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House pays tribute to Raila

In a Special Sitting, Senators describe the late Raila Odinga as a symbol of endurance and conviction whose courage and sacrifice defined Kenya's democratic journey.



Senators stand in a minute of silence in respect and honour to the late Raila Odinga during a Special Sitting of the House convened to eulogise the former Prime Minister.

The Senate, a House conceived through devolution, has described the late Raila Odinga as a “symbol of endurance and conviction,” noting that his courage and sacrifice defined Kenya’s democratic journey.

The lawmakers observed that the Senate itself exists largely because of the late Odinga’s lifelong fight for inclusion and equity, which culminated in the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution.

It is the document that served as a charter that introduced devolution and

redefined Kenya’s governance structure.

On Thursday, during a special sitting, a sombre mood engulfed the House as Temporary Speaker Senator Abdul Haji led members in paying glowing tribute to Mr Odinga, the reformist, who died in India while receiving treatment.

Speaker Amason Kingi had summoned a Special Sitting of the House after President William Ruto issued a Proclamation on Wednesday, October 15, 2025 communicating the passing on of Hon Odinga.

Moving the Motion, Senator Wambua said Hon Odinga always showed up for Kenya just as he never shied away from confronting the reality of our times as our country.

“He dedicated his life in pursuit of freedom and unity of Kenya,” said Senator Wambua, adding that in his quest for justice, Hon Odinga has built a name beyond the boundaries of Kenya.

Seconding the Motion, Deputy Majority Whip Tabitha Keroche said Hon

Odinga’s death had thrown a blanket of silence of the Kenya nation.

Senator Haji, who was on the chair, said Kenya was mourning not just a political leader but a reformer whose resilience and courage shaped the nation’s democratic path.

“Mr Odinga dedicated his life to the cause of democracy, justice and equality. He was imprisoned for his beliefs, vilified for his courage, but he never abandoned the dream of a united, democratic



Speaker Amason Kingi and National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetangula join President William Ruto in paying their respects when the body of the late Raila Odinga lay in state at Parliament Building.



Speaker Kingi pays his respect to the former Prime Minister Raila Odinga in Parliament Building.

and prosperous Kenya,” he said, hailing Mr Odinga as “a colossus in Kenya’s political and democratic space whose contribution is etched in the hearts of our people.

Haji noted that Odinga’s relentless push for constitutional reforms laid the foundation for devolution and the freedoms Kenyans enjoy today.

“He fought for the right to speak, to assemble and to dream differently. In every major milestone of our republic, Raila Odinga’s fingerprint is unmistakable,” Senator Haji told the House in the Communication, even as he praised Mr Odinga’s spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation, citing the 2018 handshake with then President Uhuru Kenyatta as a defining act of statesmanship.

“At a time when the country stood divided, he chose peace over pride and nation over self. That act alone cemented his place as one of the greatest sons of this land.”

Senator Haji described Mr Odinga as a mentor and visionary who believed in inclusion, dialogue and equitable development, the very ideals upon which devolution is anchored. “He believed in the potential of young people and in the equality of all Kenyans regardless of tribe or station in life. His dream was a Kenya that worked for everyone,” he said, urging leaders to carry forward his vision.

He added: “The highest tribute we can pay him is to continue what he started — to defend our Constitution, to strengthen devolution and to always put Kenya first.”

Senator Enock Wambua, who moved the Motion of Tribute, described Odinga as a selfless leader who stood up for the nation at its most fragile moments. He said when Kenya was on the verge of collapse, Mr Odinga showed up for the country. He never disappointed,” Wambua said, adding Mr Odinga could take a bullet for Kenya, and in many ways, he did.

Senator Tabitha Karanja Keroche, while seconding the Motion, gave an emotional account of Odinga’s personal support during her legal battles.

Senator Ledama Olekina described Odinga as a father figure and environmental defender who never compromised on protecting the Mau Forest.

Senator ole kina said Mr Odinga’s Pan-African vision and belief in unity were unmatched.

Senator Danson Mungatana said the late Odinga understood the power of the negotiation and dialogue, saying he had done a lot to promote infrastructure across the continent of Africa.

Senator Agnes Kavindu challenged President William Ruto to implement the agreement arising from his handshake with Hon Odinga that led to the formation of the Broad-based government.

Senator Ali Roba eulogised Hon Odinga as the master of political reincarnation who always bounced back in position of influence when many had written him off.

“His name is inked in the annals of our democracy. He was imprisoned and tortured in a manner that few can endure but never surrendered.”

Senator Margaret Kamar said Hon Odinga had left a big lesson in which he insisted that the country was bigger than him. He sacrificed with President Mwai Kibaki, under the Grand Coalition, President Uhuru Kenyatta, under the handshake, and with William Ruto’s broad-based government.

She recalled his decisions to reconcile with political rivals for peace and said: “He mentored us to perform and never entertained mediocrity. He was a leader of detail and excellence.”

Senator William Kisang said Odinga’s decision to accept a coalition government in 2008 showed rare statesmanship. “Everybody knows Raila won that election, yet he accepted a coalition government to keep the peace. That’s what made him a statesman,” he said.

He added that Odinga’s recent support for a unity government after the Gen Z protests reflected his lifelong patriotism. Senator Catherine Mumma described Odinga as “the conscience of the nation”.

Senator John Kinyua credited Mr Odinga as the architect of devolution as Senator Okong’o Omogeni described him as a mentor and personal friend. “I have dined in his home and he in mine. If we truly loved Baba, let us honour him by strengthening devolution. Let us mourn him in action, not just in words.”

Senator Agnes Kavindu Muthama proposed that Mashujaa Day be renamed “Raila Day” in honour of the fallen hero. “He was the only man who could call for a holiday and the nation obeyed,” she said.

Senator Munyi Mundigi, speaking in Kiswahili, hailed Odinga as “shujaa wa kweli” — a true hero who fought for the ordinary Kenyan.

Hon Odinga served as the Prime Minister between 2008 and 2013, and previously held various senior positions in government including Cabinet Minister for Energy; Roads, Public Works and Housing, and as a long-serving Member of Parliament for Lang’ata Constituency serving four consecutive parliamentary terms from 1992 to 2013.

His distinguished public service career spanned over four decades, during which he played a pivotal role in Kenya’s transition to multiparty democracy, the advancement of constitutional reforms, and the deepening of good governance, accountability, and inclusive leadership.

Senators also paid tribute for his lifelong commitment to the ideals of democracy, freedom, and justice; his central role in the enactment of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, his tireless advocacy for devolution and equitable development, his dedication to reconciliation and peace-building through the 2008 National Accord and Reconciliation Act.

The House also stood as a symbol of resilience and courage, dedicating his life to the struggle for democratic space, social justice, social and economic transformation, youth empowerment, national unity, even in the face of great personal sacrifice, and his enduring legacy as a visionary statesman who inspired generations of leaders across Kenya and the African continent.



1. Senator Betty Montet breaks down after viewing the remains of the former Prime Minister Raila Odinga when it lay in State at Parliament Buildings.
2. Senator Miraj Abdullahi views the body.
3. Minority Whip Ledama ole Kina consoles Mr Maurice Ogeta, the late Raila Odinga's bodyguard after viewing the body in Parliament Buildings.
4. Speaker Amason Kingi and Speaker Moses Wetangula view the body of the late Raila Odinga at Parliament Buildings.
5. Speaker Amason Kingi and Speaker Moses Wetangula look on as President William Ruto sign a tribute to the late Raila Odinga after paying his final respects at Parliament Buildings.
6. An emotional Senator Betty Montet breaks down while singing in a choir that comprises the Kenya Women Parliamentarians Association (KEWOPA) during the public viewing of the late Odinga at Parliament Buildings.
7. Senator Joyce Korir, Senator Catherine Mumma and other KEWOPA members sing during the public viewing of the late Odinga's body at Parliament Buildings.



1. Senator Hamida Kibwana breaks down when she paid tribute to former Prime Minister Raila Odinga during the debate in the House.
2. Senator Eddy Oketch Pays his last respects.
3. Mr Jeremiah Nyegenye, the Clerk of the Senate and Mr Samuel Njoroge, the Clerk of National Assembly, pay their last respects to the late Raila Odinga.
4. Minority Leader Stewart Madzayo pays his last respects to the late Odinga.
5. Minority Whip Ledama ole Kina views the late Odinga's body.
6. Senate Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot, his National Assembly counterpart Kimani Ichungwah, Hon Gladys Shollei, Deputy Speaker, National Assembly and Senator Stewart Madzayo view the body of the late Raila Odinga.



1. Senior Parliamentary staff pay their final respects.
2. Senator Crystal Asige and Hon. Rossa Buyu.
3. Speaker Amason Kingi signs the late Raila Odinga Condolences Book. Looking on are Speaker Moses Wetangula, Chief Justice Martha Koome, Clerk of the Senate Jeremiah Nyegenye and Mr Samuel Njoroge, Clerk (National Assembly).
4. Speaker Kingi and Speaker Wetangula look on as the remains of the late Raila Odinga are carried out of Parliament Buildings after public viewing.
5. Senator Moses Kajwang pays his last respect.
6. Senator Catherine Mumma gives the late Odinga her final salute. Behind her is former Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiangi.
7. Senator Wakili Sigei and Governor Gladys Wanga.
8. Speaker Emeritus. Former Senate Speaker Ken Lusaka and former National Assembly Speaker Justin Muturi were among those who paid their last respects to the late Odinga.

Senate rocks Busia County



After a working tour of the frontier County of Busia, in which Senators came face to face with the challenges facing the people, the Senate came through for the residents, once again confirming its status as devolution's true guardian angel. During the fourth Senate Mashinani, the lawmakers explored the breadth and width of the county, conducted inspection tours of various development projects, as part of the broader agenda of bringing the Senate closer to the people.

Having identified the problems, the Senate proposed immediate intervention to hasten service delivery:

1. The House passed a Motion which was sponsored by the majority leader Aaron Cheruiyot in which they gave the National Treasury, the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Co-operatives and the Ministry of East African Community (EAC), Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) and Regional Development a 90-day ultimatum to collaborate with the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) and the Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA) in developing a comprehensive action plan to be



The image of the Busia County Stadium.



The stalled construction works of Okisimo Vocational Training in Teso South, Busia County.



Police Officers walk around the abandoned wing of Okisimo Vocational Centre in Teso South, Busia County. The Education Committee conducted an inspection tour at the site during the fourth Senate Mashinani to assess the state of vocational training infrastructure in the county.

presented to the Senate detailing how the infrastructure and operational bottlenecks at the two border posts can be addressed.

2. The Committee on Budget and Finance directed Governor Paul Otuoma to clear all the county Governments pending bills amounting to Sh2.6 billion by the end of the 2026/27 financial year. This is after complaints were lodged by the local suppliers complained that
3. The Committee on Education raised concerns about the state of Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions in the county. The Committee directed the county executive to urgent measures and ensure ECDE and TVET centres meet basic standards — safe toilets, proper fencing, and adequate classrooms.
4. The County Public Accounts Com-

mittee and the Committee on Health visited Busia County Referral Hospital where they came face to face with the deplorable condition at the facility. The morgue, which is designed to hold 12 bodies but currently holds over 42. The facility lacks refrigeration equipment. The dialysis machines are not operational. The entire county operates with only one ambulance, which is stationed in Alupe, 20km away, and not at the Busia County Referral Hospital.

The facility does not have a public Intensive Care Unit (ICU) facility. For ICU services, one must travel to Bungoma. The Hospital does not have a working oxygen plant.

The Committee of Health resolved to conduct a comprehensive visit to the county, working closely with Members of the County Assembly

(MCAs) to ensure the situation is rectified.

The Health Committee admitted that the County Assembly has a vibrant health committee that handles the majority of health-related matters. It directed the County Executive to take the recommendations of the County Assembly seriously in their efforts to improve service delivery.

The joint inspection also noted the mushrooming of pharmacies outside the hospital. Within a radius of less than 100 metres, there are more than 20 pharmacies operating directly outside the Busia County Referral Hospital. Many of these facilities are run by staff of the County Government of Busia.

The Joint Committee directed Governor Paul Otuoma to take im-

mediate action on the pharmacies and ensure that the people of Busia receive quality health care.

5. The County Public Accounts Committee held sessions with the County Executive and the County Assembly on the status of implementation of the recommendations of the House on the auditor general reports for the 2023/24 financial year. The session with the County Executive exposed massive financial irregularities as Governor Paul Otuoma administration failed to explain how Sh200 million in the 2023/24 budget was expended. During the session with the County Assembly, the Speaker could not explain how the annual salary increments rose by Sh100 million. In both cases, the Committee invited EACC to intervene and investigate the malfeasance.

Senate committed to strong relationship with counties, says Speaker Kingi



Speaker Kingi delivers one of the rulings during the sitting in Busia County.



Speaker signs the visitors' book when during the Senate leadership courtesy call to the Office of Governor Paul Otuoma.



Speaker Kingi speaks during the meeting between the Senate leadership and the County Executive of Busia County.

Speaker Amason Kingi has reaffirmed the Senate's commitment to nurturing a strong and mutually respectful working relationship with county governments arguing that the success of devolution is hinged on continuous collaboration between the two.

The Speaker noted that the bond between the Senate and county governments thrives on mutual consultation, understanding and shared learning, the partnership that must be continually strengthened if devolution is to deliver on its promise.

"The Senate Mashinani sittings embody this spirit, affirming that counties are not just administrative structures but vibrant hubs of democratic participation and grassroots development," he said in his communication to Senators when the House convened for the first time in the County Assembly of Busia.

The Speaker Kingi noted that the Senate and county assemblies share a symbiotic constitutional responsibility that must be fortified to realise the full promise of Kenya's devolved system of governance.

"County assemblies must play a more prominent role in ensuring good governance by proactively taking up their constitutional and statutory mandates. In this regard, the Senate is willing and ready to partner with county assemblies

to ensure that the promise of devolution is achieved," Speaker Kingi stated.

The Senate sitting in Busia marked the second Senate Mashinani of the 13th Parliament and the fourth in the history of the Senate, following similar sessions held in Uasin Gishu (2018), Kitui (2019), and Turkana (2023).

Speaker Kingi said the Busia sitting was part of an ongoing institutional effort to take parliamentary business closer to the people and to strengthen intergovernmental engagement at the grassroots.

"We express our sincere gratitude to the leadership and Members of the County Assembly of Busia for hosting the Senate and for availing their facilities for use by the House. We also thank the people of Busia County for their warmth and hospitality, which have made this historic sitting possible," he said.

The Senate Mashinani initiative was conceived as a legislative innovation aimed at bridging the national and county levels of government. It seeks to foster public participation, accountability, and inclusivity in the legislative process.

Under Chapter Eleven of the Constitution, devolution remains one of Kenya's greatest democratic milestones, aimed at bringing services closer to the people, accelerating development, and promoting equitable resource distribution across the country.

The Senate Mashinani sittings embody these ideals by giving ordinary citizens direct access to national legislators and legislative processes.

"The Senate exists for the people and stands as a beacon of democracy, representing their collective will and aspirations. Through the Senate Mashinani initiative, we are entrenching inclusivity and citizen participation in governance. It is our way of ensuring that Kenyans are part and parcel of the national legislative agenda," Speaker Kingi affirmed.

The Committee on Justice, Legal Affairs and Human Rights engaged the public on the Constitution of Kenya (Amendment) Bill, 2025, drew large crowds of Busia residents eager to express their views on the proposed constitutional amendment to enhance the legislative mandate of the Senate.

Other activities during the week included committee inquiries into the status of Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) and County Vocational Training Centres, an evaluation of the Busia One-Stop Border Post, and discussions on the operationalisation of industrial parks in the region.

These, Speaker Kingi said, are critical areas of interest that link directly to the socio-economic wellbeing of the people of Busia.

"These activities are designed to give

residents of Busia County an opportunity to actively engage and participate in the legislative and oversight work of the Senate," he said.

Speaker Kingi acknowledged the contribution the national government has made in facilitating the sittings, particularly commending the Ministry of Interior and National Administration and the National Police Service for ensuring logistical support and security throughout the event.

He reiterated that the Senate's decision to hold sittings outside Nairobi reflects a deliberate commitment to inclusivity, transparency, and accountability, allowing both the public and local leaders to better understand how the Senate executes its constitutional mandate under Articles 94 and 96 of the Constitution.

The sittings in Busia County were attended by several dignitaries, among them governors, members of parliament, and county assembly speakers from neighbouring counties including Bungoma, Kakamega, Siaya, and Vihi-ga.

In a show of regional unity, Senators from the Western bloc welcomed the sitting, describing it as historic and transformative for the people of Western Kenya.

Senator Mutinda assumes WB/IMF office



Pictures of Senator Tabitha Mutinda (second right) during the annual meetings of the World Bank Group and IMF in Washington DC.

Senator Tabitha Mutinda has urged the nations of the world to work together to build an inclusive, resilient economy that not only absorbs but also unleashes the potential of global youth.

The Senator said she is ready to work alongside global partners to turn the vision into reality.

The lawmaker made the call on Monday October 13 when she took over as a member of the Board of the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

“I am deeply honoured to join the Parliamentary Network of IMF and World Bank at a pivotal time when the global youth population—1.2 billion strong, aged between 20 and 35—is poised to shape the future,” she said, noting that collective responsibility of the nation states is to create and sustain meaningful employment opportunities for the vibrant generation.

“The challenges are immense, but so are the opportunities,” she added, noting that to address youth unemployment effectively, nation states must prioritise three critical pillars: digital infrastruc-

ture, human capital investment and Capital Access and Startup Support.

“In today’s world, digital connectivity is no longer a luxury but a necessity. Investing in robust digital infrastructure will unlock access to information, markets, and innovation, empowering young entrepreneurs and workers alike,” she observed.

Equipping youth with the right knowledge and skills, she said, is fundamental as the world needs focused investments in education, vocational training, and continuous learning to prepare them for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

“The World Bank’s role in enabling access to capital and fostering startup ecosystems is vital. Supporting young innovators with financial resources and mentorship can transform ideas into impactful businesses, driving economic growth and job creation.”

The Network is an independent, non-governmental organisation that provides a platform for Parliamentarians from across the world to engage with the World Bank Group and the IMF on issues of transparency, accountability, and development effectiveness.

It facilitates dialogue between legislators, civil society, and international financial institutions, with a focus on promoting good governance in the management of public resources, advancing poverty reduction strategies, and supporting policies that foster inclusive economic growth.

Senator Mutinda will serve on the Board for a two-year period, from 2025 to 2027.

Her election to the Board was communicated to the House by Speaker Amason Kingi during the sitting in Busia County last week.

The Board of Governance is charged with the responsibility of setting the strategic agenda and providing guidance for the activities of the Parliamentary Network.

Senator Mutinda will represent the East Africa Region within the Board.

Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot said Senator Mutinda was the face of the strong cohort of the UDA nomination of 2022. “We are proud of you. That is a true representation of a UDA nominee.”

Senator Enock Wambua said her election speaks volumes about her as a per-

son and the quality of leaders that the Senate is able to produce. “I want to wish her well and tell her that we will support her in all ways possible. This is a time that I cannot even miss to brag because I have some bragging rights as far as she is concerned. She is a child and a daughter of Kitui County. She comes from my constituency, Kitui West, in Matinyani Ward,” he said. He added:

Senator Agnes Kavindu challenged Senator Mutinda to make Kenyan women proud in her role. “Go and make us, women, proud. Go and stand your ground and do what is best for this country and East Africa. Go and show that women can do it. May God be with you and help you as you serve.” Senator Joe Nyutu said her election was not accidental. “She is more than qualified to serve in that position. I also congratulate her and every other woman leader, because it is proof that women leadership has been embraced, not just in Kenya, but worldwide. I congratulate my sister from another mother, who is also proof that you can have beauty with brains.”

House pays tribute to the late Elijah Lagat, former Chesumei MP



Senator Julius Murgor and Senator Crystal Asige during a meeting of the Labour Committee.



Senator Samson Cherarkey



Senator Jackson Mandago

The Senate has paid glowing tribute to the late Elijah Kiptarbei Lagat, remembering him as a hardworking leader, disciplined athlete and patriotic Kenyan who combined excellence in sports with a deep devotion to public service.

During the Senate Mashinani sitting in Busia County, Senators spoke with admiration of the late Lagat's inspiring journey from a late entrant in athletics to one of Kenya's most respected marathon champions, before later transitioning into politics.

The late Lagat was born in Saniak village, Chesumei Constituency, Nandi County, in 1966.

He grew up in a humble rural family and only began running competitively at the age of 27, defying convention to join Kenya's elite distance-running ranks.

Over a decade-long career, he captured global attention with wins at the Berlin Marathon (1997), Paraguay Marathon (1998) and the Boston Marathon (2000), before representing Kenya at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

Off the track, he was deeply religious, a member of the Seventh-day Adventist

Church, and an academic who earned a degree in History and a Masters in Strategic Management.

His life, colleagues said, embodied discipline, humility and ambition.

Leading the tributes, Senator Samson Cherarkey described the late Lagat's life as "a story of resilience, faith and national pride".

He said the late athlete-turned-politician embodied the spirit of perseverance that has long defined Kenya's sporting and leadership heritage.

"The late Lagat's journey was marked by determination and commitment to excellence. He began running at the age of 27, yet went on to become one of Kenya's most celebrated marathoners. His victory at the 2000 Boston Marathon remains one of the most thrilling finishes in history. He brought honour not just to himself but to the entire nation," said Senator Cherarkey, in a personal statement in the House.

After retiring from competitive athletics, Mr Lagat turned to politics with equal zeal.

He was elected Member of Parliament for Emgwen Constituency in 2007 on an

ODM ticket.

He served as Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Labour and Social Welfare and Chairperson of the Sports Subcommittee in the National Assembly.

In 2013, following the creation of new constituencies, he successfully contested and became the first MP for Chesumei constituency.

Senator Cherarkey eulogised the late MP as a man of deep faith, a devoted Seventh-day Adventist, and a patriotic leader who never lost touch with his roots.

The late Lagat also served on the National Council for Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA), focusing on youth empowerment and the fight against substance abuse.

Senator Jackson Mandago described the late Lagat as a man who excelled in every sphere he ventured into — athletics, leadership and community development.

Senator Mandago recalled that Mr Lagat had a deep passion for education and was instrumental in establishing Namgoi Secondary School, a model institution in Chesumei that continues to transform young lives.

"I remember the late Lagat for the establishment of Namgoi Secondary School, a day school that rivals Kapsabet Boys. He was not only a hero on the track but also a builder of institutions and a mentor to many," Senator Mandago said in his tribute.

Senator Julius Murgor who served alongside the late Lagat in the 10th Parliament described his former colleague as a "hard-working and straightforward man" who never lost sight of his mission to serve.

"The late Lagat was an outstanding leader and an exemplary figure for young people. He was a man of action. One who rose from athletics to public service and carried the same discipline into his work as an MP," Senator Murgor said.

The senators hailed Lagat as a man whose character reflected the best of Kenya's values — faith, perseverance and service.

They noted that even after retiring from active politics, he remained an advisor and mentor, quietly guiding younger leaders and supporting youth initiatives in his home county.

KEWOSA fight HIV, GBV in Busia County



Senator Veronica Maina, Senator Beth Syengo, Senator Tabitha Mutinda and Senator Mariam Omar after when they gifted students from schools drawn from across Busia County with sanitary pads.



Senator Mutinda and Senator Betty Montent admire a new born.



Senator Catherine Mumma and a teen mother.



Senator Veronica Maina and Senator Catherine Mumma sympathise with a victim of domestic violence.

The Kenya Women Senators Association (KEWOSA) had a highly impactful and participative session where it addressed the escalating Triple Threat of HIV, Adolescent Pregnancy, and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in Busia County.

Held on the side lines of the fourth Senate Mashinani, KEWOSA delegation split into two to engage directly with students at St James Kwang'amor Secondary School and St. James Nasewa School before convening a crucial dialogue with national and county officials, as well as community thought leaders.

Citing official statistics, Senator Veronica Maina, the chair, underscored the urgency of the matter.

Busia County recorded 135 new HIV infections among adolescents (10–19) in 2024 up from 120 in 2019 with an estimated 2,400 adolescents living with HIV.

Between 2016 and 2024, a total of 65,540 adolescent pregnancies were recorded in the county, representing 28 per cent of all first ANC visits, while cases of SGBV among adolescents rose sharply from 66 in 2016 to 480 in 2024, with 171 pregnancies linked to defilement.

“These numbers paint a worrying picture,” noted Senator Maina while emphasising that 69.3 per cent of Busia residents live below the poverty line, a factor that amplifies the risks of exploitation and school dropouts.

To promote dignity and health, KEWOSA distributed menstrual hygiene kits to girls and boxer shorts to boys, helping to reduce absenteeism and empower students to stay in school.

Senator Maina also reminded learners of their legal protections under the Sexual Offences Act (2006), which criminalises all sexual activity with minors, carrying penalties of up to life imprisonment.

The team also met with a broad coalition of stakeholders at PCEA Church, Busia Town, including representatives from the County Government, Judiciary, Police, ODPP, religious leaders, teenage mothers, and boda boda associations.

The session called for a collective,

multi-sectoral approach to address the root causes of the Triple Threat.

“The seriousness of this crisis demands systemic accountability,” Senator Maina stated, adding that KEWOSA is committed to leveraging on its legislative, oversight, and representative mandate to ensure full implementation of the Children’s Act (2022) and the Basic Education Act (2013) to protect every child’s right to safety, education and health.

Senator Okiya Omtatah lauded the initiative as “a beautiful and timely step to safeguard the future of children and restore hope to the people of Busia.

Senate reaffirms respect for court rulings



Deputy Minority Whip Edwin Sifuna speaks during the meeting between the Senate leadership and the Leadership of the County Assembly of Busia.



An MCA speaks during the meeting with the Senate leadership.



Speaker Kingi speaks during the meeting with the leadership of both the Assembly and the Senate. He is flanked by Assembly Speaker Fredrick Odilo.



Assembly Speaker Fredrick Odilo officially hands over the Assembly Chamber to the Senate team led by Speaker Amason Kingi.

The Senate has reiterated its commitment to upholding the Constitution and court decisions touching on the management of public funds, notably the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) and the Senate Oversight Fund.

Speaker Amason Kingi affirmed that the House would remain guided by judicial pronouncements on matters concerning the separation of powers and fiscal management.

Speaking during a consultative meeting with the leadership of the County Assembly of Busia, Speaker Kingi clarified that the Senate was not fixated on the creation of a Senate Oversight Fund.

“Senate is not overly preoccupied with having the Senate Oversight Fund. In fact, in the proposed Constitutional Amendment Bill, Senate Bill, that Fund does not feature. What we are focusing on is giving the Senate and county as-

semblies more legislative space to ensure devolution is effectively implemented,” said Speaker Kingi.

His remarks came amid renewed debate over the constitutionality of the CDF and the introduction of the Senate Oversight Fund, both of which have faced scrutiny from the courts for blurring the lines between the Legislature and the Executive in resource allocation.

Echoing the Speaker’s sentiments, Senator Edwin Sifuna distanced the Senate from the controversial Bill proposing the Senate Oversight Fund, explaining that it did not originate from the Upper House.

“The Bill that proposes the Senate Oversight Fund was created by the National Assembly without our knowledge. The National Assembly does not know what the Senate wants,” said Senator Sifuna, as he reaffirmed that the Senate would respect court rulings and avoid

encroaching on the mandates of other government arms.

During the meeting, members of the County Assembly of Busia appealed for the establishment of a Ward Development Fund to support local development initiatives, a proposal that mirrors the national debate around the CDF.

Beyond the funds debate, the legislators urged the Senate to fast-track the implementation of a pension scheme for Members of County Assemblies (MCAs) who have served at least two terms arguing that such a scheme would recognise the contributions of local legislators to governance and devolution.

The Senate have passed the County Assembly Pension Bill which is awaiting consideration by the National Assembly.

Speaker Kingi also addressed concerns about the financial independence of county assemblies, noting that despite the enactment of a law granting them au-

tonomy, delays in disbursement persist.

“If there are still challenges in accessing funds despite the new law, we shall revisit the Act to ensure county assemblies operate independently and effectively,” he said.

Senators further emphasised that county assemblies remain the primary oversight bodies over county governments and encouraged MCAs to strengthen their watchdog role to guarantee prudent use of public resources.

The meeting was attended by several Senators, including Deputy Speaker Kathuri Murungi, Boni Khalwale and Seki Lenku.

The Busia County Assembly delegation was led by Speaker Fredrick Odilo who was accompanied by the assembly’s leadership.

Trade Committee seeks Busia border intervention



A government official briefs members of the Trade Committee on the operations at the Malaba border post.



Senator Issa Boy, Chair Trade Committee, Senator Tabitha Mutinda and Senator Okiya Omtatah at the Kakapel Prehistoric site.



Senator Okiya Omtatah, Senator Tabitha Mutinda and Senator Issa Boy inspect stalled projects at the Malaba border post.

The Committee on Trade, Industrialisation and Tourism has called for urgent measures to address persistent challenges affecting efficiency at the Malaba One-Stop Border Post (OSBP) and to support the preservation of cultural heritage at the Kakapel Prehistoric Site in Busia County.

Led by Chairperson Senator Issa Boy Juma, the Committee noted that despite the border's vital role in regional commerce, operations continue to be hindered by poor infrastructure, staffing shortages, and technical inefficiencies.

The Senators observed that the OSBP operates on only 4.225 hectares of land, which is inadequate for its growing operations. The facility handles an estimated 1,000 travellers daily and has recorded a 5 per cent annual growth in traffic, yet continues to face severe congestion due to limited space.

The customs yard can only accommodate about 100 trucks at a time, posing challenges to efficient cargo clearance.

The lawmakers further noted that the outbound road remains incomplete, forcing both incoming and outgoing

trucks to share a single lane, worsening congestion at peak hours. Additionally, the road network in and out of the facility is insufficient to handle the rising traffic volumes.

Frequent power fluctuations have disrupted systems and scanner operations, while the scanner on the Ugandan side often fails during the rainy season, further delaying clearance.

The Committee heard from truck drivers and traders who decried inefficient KRA scanning procedures, which sometimes take up to 48 hours, and complained about the high cost of KRA seals. They also cited incompetent staff, piled-up documentation, and numerous barriers and roadblocks in Uganda, which increase turnaround time and the cost of doing business.

The Senators called for the expansion of the OSBP, improvement of power stability, increased staffing, and the redesign of entry and exit lanes to decongest the facility. They further urged stronger coordination between Kenyan and Ugandan authorities to harmonize procedures and enhance trade efficiency.

The meeting was also attended by representatives from the County Assembly of Busia—specifically the Committees on Trade, Culture and Tourism—as well as County Executive Committee Members, and officials from various national agencies including the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), Port Health, Anti-Terrorism Police Unit, Kenya Fisheries Service, Veterinary Services, Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS), Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS), Agriculture and Food Authority (AFA), and the Department of Immigration.

The Committee also toured the Kakapel Prehistoric Site, believed to date back over 4,000 years, and home to ancient rock art paintings, caves, and a community cultural centre that showcases the region's rich history.

The Senators were informed that the site contains generational rock paintings, with superimposed layers showing different eras of artistic expression—including the famous Chelelemuk paintings. Evidence of early human life, including pottery shards, soot deposits indicating the use of fire, and stone

flakes used for skinning animals, was found within the caves.

Cultural practices such as Bukusu circumcision rituals are traced to Cave 1, where related artifacts have been discovered. Research and excavation conducted in 2017 unearthed human fossils, small pots, grinding stones, and traces of finger millet, further confirming ancient habitation and agricultural activity at the site.

The Committee learned that the Kenya Tourism Board had received a proposal worth Sh49.5 million to upgrade the site, which currently generates an estimated Sh100,000 annually. The site's potential remains largely untapped due to limited investment, despite its archaeological and tourism significance, a matter that was of great concern to the Committee.

Members also noted the presence of rare and endangered herbs in the area, urging conservation efforts to protect both the natural and cultural heritage of Kakapel.

Commissioner Rachel Ameso excites Busia

The Senate Mashinani outreach in Busia County took on added colour and energy when Hon Rachel Ameso, PSC Commissioner, joined the Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC) outreach team for a day of inspiring civic engagement.

Set just outside the County Assembly of Busia, the grand dome tent — adorned in bright hues of yellow, blue and white — became a symbol of accessibility and

openness in governance.

Inside, the PSC and Senate teams, smartly dressed in navy blue polo shirts and white caps, created a welcoming environment for school groups and the curious members of the public. Commissioner Ameso's presence was the day's highlight.

Breaking convention, she sat through the full session, attentively engaging with students and members of the public.

Her lively Q&A session tested participants' knowledge of the Senate's role, while her thoughtful distribution of gifts to teachers capped off the interaction on a warm, personal note.

The tent hosted two informative booths — one managed by the Public Communication and Senate Liaison departments and the other by the PSC Secretariat.

Visitors explored detailed displays on

parliamentary functions, while a replica of the Senate chamber — complete with the Speaker's chair, mace and dispatch table — offered a hands-on learning experience that captivated students.

A section of the tent was dedicated to art activities, adding a creative twist to the event. Students were challenged to colour drawings illustrating different aspects of the Senate, blending fun with education.



PSC Member Rachel Ameso with some of the learners who visited the Senate information booth during the fourth Senate Mashinani.



Commissioner Ameso hands a gift to one of the learners during a Q & A at the Senate information booth.



Some of the learners who visited the Senate information booth.



(left and right) Some of the learners who visited the Senate information booth at the County Assembly.

Senate Mashinani offers career fulfilment for PCOs

For Public Communication Officers (PCOs) who participated in Senate Mashinani, few moments are as fulfilling as engaging with inquisitive young learners eager to understand how their government works.

Last week's outreach activities in Busia County were a testament, with students from various schools interacting with Senate PCOs.

They learnt about the composition of the Senate, its leadership and the legisla-

tive process.

The sessions turned complex governance concepts into relatable ideas, bridging the gap between Parliament and the people.

The outreach was also visually engaging, featuring giveaways such as branded caps, T-shirts, shawls (leso) and educational materials.

The colourful items doubled as civic education tools, helping to reinforce key messages about leadership and partici-

pation.

Many students expressed surprise upon learning that the minimum age to contest for most elective seats in Kenya is 18 years, an eye-opening realisation that positioned youth at the centre of leadership.

Another highlight came when students discovered that Jeremiah Nyege-nye, the Clerk of the Senate, hails from Busia County.

The revelation sparked excitement

and pride, making the message of local representation deeply personal.

Through interactive Q&A sessions, face-to-face discussions and hands-on learning, the outreach succeeded in demystifying governance, law making and building public trust.

The initiative not only brought the Senate closer to the people but also strengthened the institution's reputation as a democratic, transparent and citizen-oriented body.



A Public Communications Officer speaks to learners from different schools who visited the Senate information booth.



Learners follow as a PCO takes them through the legislative process at the Information booth in Busia County.



Commissioner Rachel Ameso and students follow the events at the Senate information booth.

Senate Mashinani lives to expectation

Once again, the Senate Mashinani initiative lived up to its billing in its mission to bring the national legislature closer to citizens with a dynamic fourth edition held in Busia County in the first week of October.

The week-long programme merged learning, civic engagement and collaboration, in a move that kept the Senate's commitment to strengthening devolution through direct interaction with the public.

As part of its outreach, the Senate conducted school visits that drew participa-

tion from primary, secondary and tertiary institutions across the county.

Students were introduced to the structure, mandate and legislative role of the Senate, an experience that ignited curiosity and ambition among young learners.

These sessions aimed to nurture civic consciousness and inspire leadership among Kenya's next generation.

Brand visibility across the host county played a crucial role in connecting with the local community.

Colourful banners, outreach tents and

branded materials gave the event a vibrant local identity, attracting residents eager to engage with their leaders.

The highlight of the week was the plenary sessions held inside the County Assembly of Busia where Senators conducted official sittings.

Residents, county officials and invited guests witnessed live proceedings, offering a rare opportunity for the public to observe legislative deliberations firsthand.

Discussions focused on development,

accountability and service delivery at the grassroots level.

The Busia edition of Senate Mashinani demonstrated the power of proximity in governance, confirming that devolution thrives when leaders and citizens meet on common ground.

The event reinforced the Senate's vision of an open, accessible and people-centred institution driving Kenya's development agenda.



Students at the Senate information booth in Busia County.



Senate Veronica Maina and Senator Miraj Abdullahi, the sponsor of the Bill.

Huge support as House debates Hall of fame Bill

The Senate has opened a new chapter in Kenya's journey of preserving its identity and recognising local achievers through the County Hall of Fame Bill, 2023.

The Bill, sponsored by Senator Miraj Abdillahi, seeks to compel every county to establish a Hall of Fame to document and celebrate men and women who have made outstanding contributions to society in various fields.

The proposed law received overwhelming support from senators across the political divide when it came up for debate during the fourth Senate Mashinani in Busia County, who argue that, if passed, it would restore Kenya's heritage, immortalise forgotten heroes and heroines and inspire future generations.

"This Bill is about celebrating our people, preserving our heritage and inspiring our youth," said Senator Miraj as she moved the Bill. "Every county has its heroes, people who have made a mark in governance, education, arts,



Senator Godfrey Osotsi speaks during the debate as other Senators listen.

sports, health, business and social justice. It is time their stories are told and remembered."

If passed, the Bill will require counties to identify and publicly honour individuals whose work has transformed communities.

"Recognition should not only be reserved for those with national awards. Counties must celebrate their own sons

and daughters who have done great things," she said., citing individuals she said embody the spirit of the proposed law.

Among the heroes and heroines is Koitalel arap Samoei - the revered Nandi resistance leader, Mekatilili wa Menza - the fearless Giriama heroine and Bishop Alexander Muge - whose voice for justice still echoes decades after his death.

She also mentioned Father Alois Cheruiyot Bett, a priest who was assassinated for his activism, and Prof Nelson Awori, Africa's first kidney transplant surgeon. "These are names that should not fade with time. They belong in every Hall of Fame," she said.

Her sentiments were echoed by Senator Margaret Kamar, who hailed the Bill as a bold step towards reclaiming Ken-





Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot, Deputy Speaker Kathuri Murungi, Senator Joe Nyutu and Senator Joyce Korir follow debate in the Assembly Chamber in Busia County.



Senator Boni Khalwale speaks in the House.

ya's history from the shadows of colonial distortion.

"For years, our history has been written from the colonial lens, ignoring our true heroes," she said and added: "This Bill will help us recover our image as a people. We must document our heritage ourselves, otherwise the stories of those who built this nation will disappear."

Senator Kamar urged counties to include both the famous and the humble in their local halls of fame.

"Every village has someone who changed lives — a midwife, a teacher, a farmer or a musician. Their names must be recorded before it's too late," she said, warning that Kenya's oral historians are aging fast.

Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot supported the Bill, describing it as "an innovative way to build pride and unity."

He said counties often celebrate development projects but fail to honour the people behind them. "This legislation reminds us that progress is not just about roads and buildings. It's also about people. Every county has those who have sacrificed for others — from educators to athletes, artists to freedom fighters. They must be remembered."

Senator Godfrey Osotsi called for clear selection criteria to avoid politicisation. "Recognition must be based on merit, integrity and tangible contribution. We should not turn the Hall of Fame into a political reward system," he cautioned.

Senator Okiya Omtatah, who has often championed transparency and local empowerment, said the Bill will give meaning to county identities. "Every county must know who its heroes are. From Busia, we have names like Prof Nelson Awori, Prof Arthur Obel and investor Itoya, who have made immense contributions to medicine, science and business," he said, noting that Busia County, which hosted the Senate sitting, "is home to many great minds who built this country from the classroom to the operating room".

Senator Peris Tobiko said the law would "correct the historical injustice of ignoring women's contributions" and proposed that each county's Hall of Fame should equally recognise women trailblazers such as Prof Julia Ojiambo, the first Kenyan woman to join the University of Nairobi; Ms Grace Ogot, a pioneering author; Ms Jane Kiano, a national organiser; Ms Charity Ngilu and Ms Beth Mugo, who broke barriers in politics and governance.

"We must celebrate the women who carried this country quietly on their backs," she said and added: "Recognition must not be limited to men or to those in high office."

Senator Boni Khalwale added that recognition should go beyond commemoration to inspire county unity and development, as he proposed that the halls could double as tourist and cultural centres.

"Every Hall of Fame can become a

mini-Bomas, where our children and visitors learn our songs, dances and stories," he said and added: "If we do this right, we will not only preserve our culture but also create jobs and boost local economies."

Senator Catherine Mumma commended the Bill, calling it "an opportunity to strengthen intergenerational dialogue".

She reminded the Senate that Busia and Western Kenya have produced towering figures who deserve to be remembered, including former Vice President Moody Awori, Prof Nelson Awori and Prof Julia Ojiambo.

"These people personify humility, service and excellence. Their stories must live in the hearts of our counties," she said.

Senator Oburu Oginga reflected on the heroes who have been forgotten because their stories were never documented. He recalled that colonial land grabbers and corrupt elites erased much of the country's authentic history.

"The people who resisted oppression — like Koitalel arap Samoei and Mekatilili wa Menza — must be taught in schools, not just in passing. This Bill ensures their bravery is permanently recorded," he said.

Senators also mentioned outstanding athletes such as Faith Kipyegon, Conseslus Kipruto, Ezekiel Kemboi and Wanyonyi, who continue to bring global pride to Kenya.

They said the athletes should be inducted into the county halls of fame while still alive and not posthumously.

During the debate, senators agreed that the Bill's success would depend on community participation. They proposed that each county form an inclusive selection committee comprising county officials, civil society, historians and youth representatives to ensure transparency and legitimacy.

Said Senator Miraj, the Bill's sponsor: "A hero must be chosen by the people, not by politicians." The senators also discussed the potential of the Halls of Fame to promote domestic tourism, education and social cohesion.

They said the initiative could help counties preserve artefacts, photographs, oral histories and artistic works.

"Let us move beyond statues and plaques," Senator Cheruiyot said and added: "Let us create living museums of courage and innovation."

If passed, the Bill will require county assemblies to budget for their halls of fame, establish selection committees and publish lists of honourees annually.

"This Bill is about identity, memory and pride," Senator Miraj said in her closing remarks and notes that: "We must honour those who shaped our past so that the next generation can shape our future with courage and inspiration."

Secure Kenya's maritime resources, urges Agriculture Committee

A House Committee has raised the alarm over the levels of insecurity on Kenyan waters, pressing the national government to act swiftly to shield fish farmers from harassment, confiscation and cross-border incursions.

A recent fact-finding mission led by the Agriculture Committee chaired by Wafula Wakoli established that fishermen on Lake Victoria are persistently under threat.

Senator Wakoli recounted how their boats and fishing gear were seized un-

der the pretext that they had strayed into neighbouring states' waters, even when those claims are false.

"Kenya has got enough fish for local consumption and export. What is only required is empowering the farmers by having favourable operating conditions. That is why we are asking the government to address the security threats in our waters. We have no valid reason to have fish imported from China," he said.

At the Mulukoba Beach Management Unit in Port Victoria, Senator Wakoli

noted that the insecurity has hollowed out local fisheries, creating space for cheap imports from abroad.

He led the Committee's visit to assess the challenges faced by cage fish farmers, who he said are particularly vulnerable to harassment.

Local voices at the meeting also voiced strong appeals with the leadership of the unit indicating that many farmers are now engaging in cage fish farming because the wild fish stock in the lake has shrunk.

Busia County's Agriculture execu-

tive, George Mukok, affirmed that the county is collaborating with cooperatives to support fish farmers and boost earnings.

He however admitted more investments are needed.

Senators demanded that the government should formulate a concrete implementation plan, insisting that assurances be backed by timelines, accountability and meaningful resource allocation to restore security and viability to Kenya's inland fishing sector.



Senator Wafula Wakoli and other members of the Agriculture Committee listen to the challenges the fishing community at Mulukoba Beach in Budalangi, Busia County, face.



Senator Wafula Wakoli consults with Senator Mohamed Abbas at Mulukoba Beach, Budalangi.



Senator Wafula Wakoli and Senator Munyi Mundigi at Mulukoba Beach during the inspection tour.

House gives State 90 days to fix Busia border posts



The sitting of the Senate at the County Assembly of Busia during the fourth Senate Mashinani.



Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot.

The Senate has given the government agencies a 90-day ultimatum to fix the perennial congestion and inefficiencies at the Busia and Malaba border posts.

The lawmakers lamented that congestion and inefficiencies have crippled cross-border trade and undermined Kenya's leadership in the East African Community (EAC).

In a resolution passed in Busia County during the fourth Senate Mashinani, senators directed the National Treasury, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, and the Ministry of East African Community, Arid and Semi-Arid Lands and Regional Development to develop and present within three months a comprehensive action plan to modernise infrastructure, streamline customs procedures and restore efficiency at the two border points.

The ministries are expected to work with the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) and Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA) on the matter.

The plan will include the expansion of access roads, the installation of additional cargo scanners, the creation of dedicated lanes for perishable and transit goods and the completion of stalled infrastructure projects such as the Mundika and Malaba trailer parks and the 200-acre Ngelechom truck yard.

Speaker Amason Kingi said the House's directive must not gather dust in government files.

"When Parliament speaks, the right people must listen. Kenya must reclaim

its position as a regional trade leader through efficiency and accountability," he declared at the close of the debate.

Senators called out what they termed as decades of failure during debate on the Motion that was moved by the Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot.

Senator Cheruiyot lamented that successive governments had ignored the worsening congestion at the border since independence.

"Trucks line up for five kilometres or more waiting for clearance. Perishable goods rot and the cost of doing business keeps rising. This is not just inefficiency. It is economic sabotage," he said.

Cheruiyot decried duplication of roles, multiple agency checks and corruption that have turned the One-Stop Border Post (OSBP) into a mirage.

"I first heard of the OSBP when I was in high school. Decades later, it still exists only on paper. We must stop normalising dysfunction while traders and drivers suffer," he said.

He further cited stalled public projects, including the underutilised Mundika and Malaba trailer parks and the idle Ngelechom land, saying they represent "a significant waste of public resources and lost opportunity."

Senators said the border system is in a disarray.

Those who visited the two posts described scenes of gridlock, broken scanners and demoralised workers.

Senator Ledama Olekina said inefficiency had made cross-border trade needlessly expensive.

"If you fly from Uganda to Nairobi, you'll pay four times the fare to Mombasa. The inefficiency is punishing business and eroding Kenya's competitiveness," he said, urging full implementation of EAC integration plans.

Senator Wahome Wamatinga pressed for use of technology to speed up clearance.

"We don't need to reinvent the wheel. Real-time scanning, artificial intelligence and automated tracking exist. What's lacking is commitment and a 24-hour operational culture," he argued.

Minority Leader Stewart Madzayo backed the Motion, saying the region must emulate the seamless systems of the European Union.

"Our laws and politics should unite us, not divide us. Border barriers defeat the spirit of East African cooperation," he said.

Senator Okiya Omtatah lamented that despite the immense trade volumes, his county earns almost nothing.

"Busia hosts two of the busiest border points yet gains nothing. The 200-acre Ngelechom land should be turned into a trailer city to improve safety and generate revenue," he said.

He warned that inefficiency was diverting regional cargo to Tanzania's Dar-es-Salaam port.

"Countries like Burundi now prefer Dar because it's faster. We are losing billions," Omtatah said.

Senator Samson Cherarkey criticised the so-called One-Stop Border Post.

"There's nothing one-stop about a

system that forces you to clear with 22 different agencies. It's a mockery of integration," he said.

Senators Faki and Abass decried the poor living and working conditions for long-haul drivers.

"Roads are narrow, toilets inadequate and rest areas non-existent," said Senator Faki who added that: "Drivers pay to use unhygienic facilities while Uganda provides them free. We must treat workers with dignity."

Senator Oburu Oginga reminded colleagues that the borders split communities that share culture and history.

"During colonial times, we had one currency and free movement. Why are we doing worse today than the colonialists?" he asked.

On accountability and regional diplomacy Senator Tabitha Mutinda, after inspecting the Malaba post, wondered why, despite KRA collecting over Sh8 billion in the last financial year, the 700-metre access road remains unpaved.

"That small stretch could instantly ease congestion. Revenue collected here should be reinvested to fix the basics," she said, urging the Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi to lead regional talks to remove non-tariff barriers with Uganda.

Senator Allan Kisang said corruption and resistance to automation were at the heart of the problem.

"Systems work globally but fail here because people resist them for personal gain. Digitising border management is the only way to eliminate human interference," he said.

Senate honours Busia best



(L to R) Busia first Senator Amos Wako, former MP Christine Mango and former IEBC vice chair, Mr Gabriel Mukele, follow proceedings in the County Assembly of Busia during the fourth Senate Mashinani.



Invited guests: from left, Musician Vincent Ongidi, Mr Bonface Makokha, Planning Principal Secretary, Prof Julia Ojiambo, former MP Sakwa Bunyasi and former Minister Philip Masinde in the Speaker's gallery during the Senate sitting in Busia County.

Busia County basked in glory on Wednesday last week as the Senate celebrated a distinguished line-up of its most accomplished sons and daughters whose remarkable contributions have defined Kenya's progress in all spheres of life: politics, academia, law, medicine, sports, media and the arts.

Speaker Amason Kingi led the House in recognising more than two dozen heroes and heroines, describing them as men and women "of high stature who made significant contributions not only to Busia but to Kenya at large".

Speaker Kingi said identifying whom to honour from Busia had been no easy task, given the county's wealth of talent.

"There is always the danger of offending some constituencies by naming some and leaving out others," he noted, adding that the list he presented to the House was not exhaustive but a representative roll of fame.

The first on the honour roll was Mr Moody Awori, the former Vice President and the first person from Busia County to hold that office.

The Speaker said Mr Awori's long and selfless service to the nation, especially his advocacy for prison reforms and social welfare, remained an inspiration to generations.

Also celebrated was Mr Amos Wako, the former long-serving Attorney General, described by the Speaker as a "renowned jurist and the first Senator for Busia County".

Mr Wako's stewardship in crafting the 2010 Constitution and his decades of service in the public legal sector earned him standing ovations from Senators.

The Speaker also recognised Mr Kenneth Marende, former Speaker of the National Assembly, lauding him for opening Parliament to the public through live broadcasts and modernising the legislative chambers to suit Kenya's bicameral system.

Among the celebrated heroines was

Prof Julia Ojiambo, a pioneering academic and politician, the first female Assistant Minister in Kenya and founder of the Labour Party of Kenya.

She was hailed for her advocacy of affirmative action and for being among the founders of Maendeleo ya Wanawake.

Also honoured was Christine Mango, a leading educationist and former MP for Butula Constituency who also served as a Member of the Judicial Service Commission.

Ms Florence Mutua, Busia's first Woman Representative, was recognised for championing education and women's empowerment.

Dr Josephine Ojiambo, a distinguished diplomat and former Deputy Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, described as "a seasoned multilateralist and National Sickle Cell Champion".

The list featured a long line of seasoned leaders, among them Mr Sospeter Ojaamong, the first Governor of Busia County, and Mr Chrysanthus Okemo, a former Minister for Finance and Energy credited with removing tax on bicycles, an intervention that boosted rural mobility and small enterprise.

Others included Albert Aggrey Alexander Ekirapa, a former Nation Media Group chairperson and CEO, former MP for Amagoro and Assistant Minister for Trade and Industry; and Dr Francis Masakhalia, the first MP for Butula Constituency and a former Finance Minister.

Also celebrated were Mr Philip Masinde, a former Labour Minister and MP for Nambale, and Mr John Sakwa Bunyasi, a development economist and current Chairperson of the Kenya Development Corporation.

Busia's strong legal legacy was also celebrated with tributes to Justice Smokin Wanjala, Supreme Court Judge and Director of the Kenya Judiciary Academy, and Justice Matthew Emukule, a respected former Judge of the High Court.

Speaker Kingi also paid homage to

Busia's own senior parliamentary technocrat, Jeremiah Makokha Nyegenye, Clerk of the Senate and Secretary to the Parliamentary Service Commission.

He praised him for his "unwavering dedication, exemplary professionalism, zeal and integrity since 2012."

Among the late scholars and scientists honoured were Prof Nimrod Bwibo, a renowned paediatrician and academic who was the founding member of the University of Nairobi's Faculty of Medicine and Chair of Maseno University Council; and Dr Nelson Awori, celebrated as the first African to perform a kidney transplant in 1978 and founder of the Department of Urology at the University of Nairobi.

Speaker Kingi also recognised the late Hilary Ng'weno, a nuclear physicist-turned-journalist and founder of The Weekly Review and STV, Kenya's first independent TV news station, for pioneering freedom of expression and independent journalism.

The Speaker's roll of honour extended to Busia's sports and cultural stars, among them Joseph Jesse (J.J.) Masiga, a legendary footballer and doctor who starred for AFC Leopards and Harambee Stars; MacDonald Mariga, the first Kenyan to play in and win the UEFA Champions League with Inter Milan and current Vice-Chairperson of the Football Kenya Federation; and Victor Wanyama, Harambee Stars captain and the first Kenyan to play in the English Premier League.

Also recognised were Wilberforce Mulamba, the iconic midfielder known for his dribbling and goal-scoring prowess and Vincent Ongidi, a celebrated traditional musician famed for his hit song "Mama Mulayi."

Rounding out the sports and public service icons were Mr Gabriel Mukele, former Vice-Chairperson of the Electoral Commission of Kenya and Susan Mang'eni, the Principal Secretary for

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, alongside Mr Boniface Makokha, the Principal Secretary for Economic Planning.

The Speaker also paid tribute to the late Hon. James Charles Osogo, a veteran politician and long-serving Cabinet Minister remembered for his decades of national service.

Senators lauded Busia's legacy with Senator Okiya Omtatah hailing the recognition as long overdue.

He said the county had "punched above its weight" in shaping Kenya's development story.

"Busia has produced firsts in every field, from medicine and law to football and culture. It is right that we immortalise these names as role models for future generations," Senator Omtatah said.

Senate Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot lauded the honourees for shaping Kenya's national fabric, while Senator Margaret Kamar praised the female pioneers for "breaking barriers and opening doors for women in leadership".

Senator Okong'o Omogeni proposed that Busia should establish a Wall of Fame to immortalise the honourees' names, similar to practices in other parliaments worldwide.

Senator Mumma, who once worked under Amos Wako, recalled his mentorship and that of Clerk Nyegenye.

She called them "the gold standard of professionalism".

Speaker Kingi reaffirmed the Senate's commitment to recognising excellence across the counties, noting that celebrating such achievements was vital for nation-building.

"Counties must document and honour their heroes to preserve the nation's memory. Busia has shown us that greatness thrives in every corner of Kenya," said Speaker Kingi.



Senator Okiya Omtatah

“The county has contributed its rightful share to the country. At times when you look at the county and the personalities it has produced, you will find that this county has on many occasions punched beyond its weight and it is because of those beautiful names you have heard that this county has contributed to the development of this country. It is really good that, yesterday, on the Floor of this House, we debated The County Hall of Fame Bill, which seeks to immortalise names like the ones you have heard being mentioned on the Floor of this House. Many people have contributed to the development of this country and sometimes they do not get acknowledged. They cease serving as role models to generations coming after them. I am sure that very few people in this hall knew that the first kidney transplant by an African was by a man from Busia.”



Senator Margret Kamar

“I am happy that we put a lot of value to our Senate Mashinani in Busia County

with this recognition. Of course, in addition to the Bill that was brought yesterday, it reminds us that we must learn to appreciate ourselves as human beings. If we do not write our history, nobody else will. Prof. Julia Ojiambo continues to work for this country. She is now in the National Fund for the Disabled of Kenya, where she is doing an excellent job. Mr. Speaker, there is someone who was not on your list and in absentia, it is the daughter of the soil, Agnes Odhiambo, the first Controller of Budget (CoB). Let us remember that very powerful lady. She did a powerful job and worked with this Parliament very well. I was in the 10th Parliament and she guided the spending of this country. She is the one who started the reporting to Parliament of how constituencies were spending money.”



Senator Esther Okenyuri

“I salute all the eminent persons whom the Senate has recognised this afternoon. Just to admit, coming to Busia was a blessing because for the first time, I am able to see Hon. Julia Ojiambo lives; I just read about her in history. Courtesy of this visit to Busia, I am very privileged to see the champion of affirmative action because she, in a big way, demystified the fact that women can be in some of these spaces and gender should not be used to scare women from participating in decision-making and politics. I also wish to recognise the footballers who have been mentioned; I am a football fan. Their contribution and action at that time entertained most of us. It is good to note that most of them hail from this county. I also recognise the Clerk of the Senate, who has also been recognised,

a very professional individual at a time like this when we have very few professional people. He is a man of integrity who has refused to bow to certain external pressures that sometimes tempt people of little faith.”



Senator Agnes Kavindu

“I have worked closely with two of the heroes we are recognising; Senator Amos Wako in the last Senate. We used to get his wisdom to the last. When we were debating, the Speaker used to give him the opportunity to give us his wisdom and we really appreciated it. Congratulations on the good work that you have done for this country. Prof Julia Odhiambo, thank you so much for the good work that you have done for this country. You are still working up to today. Just last week, we went to commission two dormitories in Masinga, where I called you to support Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). You willingly supported and gave funds to build those two dormitories. As if that was not enough, you also gave out money to build the houses for both caretakers of the students. I want to honour you, Mama, and tell you we have watched you. We are following your steps together with those other women who were before us, like you.”



Senator Catherine Mumma

“Anything I do right professionally is because I worked under Senator Amos Wako who guided me so well that at some point I was one of the speech writers and would write on human rights. He is a boss that I celebrate. He did not just teach me; Hon Wako was also the boss to the Clerk of the Senate. All of you can attest to the professionalism of our Clerk. Boss, we recognise and celebrate you. I also want to celebrate Hon. Moody Awori. To me, Hon. Moody Awori is a big political giant who is so humble and approachable and gives counsel to some of us. Even up to now, he is still solid, despite the fact that he is around 97. He still gives counsel to some of us and follows politics that go on. Once in a while, he asked me, Catherine, what are you guys doing in that House? I want to celebrate him for what he has done.”



Senator Consolata Wakwabubi:

“I join distinguished Senators to celebrate our sons and daughters of the soil. As one of the daughters of this soil, I also want to jump on the bandwagon to congratulate our incredible heroes and heroines of the day on their outstanding accomplishments. We acknowledge your inspiration to some of us, as you remain our role models. God bless you; God bless Kenya and God bless the Senate.”

Senator Khalwale, Senator Osotsi hail fourth Senate Mashinani



Senator Godfrey Osotsi

Majority Whip Boni Khalwale has hailed the fourth Senate Mashinani that ended its sittings in Busia County last week, saying it was a historic moment for the Western region.

“We feel truly honoured for the Senate being in this region for this one week. This is truly historical because when I was looking at it, by the time all the 47 counties are reached, we will not be able to come back to Kakamega, Vihiga, Bungoma and Trans Nzoia any time soon. It is a rare privilege for us.”

Saying the sitting was a privilege of the region, the Majority Whip requested the House to address the business chal-

lenges the County faces arguing as it is an economic giant.

“They make very little from their own-source revenue, raising around Sh500 million, and yet, the cargo they handle, that comes from Mombasa, passes through here.”

The twin border points of Busia and Malava in the county handle up to about 80 per cent of the total volume of the great lakes region cargo that originates from the port of Mombasa.

“I believe that the own-source revenue of Busia County should be comparable to the own source revenue of Mombasa County. We should unlock this. At the moment, the county government



Senator Boni Khalwale

is not able to make any reasonable returns from these trucks that you will see passing here 24-7. It is because there is a lack of a holding zone for the trucks when they are trucking from Mombasa.”

The Senator said it is very hard both for the first Governor Sospeter Ojaamong and second Governor Paul Otuoma, because of the lack of support from the National Land Commission (NLC), which should help them to displace people to create space to maximise returns from the trucks.

Senator Godfrey Osotsi supported the sentiments saying that it is important for the Senate to look at opportunities

for own-source revenue for our counties at the border.

There is a lot of trade between Kenya and Uganda, which the Senator observed should benefit the county governments besides the challenges faced by the fishermen, who are being arrested recklessly by the Ugandan Government.

“The fishermen are not able to do their trade very well because of that harassment. I think the relevant Committee needs to really deal with that issue, so that we continue promoting fish business in this region.”

COMMITTEE ROUND UP

County to settle Sh2.6B bills by 2027

The Busia County Government has pledged to clear all its pending bills amounting to Sh2.6 billion by the end of the 2026/27 financial year.

This follows sharp criticism from the Committee on Finance and Budget during the Senate Mashinani sessions held in the county last week.

The Committee’s session turned into a tense exchange as the lawmakers accused county officials of financial mismanagement, inconsistencies in expenditure reports and lack of a coherent plan to settle outstanding debts owed to suppliers and contractors.

Senators were frustrated by evasive responses from county officials, who focused on historical challenges rather than presenting a clear debt settlement strategy.

Senator Tabitha Mutinda, the vice Chair, called for immediate accountability, noting that all verified suppliers must be paid without further delay.

“These are people who supplied goods and rendered services to the county government. They must be paid,” said Senator Mutinda, even as she directed the county to develop a month-by-month debt clearance schedule.

Bowing to pressure, Governor Paul Otuoma unveiled a detailed two-year plan aimed at fully clearing the county’s pending bills by 2027.

He announced that 30 per cent of the current budget — about Sh781 million — will be dedicated to debt settlement this financial year, supplemented by Ksh520 million through a supplementary budget.

This will total Sh1.3 billion in payments for 2024/25.

A similar allocation structure, he said, will be repeated in the 2026/27 financial year to clear the remaining Sh1.3 billion.

“This is the result of hard decisions, including suspending all new development projects to prioritise debt repayment,” the Governor stated.

He added that an initial audit had verified about Sh600 million in legitimate claims, while a special committee is currently vetting the remaining bills to validate those lacking supporting documentation.

The session grew increasingly heated when senators raised concerns about discrepancies between financial reports submitted to the Controller of Budget and those provided to the Auditor-Gen-



Members of Budget Committee: from left, Senator Tabitha Mutinda, Senator Esther Okenyuri, Senator Mohamed Faki and Senator Mariam Omar.

eral, questioning the integrity of the county’s financial reporting.

Senator Okiya Omtatah criticised the county administration, accusing it of incompetence and possible favouritism in the payment process.

“You cannot explain the failure to account for public funds by pleading incompetence. Under the law, there is no room for omission unless it is deliberate,” Senator Omtatah asserted.

He further questioned why newer pending bills appeared to be settled ahead of older ones, suggesting a lack of transparency in payment prioritisation.

“There’s no logic in the way these

bills are being cleared. It seems the county is favouring recent suppliers while older debts remain unpaid.”

The Committee urged the County Government to enhance financial transparency, align all reports submitted to oversight institutions and ensure equitable treatment of suppliers.

Governor Otuoma maintained that his administration remains committed to restoring fiscal discipline and regaining the trust of local suppliers through consistent and transparent debt settlement.

“We are determined to clean up our books and rebuild confidence among our business partners,” he affirmed.



1. Senator Joyce Korir admires gifts the boy child during a ceremony in Busia County.
2. Senator Korir hands girl students sanitary pads as part of the Senate's outreach.
3. Senator Beth Syengo with girl children.
4. Senator Miraj Abdulahi with the students.
5. Senator Catherine Mumma with the students.
6. Senator Betty Montet with the girls.



- 1 Senator Joyce Korir, the PSC vice chair, speaks to guests during the Senate's outreach during the fourth Senate Mashinani in Busia County.
- 2 Commissioner Rachel Ameso and Senator Joyce Korir, listen to the public during the Senate outreach in Busia town.
- 3 PSC vice chair Joyce Korir speaks to learners who visited Senate's booth in Busia County.
- 4 A Parliamentary public Communication official poses for a picture with students who toured the Senate information booth in Busia County.
- 5 Mr Adan Issack, the Parliamentary Communication Officer, educates members of the public on Parliamentary practices during Senate Mashinani in Busia County.
- 6 Students pose for a picture with the Mace when they visited the Senate information booth in Busia County.



1. Mr Alex Mutuku, the Principal Serjeant- At-Arms, gives legislative tips to students who visited the Senate information booth in Busia County.
2. Senator Moses Kajwang, the chair of CPAC, (third from left) leads members of the Committee to the inspection tour of Busia Referral Hospital. Senator Samson Cherarkey, is on the left.
3. Dr Wilberforce Lusamba, Health Chief Officer in Busia County, speaks to the joint sitting of CPAC and Health Committee of the Senate when they inspected the state of the Busia County Referral Hospital.
4. Senator Edwin Sifuna engages members of the public when CPAC toured the Busia County Referral Hospital.
5. Senator Moses Kajwang, chair CPAC, Senator Jackson Mandago, chair Health Committee, Senator Enock Wambua and Senator Edwin Sifuna, when both committees visited Busia County Referral Hospital.
6. Senator Godfrey Osotsi shares a light moment with Mr Fredrick Odilo (centre) and Mr Arthur Odera, Busia Deputy Governor during the launch of capacity-building programme for county governments on economic planning in Busia County.



1. Senator Godfrey Osotsi and Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi during the launch of capacity-building programme for county governments on economic planning in Busia County. Senator Osotsi represented Speaker Amason Kingi at the event.
2. Governor Kenneth Lusaka, who is also former Senate Speaker; (second left), Governor Paul Otuoma and Mr Chris Omulele, Speaker County Assembly of Vihiga, the invited guests during the first sitting of the Senate Mashinani in Busia County.
3. Senator Issa Boy, chair Trade Committee, Senator Tabitha Mutinda and Senator Okiya Omtata at the Kakapel Historical site.
4. Senator Betty Montet listens to the views of the members of the public when the Education Committee visited ECDE facilities in Busia County.
5. From left, Senator Mariam Omar, Senator Miraj Abdulahi, Senator Catherine Mumma and Senator Beatrice Ogola during a Kewosa event in Busia County.
6. Speaker Amason Kingi in the first Speaker's procession during the first plenary sitting of the Senate in Busia County

Wellness Committee congratulates staff

On September 12, the Senate Staff Wellness Committee launched the step-up challenge, whose aim is to achieve 100 million steps per year, which is aimed at incrementally building up the kind of strength, control and coordination staff need in order to feel light on their feet.

Little over a month since the launch, the staff have racked up 33,367,461 total steps and are well on course to hit the target by the end of September 2026.

Carol Njue tops the list of those who have done the most in the last one month. With an average 31, 659 steps every day, she has racked a total of 918,446 steps since the start of the challenge on September 12. This totals to 446.1KMs during the period. She is followed in second place by Marlene Andia whose total steps during the month stood at 628, 170 translating to 265.5 KMs. Her daily steps averages 20, 263.

Nelly Mbuvi is in third position. She has accumulated a total of 521, 444 steps so far. This averages 21276 steps daily

and she covered 237KMs during the period.

Nicholas Nyona has covered a total of 207.4KM to stand at the fourth position. His daily steps averages 14724 which translates to 456, 452 he has accumulated so far. With average daily steps of 15, 091, Musili wa Musili has accumulated 452, 758 translating to 205.8 KM. He is in fifth position. Hillary Kipnetich is in the sixth position having accumulated 438, 492 steps, translating to the daily average of 16, 865. In total he has made a total of 199.1 KM.

Paul Mbatha daily steps averages 13, 226 and has accumulated 186.3 KM. Dahir Gudow has accumulated 179.7 KM with average daily steps of 12,752. His total accumulated steps stood at 395,331.

A staffer only identified as Ahmed stands at No 9. With his daily steps averaging 16,620 his total steps are 382, 268 while Hillary Wesonga lies 10th, with accumulated steps standing at 377,858. His daily steps average 12,188. Clerk of the Senate Jeremiah Nyegenye is No



Parliamentary Staff display their excitement after conquering Ngong Hills as part of the wellness programme.

16 overall having accumulated a total of 364, 034 in the one month. His daily steps average 11, 743. He covered a total of 165.5 KM during the period.

The Senate staff wellness committee congratulates the top ten officers who made the highest number of steps in September.

Senate celebrates Mr Nyegenye, the Clerk

Senators have heaped glowing tribute on Mr Jeremiah Nyegenye, the Clerk of the Senate, describing him as a model public servant whose professionalism and integrity have anchored the operations of the Upper House since its inception in 2013.

The lawmakers waded into the issue after Speaker Amason Kingi, in the communication to the House, recognised Mr Nyegenye as among Busia County's distinguished sons and daughters who have made outstanding contributions to the nation.

In his communication, the Speaker lauded the Clerk for his "unwavering dedication, exemplary professionalism, zeal and integrity" in steering the technical arm of the Senate and the Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC).

"Since his appointment as Clerk of the Senate in October 2012 and subsequently as Secretary to the Parliamentary Service Commission in 2013, Mr Nyegenye has led with diligence and distinction," said Speaker Kingi on the second day of the sitting of the House in Busia County.

Mr Nyegenye's recognition came alongside celebrated figures from County, including former Vice President Moody Awori, Attorney-General Emeritus Amos Wako and academic trailblazer Prof Julia Ojiambo, in what was described as a historic moment to celebrate Busia County's contribution to Kenya's leadership and professional excellence.



Mr Jeremiah Nyegenye.

Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot described Mr Nyegenye as the "embodiment of integrity and diligence", crediting him with building the institutional strength and stability that defines the Senate today.

"I have worked closely with Mr Nyegenye in the Parliamentary Service Commission and I can say without hesitation that the Senate is what it is today because of his integrity, professionalism and quiet firmness," Senator Cheruiyot stated, adding that: "We celebrate him for the dignity and excellence he brings to public service."

Other lawmakers echoed similar sentiments, painting a picture of a princi-

pled leader who has earned the respect of Senators across political divides.

Senator John Methu hailed the Clerk as a "consummate professional" who consistently rises above politics.

"Every time politics is thrown his way, he runs away from it. Mr Nyegenye deals with us professionally and we are very grateful for it," said Senator Methu.

He noted that the Clerk's conduct was an example to public officers nationwide.

Senator Okongo Omogeni also lauded the Clerk's work ethic, saying that his commitment has been unrelenting over the years.



Speaker Amason Kingi presides over the House during the sittings in Busia County. Mr Nyegenye, the Clerk of the Senate, and other technical staff follow the proceedings.

"I have never known a time that Clerk Nyegenye has taken leave. Whether we are in session, on recess, or after hours, you will always reach him. He is ever available and professional," said Senator Omogeni.

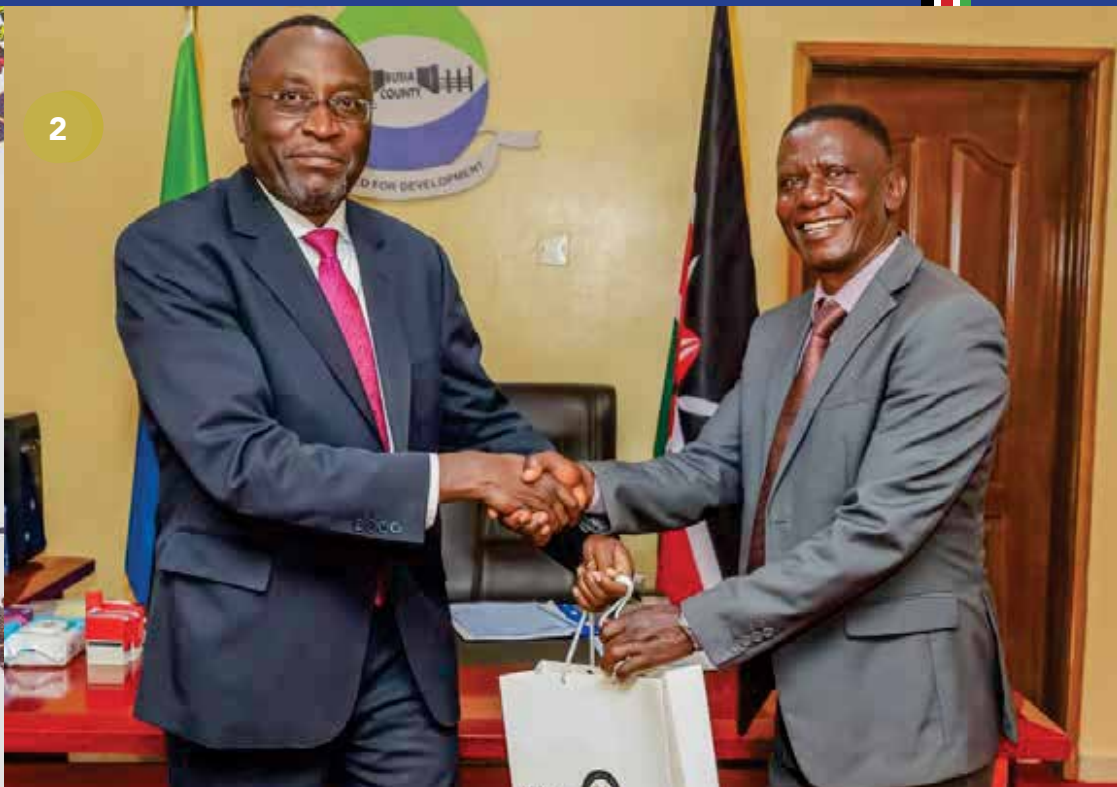
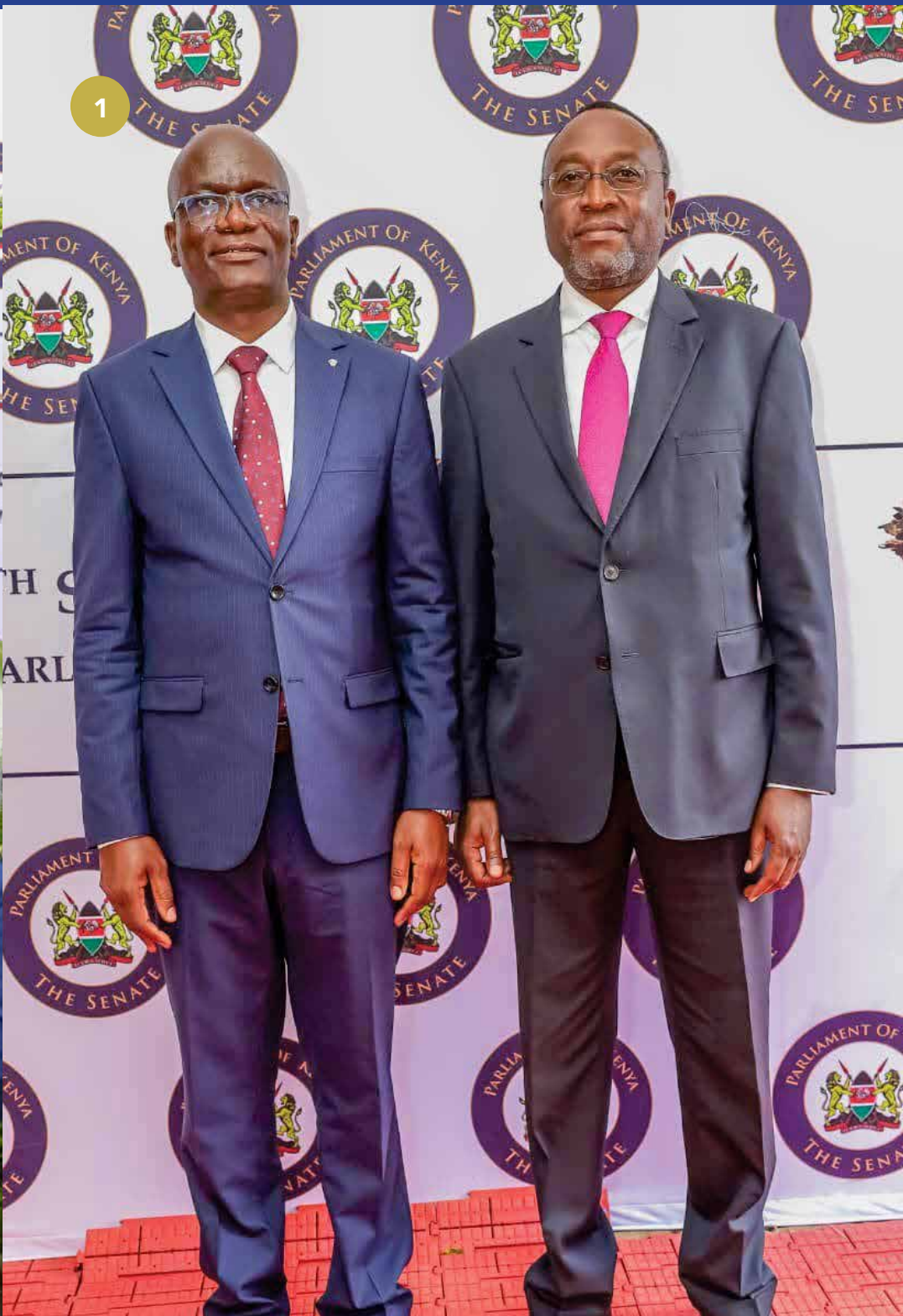
Mr Nyegenye, a lawyer, has served as the Clerk since the return of bicameralism under the 2010 Constitution.

Under his stewardship, the Senate has developed a reputation for procedural order, administrative efficiency and bipartisan respect.

His recognition in Busia during the Senate Mashinani session symbolised the county's deep roots in Kenya's legal, academic and administrative history.



1. Senator George Mbugua and Senator Issa Boy when the Committee Trade visited the Malaba border post.
2. Deputy Clerk Eunice Gichangi and Mr Zakayo Mogere, Deputy Director, Legislative and Procedural Services, receive a petition from members of the clergy in Busia County who visited the Senate in Busia County.
3. From left, Senator Joseph Githuku, Senator Mohamed Chute, Senator Issa Boy, Senator Okiya Omtatah and Senator Samson Cherarkey at the Busia border post.
4. Senator Okiya Omtatah and Senator Samson Cherarkey with students from Alupe University at the Busia County Assembly.
5. Senator Betty Montent, left, Senator Agnes Kavindu and Senator Margret Kamar when the Education visited an ECDE centre in Busia County.



1. Clerk Jeremiah Nyegenye and Planning Principal Secretary, Mr Bonface Makokha.
2. Clerk of the Senate Jeremiah Nyegenye with Musician Vincent Ongidi.
3. Mr Nyegenye and former Senator Amos Wako, who also served as Attorney General.
4. The Clerk, Mr Nyegenye and former Senator Amos Wako and Prof Julia Ojiambo.
5. Mr Nyegenye hands a gift hamper to former Nambale MP Sakwa Bunyasi.



1. Mr Jeremiah Nyegenye, the Clerk of the Senate, when he hosted Ms Christine Mango, former MP, and Mr Gabriel Mukele, former IEBC vice chair, in his office during Senate Mashinani in Busia County.
2. Mr Zakayo Mogere, Deputy Director, Legislative and Procedural Services in the Senate, with Ms Christine Mango at the County Assembly of Busia.
3. Mr Nyegenye listens as former Cabinet Minister Phillip Masinde offers a word of advice in his office.
4. Mr Nyegenye with Hon Judith Odeda, (right) and Hon Judith Ojaamong, MCAs at the County Assembly of Busia.



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