



# The **SENATE** Weekly

Safeguarding Devolution  
Issue No. 0080

## Senate in Busia County

**Senate Mashinani enhances interaction and it is also an innovative way through which the Senate exercises its roles as provided for in the Constitution.**



*Entrance to the County Assembly of Busia.*

**F**rom Monday, October 6, through to Friday, October 10, 2025, the precincts of the County Assembly of Busia will be the site of the Senate plenary sittings.

Christened Champions of devolution, Senators will be in Busia town for the increasingly popular Senate Mashinani in line with the provisions of the

Constitution on the devolved system of government, which aims at bringing services closer to the people to accelerate development.

The 2025 Senate Mashinani, which is the fourth edition in the series that started in 2018, offers both the lawmakers and the residents of Busia County the rare opportunity to interact and share views

on how to best entrench devolution.

The House has lined up various legislative activities during the week. Besides the Plenary, Senators will conduct public participation for the Constitution of Kenya (Amendment) Bill, 2025, which seeks to enhance the Senate's legislative and oversight mandate.

The House Committees will also

conduct their sittings across the County, according residents the opportunity to actively engage and participate in the Senate legislative business.

The activities will also include oversight visits to local development projects, inspection of government programmes and public forums where citizens, civil society and local officials interact direct-



*The sitting of the County Public Accounts Committee (CPAC). The Committee will host Governor Paul Otuoma and the County Assembly leadership during Senate Mashinani.*



*The long queue of the oil tankers in Busia town waiting to be cleared at the border. The congestion within the town is likely to be a subject of the House's deliberations during the 2025 Senate Mashinani.*



*Senator Fatuma Dullo makes her submission during a sitting of CPAC as Senator Moses Kajwang, the chair looks on*

ly with Senators.

There will be engagement forums and inspection visits, activities that will accord residents a special opportunity to actively engage and participate in the legislative process.

The House leadership has encouraged residents of Busia and the neighbouring counties to turn up and engage with the Senate.

In his communication to the House during similar sitting in Lodwar, Turkana County in 2023, Speaker Amason Kingi said the sittings of the House outside Nairobi are designed as an ingenious way of enhancing the interaction between the national and County levels of Government and an innovative way through which the Senate may exercise its roles as provided for under the Constitution.

“Through this Senate Mashinani Initiative, the Senate is making its contribution towards nurturing inclusivity and management of public affairs in Kenya,”

he said, urging the lawmakers to take advantage of the unique opportunity to engage in candid discourse on what needs to be done to achieve prosperity and to strengthen devolution.

The County Public Accounts Committee (CPAC), one of the House watchdog Committee, has scheduled sessions with Governor Paul Otuoma and the leadership of the County Assembly touching on their financial statements for the 2023/24 financial year.

Other Committees that have planned activities during their time in Busia include the Justice, Legal Affairs and Human Rights, the Committee on National Cohesion and Integration, Committee on Education, Committee on Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries and Trade, Industrialisation and Tourism.

The Justice, Legal Affairs and Human Rights Committee will undertake public participation on the Bill while the Committee on Education will try to understand the status of implementation of

the Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) and the Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the County.

The origin of Senate Mashinani can be traced to Article 96 of the Constitution, which requires the Senate to protect the interests of counties and their governments.

Article 126(1) also allows Parliament to sit outside its traditional precincts.

The first Senate Mashinani was held in Uasin Gishu County in September 2018, followed by Kitui County in September 2019 and Turkana County in September 2023.

First introduced in 2018, the concept is designed to make the Senate more accessible to citizens, to strengthen oversight of devolved units and to demonstrate the national government's commitment to devolution.

For Busia, this development is expected to be significant, not only in highlighting the County's development

priorities but also in placing its unique challenges — such as those linked to its cross-border status with Uganda — at the centre of national debate.

Busia has the opportunity to showcase its progress in health, trade and infrastructure while exposing Senators to the realities of devolution on the ground.

The event is also expected to strengthen ties between the Senate and the Busia County Assembly.

Specifically, the Mashinani sittings are expected among other things to hold public hearings on key legislative proposals, promote the work and role of the Senate and to highlight existing opportunities for people to get involved to achieve greater public engagement.

The sittings also give an opportunity to the Members and staff of County Assemblies (MCAs) to learn and borrow practices from the Senate and develop and strengthen partnerships at the County level by creating interest among the public regarding the business of the Sen-

## Senate Mashinani brings Parliament to the people - Speaker Kingi



Speaker Amason Kingi

**W**ith the much-anticipated Senate Mashinani Programme in Busia County, Speaker Amason Kingi speaks on the importance of the Senate's constitutional role in overseeing the 47 county governments.

The Speaker spoke to the Parliamentary Broadcasting Unit. Excerpts.

**Question: What is the role of the Senate in Kenya's governance structure?**

**A:** The Senate is tasked with overseeing all the 47 county governments. This gives it a bigger role within the devolution family to ensure that devolution works effectively. Our responsibility is to see that devolved funds are put to prudent use and that counties operate strictly within the law.

**Q: Why is the Senate Mashinani programme important?**

**A:** Senate Mashinani brings Parliament closer to the people. It allows

us to interact directly with the communities we serve, to feel the realities of devolution on the ground and to deliberate on both national and local issues affecting residents.

**Q: How will Busia County benefit from this particular session?**

**A:** Senators have already sought statements touching on Busia County's government. During the sessions, county officers will respond to these matters. This will ensure that the people of Busia see their issues discussed, addressed and prioritised at the national level.

**Q: What opportunities will Busia residents have during the Mashinani sessions?**

**A:** Busia residents will be able to attend the proceedings, interact with senators one-on-one and closely follow how the Senate operates. This interaction fosters transparency and builds confidence in the work of the Senate.

## Senate Mashinani strengthens democracy – Majority Leader Cheruiyot

**Question:** What does Senate Mashinani mean in the accumulated matter of Senate constitutional mandate under Article 96 of the Constitution?

**A:** Senate Mashinani isn't just another tour. It's about bridging the gap between leaders and citizens, and ensuring that governance is felt in everyday life. It is about taking Parliament to the people. When residents sit in Senate sessions, question their leaders, and share their concerns, that is how democracy grows stronger.

**Q:** What does this mean for the residents of Busia?

The programme now in its fourth year, will see Senators trade their Nairobi chambers for the Busia County Assembly. They will debate, hold committee sessions, and meet residents face-to-face in public forums. But Mashinani is more than speeches. Senators will tour hospitals, schools, roads, and development projects including checking whether reports on paper match the realities on the ground. In a county where health care access and youth employment remain pressing challenges, this is the opportunity by Busia residents to finally get their voices heard at the highest level.

**Q:** What plans have you made to ensure that the event is a success?

**A:** Local leaders and community groups are already mobilising. Farmer cooperatives, boda boda associations, and women's self-help groups are preparing petitions, hoping the presence of Senators will shine a spotlight on long-standing challenges such as delayed infrastructure projects, sugar sector woes, and cross-border trade bottlenecks. These interactions are not symbolic, but crucial in shaping better policies.

**Q:** What legacy do you want this Busia Mashinani to leave for the county and for the Senate?

**A:** Our greatest legacy will be resolving long-standing issues affecting residents and ensuring solutions are permanent. We have invited residents of Busia and Kenyans across the country to actively participate in the upcoming activities at the Busia County Assembly and other public engagement forums. Ultimately, the initiative aims to foster deeper appreciation of the Senate's work, improve service delivery, and strengthen county and national government collaboration. It's a chance for ordinary people to step into the heart of governance, and for leaders to be reminded who they truly serve.



Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot

## Mashinani to strengthen accountability – Senator Madzayo



Minority Leader Stewart Madzayo.

**Question:** What is the Senate Minority's vision for Mashinani in Busia, what do you hope will be achieved by the end of the sitting?

**Answer:** Our vision is to bring the Senate closer to the people, ensuring that devolution is not just a constitutional promise but a lived reality. In Busia County, we hope to leave behind a clear roadmap of solutions to the pressing issues raised by wananchi, strengthen accountability of the county leadership, and affirm the Senate's role as the protector of devolution. By the end of the sitting, residents should feel that their voices have been heard and integrated

into national decision-making.

**Q:** What plans are being made to ensure that infrastructure, logistics, and public participation are effective in Busia county?

**A:** Senate has worked closely with county leadership, local administrators, and Senate committees to ensure all logistical aspects are in place. Venues have been secured, infrastructure upgraded where possible, and a strong emphasis has been placed on mobilising citizens to attend and contribute.

**Q:** Are there particular bills, motions, or oversight activities you

want the Senate to prioritise during your time in Busia?

**A:** Yes. Oversight on equitable revenue allocation and expenditure by counties will take center stage. We also want to advance motions on strengthening border counties like Busia to benefit more from cross-border trade, health service delivery, and infrastructure development. In addition, the Senate will be listening to submissions that can inform future legislation, especially around water resource management and universal access to healthcare.

**Q:** Busia faces several challenges—water shortage, deteriorating roads, health facilities in disrepair. How will the Senate use this Mashinani to address issues affecting Busia?

**A:** Mashinani sittings give us an opportunity to spotlight these issues nationally. Committees will interrogate why services are lagging, summoning responsible agencies where necessary. More importantly, we will work with the county government to identify gaps in funding, planning, and implementation. The aim is to ensure Busia's challenges are not just documented but also acted upon through budget interventions, oversight reports, and sustained Senate follow-up.

**Q:** What expectations should Busia residents have of the Senate while it is there—what can they attend, ask, or contribute?

**A:** Busia residents should expect open doors. They can attend plenary sessions, committee hearings, and public forums. They can ask questions, submit memoranda, and speak directly to their leaders. This is their chance to put forward concerns about schools, hospitals, markets, and livelihoods, and to hold leaders accountable. The Senate is here to listen, not lecture.

**Q:** What legacy do you want this Busia Mashinani to leave for the county and for the Senate going forward?

**A:** We want the legacy to be two-fold: for Busia, a renewed sense of belonging in the national agenda, and for the Senate, a reaffirmation that Mashinani is not symbolic—it delivers results. Going forward, we want every county we sit in to feel the tangible impact of Senate oversight, advocacy, and legislative action.

**Q:** Message to Busia residents and the country at large

To the people of Busia: your voices matter, your struggles are seen, and your hopes are valid. We are here because devolution belongs to you, not to leaders in Nairobi. To Kenyans at large: The Senate will continue to stand firm as the guardian of counties, ensuring that resources are used well, services reach the people, and no region is left behind. Together, let us make devolution work.

## Busia's Sh58 billion in ten years

Busia County has received more than Sh58 billion in equitable share allocations since the inception of devolution in 2013, official documents show.

An analysis of figures from the National Treasury, the Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA) and Busia's County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs) reveal that the County has received a cumulative Sh58.2 billion between the 2013/14 and 2022/23 financial years.

The equitable share remains Busia's

single largest source of revenue, financing the bulk of both recurrent and development expenditures.

County Treasury reports consistently show that without the national transfers, the County would struggle to sustain service delivery and development projects.

At the dawn of devolution in the 2013/14 financial year, Busia County was allocated Sh3.41 billion.

The amount has steadily risen over the years, surpassing the Sh7 billion mark in recent financial years.

In the 2014/15 financial year, the allocation rose to Sh4.74 billion, before increasing to Sh5.44 billion in 2015/16 and Sh5.87 billion in 2016/17.

The 2017/18 fiscal year saw Busia receive Sh5.83 billion, followed by Sh5.97 billion in 2018/19.

The County received Sh6.01 billion in both 2019/20 and 2020/21.

The allocation jumped significantly to Sh7.17 billion in 2021/22 and peaked at Sh7.74 billion in 2022/23, according to the County Treasury's Budget Review

and Outlook Paper.

For the 2023/24 financial year, the figure was Sh7.47 billion.

The County's planning documents, including the first, second and third generation CIDPs, underline Busia's heavy reliance on equitable share transfers, which consistently account for the lion's share of County revenues.

Own-source revenue collections remain comparatively low, meaning the County's fiscal health is tightly bound to national allocations.

## Senator Omtatah: We are excited to have Senate in Busia County



Senator Okiya Omtatah

**Question: Senate Mashinani will be held in Busia County. What do you think about this event?**

**Answer:** Article 126 of the Constitution allows either House of Parliament to sit outside Nairobi. A sitting of the Senate in Busia is perfectly within the law. I want to thank the Senate leadership for having implemented this provision of the Constitution. The National Assembly has not and it is my hope that they will follow on this plan sooner rather than later.

I welcome the Senate fraternity to Busia County. We are excited to host them as this will give residents the rare opportunity to witness the business of the House from close quarters. My plea to my colleagues in the House is that we should schedule as many Committee sittings as we can during our time in Busia County. The Committees should as much as possible move around the County so as to appreciate the challenges the people in Busia are facing while offering them a bigger opportunity to interact with the Senate. I am sure the Senate Mashinani will be profitable to the people of Busia County.

**Q: What are your expectations?**

**A:** Busia County has friendly and hardworking people, only that they were made poor because of the structural marginalisation implemented by successive post-independence regimes. I have identified 15 representative projects for inspection and engagement by the Senate. These projects cut across key sectors including health, agriculture, infrastructure,

education, and water. Each represents a critical budgetary intervention aimed at enhancing service delivery, addressing citizen priorities, and ensuring value for public expenditure. We expect the Senate to conduct inspection tours of development projects in the County and determine value for money, engage ordinary people, farmers and the County government on the challenges they separately face in execution of their mandates. I expect the Senate to push for accountability on project implementation and where necessary recommend action where there are clear cases of breach of the law.

**Q: Elaborate.**

**A:** I will start with the positive side of devolution in Busia. The Kakapel Cultural Centre in Teso North is a national gem. It is a site for ancient rock paintings. It has art forms dating over 2000 years ago and maybe as much as 4000 years old, combining many different styles and periods. Though it has never been developed, it has high potential for tourism, archaeological research and exchange programmes for universities. The only other place with similar paintings is in Namibia. The problem is that it has been neglected.

There is Ng'elchom land of Apes in Teso South. This 300-acre site along the border was once upon a time heavily forested and the colonial administration used it to preserve apes. The project was abandoned and the forest was destroyed. The Senate should visit and explore what can be done with the site. Should we develop a trailer city so that we can decongest our two border points?

In Butula Constituency we have Bumuturu Mines where artisanal gold mining is taking place. The mining has potential but the artisans have no proper equipment to mine and refine the gold. The sand mined is sold to Tanzanians for over Sh35,000 per lorry. The Senate should visit and see how it can help the miners. In Funyula, the beautiful Samia Hills are good for cycling enthusiasts and Sio Port offers great potential for tourism even though it is not developed as it lacks proper berths to ferry cargo to the Ugandan side.

Matayos is the industrial centre of

Busia County. It is here that we have erected the County Aggregated Industrial Parks (CAIPs). In Nambale, at a place called Emasinde, we have the breeding grounds of the Blue Swallows, a migratory species that arrives in western Kenya from April to September. However, sugarcane plantations have destroyed these breeding grounds.

Across Busia County we need a proper soil crop profile so that we know which other crops, other than sugarcane, can be grown there.

**Q: That is the good side. The bad?**

**A:** There are so many budgeted projects in which funds have been appropriated in Busia County but there is nothing on the ground even though money has been appropriated. The projects cut across key sectors including health, agriculture, infrastructure, education, and water. Each represents a critical budgetary intervention aimed at enhancing service delivery, addressing citizen priorities, and ensuring value for public expenditure.

For example, in the 2018/19 financial year, the County Government initiated the Dairy Parks at Aciit-(Teso South), Buduma- (Butula) and Nambale). The objective was to increase milk production across the County from the current 30,000 litres to 0.9 million litres by 2025, provide farmers with quality dairy heifers - over 300 Heifers were allegedly provided but none grew to maturity. Over Sh400 million was allocated for operationalisation of the project and in this financial year Sh7.5 million has been allocated. Aciit Dairy Park and Butula Dairy Park remain stalled and vandalised. Another Sh112 million was initially for the development of fish aqua parks and fish processing plants as flagship projects under the Blue Economy, Fisheries, and Agribusiness sector. Despite the heavy investment, both projects remain grossly underutilised - basically non-functional. The Cottage Fish Filleting Project was allocated Sh3.3 million to support small-scale fish farmers through a local filleting and processing facility. Despite being 60 per cent complete, the site was handed over to the National Government's Affordable Housing Scheme, without consultation with intended beneficiaries.

The Asiriam Poultry Park Hatchery was initiated in 2020/2021 as a donor funded project at a cost of Sh45 million. The aim was to establish a poultry hatchery to raise and distribute quality chicks across Busia County. It is stalled.

The Changara Water Pan Project, valued at Sh19 million, is a rare Busia flagship project reported as 100 per cent complete." Yet, the delay in handover has denied the community timely access to the intended benefits of water, food security, and livelihood support.

In all these and other projects, the Senate oversight is crucial to push for completion and where necessary operationalisation. That is why the Senate presence in Busia County is important.

**Q: Busia town is the origin of boda bodas, first as bicycles and then motorcycles, any deliberate plan to mainstream the industry?**

**A:** Yes, the Senate will have to consider and explore ways of regulating the industry. There is a need to train the actors in the industry and encourage them to join the Saccos so that they can standardise their operations and focus on the safety of the passengers.

**Q: Funding and delayed exchequer releases have been adjudged as the biggest threats to devolution. What do you think?**

**A:** Counties have become small fiefdoms. Perhaps we should have designed directors appointed by the national government to administer County governments. This would have cured the problem of governors converting the devolved units into their fiefdoms. The National Treasury was never meant to be a Ministry under the national government. It was supposed to be an independent entity serving both the national and County governments. We need to create independent County treasuries as one of the ways of entrenching accountability. The money should be taken away from the Governors. County treasuries should manage finances in a professional sense, focusing on the budgets and controller of budget.

## Governor Otuoma: Senate Mashinani is public participation in another way

Take this opportunity to welcome the Senate team to Senate Mashinani programmes in Busia County. As the custodian of devolution, we all know that without the Senate there would be no devolution. My understanding of Senate Mashinani, is that the lawmakers are going to interact with the people, the County Assembly and the County executive to find out whether their role is understood in terms of delivering services. The Senate Mashinani gives the people the opportunity to interact with the Senate because what people read and what they see on the ground is completely different from what the Senate is supposed to be. The Senate is the custodian of devolution and it helps counties to deliver to the people. At the end of the day everything is about service delivery. County Executives are doing the actual execution, the County assembly are doing oversight and now the Senate, which in addition to their oversight role of, has a bigger role of looking at policy issues and how to improve service delivery to the people.

Talking about service delivery, by coming to Busia, Senators will get first-

hand interaction with the people and the kind of services the County Executive is offering to the people, whether in health-care, roads or water. Senators will also see and appreciate what is happening on the ground other than the reports they get from the auditor office, which most of the time are abstract in terms of what is practical. During their time in Busia, Senators should also explore how best to improve on devolution. The constitution gave us devolution but that cannot be an end in itself. By interacting with service delivery within the counties, Senators are able to see where we have done well and where we need to improve. For example, on the debate about social health insurance Senators need to come on the ground to really realise the kind of burden the counties are carrying in terms of health care, compared to what is expected of them and the available resources. This will enable them to make the law from a point of understanding especially if they will have sampled quite a bit of the whole country. Senate Mashinani is part of public participation in terms of assessing the achievements of devolution, the challenges and the opportuni-



*Governor Paul Otuoma.*

ties that we can still have.

What are your expectations?

We expect Senators to interact with the residents of Busia County, see and understand what the people go through on the daily basis. Senators should also enjoy what we have as a County, tell us the opportunities and potentials that we have but which we may not know exist.

They should tell us what we can do to improve delivery of services to the people. What we can do to market our County, especially being a border County, the opportunities we have and which we may need to exploit further. We also expect Senators to appreciate the challenges we go through as a County.

## Senate Mashinani will shine a spotlight on Busia, says Assembly Speaker

The County Assembly of Busia has welcomed the Senate to the County saying the presence of the Upper House in the County will mark a major hallmark for the County.

Mr Fredrick Odilo, the Speaker of the Assembly, said Senate Mashinani will shine a spotlight on Busia County. "It will put Busia on a national map. Our County will be a point of discussion for now and into the foreseeable future," he said, even as he welcomed the Senators to the County.

The Senate is expected to have its first sitting in the County Assembly premises on Tuesday, October 10 which will be preceded by the activities of several House Committees in the one week that the Senate fraternity will criss-cross the County for the fourth edition of Senate Mashinani.

In an interview with the Senate Weekly, the Speaker said the event will bring to the Senators the hard realities of what happens in the County, how residents perceive the House, while offering the residents an opportunity to witness the level of each individual senator's participation in the business of the House.

However, Mr Odilo insisted that there are many problems in Busia County that residents expect the Senate to offer in-



*Hon Fredrick Odilo, Speaker County Assembly of Busia.*

stant solutions. The problems, he noted, related to funding of the devolved unit.

The equitable revenue sharing formula recently passed by the Senate does not support the challenges encountered by the border counties, he said.

The allocation to the County arising from the equitable share does not include money that takes into account the characteristics of border towns, specifically Busia, which is the gateway to Kenya's

biggest trading partner, Uganda.

Busia is a border County, and the Speaker says the money allocated to the County does not support the development of infrastructure on the border. "Considering that Uganda is our biggest trading partner, we expect the Senate will push the national government to give Busia more money to develop infrastructure along the border," he said, adding that if not the Senate should compel the national Government to improve the infrastructure on the border.

"I am talking about the dual carriage-way, streetlights and the construction of the East African market in the town in which 50 acres of land has already been set aside."

He said at the minimum, the Senate will have to explore ways of how frontier counties can develop infrastructure in the face of a funding model that does not take into account such dynamics.

Additionally, he argued, while health is a fully devolved function, the resources allocated to Busia are not enough. For example, he said the Busia Referral Hospital receives between 40,000 to 50,000 Uganda patients, but who are not captured by the data.

Busia has two border points: Busia and Malaba. The Speaker says a decision

was made to put up a third entry point, a place called Mulwanda to decongest Busia town. However, the Kenyan side has dragged its feet while Uganda had already developed infrastructure on the side.

Since independence Uganda has been Kenya's biggest trading partner and if you look at the current status of relationship between Kenya and Tanzania, we do not want to lose Uganda as our business partner. As a country we need to put deliberate efforts to develop infrastructure around the borderline, specifically Busia.

"It is important that we should complete the project. The Senate should help us and ensure the Mulwanda border point is working. Unlike Malaba, all cargo exiting through Busia are oil tankers. Imagine if one of them blew out there, what would be the damage in this town?"

Mr Odilo said residents of Budalangi sub County will also seek answers from the Senate on the fate of the Migingo island, which has been a point of conflict between Kenya and Uganda since 2008. "Has the government given up on this island?" he asked.

## Governor Otuoma's vision for County

When the Senate Mashinani programme rolled into Busia, Governor Paul Otuoma saw more than a routine oversight visit. For him, it was a chance to reflect on Kenya's decade of devolution, its achievements, its struggles, and the opportunities waiting to be seized in this border County that serves as the gateway to East and Central Africa.

"The Senate is the custodian of devolution," the governor emphasized, "and what they do should go beyond audit reports. It should be about policy, about understanding our service delivery challenges on the ground, and about shaping laws that truly respond to the realities in counties."

From Border Gate to Regional Powerhouse

On a sweltering afternoon at the Busia border, trucks snake endlessly along the highway, their containers stacked like moving skyscrapers. To many, this is all Busia town has ever been, a gate through which East Africa's trade flows. But to Governor Otuoma, Busia is far more than a checkpoint, than a gate.

"It is a frontier of opportunity, a County with the power to shape Kenya's devolution story and anchor an entire region's economy," he explains, noting that:

"When wealth passes through your land and your people remain poor, that is dangerous," he says, his tone firm. "We must transform Busia from a gate into a metropolis which integrates the Uganda side. We must create wealth for the local



*Governor Paul Otuoma speaks to Senate Clerk Jeremiah Nyegenye and Hon Beatrice Opuapo, an MCA at the Busia Assembly, when the Senate Board of Management paid the Governor a courtesy call during one of their inspection tours.*

people to see the importance of the border in their lives."

### Devolution in Practice

The governor, the last Minister for Local Governments in the former constitutional dispensation, is no stranger to the tug-of-war between lofty promises and harsh realities. The 2010 Constitution devolved health, agriculture, water, and infrastructure to counties, but not always the resources to match.

"Functions were given, but resources did not follow," he explains. Busia's equitable share stands at about Sh8 billion, stretched thin across hospitals, schools, roads, and salaries. Delayed disbursements only tighten the noose.

To him, the Senate Mashinani programme, taking oversight tours to coun-

ties, is more than a ritual. "This is policy in action. Senators must walk to our hospitals, our water points, our farms. Laws made in Nairobi must reflect what is lived in Busia."

### The Border Economy Dream

If Kenya is the gateway to East Africa, Busia is the doorman. Nearly 90 per cent of the region's trade moves through its border posts, yet Busia remains one of the country's poorest counties.

The Governor wants to rewrite this paradox. His vision is bold; an industrial park and export processing zone, modern trailer parks, a thriving service industry for truckers and travellers, and eventually, a full-fledged Busia Metropolis co-developed with neighbouring Uganda.

"We have been treated as just an exit

point," he says. "But people don't just pass through. They eat, sleep, and interact. That's where opportunity lies." His plan to is to make Busia the logistics hub of East Africa.

Agriculture and the Blue Economy: Busia's Sleeping Giants

Away from the border, Busia is green with potential. Its soils grow maize, groundnuts, cassava, and cotton, yet small-scale farming has left most households trapped in cycles of hunger and hand-to-mouth survival.

"You cannot call two bags of maize an economy," the governor remarks. His answer is ward-based economic revitalisation. That is, cooperatives that pool farmers' produce, add value, and give them leverage in the market.

Then there is Lake Victoria. The former Fisheries Minister believes with two ports; Sio and Port Victoria, Busia holds keys to Kenya's blue economy, but the challenge is that the facilities remain underdeveloped. Plans are underway for modern ports, aquaculture projects, and marine transport networks that could link Busia to Kisumu, Jinja, and beyond.

"The Lake is our oil well," he says. "It must deliver wealth to our people."

Rethinking Devolution

Despite Busia's ambitions, the governor remains a realist. He knows counties cannot do it all. Some functions, he argues, must be shared at regional or national levels such as, specialised hospitals, research institutions, or large-scale factories.

## Busia County Fact File: Gateway to Great Lakes

Busia County famously described as the "gateway to East Africa," sits at the western tip of Kenya, straddling the country's busy border with Uganda.

Its strategic location has for decades made it a focal point of trade, culture and cross-border relations.

Under Kenya's devolved system of government, Busia has emerged as one of the most vibrant counties in the Lake Victoria region.

Busia County had a population of 893,681 people, out of which 467,401 are male, 426,252 are female while 28 are intersex, this according to the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census.

They are spread across a land area of approximately 1,628.4 square kilometres, translating to a population density of about 527 people per square kilometre, making it one of the most densely populated counties in the western corridor.

The average household size stood at 4.5 persons, slightly higher than the national average.

Politically and administratively, the County is divided into seven constituencies: Budalang'i, Butula, Funyula, Matayos, Nambale, Teso North and Teso South.

The constituencies also serve as sub-counties, aligning with the devolved government structure.

In total, Busia has 35 electoral wards, each playing a crucial role in grassroots governance, as captured in the County's Integrated Development Plan (CIDP 2023–2027).

The County headquarters is based in Busia town, a bustling settlement that directly mirrors its twin across the border in Uganda.

"Busia town remains one of East Africa's busiest border points, providing livelihoods for thousands through

cross-border trade and logistics," notes the CIDP report.

On historical backdrop Busia is deeply intertwined with the cultural tapestry of western Kenya as it is home to diverse communities including the Luhya sub-groups such as the Abakhayo, Abanyala and Abamarachi, alongside the Teso (Itese) and the Luo.

The County's frontier location made it a vibrant hub of commerce and cultural exchange long before Kenya's independence.

With the enactment of the 2010 Constitution, Busia formally became one of Kenya's 47 devolved units.

### Busia economy

Is anchored on agriculture, with households engaging in smallholder farming of maize, beans, cassava, horticultural crops and sugarcane in select areas.

Proximity to Lake Victoria provides fishing opportunities that sustain both livelihoods and local markets.

Yet, it is cross-border trade that sets Busia apart with thousands relying on formal and informal trade between Kenya and Uganda every day, making the Busia One-Stop Border Post a symbol of regional integration.

Geographically, Busia shares boundaries with Kakamega County to the northeast, Bungoma County to the north and Siaya County to the south.

Its western boundary opens to Uganda, while the southwest is bordered by Lake Victoria, enhancing its fisheries and transport potential.

The 2023–2027 CIDP highlights agriculture modernisation, improved border infrastructure and youth empowerment as top priorities.

“Devolution must not mean duplication,” he cautions. “If regions pool resources, we can create centres of excellence while still delivering last-mile services locally.”

It’s a call for interdependence, not isolation. “We must not forget we are one nation. Our roles must be clearly defined,

otherwise we waste resources fighting over who does what.”

A gateway reimagined

From expanding Busia municipality into a planned smart city, to marketing cultural heritage sites like the Kakapel stone art carvings, to exploring new lake transport corridors that could bypass con-

gested highways, the governor is painting Busia as more than a border town.

“When Senators come here, I don’t just want them to see our challenges,” he says with a faint smile. “I want them to see opportunity. Busia County is not just the end of Kenya; it is the beginning of East Africa.”

And as the sun sets over the endless convoy of trucks at Malaba and Busia border points, one thing is clear: if the Governor’s vision takes root, this County may one day be remembered not as Kenya’s gate, but as its engine.

## COUNTY ASSEMBLY LEADERSHIP

### Opportunity for Assembly to learn

**A**s the Majority Leader I welcome the Senate fraternity to the County Assembly of Busia. I know many counties had hoped to get the opportunity to host the fourth Senate Mashinani. We are happy that the Senate decided that Busia County will host the event. We are grateful because this makes us among the very first counties to host this important event. We are ready for the challenge. Many times, we have seen County governments officials invited to the watchdog committees of the Senate where they are grilled over audit queries. This time we are happy that we shall have the rare opportunity of witnessing this process right before

our eyes and in our County Assembly. We expect the presence of the Senate in Busia County to boost our economy in a big way, which is a plus for us. Already our Chamber is receiving a face lift to match the standards like that of the Senate. The general infrastructure around the Assembly is also changing, thanks to this event. Our car parking is under construction. We have high expectations and by the end of it, we shall learn from our senior brothers on how to conduct our business as an Assembly. The Senate Mashinani offers us, as the Assembly, a great opportunity to learn how to conduct ourselves while executing our constitutional mandates.”



*Hon Josephat Wandera, the Majority Leader*

### Time to implement e-parliament

**T**he people of Busia are excited about the prospect of hosting Senate Mashinani. This is not something common. Let me extend a hand of appreciation to the leadership of the Senate and all those who decided that Busia County should play this very important role. We feel honoured and we are really prepared to ensure the event is a resounding success. The Senate is a superior national body and coming to Busia is an obvious game changer. We hope that by coming here, the Senate will push for the implementation of e-Parliament so that our Assembly becomes completely paperless.”



*Hon Bonventure Makokha, the Minority Leader.*

### We are ready for Senate Mashinani

“We were happy when our Senators met and approved that the County Assembly of Busia will host Senate Mashinani. As the Clerk, I take this opportunity to welcome all the Senators and the Senate fraternity to the Assembly. I want to assure them that the Assembly here is excited and eager and they are waiting for the moment. They hope that through this initiative they will also learn the best legislative practices. We are ready to host the event because we believe this is the best opportunity to market our Assembly and Busia County at large. Besides boosting our economy, we expect a very vibrant and informative one week. The People of Busia County are upbeat, and for a good reason. We are grateful that out of the 47 Counties, Senate leadership decided that Busia County should be No. 4 in hosting the Senate Mashinani. We really appreciate this gesture of goodwill and assure you we shall not disappoint.”



*CPA Gabriel Erambo, Acting Clerk.*

## 2018: Uasin Gishu hosts first Senate Mashinani



*Hon Kenneth Lusaka, the third Speaker of the Senate of Kenya.*

The first ever sitting of the Senate Mashinani was held on Tuesday, September 25, 2018 when the House convened in the County Assembly of Uasin Gishu, under the leadership of Speaker Kenneth Lusaka.

The Sitting remains memorable as it was the first time in Kenya post-independence history the plenary of a House of Parliament was conducted outside Nairobi, the capital.

In his welcoming message to the House, Speaker Lusaka described the moment as historic.

“The Third Senate and the Uasin Gishu County are jointly making history which will remain engrained in the annals of Kenya’s parliamentary history,” observed Speaker Lusaka when the House convened at 2.30PM on that day.

He said this inaugural sitting constituted one of the noble and innovative ways of enhancing interactions between the national and County governments,

which are distinct and interdependent, noting that this was one way of bringing the Senate closer to the people both “symbolically and functionally”.

One of the fundamental provisions of the 2010 Constitution is the devolved system of government, which aims at bringing services closer to the people as a means of accelerating development and enhancing collective responsibility.

Under the Constitution, the Senate’s main function is to represent the counties, protect the interests of the counties and their governments.

The Senate Business Committee (SBC) on March 13, 2018, directed that a Sitting of the Senate be held away from its traditional premises in Nairobi.

The directive was part of the effort to institute steps towards actualisation of the functions of the Senate.

During the SBC meeting, Uasin Gishu County was picked for the inaugural Sitting in September, 2018, arguing that

it was a way of enhancing interaction between the national and County levels of government.

“Today we create a new path in the democratic governance of our country by setting in motion a Senate programme which shall, henceforth, be replicated in other counties and regions. Through these sittings, the Members of this Third Senate will be involved in a critical process of redefining the work systems and ethics of the Senate,” Speaker Lusaka argued.

The inaugural sitting in Uasin Gishu County noted the Speaker, and the subsequent ones to be held outside Nairobi, will serve to open up the scope for the Senate to operate amidst the people beyond the country’s capital.

“Let us face it; the Senate is all about our people and their needs,” he argued.

Speaker Lusaka observed that through the “Senate Mashinani” initiative, the lawmakers were to make their contribution towards nurturing larger and more inclusive parameters in the management of public affairs in the country.

“In the next 4 days, various legislative activities that have been lined up – Plenary, Committee meetings and public participation fora, which are a key pillar of our Constitution – will accord the public a special opportunity to actively engage and participate in the Senate legislative Business.”

Describing the sitting in Uasin Gishu as unprecedented, the Speaker argued that it provided a unique opportunity for the House to engage and harness diverse efforts drawn from various parts of Kenya to make the country better.

He challenged Senators to engage in

open conversations on what needs to be done to achieve prosperity, even as they pushed for the strengthening of institutions of governance.

“Going forward, the Senate will seek to draw valuable lessons to further enrich and improve the subsequent sittings. This is because we believe that County assemblies can complement good legislative practices and hold the potential of directly identifying and addressing the people’s tribulations, revitalising hopes and aspirations as well as deepening a democratic, consultative and participatory governance tradition.”

He added: “I dare add that County assemblies are at the core of improving governance in our country. I want to urge all of us to always remember that we cannot have counties without the Senate; conversely, we cannot have a Senate without the counties. Ours is a symbiotic relationship, one which requires mutual learning, experience sharing and leadership for it to grow and thrive.”

He expressed deep appreciation to the leadership and Members of the County Assembly for play the host and for accepting to adjourn their sittings to allow Senators use their Chambers for the sittings.

“Our sincere gratitude also goes to the great people of Uasin Gishu County, the home of champions, for the friendly welcome and the hospitality extended to us. I also thank the leadership of neighbouring counties for embracing this noble idea and joining us for this auspicious sitting.”



*Senator Margret Kamar*

“I will forever be grateful to the Senate for accepting in one voice to bring the first sitting of the Senate ever outside Nairobi to Uasin Gishu County. I would like to assure members that the people of

Uasin Gishu are very excited about this sitting. We expect them to visit the committees and the plenary sessions during this one week. I can also assure the Committees that will be going for site visits that they will be warmly welcomed by the people of Uasin Gishu. I am sure that the Committees have already felt the presence of the public, including professionals. I accompanied the Committee on Health during their visit to the Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital and we witnessed very wonderful interactions. The people of Uasin Gishu are looking forward, not only for interactions, but also to contributing to legislations by the various Committees after these sittings. Our farmers are very eager to listen to the Agricultural Committee and the ad hoc Committee in the County Hall, the same way our business community is looking forward to the public hearing on the Private Public Partnerships (Amendment) Bill, 2017 that has been set by the Committee. We are all set and ready.”



*Minority Leader James Orengo:*

“By sitting in Uasin Gishu, we are demonstrating to everybody, not just in this County, but across the nation that the Senate is here to stay because it has a role to play. It has a role to play be-

cause devolution is one of the most innovative and the fundamental pillars in the Constitution that was proclaimed in the year 2010. If anybody wants to doubt the authority and power of the Senate, then he should read the judgment of Supreme Court about the role of the Senate. This House makes me proud because everything we have done mostly all the time is for the interest of this country.

I have never seen in other chambers and in other parliaments before, where it is possible to develop a bi-partisan spirit in order to talk about a Bill or a Motion, or even deciding to come to this County. There was no much debate about it in the Senate. It was important that we make that point to emphasise that, when we come to this County, we are coming to the bread basket of this nation. I

pray that one day the sins of the national Government will not be visited to the County governments. In Nigeria now, for example, Lagos is talking about being the third or fourth largest economy in Africa. California prides itself of being the fifth largest economy in the world. I hope that because of the potential Uasin Gishu County has, and the leadership I have seen here, one day we can pride ourselves that the economy of this County could be larger than the economies of some of the surrounding counties. I will not mention which, but which if they want an example of good leadership, should probably come to this County.

It is not a dream, but something we can achieve. Even if Kenya is coming down, that does not mean that this County should also go down, but it can still go up. We want the County and the nation to go up together and make Kenya a great and prosperous nation for the people. The people of Kenya are like we are seated here, nobody can look at the Senate Majority Leader and know where he comes from, or probably, some people make mistakes about certain people if they do not have the sixth teeth that I do not have, to determine where I come from. However, this is the nation of Kenya through electoral representatives, sitting together in a Chamber like this.”

Majority Leader Kipchumba Murkomen

I want to join you and my colleagues in appreciating the importance of the Senate coming to this County. This is a dream that we had in the last Parliament and now “Senate Mashinani” is a reality in this Parliament, and this is a unique thing.

In the last Parliament when there was a contest as to who is greater; we decided as a Senate that our greatness will not be defined by our title, cars or entourage that we have. We said that the person who is great is the one who is the servant of them all. We are willing and ready to sit down with the people; go to every County, even a small Chamber like this one to sit in such an environment even if we are used to our Chamber. This brings us closer to solutions that we need for the people of Kenya. To start with, since I have been a very vocal champion for the empowerment of County assemblies, the experience we have in this Chamber today confirms what we have always said in Nairobi; that the County assemblies must be facilitated, empowered and given resources to perform their legislative and oversight function. The County assembly should not struggle the way we are, in tents where we will meet. They should not struggle to have microphones in the Chamber and committee rooms.

The County assemblies must be made as modern as possible for them to dis-

charge their responsibilities. We are happy to be in Uasin Gishu. I celebrate as a Senator. I also welcome you to come to this region of north Rift. My County is just next door. Feel at home. We have already started good interactions with the people of Uasin Gishu County. Today, we had very good interaction. I had the privilege of leading a team to Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH) and the university to discuss matters of health.

The Senate must not be ashamed of what we did in coming to Uasin Gishu County. Instead, we must make a Uasin Gishu Declaration that at least, four to five times a year, we hold similar sessions in different counties.

If we continue doing that, we will provide critical support. We must choose to go to the most difficult County assembly so that we have the greatest pain and feel the greatest suffering that County assemblies and counties are going through so that we give proper intervention. When counties say they need money, we will speak from a point of information that those counties need money and our protection.



*Senator Mutula Kilonzo said:*

“I often quote the Bible. Even in this occasion, I will, where it says: “Where two are gathered in his name, He shall be there”. I have seen some comments about the Senate Mashinani in Uasin Gishu. For those who are in doubt, we had a very successful meeting this morning with the Committee on Finance and the executives of Uasin Gishu and the County Assembly in a make shift tent. We also had a very successful visit to the Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital. I do not think I would have known that this County hospital serves 21 counties if we had not come to Eldoret. If we had not come here, we would not have heard the things that we did. The County Public Accounts and Investments Committee (CPAIC) is meeting with governors. They spend money coming to Nairobi, but now we have come here to listen to them. We have demonstrated humility by sitting in the County assembly just like in the Bible, those who come down will be raised by the good Lord. As the Senate Major-

ity Leader said, we should go to Tana River County Lodwar, and let us cross by boat and go to Lamu County listen to them and ride on those donkeys so that then, just like in the Bible, “we can be lifted high.” I have no regrets whatsoever coming to Uasin Gishu. I am sure by the time we will finish, devolution will be much better because of the things that we will do here. We should make a resolution to suspend a lot of our sittings in Nairobi and sit amongst the people and leave those ones who think that they are big because they make themselves big to sit in Nairobi. I would choose to sit in Wote and many other places. There is no contradiction with Senators having offices in County assemblies. To the people of Uasin Gishu, the Home of Champions, may God bless you. The Champions of devolution are in town.”



*Senator Fatuma Dullo:*

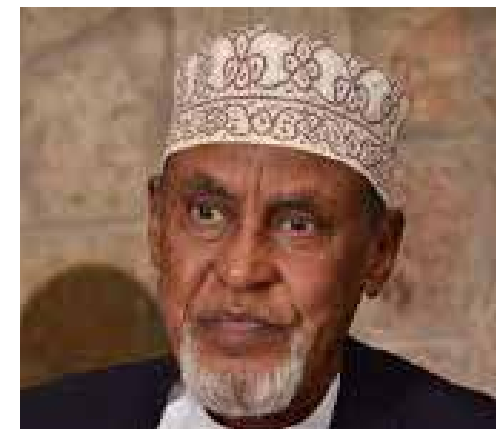
“Most people do not know what the Senate does. However, today, the country has seen the work of the Senate. This morning, we interacted with Members of the County Assembly when we heard a Petition from Kericho and Bomet counties in terms of land issues. There is nothing as fulfilling as having service delivery being brought to the people of Uasin Gishu or various counties to deal with the issues first-hand, instead of them travelling to Nairobi. The Senate Majority Leader has proposed that we should have more sittings like this one to build capacity, interact and share partnership with our colleagues at the County level so that we are able to deliver services as required within the laws of this country.

We had a sitting with the Governor of Baringo to discuss issues affecting his County. The Governor appeared before us with all his senior members of staff. By doing so, he was able to answer all audit queries with the assistance of his staff. This was a learning experience for them. I would like to appeal to the Senate that, the next sitting should be in a place that is not as rich as Uasin Gishu, and I will propose isiolo County for this matter. I will lobby my colleagues to make sure that we have the next sitting to improve the economy of our County.



*Senator George Khaniri:*

For those who had doubts about devolution, this is a clear demonstration that devolution is here to stay. The biggest gain that Kenyans got in the Constitution 2010 is devolution and one of the three pillars of devolution is the Senate. The other one is County assemblies and County governments. The Senate as provided for in Article 96 of our Constitution serves to represent counties. There is no better way to represent people than going to them and getting to know their problems first-hand. That is what we have embarked on. I want to support the idea that we should endeavour to visit four counties every calendar year. I take this opportunity to welcome you to the great County of Vihiga that I represent.



*Senator Yusuf Haji:*

I must express the fact that in the beginning, I had some reservations about coming here not for anything, but because of the cost that is going to be involved. However, I had the opportunity to attend the meeting of the Committee on Finance and Budget and the Committee on Devolution and Intergovernmental Relations. Our committee on Security had a meeting with our colleagues; the MCAs of the Committee on National Security, Defence and Foreign Relations. I think we would have not got this opportunity if we had stayed in Nairobi Mr. From my own words, I will be supporting that the Senate should sit outside Nairobi and that time has come to hold a sitting in northern Kenya where they have been marginalised for many years. I invite you to Garissa to come and drink camel milk.

## First of many firsts

The fourth sitting of Senate Mashinani has cemented Busia County's entrenched history as the County of many firsts.

The County is the first in the western region to host a sitting of the plenary session of Parliament since Kenya gained independence in 1963.

Busia County gave Kenya the first ever heart transplant surgeon, Professor Hillary Ojiambo. The first Kenyan surgeon to operate a Siamese twin was the

late Nelson Awori while Dr Micah Majale was the first orthopaedic surgeon in Kenya.

Dr Julia Ojiambo was the first woman Assistant Minister in modern Kenya, while the Kenya African Union (KAU), the precursor of KANU, had its first chairman in Mr W.W.W. Awori.

Mr Macdonald Mariga's exploits in European football is now a familiar story. He is not only the first Kenyan to play a UEFA Champion League final match

but also won it when the Italian giants, Inter Milan won the title in 2009.

Generations have changed and memories have faded but the name of the late Robert Nangila will endure forever. His 1988 Olympic Gold medal in boxing will never be forgotten. In fact, it was the first for Kenya and four decades later, it remains the only one for Kenya.

Ms Mary Okello was the first woman bank manager Kenya, the late Hillary Ngweno was the first ever Kenyan

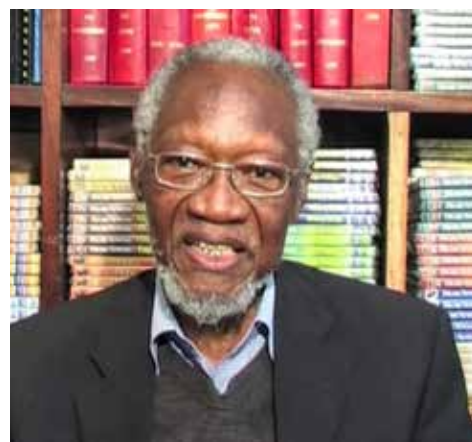
to serve as the Editor in chief of a major newspaper, Nation Newspapers.

Legendary footballer Dr Joe Masiga had a good mix of sports, juggling football and rugby while a student at the University of Nairobi, while Mr Amos Wako, who served as the Senator for two terms, is the longest serving Attorney General of the Republic.

Senator Okiya Omtatah has earned accolades as the longest serving public spirited litigant in the history of independent Kenya.



Hon Amos Wako



Hillary Ng'weno



McDonald Mariga



Dr Joe Masiga

## The border County of Bodas



Boda Bodas rider at work. The industry traces its origin in Busia town.

The multibillion-shilling industry fascinating story of ingenuity and adaptation began in Busia town in 1960s

The boda boda industry, now a defining feature of Kenya's transport landscape, traces its roots to Busia, the bustling frontier town straddling the Kenya and Uganda border.

Today, the boda bodas weave through Nairobi's traffic jams, ferry passengers in remote villages and even deliver packages in all urban centres.

They are not just a means of transport but a livelihood for millions of Kenyans.

Yet, behind this multi billion-shilling industry lies a fascinating story of ingenuity and adaptation that began in Bu-

sia town, the host of this year's Senate Mashinani, more than half a century ago.

In the 1960s and 70s, Busia's position as a gateway between Kenya and Uganda made it a natural hub for trade and movement.

But with limited transport options, traders and travellers often found themselves stranded between official cross-

ing points.

Enterprising young men began using bicycles to ferry people and goods across the short stretch of no-man's land between the two borders.

Their constant cry of "border! border!" to attract customers soon morphed into boda boda.

As The Standard reported in its May 25, 2017 edition, "The word emerged in Busia, Kenya where bicycle riders would ferry people from different areas in the County to the market in Busia town."

The term stuck, and with it, an industry was born.

For many of these early riders, the trade was about survival as much as service.

In a recollection published by Uganda national newspaper, New Vision in 2012, an 84-year-old retired teacher recounted: "We would sneak in coffee and other merchandise across the border like a whirlwind. During the day, I was a teacher and at night, a smuggler. I did all this to make ends meet, using a bicycle boda boda."

This dual life points to the economic pressures of the time and the role boda bodas played in sustaining households.

Another recollection from the same report by New Vision captured how the



*Boda Bodas waiting for clients.*

name caught on.

It states: “The bicycle owners would shout out ‘boda boda’, a Kiswahili version of the English word meaning ‘border-to-border’ to potential customers.”

By the late 1980s and into the 1990s, bicycles began to give way to motorcycles.

Cheap imports, especially from Asia, made motorbikes accessible and their speed and carrying capacity transformed the trade.

Suddenly, riders could cover longer distances, carry heavier loads and reach areas far beyond border towns.

The boda boda had evolved from pedal power to petrol engines and its popularity soared.

The industry quickly mushroomed across Kenya, fuelled by youth unemployment, low entry barriers and the lure of immediate cash.

For many school leavers, riding a boda boda became the only viable path to self-employment.

One young man told Daily Nation on July 22, 2023: “Life became hard for me after secondary education. I had to look

for a source of income and being a rider was the only available opportunity for me then.”

Another rider, identified as Hassan by the newspaper, admitted the downside of this rapid growth.

He said as quoted by the Daily Nation: “Few riders are qualified to operate on the road. That is why the majority are often caught on the wrong side in an accident.”

These testimonies testify to both the opportunity and the peril that define the sector.

Today, boda bodas are far more than a cultural fixture as they are an economic powerhouse. According to the Boda Boda Safety Association of Kenya, there are about 1.6 million riders nationwide, with close to 1.3 million of them being young people.

Collectively, the sector generates around Sh660 billion annually, accounting for about 4.4 per cent of Kenya’s GDP.

According to the statistics, riders earn on average Sh1,100 per day, making it a crucial source of income in both

rural and urban settings.

The sector also contributes significantly to public revenue with fuel taxes from boda bodas bringing in approximately Sh60 billion per year, while licensing fees generate another Sh21 billion.

In rural areas, boda bodas have become indispensable, ferrying sick patients to health facilities, transporting farm produce to markets and bridging the last mile where government infrastructure is weak.

In urban centres, they are a lifeline for commuters battling traffic and for businesses needing quick deliveries.

It is little wonder that motorcycle registrations in Kenya rose by more than 53 per cent between 2017 and 2021, evidence of just how entrenched the industry has become.

Innovation is quickly reshaping the sector. The rise of ride-hailing apps tailored for motorcycles has introduced new efficiencies, while the emergence of electric boda bodas promises lower operating costs and reduced emissions.

Cooperatives and savings groups

among riders are also bringing a measure of financial security, with some even providing health insurance and micro-loans.

The developments echo the industry’s long-standing ability to adapt to changing circumstances, a trait first demonstrated in Busia decades ago.

For Busia, the legacy is profound as what started as a handful of bicycle riders ferrying passengers across the border has grown into one of East Africa’s most dynamic industries.

It is a story of necessity birthing innovation, of informal enterprise maturing into an economic pillar.

The Standard noted in its May 25, 2017 report when celebrating the word’s inclusion in the Oxford Dictionary: “Boda boda, a word of Busia County origin, has found global recognition.”

That recognition is not just linguistic but socio-economic, marking the journey of an industry that began with a shout at the border and spread to every corner of the nation.





**Rt. Hon. Amason Jeffah Kingi, EGH, MP**  
Speaker

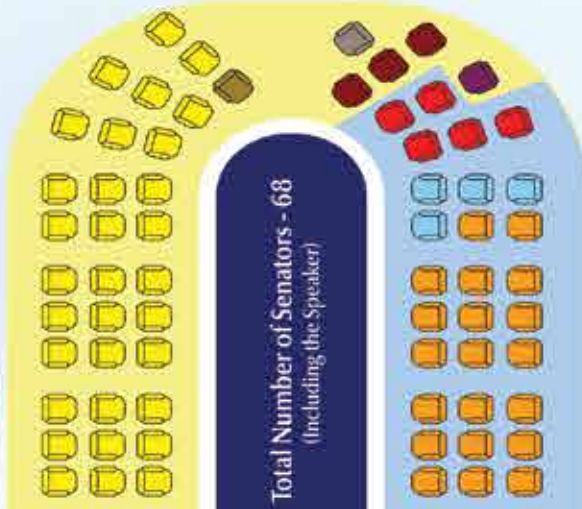


**Sen. Kathuri Murungi, MGH, MP**  
Meru County  
UDA  
Deputy Speaker



**Mr. Jeremiah M. Nyegenye, CBS**  
Clerk of the Senate/ Secretary, Parliamentary Service Commission

**Political Parties in the Senate**



REPUBLIC OF KENYA  
**13<sup>TH</sup> PARLIAMENT - 4<sup>TH</sup> SESSION**



Sen. Abasi Sheikh Mohamed, MP  
Wajir County  
UDM



Sen. Abdul Mohamed Haji, CBS, MP  
Garissa County  
IP



Sen. Agnes Kavindu Mathara, MP  
Machakos County  
WDM



Sen. Alexander Muryi Mwangi, MP  
Taita County  
DP



Sen. (Cape) Ali Ibrahim Mwanjuki, MP  
Mandera County  
UDM



Sen. Betty Barili Mwangi, MP  
Nominated  
ODM



Sen. Catherine Atiyeka Mwangi, MP  
Nominated  
ODM



Sen. Crystal Raphael Aigie, MP  
Nominated  
ODM



Sen. David Kitwaga Akumu, MP  
Mikumi County  
WDM



Sen. Esther Chesere Ayiemba, MP  
Nominated  
UDA  
(Swearing in on 28th November, 2022)



Sen. Estance Adan Dullo, CBS, MP  
Isiolo County  
IP



Sen. George Mongai Abegana, MP  
Nominated  
UDA



Sen. Cassilda Nalwala Wainwani, MP  
Nominated  
UDA



Sen. Jackson Kijaji Mwangi, EGH, MP  
Uasin Gishu County  
UDA



Sen. James Kimani Mutunga, MP  
Kitengwa County  
UDA



Sen. James Lutterwa Ekumu, MP  
Narok County  
IP



Sen. Joe Nyata, MP  
Mwingi County  
UDA



Sen. Joyce Chaptinchi Saiti, MP  
Nominated  
UDA



Sen. (Ret.) Jubar Abegana Ibrahim, CBS, MP  
West Pokot County  
UDA



Sen. Karen Njeri Nyumu, MP  
Nominated  
UDA



Sen. Kiprotich Sigo Hilkey Wakili, MP  
Bomet County  
UDA



Sen. Miraj Abdillahi Abdulkahar, MP  
Nominated  
UDA



Sen. Mohamed Faki Mwangi, CBS, MP  
Siaya County  
ODM



Sen. Mohamed Said Chuma, MP  
Mandera County  
UDA



Sen. Moses Othman Kapungu, CBS, MP  
Homabay County  
ODM



Sen. Ephraim Chirwa Njiru, MP  
Nominated  
UDA



Sen. Richard Mwangi Oryinika, CBS, MP  
Kisumu County  
ODM



Sen. Samuel Kiprotich Chesere, MP  
Nandi County  
UDA



Sen. Shafiq Abdulla Mohamed, MP  
Nominated  
WDM



Sen. (Prof.) Tom Odhiambo, MP  
Kisumu County  
ODM



Sen. Markomen Othman Epuchumba, EGH  
UDA  
(Nominated on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2022)



Sen. Taya Kiprotich Sojan, EGH  
Nominated  
UDA  
(Nominated on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2022)



Sen. Gloria Magoma Oruc  
Nominated  
UDA  
(Nominated on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2022)

(Nominated on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2022, upon nomination as a Cabinet Minister)

(Nominated on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2022, upon nomination as a Cabinet Minister)

(Nominated on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2022)



# REPUBLIC OF KENYA 10TH SENATE (2022-2027)









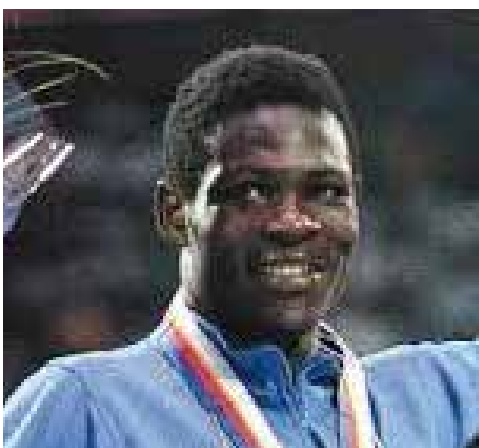
*Prof Julia Auma Ojiambo*

Politician, academic, researcher and gender activist are some of the easy accolades used to describe Prof Julia Auma Ojiambo.

She has scored so many firsts in her long career that it is impossible to remember some.

Some describe her life as a map of many firsts.

She was the first woman in Kenya to be elected a member of Parliament in 1974, the first female assistant minister in the Kenyan cabinet. She was the first African female student to be admitted at the Royal Technical College, the current University of Nairobi. She was the pioneer single student at the Home Science Department of the institution where she graduated with a Diploma in Home Economics in 1958. After completing her undergraduate studies, Prof Ojiambo was employed by the University of Nairobi as the first African woman Assistant Lecturer and the first African woman warden.



*Robert Wangila*

He bagged his first gold medal at the 1987 All Africa Games which elevated him to instant national fame. But that was just the introduction to the man with the power fists. At just 22, Wangila took the flag beyond the country as one of the Kenyan athletes at the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, Korea, where he won Kenya first-and-only Olympic gold medal in boxing in the men's welterweight. This historic win made him not only the first Kenyan

but also the first and only boxer from Sub-Saharan Africa to claim an Olympic gold medal in boxing. To date, he's still the only Kenyan athlete to have won Olympic gold, outside athletics. In fact, no boxer from sub-Saharan Africa, outside of South Africa, has ever attained this feat.

Wangila's victory is a testament to his extraordinary talent and determination.



*Professor Hillary Ojiambo*

The man known among friends as intelligent, meticulous, and sensitive person, also hailed from Busia County. He is a pioneer cardiologist in East and Central Africa and the co-founder of the Kenya Cardiac Society alongside Prof Peter Odhiambo.

Prof Ojiambo also served as Editor in Chief East Africa Medical Journal. Among other illustrious scholars and professionals who served as editors of the EAMJ, were the late Professor Nelson Awori and the late Dr Martin Luther Oduori who served as Director of Kenyatta National Hospital. Just like Prof Ojiambo, these brilliant gentlemen were all from Samia.



*Prof Nelson Awori*

Professor Nelson Awori was a pioneering African medical professional, research-

er, and educator who achieved the first kidney transplant in Africa in 1978. He established the first urology department at the University of Nairobi, researched debilitating diseases in Africans, and championed medical equity.

Urology is a branch of medicine that focuses on medical and surgical treatment of male and female urinary-tract system, and the male reproductive organs.

He died in 1986 in fatal car crash. His significant legacy is honoured by a modern office complex in Nairobi, the Professor Nelson Awori Centre.

At Kenyatta University Teaching and Referral Hospital (KUTTRH), he is recognised as a medical hero. This is mainly because he pioneered the fight against the kidney disease.



*Mr McDonald Mariga*

He is the current deputy President Football Kenya Federation (FKF). He is the first Kenyan footballer to win the prestigious UEFA Champions League when he was part of the Inter Milan squad in the 2009/10 season under coach José Mourinho. His inclusion in the Champions League squad made him the first East African player to achieve this feat. Other include playing in the FIFA Club World Cup, and Serie A, all with Inter Milan in the 2009-10 season. He also won the Coppa Italia twice and the Supercoppa Italiana once with the Italian club. Mariga is recognised as a football trailblazer, being the first Kenyan to play in Serie A and La Liga, and also for his 40 caps with the Kenyan national team



*Dr Micah Majale*

Born in 1923 in Funyula, Dr Micah Majale was Kenya's first indigenous orthopedic surgeon. He helped establish local capacity, trained undergraduate studies at Makerere University. He then further trained in France specifically in orthopedics. He laid the foundation for orthopedic surgery in Kenya: building the systems, mentoring, and developing the discipline locally. He was associated with Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH), including its first medical school. His work helped establish orthopedic services at the facility. There is a "Dr. Micah Majale Memorial Lecture" in the East African Orthopedic Journal, which suggests he is well remembered in the orthopedic medical community.



*Mary Okelo*

She was the first woman bank manager in Kenya in 1977 and later the first African representative to the World Women Banking Organization in 1985.

## Senators use Eldoret Sitting to pay tribute to Eliud Kipchoge



*Eliud Kipchoge*

Senators arrived in Uasin Gishu in the late September 2018 for the first Senate Mashinani, just 10 days after Mr Eliud Kipchoge had broken one his many athletics records during the marathon race on a cold and windy Sunday day in Berlin, Germany.

On September 6, 2018, Kipchoge had stormed through the streets of Berlin and stopped the clock at 2:01:39, smashing the marathon world record and etching his name in history.

In a Motion to honour Mr Kipchoge The tributes to Kipchoge's discipline and humility, the pride in Kenya's sporting legacy and the urgent calls for better treatment of athletes still speak with remarkable relevance today.

It was the then Majority Leader Kipchumba Murkomen who moved

the Motion, describing Kipchoge as "a gentleman par excellence" and athletics as Kenya's strongest global brand, reminding the House that when Kenyans are running on the world stage, the entire nation unites, even across political and ethnic lines.

But he also sounded a warning: "We reap where we have not sown," he said, lamenting the lack of investment in sports facilities and athlete welfare.

Senator Murkomen called for pension schemes, psychosocial support and protection from unscrupulous managers who exploit runners, noting that many world-class athletes train under deplorable conditions and retire into poverty despite bringing the country global fame.

Mr Kipchoge has since twice stretched the limits of human endurance, famously

breaking the two-hour barrier in Vienna in 2019, yet many Kenyan athletes still train on rough fields and face exploitation in retirement.

The Minority Leader James Orengo, said athletes market the country better than politicians ever could, pointing out that in other nations, monuments are erected to immortalise champions, while in Kenya such honours are reserved for politicians.

Senator Moses Wetang'ula narrated how Kipchoge's triumph brought him unexpected stardom abroad. He recalled being in Ghana with former President John Kufuor when news of the record broke.

"Everyone hugged me as if I was the one who had run," he said while he regretted that in Berlin, Kipchoge

was draped not in Kenya's flag but in BMW's, something he blamed Kenya diplomatic mission in Germany.

"Even without a record, the mere fact that he was competing should have been enough to market our country," he lamented.

He called for the establishment of a non-contributory pension scheme to cushion athletes in their twilight years, noting that too many heroes had been left destitute.

Senators from across the country added their reflections with Senator Samson Cherarkey describing Kipchoge as a humble role model and demanded that national honours be reserved for athletes rather than "individuals who have done nothing for this country".

Senator Fatuma Dullo stressed that



Senator James Orengo



Senator Mohamed Mahamud



Senator Naomi Shiyonga



Senator Christine Zawadi

sports could replace cattle rustling with camaraderie in pastoralist regions, while her colleague Abshiro Halake challenged gender discrimination in athletics, condemning testosterone testing rules for women and calling for greater representation of women in sports leadership.

Senator Mithika Linturi urged the President to decorate athletes with national honours as he lamented that many champions retire into poverty and ill health.

Senator Sam Onger, once a sports administrator, recalled how Kenya built Nyayo Stadium using funds saved from boycotting the 1980 Moscow Olympics.

He recounted battles fought to keep doping at bay, warning that unscrupulous foreign agents had long sought to lure Kenyan runners into banned substances.

Senator Amos Wako reminded the House of Kenya's long tradition of champions — from Naftali Temu and Kipchoge Keino to Catherine Ndereba and Tegla Loroupe.

He insisted that their exploits were

not just about medals but about shaping Kenya's global identity.

Senator Murkomen cautioned against ridiculing athletes on social media, urging them to speak proudly in Kiswahili or their mother tongues with interpreters provided.

"We must be our brother's keeper," he pleaded and added: "Instead of laughing at them when they fall, we should reach out."

The Motion urged the government to allocate more funds to improve sports facilities, incentivise private investors, provide psychosocial and pension support to athletes and establish a fund for those forced into early retirement by injury or illness.

The debate was full of empathy as Senators felt that athletes were struggling and vulnerable despite winning Kenya medals and pride.

They recognised that the Berlin record was more than a victory for one man but a mirror held up to Kenya itself, showing both the heights, the nation could reach and the depths of neglect it could sink to.

Said Wetang'ula: "When Kipchoge runs, Kenya stands tall. The least we can do is stand by him and by all our athletes, long after the finish line."

Senator Milgo hailed Kipchoge's feat as a source of immense pride, noting that athletes have become key investors in counties like Bomet, where high-rise buildings and community pride have emerged from sporting success.

Senator George Khaniri observed that athletics has overtaken wildlife and tourism in branding Kenya globally and called for serious investment in sports, including the establishment of sports tourism, to fully harness the nation's athletic prowess.

Senator Johnson Sakaja, talked of the urgent need for counties to invest in facilities and playgrounds and emphasised that nurturing sports should not be left to chance.

Senator Gideon Moi linked Kipchoge's triumph to Kenya's long history of athletics excellence and recalled Paul Tergat from his home County of Baringo.

He proposed innovative funding models, including a sports lottery, to finance athlete welfare and insurance even as he urged for nurturing of diverse sports such as cricket and polo to tap into hidden talent.

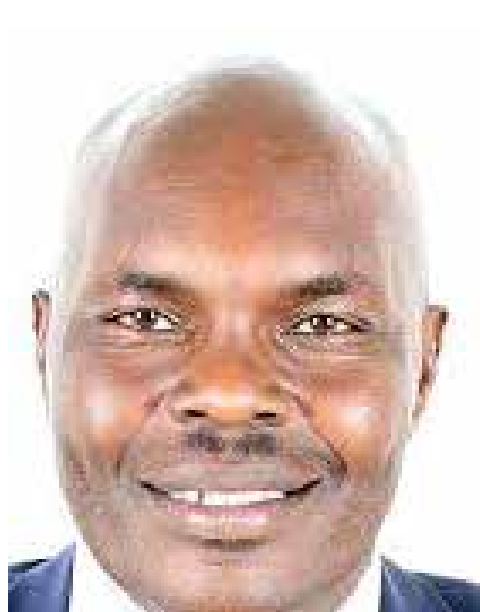
Senator Naomi Waqo praised Kipchoge's discipline and called for broader support systems, including pension schemes that extend to athletes' families.

She highlighted the sacrifices made by sportspeople and urged the Senate to legislate protective measures for them even as Senator Ledama ole Kina reflected on his own scholarship experience through basketball in the United States.

He contrasted it with Kenya where athletes struggle for support and pressed counties to develop training facilities and to introduce financial literacy programs for athletes.

He warned that without such frameworks, sports success could be fleeting.

Senator Margret Kamar praised not just Kipchoge but also Gladys Cheron, Wilson Kipsang and Amos Kipruto for their Berlin Marathon triumphs.



Senator Christopher Langat



Senator Isaac Mwaura



Senator Judy Pareno



Senator Susan Kihika



Senator Kipchumba Murkomen

She urged government and private sector collaboration in building training facilities.

Senator Aaron Cheruiyot reminded the House that Kenya has a reservoir of untapped talent. He called for sports institutes to identify potential stars at younger ages while also warning against the influence of cartels in athletics.

He linked sports investment to nation-



Senator Rose Nyamunga

al cohesion, stressing its peace-building role even as Senator Naomi Shiyonga praised Kipchoge's record-breaking run as inspirational for young Kenyans.

She emphasised that beyond celebrating heroes, deliberate policies must be implemented to ensure that upcoming athletes are supported and protected from exploitation.

Senator Mohamed Mahamud said

Kenya is globally branded as a land of runners, yet the athletes largely succeed without organised state support. He called for structures to safeguard their earnings, ensure better stadia and formalise sports development as part of national pride.

Senator Isaac Mwaura noted that Kenyans often neglect heroes until they fall into hardship. Citing the Heroes Act, he urged the Senate to honor athletes formally and provide social support even as he called for celebration that goes beyond pomp. He warned against leaving sportspeople to poverty after their peak years, with Senator Ephraim Maina likening Kenya's handling of sports talent to an elephant unaware of the value of its tusks.

Senator Christine Zawadi noted that Kipchoge's victory placed Kenya on the global stage, celebrated by international media and pushed for pension products and stronger athletes' unions to shield them from exploitation by sports cartels, particularly in athletics and football.

Senator Christopher Langat urged

the establishment of a national sports institute to detect and nurture talent early, warning of athletes being exploited in camps.

Hailing Rwanda's model where sports offices are housed within stadiums, Senator Judith Paredo questioned Kenya's lack of academies and sports-focused administration, and suggested Kenya should adopt similar innovative frameworks. Senator Hargura Godana expressed regret that Kenya's athletes succeed mostly through personal struggle and argued that sports has been underfunded and undervalued despite its power in building cohesion.

Senator Susan Kihika urged policymakers to seize the moment and legislate meaningful reforms in sports management so that Kenya's glory on the tracks translates into structured opportunities for the youth.

Senator Rose Nyamunga emphasised on the importance of tapping into athletics, not only for pride, but also for County-level economic development.

## Dr Moody Awori: Kenya's ninth VP hails from Busia County

Famously known as Uncle Moody, Dr Moody Arthur Awori, Kenya's ninth vice President also hails from Funyula, Busia County.

He the son of the late Jeremiah Awori, the pioneering African Canon of the Anglican Church in Kenya who successfully established over 100 churches in Western Kenya prior to his demise in 1971.

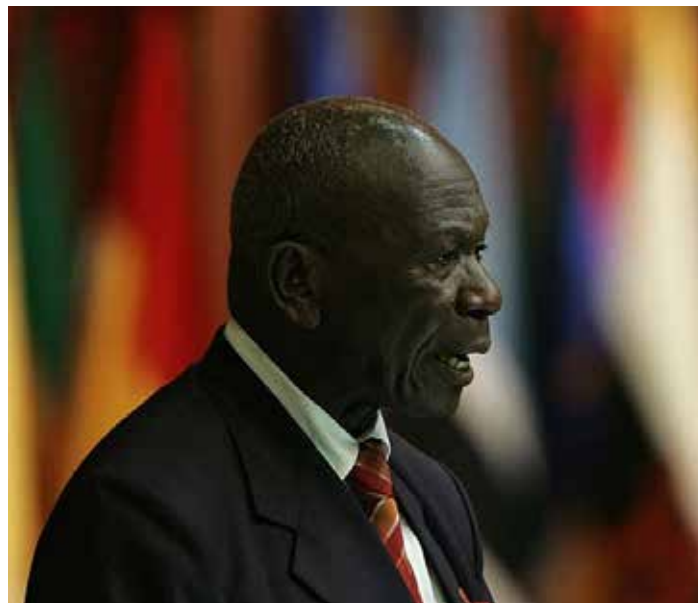
Hon Awori, 98, served as the country's second in command under President Mwai Kibaki, from September 25, 2003 to January 9, 2008 after the 2007 general election.

He had served as Minister for Home affairs, under the Kibaki administration, where he is remembered for having pioneered reforms in Kenyan Prisons focused on improving the dignity and welfare of inmates, introducing measures like mattresses, television access, and more respectful transportation compared to harsh conditions.

These reforms, initiated aimed to shift prisons from punitive centers to places of rehabilitation.

He was first elected as a Member of Parliament representing Funyula Constituency in the then-Busia District in Western Province in 1984. He served in several positions as assistant minister in the President Daniel Arap Moi regime.

Awori quit KANU in 2002 and



Dr Moody Awori speaks in a public forum during his time as Vice President.

joined the National Rainbow Coalition opposition party, and served as chairman of NARC'S top decision-making organ.

He was appointed Minister of Home Affairs in January 2003 and later Vice-President (while remaining in charge of Home Affairs) in September 2003, following the death of Michael Kijana Wamalwa.

He lost his Funyula parliamentary seat in the 2007 general elections.

Uncle Moody is the founding chairman of the Association for the Physically

Disabled of Kenya and a member of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries.

He holds an honorary doctor of laws degree from the Southern New Hampshire University in the United States of America. He was awarded the degree in May 2004 in recognition of his many years of dedicated service to the disadvantaged in society, particularly the disabled and the poor.

In recognition of his outstanding contribution to the nation and the society in general, the Kenyan Government decorated him with two high-level State

awards – Elder of the Burning Spear (EBS) and Elder of the Golden Heart (EGH).

Uncle Moody made a comeback in President Uhuru Kenyatta's government as the Chairman of the Youths Sports Fund at the age of 91, eliciting mixed reactions from members of the public. At the time, Uhuru defended the appointment claiming that the youth had failed to prevent the theft of public funds.



Dr Moody Awori and then Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi in 2007.

When the Senate Mashinani moved to Kitui County in 2019, Speaker Kenneth Lusaka cited the success of the inaugural sittings in Uasin Gishu County saying that they had opened up the scope for the Senate to operate amidst the people and beyond the capital.

He cited the case of the national executive which has, since 2016, adopted the concept for the celebration of national holidays every year in various counties and regions of the country. “Senators, through this Senate Mashinani Initiative, the Senate is making its contribution towards nurturing more inclusivity in the management of public affairs in our country,” he stated, using some of the phrases he had used earlier in Uasin Gishu.

“In holding our sitting at the Kitui County Assembly, the Senate believes that County assemblies can complement good legislative practices, and hold the potential of directly identifying and addressing the people’s tribulations, revitalising hopes and aspirations, as well as deepening a democratic, consultative and participatory governance tradition. I dare add that the County assemblies are at the core of improving governance in our country.



Senator Enock Wambua

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir, for this opportunity to join you and my colleagues in welcoming the dignitaries that have been invited to attend the Second Senate Mashinani Sitting in Kitui County. When you stand to invite guests who are your seniors in politics, it feels like you are sitting for a —Leadership 101 test, and being marked in real time. I am very sure that if it was Senator Aaron Cheruiyot from Kericho doing this test, he would probably fail. I am very grateful that the leadership of the Senate unanimously agreed to come to Kitui to sit for the Senate Mashinani. On behalf

of the great people of Kitui and on my own behalf, I welcome all Senators and guests that have been invited. This is the making of history. If each County in this country is going to host the Senate Mashinani once a year, it will take the next 46 years before the Senate comes back to Kitui. I, therefore, want to invite the leaders and the people of Kitui to join all of us in witnessing and celebrating the making of history in our County. The Senate Mashinani Programme, as rolled out by the Senate, will ensure that Senators will have access to different parts and institutions of this County. As I welcome the Senators to Kitui, I ask them to take time and visit all the institutions that are listed in the programme; interact with the people of Kitui and see how we can join hands to help our people in deepening and widening devolution.”



Minority Leader James Orengo:

“It has been pleasant being here. The Senate Majority Leader is not here; it would have been a wonderful thing for him to be here in the very first session, but he got injured. I talked to him a little bit earlier. Somebody was telling me that the people in the County were not happy that the Senate took all the trophies. I do not know whether somebody used kamute to ensure that the Senate Majority Leader is not here, but I know that he would have been very happy to be here.

I am also very delighted to see the Governor of Kitui Charity Ngilu is here. As you know, the Governor of Kitui was at the forefront in fighting for this new Constitution of dispensation. To the ladies who are here today, I have said before in the Senate that I am looking forward to the day when the majority of Senators will be ladies. The gentlemen are not applauding! We should have as many female governors as possible and we thank her for being here. Kitui Coun-

ty has a unique leadership, because the Speaker of the County Assembly in Kitui was a Minister in the national Government. He performed wonderfully when he was in the Cabinet. I know that as a matter of fact. The former Provincial Commissioner (PC), Senator David Musila, is here. I do not know which title we should use for him in retirement; although politicians never retire. I do not know whether we should call him the PC, the Minister, The Senator, or Mheshimiwa, because he was also in the National Assembly. At one time, I was in the presence of the former President Moi with a member of the National Assembly who had lost in the elections. That member had once served as a Minister, and then he became a nominated councillor when he lost his seat in the National Assembly. When there was a function at Parliament, he went to President Moi and said, —Mr. President, can you meet the Assistant Minister, Mheshimiwa Councillor OchollaOgur? (Laughter) I, therefore, do not know whether they should keep all those titles. Even more importantly, Kitui has produced some of the best brains and leaders in this country. Talking as a lawyer, the first black Chief Justice and Solicitor-General, Kitili Mwendwa, came from this great County. The second Chief Justice under the current Constitution also came from this County. This County has produced one of the Vice Presidents who is my boss in NASA. Therefore, it is a great County. In fact, if I keep on mentioning these dignitaries, I will be on my feet for very long.

I want Senators here to know how familiar I am with Kitui; I used to run an office here in Kitui. I would go to Mwingi, the courts around here and I remember when I first came to Kitui, the roads were not as good so when I crossed in from Machakos, I kept on asking on the way: —Am I about to get to Kitui and they would tell me: —novaa, novaa”. I kept on going, until I almost gave up. Let me not say anything more than that; we are happy to be in Kitui. I hope we are going to have a very robust debate here in Kitui and I thank the County Assembly also for building and erecting such a magnificent Chamber. I think we also have some business to learn from the way they operate here in Kitui as a County Assembly. I think the Speaker and his team have done a very good job.”

One of the greatest impacts that we left in Kitui County for the second Senate Mashinani was when the Justice and Legal Affairs and Human Rights Committee visit Kitui Prison and engaged with the people that had pending bail

hearings and rulings. Eventually, they were able to secure the release of those citizens. That is a lasting impact that has remained with the people of Kitui County. As we I



Senator Mohamed Mahamud said:

“As we sit in Kitui County I, who come from Mandera in the former North Eastern Province--- we are almost nearing Garissa. I think the Senate is going this direction; being in Kitui County it will be easy to go to Garissa and Mandera in future. I welcome the opportunity for Kitui County to have hosted us and at least to exchange ideas and work together with the County Assembly. This is a very important session for us today. Today as we sit here, we are going to move the current County Allocation of Revenue Bill, and pass it tonight which will open the gate for funding to the counties. I think it is actually a good opportunity for us to do it in a County and not in Nairobi. It is a good opportunity for us to discuss this Bill and the people of Kitui to take the advantage of us being here and passing it here. I would like to assure the County Government of Kitui; both the Assembly and the Executive, that the Senate is there to work with you to defend the counties and their governments as stipulated in Article 96 of the Constitution. With those few remarks, I apologise as my colleague Senator Orengo has said; we wish the Senate Majority Leader would have been here. Yesterday he played hard and I think the people of Kitui willingly ceded defeat because they did not want to defeat guests in their own home. We congratulate ourselves for winning both the football and the tug of war.”

## Senate Mashinani is nurturing inclusivity, Speaker Kingi

Through the Senate Mashinani Initiative, the Senate is making its contribution towards nurturing inclusivity and management of public affairs in Kenya. In holding a sitting at the Turkana County Assembly, the Senate also affirms that County assemblies have the power to directly identify and address the people's concerns, revitalise the hopes and aspirations, deepen our democratic, consultative and participatory Government, as well as strengthening institutions of governance in the country.

County assemblies are, therefore, called to complement good legislative practices by proactively and robustly taking up the constitutional and statutory rules as espoused under Article 185 of the Constitution and Sections eight and nine of the County Governments Act to bring the executive to account. In this respect, the Senate is willing to partner with the County assemblies to ensure that devolution works. On our part, the Senate will continue to play its role as the protector and defender of devolution. We shall jealously guard against

attempts at watering down the devolved governance structure and thereby, eroding the gains that devolution has brought and portends. Therefore, let us take advantage of this unique opportunity to engage in candid discourse, on what needs to be done to achieve prosperity and to strengthen devolution. In doing so, I am confident that the objectives you have set for yourselves through the event and the subsequent ones in the time of the 13th Parliament, shall be met.



Speaker Amason Kingi.

## Frontier counties are source of inspiration – Majority Leader



Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot.

“I appreciate that the leaders have found time to welcome us into the beautiful County of Turkana, the cradle of mankind, the home of the world's largest desert lake and so many attributes that we can list about this County. I know many of our colleagues like yours truly, this is the first time to be in the County of Turkana. In the few hours that we have been here since I arrived, I have learnt that one of the greatest potential counties in our country is the County of Turkana. They say that a chain is as strong as its weakest links. I still maintain the position that our weakest links are our frontier counties, not because they lack opportunities or they are not resourced but because we have over the years marginalised them, yet they have great potential if we invest in them.

They can be a source of great inspiration for the people of Kenya. I hope that in the next few days that we shall be here, we shall all have an eye-opening moment as Senators and decision-makers in this country, so that we continue investing in our frontier counties like Turkana and the others. I also thank my colleague leaders who have come together with the people of Turkana. I hope we shall get to learn and enjoy. It was our most ardent wish and I spoke to Governor, earlier and told him to please have the Tobong Lore ceremony alongside this Senate Mashinani. Unfortunately, I think due to other reasons, that was not possible. So, just to tell him that if there were goods that he had set aside for Senators, he should not sell them. We shall still be back here for Tobong Lore later on in the year when they reveal it to us.

## Senate Mashinani in Turkana is special, Senator Lomenen

“I had accompanied the Committee on Energy to Tullow Oil in Lokichar which is 90 kilometres from here. Yesterday, we went to Lake Turkana Wind Power (LTWP) to get rid of blackouts in this nation. I am very happy for giving me permission to mobilise the County. On Wednesday, I came here and went to every radio station. I also sensitized the youth and women to make sure that they were aware that God had given us an opportunity to hold Senate Mashinani. To us, this is a special opportunity. This is because most of the time, I have cried in the Senate while saying that we were marginalised and forgotten in the Sessional Paper of 1965. We were denied many opportunities that we deserved. However, this time, I can confidently say that Turkana County belongs to Kenya. As we prepare to go back, I know that

everybody will say that they have come from the furthest corner of Kenya and they have learned many things in Turkana County. I know that we have challenges just like in every community. We were with the senior Senators in Lokichar to see the challenges faced by the community brought by the Tullow organisation. I am very happy to see that all the invited Senators are here. I am telling my community that the people whom they see on television and newspapers and hear on radio, are all here. You can feel, touch, and hear them because they are all here. They are fearfully and wonderfully made. I have been given this opportunity because I know the challenges that Turkana County has been having. There have been assumptions that we are allocated funds but we do not know where they are. However, those who went with

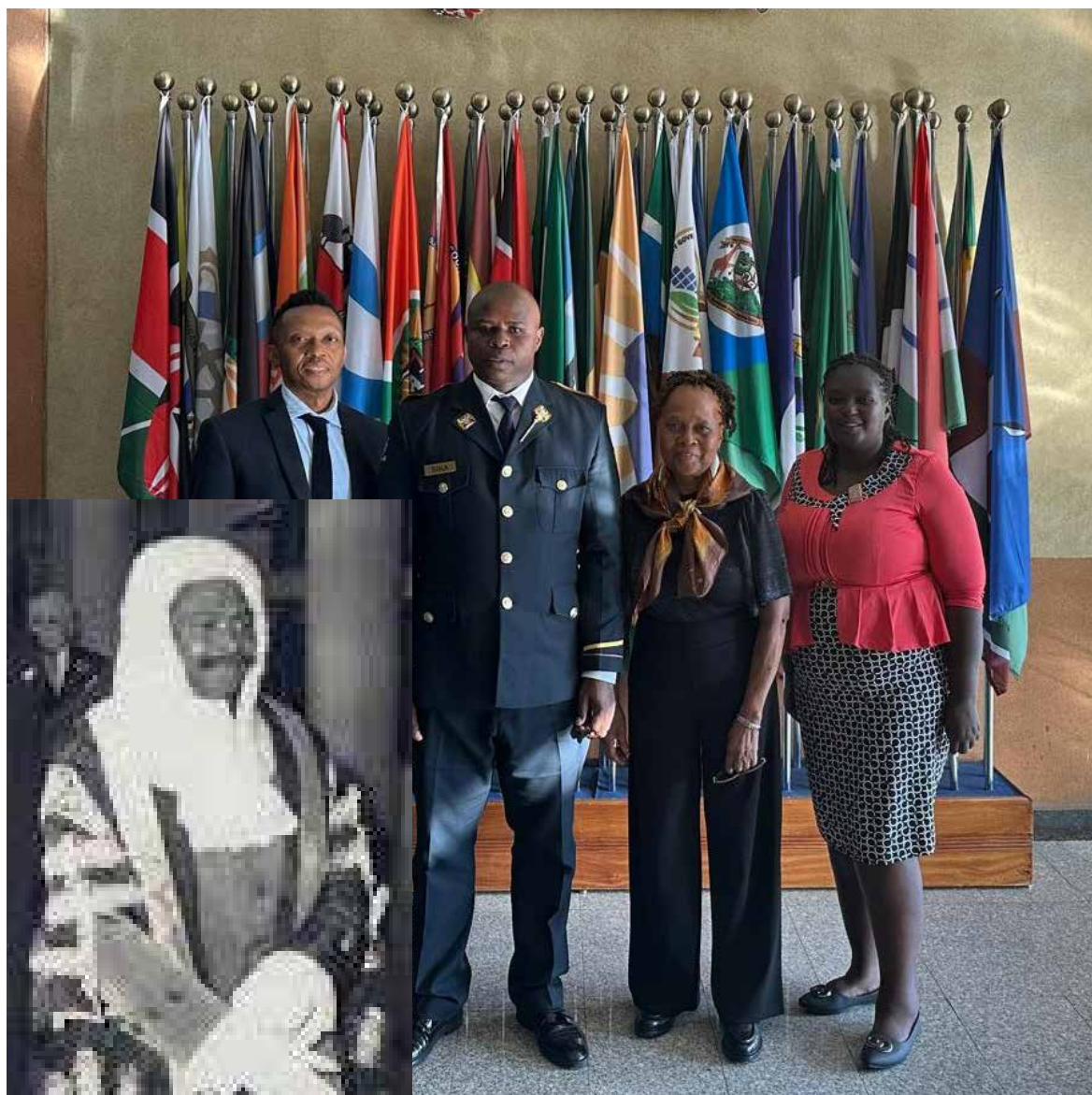


Senator James Lomenen

us to Lokichar, saw what happened on the road. The Kenya Women Senators Association (KEWOSA) also saw how the women were. For those people who want to go to Kibish, there are so many things to see. When Jesus was preaching

the word, he visited all the areas to see with his naked eyes before he went to the spirit. So, you have seen it. So, when you go back, you will interpret it in spirit and assist us to challenge our issues.”

## First Senate 1963 to 1966



*The family members of the late Timothy Chokwe (inset), who served as the first ever Speaker of the independence Senate in 1963, in a group photo with Mr Ben Sika, Serjeant-At-Arms, during their tour of the Senate last April. From left, Nimrod Mwakitawa Chokwe (grandson), Ms Alice Damaris Chokwe (daughter in law) and Ms Maria Nzisa Kioko (niece).*

The 1962 Lancaster Constitution which set the stage for Kenya's independence created a Bicameral Parliament called the National Assembly, consisting of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The House Representatives had 117 members elected in constituencies, 12 nominated Members and the Attorney General as an ex officio member. The National Assembly held its first sitting on 11th June 1963.

The Senate was composed of 41 members, drawn from each of the 40 districts in the country and one from Nairobi area and the Speaker. The first Senate met on June 7, 1963 and Hon Timothy Chitasi Muinga Chokwe served as the first Senate Speaker.

The Senators were elected for a six-year term, with one-third of the members retiring every two years.

The idea of a second chamber for Kenya was originally proposed by the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) as part of its plan to provide protection for the smaller tribes, which that party represented, against the danger of domination by the larger communities, which supported the Kenya African National Union (KANU). The Senate was also expected to safeguard the autonomy of the regions (Majimbo) and to protect the interests of the people of the various regions. It was further to safeguard the 1962 Constitution in that no constitutional amendments would take place without involving the Senate. Bicameralism was also supported by Asian merchants and European settlers in Kenya as a means of providing some checks against hasty, ill-advised, or discriminatory action.

However, the first Senate survived for only three years.

The Constitution of Kenya (Amendment) Act, 1966 abolished the Senate and its membership was combined with that of the House of Representatives to form a unicameral legislature, The National Assembly. Different reasons have been given for the disbandment of the Senate.

The Senate's power to keep the Executive under check was weakened, contributing to the push for its dissolution.

After its abolition in 1966, the Senate was re-established following the promulgation of the 2010 constitution to represent counties and interests as well as pass legislation concerning counties.

### The list of first members of the 1963 Senate

	Constituency	Senator
1	Mombasa District	S. R. D. Msechu
2	Kwale District	Rocky Mchinga
3	Kilifi District	H. J. Malingi
4	Tana River District	Martin T. Jilo
5	Lamu District	Msallam M. Ali
6	Taita-Taveta District	W. K. Mengo
7	Garissa District	Abdi Haji Ahmed
8	Wajir District	Noor Adhan Hassan
9	Mandera District	Mohamed Nur Hussein
10	Marsabit District	S. A. Galgallo
11	Isiolo District	Mkubito Lawi
12	Meru District	Julius Muthamia
13	Embu District	S. R. Nyaga
14	Kitui District	Permenas Nzilu Munyasias
15	Machakos District	J. M. Nthula
16	Nyandarua District	Gideon G. Kago
17	Nyeri District	James P. Mathenge
18	Kirinyaga District	Ndegwa Njiru
19	Fort Hall District	Tadeo Mwaura
20	Kiambu District	J. M. Koinange

21	Thika District	J. M. Njonjo
22	Turkana District	J. H. Robaro
23	West Pokot District	E. Porriot Kassachon
24	Samburu District	J. Lenayiarra Kanite
25	Trans-Nzoia District	William Wamalwa
26	Uasin Gishu District	E. M. Daliti
27	Elgeyo-Marakwet District	J. K. Arap Chemjor
28	Nandi District	G. N. Kalya
29	Baringo District	William Kiptui Rotich
30	Laikipia District	Tom Kariuki Gichohi
31	Nakuru District	W. Sijeyo
32	Narok District	P. T. Ole Lemein
33	Kajiado District	G. K. Ole Kipury
34	Kericho District	James K Arap Soi
35	Kakamega District	A. R. Tsalwa
36	Bungoma District	Nathan W. Munoko
7	Busia District	J. W. Machio
42	Central Nyanza District	D. O. Makasembo
39	South Nyanza District	S. F. Mbeo-Onyango
40	Kisii District	J. K. Kebaso
41	Nairobi Extra-Regional Area	C. K. Lubembe

# Understanding the Senate of the Republic of Kenya



## 1. Legal Basis

The Senate consists of-

- (i) Forty-seven members each elected by the registered voters of the counties, each county constituting a single member constituency;
- (ii) Sixteen women members who shall be nominated by political parties according to their proportion of elected members of the Senate;
- (iii) Two members, being one man and one woman, representing the youth;
- (iv) Two members, being one man and one woman, representing persons with disabilities; and
- (v) The Speaker, who shall be an

ex officio member.

The Senate is the upper house of Parliament. Its main role is to represent and safeguard the interests of counties and their governments. Under Article 96 of the Constitution, the Senate:

Participates in law-making by considering Bills that affect counties.

Determines county revenue by debating and approving the Division and Allocation of Revenue Bills.

Exercises oversight over the national revenue allocated to counties.

Represents counties in national

debates, ensuring devolution is respected.

Unlike the National Assembly, which focuses on national policy, budgets, and taxes, the Senate ensures equity and fairness in devolution.

The Senate is also the House that determines removal from Office by Impeachment of the President, Deputy President, County Governors, and their Deputies.

## 2. County Matters

The Fourth Schedule of the Constitution stipulates the crucial services overseen by Counties: primary healthcare, agriculture,

early childhood education, local infrastructure, and cultural promotion. The Senate ensures counties:

- Receive fair funding regardless of size or population.
- Are accountable in using devolved resources.
- Have laws supporting devolution and service delivery.

**Example:** The Senate intervened when several counties delayed paying health workers. By summoning governors, it ensured citizens' right to healthcare was protected.

### 3. Law-Making Process

How does the Senate make laws?

- (a) Introduction – A senator or committee drafts a Bill.
- (b) First Reading – Bill is formally introduced, no debate yet.
- (c) Second Reading – Senators debate the Bill's principles.
- (d) Committee of the Whole – Senators discuss clauses line by line, amend if needed.
- (e) Third Reading – Final debate and vote.
- (f) Transmission – If it affects counties, the National Assembly must also approve.
- (g) Presidential Assent – Signed into law.

#### Types of Bills:

**Senate Bills** – Primarily affect counties (e.g., County Allocation of Revenue).

**Shared Bills** – Both Houses must agree (e.g., health financing laws).

#### 4. Public Finance & Devolution

Money is at the heart of devolution, and the Senate controls the flow.

#### Division of Revenue Bill (DoRB):

Splits money between the national government and counties (e.g., 85% national, 15% counties).

#### County Allocation of Revenue Bill (CARB):

Distributes the county share among the 47 counties.

**Equalization Fund:** Provides extra money to marginalized areas like Turkana, Mandera, or West Pokot to improve water, roads, and electricity.

The Senate debates formulas like population, land size, poverty index, and service delivery gaps to decide who gets what.

#### 5. Oversight and Accountability

Governors manage billions of shillings annually, but who checks

them? The Senate does and through its Sessional watchdog Committees;

- It summons governors, county executives, or auditors to explain spending.
- It reviews reports from the Controller of Budget and Auditor-General.
- It can recommend sanctions against governors who misuse funds.

**Case Study:** In 2020, the Senate investigated how counties used COVID-19 emergency funds, the Kshs63B Managed Equipment Services to counties, the KEMSA Scandal scrutiny on misappropriation on billions of shillings, e.t.c

#### 6. Public Participation

The Constitution demands that citizens must be involved in governance. The Senate promotes this by:

- Holding public hearings on Bills in different counties.
- Allowing citizens to submit memoranda on laws and policies.
- Giving any Kenyan the right to petition the Senate on county matters.

**Tip for citizens:** You don't need to be a lawyer to petition the Senate. A simple letter with signatures from affected residents is enough.

#### 7. Senate Committees

Committees are the Senate's engines. They dig deep into issues before bringing them to the House.

Committees are a vital tool or organ in the working processes of Legislatures, without which, the proceedings of a Legislature could grind to a halt for the sheer volume of activities that would have to be considered at Plenary. Committees are agents, which enable Legislatures to organize their work in such a way as to perform numerous activities simultaneously

and expeditiously. These include matters such as:

- (i) Reviewing legislation;
- (ii) Reviewing and approving the budget and expenditures for the execution of governance;
- (iii) Scrutinizing governance activities, policies and programmes, assessing whether they meet the intended objectives of legislation, policy frameworks and development plans;
- (iv) Conducting investigations on special issues;
- (v) Vetting and approving executive appointments;
- (vi) Providing a platform for public participation in the execution of specified business.

The Senate has a total of 21 Committees divided into different categories:

#### 1. The House Keeping Committees;

- (i) The Senate Business Committee
- (ii) The Liaison Committee
- (iii) The Procedures and Rules Committee
- (iv) The Powers and Privileges Committee

#### 2. The Standing Committees

- (i) Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries
- (ii) Education
- (iii) Information Communication and Technology
- (iv) Roads and Transportation
- (v) Energy
- (vi) Finance and Budget
- (vii) Health
- (viii) Justice, Legal Affairs and Human Rights
- (ix) Devolution and Intergovernmental Relations
- (x) Labour and Social Welfare
- (xi) Lands, Environmental and Natural Resources
- (xii) National Cohesion, Equal Opportunity and Regional Integration
- (xiii) National Security and

- Foreign Relations
- (xiv) Tourism, Trade and Industrialization

#### 3. Sessional Committees

- (i) County Public Accounts
- (ii) County Public Investment & Special Funds
- (iii) Delegated Legislation

#### 4. Ad Hoc Select Committees

Ad-hoc committees are temporary committees established to resolve a specific issue and with specific timeline. E.g, Ad Hoc Committee on Shakahola deaths, Covid-19, e.t.c

#### 5. Joint Committees

Established under Article 118 of the Constitution and Standing Orders of both Houses, this is a Committee formed from Membership of both Houses, the Senate and the National Assembly. They are meant to deal with matters of common interest to both Houses E.g Joint Committee on the Sugar Bill, Mediation Committee on Division of Revenue Bill

**Example:** The Committee on Devolution and Intergovernmental Relations often mediates conflicts between governors and county assemblies and amongst the leadership in County Assemblies.

#### 8. Civic Rights & Responsibilities

##### Your rights as a citizen:

- Petition the Senate on county issues.
- Demand accountability from governors and MCAs.
- Participate in Senate public forums.
- Access public documents like budgets.

##### Your responsibilities:

- Vote wisely during elections.
- Pay taxes that fund devolution.
- Monitor projects in your ward and report misuse.



1. Clerk Jeremiah Nyegenye, Deputy Clerk Eunice Gichangi and other members of the Senate Board of Management inspect refurbishment works of the County Assembly of Busia in readiness for the 2025 Senate Mashinani.
2. The Senate Board of Management, led by the Clerk, Jeremiah Nyegenye, inside the County Assembly of Busia Chamber during one of the inspection tours.

3. The Senate Board of Management team and members of the Busia County Executive led by Governor Paul Otuoma speak to the media after one of the inspection tours.
4. Construction works of the County Assembly of Busia Parking in progress.

## This week in History – October 6, 2016.

### Petition on rejection of the Garissa 2016/17 budget estimates in House.



**Deputy Speaker Kembi Gitura**

On this day, the House debated a Petition submitted to the House by 35 Members of Garissa County Assembly concerning the rejection by the Assembly of the Garissa County Government budget estimates for the Financial Year 2016/17.

The Petition was communicated to the House by Deputy Speaker Kembi Gitura, in which the MCAs argued that the budget estimates did not adhere to the ceilings adopted by the Assembly in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper as required by the Public Finance Management (PFM) Act. The budget estimates also violated regulation 37(1) of the Public Finance Management (County Governments Regulations) 2015, in that the submitted estimates increased expenditure by 2.12 per cent well above the set charge in vote ceiling of 1 per cent.

The programmes and targets contained in the budget estimates deviated from the approved annual development plan and that the deviation was not explained in a memorandum to the Assembly as required. They also claimed that the county treasury did not verify the debt levels and did not submit to the County Assembly for approval a debt strategy plan in line with the PFM Act.

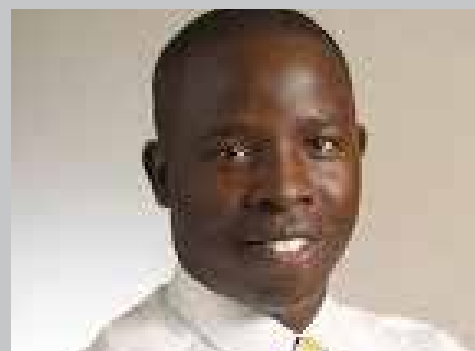
“The narration of the programme based budgeting estimates was very weak,” the Petitioners said in part, adding that the county executive had frustrated the County Assembly in its effort to exercise oversight over the county executive. This has included failure to respond to correspondences and resolutions of the Assembly, failure to submit reports to the County Assembly as well as frequent transfers of the County Executive Committee (CEC) member for finance whenever the County Assembly seeks to undertake an inquiry into finances of the county executive.

The MCAs thus asked the Senate to initiate the process of halting any further disbursements to the Garissa County Executive and require that any emergency disbursements be tabled before and approved by the County Assembly. They also wanted the Senate to establish mechanisms of providing support to the County Assembly in the discharge of its mandate and conduct a study to ascertain the actual debt owed by the Garissa County Government in light of the County Executive’s failure to disclose this information to the County Assembly.



**Senator Kipchumba Murkomen said:**

“As the Senate, we must be concerned that this is the last year before elections and there is a possibility that many counties and county executives will act with impunity in so far as management of public funds is concerned. It is important to support county assemblies that are ready to push for accountability of resources with full disclosure of information. You will find that some expenditure will be hidden in the name of paying debt when it is campaign money. We know many counties including mine, where governors now have goons that they carry around using county resources. They package goons and carry them to a meeting with the sole responsibility of shouting down the governor’s competitors like we have seen for many Senators who are running to be governors and even those who are not. Counties are misusing resources for purposes of campaign. In fact, one thing that should concern this Senate is the misuse of ward, sub-county and village administrators who are paid by county resources and are called public servants. They are also part of county public service but are now chief agents of organizing goons against political competitors of governors. All these culminates to lack of accountability when it comes to the usage of that money.”



**Senator Stephen Sang said:**

“It must be understood by everybody and especially governors that the responsibility of county assemblies is to deal with the budget. The law provides on how to resolve crisis or disagreement arising from the budgeting process. The tendency by governors to ignore provisions of the Public Finance Management Act on how to resolve challenges--- Sometimes, governors intentionally engage that so that there is a lacuna for them to misuse public resources. Whereas I know the timelines within our Standing Orders in terms of resolving some of the petitions is 60 days, this is a very urgent matter. Whichever committee that will be given the responsibility to handle this Petition should do so within the shortest time possible. It should even handle it within 14 days, so that we help the County Government of Garissa to move on. However, county assemblies must be concerned and be keen with the implementation of the budget, especially in this last financial year towards elections, lest we lose a lot of resources in our budgets into the campaign mode by governors. At the end of the day, when we get back to our counties after the elections, we will have nothing to celebrate about. I caution all governors, including my own. He must utilise the last budget for the better of the people of Nandi.”



**Senator Agnes Zani said:**

“The interconnectedness between the Senate and county assemblies is becoming clearer and clearer. The Constitution pre-empted some of the disputes that would arise within county assemblies. This is another tussle that includes the executive and MCAs on issues that have been quite well streamlined. There are two clear issues in the prayers. These are the issue of budget ceilings and the provisions of the Public Finance Management Act. These are very critical. The Committee on Finance, Commerce and Budget put into operation the ceilings for the counties as a result of over-expenditure within the counties. This was a long process and the Committee invited MCAs and agreed with them on what the ceilings will be, negotiated specific ceilings and finally agreed on the specific ceilings. It is important for MCAs to adhere to them. I urge Members to look at the point of the argument of the County Assembly and the anger for the questioning of why the estimates have been rejected especially regarding the ceilings. If they have passed those ceilings or if they have not but they are being attributed as though they have, that becomes an issue that the petitioners need to be addressed directly. The whole nexus of having ceilings was very critical and important. This Senate and county assemblies put into operation laws that need to be followed stringently.

## Busia residents have their say



**Margret Adongo:**

**Street hawker:**

“It’s good to welcome Senators to Busia. We hope their presence in this town will help us solve the many issues that affect us ordinary people. We expect the Senate to help uplift the standards of the common people in Busia town. We have

a very erratic street lighting in this town which undermines small businesses, like. I am forced to close my business by 6PM because there are no street lights and insecurity is rampant. Senators should also focus on how they can ensure House rents are reduced, especially for the low-income people. Life is hard. Business is low and we have to really balance between our near-zero income and paying

exorbitant house rents. Senators should, and must, think of us as small people.”

**Job Wafula**

**Boda Boda operator**

The Senate coming to Busia town is in itself a good thing for our county. They are our leaders and we welcome them because we elected them. We are ready to listen to them as much as we believe they will be ready to listen and help

solve our problems as the people of Busia County. As a boda boda operator, I want to urge them to do something about the high levels of insecurity in Busia town which is the biggest challenge facing Boda boda business. We are robbed, assaulted, beaten and in worst case scenarios killed by thugs, our crimes being boda boda operators. A client approaches and you carry him to their destina-

tion, which turns out to be a death trap. There is the challenge of the high cost of fuel. High taxation on fuel has made our business difficult and reduced our profit margins. Let the Senate think about us while here. Let them do something about insecurity and the high cost of fuel.”



**Vitalis Mbuya**

**Motor vehicle mechanic, Busia town**

“We welcome the Senate in Busia County but they must expect tough questions touching on their oversight role. There was a time the Senate was very tough and firm on County Governors. But

it appears, they have gone easy on them, and to an extent, their oversight role. Senators are not pursuing County Governors as much as they used to. I rarely hear the Senate’s voice. Senators are not as strict as they were. We know the Senate’s work is oversight. Senators should follow up on how County Governors are using money allocated to them every year.

When they are in Busia they must put the County Government in the spotlight.”



**Agnes Chakara**

**Farmer, Malaba**

“Senators should not confine themselves to Busia town during the time they will be here. Let them get out, go deeper into the villages, away from the town. They will come face to face with unthinkable wretchedness that is en-

trenched in our villages. Poverty is real. We are largely an agricultural county and if you want to encounter the problem with our agricultural production you must go out there. This is the only way that they will have a feel of what is happening in Busia County. Understanding the challenges facing our rural communities will be the first step towards liberating our people from the

yoke of poverty. We have challenges of marketing our produce, poor quality seeds and the high cost of farm inputs.”

**Mr Raymond Mombo**

**Manager, Ristopark Hotel**

**Busia town**

“There is a big problem with those who do business with the County Government. As a hotel we have supplied services in excess of Sh20 million but there is no payment. The hope to be paid is thin. Other hoteliers have been forced

to close shop because of failure by the county to clear the pending bills that run into millions. The Senate should help us. The County oversight organs are silent. Nothing is happening and the business people who dare do business with the county are in pain. Yes, hotels in this town are operating in hard times. The few businesses still afloat is because they have other revenue streams. The few hoteliers who took loans to remain afloat have collapsed

with the pain of repaying loans hanging on their necks. We plead with the Senators to come to our rescue. Let the Senate push the authorities in the county to clear our pending bills. We shall not kill business at the altar of the comfort of a few. There is insecurity in this town that has undermined business. Where does the county money go? The Senate must demand answers. It is for this reason that we have high expectations with the Senate’s presence in this town.”





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