kwenye Kaunti kwa wakati ili kufanikisha utoaji wa huduma na maendeleo.

Wakati uo huo, wakazi hao walitoa wito wa kuendelea kuandaliwa kwa Makongamano kama hayo katika Kaunti mbali mbali wakisema kando na uhamasishaji mkubwa waliopata, hali yao ya kiuchumi pia imeboreka kutokana na bi-

ashara iliyoimarika kwenye sekta ya hoteli, chakula na uchukuzi miongoni mwa sekta zingine.

“Mimi kama mhudumu wa Bodaboda nasema hakika Kongamano hili limekuwa la manufaa sana kwetu kibiashara, wateja wamekuwa wengi na hivyo hatujakosa pesa, kwa siku moja nimekuwa naenda nyumbani na zaidi ya shilingi elfu moja,” alisema mhudumu wa bodaboda mjini Homa Bay

Call to strengthen devolution

Senate leadership has renewed calls for reforms to strengthen devolution, noting that unresolved challenges risk undermining the promise for equitable development.

Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot and Minority Leader Stewart Madzayo urged national and county governments to work together in addressing persistent governance and financial obstacles witnessed in counties.

In his reflections on the journey toward devolved governance, Senator Cheruiyot said it arose from the public's long-standing demand for a fairer and more inclusive decision-making after decades of centralised administration, which had entrenched inequality and marginalisation.

The Majority Leader commended progress made in areas such as health care, early childhood education, vocational training, infrastructure, agriculture and targeted programmes for women, youth, persons with disabilities and the elderly.

However, he warned that incomplete transfer of functions, delayed disbursements, misuse of public resources, lead-

ership wrangles and inter-county boundary disputes were slowing momentum.

"There is a need for consultations and reforms that will strengthen counties as engines of socio-economic growth," he said, in remarks at the 9th Devolution Conference in Homa Bay County.

The remarks were read on his behalf by Senator Margaret Kamar.

"The Conference should conduct an honest appraisal of the system and adopt best practices rooted in equity, inclusion and social justice."

Senator Madzayo supported the call for renewed commitment, stressing the Senate's constitutional duty to protect devolution and ensure fair distribution of resources. While acknowledging counties' notable development achievements, he cautioned that delays in funding and instances of mismanagement erode public trust.

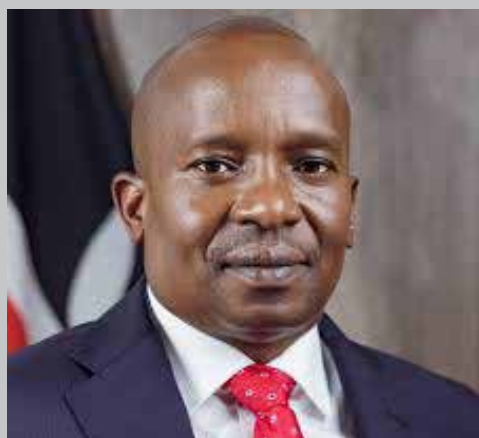
"We must uphold transparency, accountability and inclusivity to fulfil the vision of the 2010 Constitution," Senator Madzayo said, appealing for united action by both levels of government, development partners and citizens to preserve devolution as the nation's most transformative governance reform.



Senator Margaret Kamar, delivers the speech on behalf of Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot, and Minority Leader Stewart Madzayo.

This week in History – August 24, 2016.

House adopts Mediation Committee report on Forest Bill, 2015.



Majority Leader Kithure Kindiki

The debate on the Motion was moved by Majority Leader Kithure Kindiki who told the House that the Bill had gone through successful mediation. "It will be recalled when the Forest Bill came to this House, the Senate made significant amendments," he told the House in his moving notes. The Mediation Committee did not differ significantly with those amendments. The Report of the Mediation Committee only touches on four to five provisions. It suggests the inclusion of the provision for a new ground for disqualification of members to the Board. The report also provides for the inspection by the public of the information that will be under the custody of the Chief Conservator of Forests. It provides that any register maintained shall be opened for inspection by the members of the public at the Office of the Chief Conservator of Forests. The information includes licenses issued under the Act, information on community forests, private forests, etc. "I hope that those amendments were well thought out and this being a Constitutional Bill I just want to request that the Senators we support it as it can always be improved," he said, adding that he always believes that there can never be a perfect legislation. "Unless something is automatically and obviously repugnant on the face of it, I really urge Senators to support this Bill. I am sure it can be made better through future amendments."



Senator Anyang Nyongo said:

Counties are in charge of land, agriculture, water and the environment as well. These are four critical variables in dealing with forests. There can be no better level of government to be in charge of environmental control, to fight environmental degradation and to work for afforestation if it is not the county government. However much we plant trees, if there are other things going on which lead to environmental degradation which lead to the depleting of water resources, then our forests will not be there. Afforestation and planting of more trees must go hand in hand with environmental control and preservation of water catchment areas and forests. At the moment, there is no other county among the 47 counties which have adopted a progressive climate change policy, except Makeni County. I know that there are many Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) which have been holding climate change seminars across the counties. However, whether these seminars are leading to policy changes and policy implementation, is another matter. Those of us who are in the Land Committee like my friend Senator George Khaniri should come here with a Bill on environmental control and preservation of water resources. This is because those two issues are very closely related to preservation of forests and afforestation.



Senator Henry ole Ndiema said:

As we move towards conserving forests, we should not lose sight of the fact that we are doing this for the benefit of the people. Forests principally exist for the benefit of the people. Forest conservation should not be viewed at any time as a way of penalising or punishing them. Forests in this country exist in specific locations as indicated in the Schedule; the gazetted forests. Before any gazettement was done, there were already indigenous people residing there. Unfortunately, when gazettements were done no regard was given towards their wellbeing, in terms of being compensated with land elsewhere or any other way. Even as forests were gazetted, the indigenous communities in some instances were allowed to reside there and eke out their livelihood. As we move to the next phase, we believe that the indigenous people living in these forests will not be subject to harassment and eviction because they have been looking after these forests since time immemorial. The Constitution of Kenya recognises the right of communities living in forests including those living in the gazetted forests. These are communities like the Ogiek, Ndorobos and Boni among others. We hope that they will not be harassed.



Senator Yusuf Haji said:

Apart from the gazetted forests which we knew many years ago, there are forests which were maintained by county councils and the communities who lived within the forested areas. Particularly, I would like to talk about Bota Forest. The last speaker talked about Boni Forest which is also part of Garissa County. This forest is the only forest in Northern Kenya and it extends up to Somalia. Unfortunately, while the local people have always co-existed with this forest without any damage - they only use the resources during drought to graze their livestock - the Ministry for Environment and Natural Resources, unfortunately without legal basis and without carrying out public participation went ahead and gazetted the Bota Forest as Government gazetted forest. We object to that and the community has already made an appeal to the National Assembly. I am glad the National Assembly Committee on Environment and Natural Resources went to Ijara to receive the views of the people. We are following it keenly and waiting for the report so that this forest is degazetted and left to the management of the county. While going through this mediated report, there is an element where it is stated that the Ministry should assist county governments to build capacity in order to manage their forests. That is a good move which should be the spirit instead of the Government planning to take forests from the people.



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