

# The SENATE

Safeguarding Devolution

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# Support for expanded budget-making time

**Parliament to increase time for consideration of the Budget Policy Statement from 14 to 21 days to allow time for public participation on the document.**



Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot



Senator Tom Ojienda speaks to Senator Fatuma Dullo.

The House has completed debate on the Public Finance Management (Amendment) Bill, 2024, with Senators supporting the proposed law that seeks to give them more time to consider documents related to the national budget more exhaustively.

The Bill, which originates from the National Assembly, seeks to extend the time within which Parliament considers and makes recommendations on the annual Budget Policy Statement (BPS), extend the time within which the Cabinet Secretary for Finance complies with debt management provisions and also put in place a framework for implementing accrual accounting in Government.

If approved, the time within which Parliament will consider and make rec-

ommendations to the BPS will be 21 days from the current 14 days. Senators argue that this will allow Parliament sufficient time for public participation, debate and make conscientious recommendations on vital budget documents.

Kenya operates within a tight fiscal cycle of only 12 months. When the House resumes at the beginning of every year, in February, BPS is usually the first business that awaits the lawmakers. Within that short time, they must consider the BPS, return it to the National Treasury, which then compiles and sends the proposed budget to the National Assembly. The National Assembly must then conduct public participation and other processes.

“We should support the proposal to

grant the House sufficient time to consider the BPS. The 14 days we are granted are not tenable within which to listen to the public, make decisions as House committees, compile and bring our decisions to the House,” said Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot while moving the Bill.

He argued that it would make sense to have individual committees present their findings on BPS separately rather than having it compiled by the Committee on Finance and Budget as is tradition. “You could have the Chairperson for the Committee on Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) come and give their perspective on the proposal in the BPS.”

Senator Tom Ojienda, who seconded the Bill, said timelines are important.

“They are important to the extent that budget policy statements must be debated within a sufficient time and the proposal to amend the sections in question is important. These amendments will improve the substance of business that this House will undertake and in the light of the proposed timelines and timeframes as per the proposals.”

Senator Okiya Omtatah described the proposed amendments as crucial arguing that the House should be given adequate time to interrogate and audit the proposals for the budget and if possible be able to ferret out cases of budgeted corruption, which may be buried in the budget, intended distortions of equitable sharing.

“The amendment is extremely important and I would urge this House to

support it so that we are given adequate time to scrutinise the budget proposals,” he said, adding that the 14 days are inadequate. “That kind of restriction reduces this House to a rubber stamp, whereby we have to decide between having a bad budget or having no budget at all. That leads to a situation whereby sometimes things that are passed in this House, that when you encounter them later on, you say, how come this thing went through the House unnoticed? Therefore, it is a very, very important proposal that we bring that out.”

Clause 2 of the Bill proposes to amend Section 25(7) of the PFM Act to provide that Parliament shall not later than 21 days after the BPS is submitted, table and discuss a report containing its recommendations and pass a resolution to adopt it with or without amendments. It also amends Section 25(9) to obligate the National Treasury to publish and



*Senator Okiya Omtatah*

publicise the BPS not later than 22 days after submission to Parliament. This extends the time for publication to 21 days.

Section 50 of the Act imposes obli-

gations on the Cabinet Secretary for the National Treasury and Economic Planning regarding debt management. Under Section 52, borrowing by the nation-

al Government must not exceed 55 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in present value terms. Section 52C, amended at the beginning of this term, came into force in 2023. The Bill now proposes a different commencement date for this provision. Clause 3 of the Bill proposes to delete Section 52C and introduce a new section requiring the Cabinet Secretary to ensure that borrowing complies with the threshold under Section 52A. Clause 4 proposes to amend Section 194(1) to mandate the Accounting Standards Board to provide a framework for implementing accrual accounting in Government. Further, the Board shall prescribe a risk management framework. The Bill also proposes to amend Section 194 by inserting a new subsection (6) to provide for a three-year transition period to the accrual system. Many have called for this change because it means that we shall spend based on actual revenue rather than on projected collections.

## Seeking answers on fate of Kenyans in Tanzania



*Senator Kathuri Murungi, who is also Deputy Speaker, consults Speaker Amason Kingi.*

Senators have faulted the national Government’s response to the treatment Kenyans are being subjected to by neighbouring countries and have demanded accountability from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding Kenyan citizens in Tanzania, following the election related violence witnessed in Dar es Salaam and some parts of the country.

The lawmakers questioned why it has become so easy for Kenyans to be mistreated by regional governments while Kenyans do not mistreat the other people.

“Why are Kenyans not respected in the East African countries and communities? Why are we becoming so laid back such that we do not respond to the plight of our people when they are persecuted or arrested and thrown into police cells, and yet, the other governments follow up on their people?” asked Senator Ju-



*Senator Samson Cherarkey*



*Senator Catherine Mumma*



*Senator Julius Murgor and Senator Crystal Asige*



*Senator Veronica Maina*



*Senator Beatrice Ogola*



*Senator Wahome Wamatinga*

lius Murgor, pointing out that Kenya government has become so friendly that it does not even do anything, even when foreigners make mistakes in Kenya.

“We are good neighbours, we treat them humanely, while Kenyans are treated with hostility in these countries. I think it is time that the Government should handle the situations equally and make the other governments responsible and positive towards Kenyans. Otherwise, we are treated like we do not really

matter in East Africa.”

The Senator was making comments on the request for a Statement made by Senator Samson Cherarkey over the fate of Kenyans following the widespread violence witnessed in Tanzania during the election.

The country has experienced widespread unrest marked by civilian clashes with security forces. Major cities have witnessed heightened tensions, raising serious concerns about public safety and civil stability. Senators say this poses a significant safety risk to Kenyan citizens residing in or travelling to Tanzania. Moreover, the tensions have spilled over to border regions where cross-border confrontations have emerged.

Senator Cherarkey the national Government to provide its assessment of the safety of Kenyan citizens currently in Tanzania, the emergency assistance evaluation protocols and other measures instituted by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs to ensure the safety of Kenyans in Tanzania during this period, including whether the Ministry has issued travel advisories and established communication channels to keep Kenyan nationals informed.

In his request, the Senator also wants the Committee on National Security, Defence and Foreign Relations to explain steps taken by the Government to secure the regions along the Kenya/Tanzanian border, including the coordination efforts underway between the Kenyan and Tanzanian governments to de-escalate tensions and address the reported cases of broader violence.

“The Committee should explain whether there are ongoing engagements with the regional and international organisations, including the East African Community (EAC) and the African Union (AU) to address the humanitarian and security implications of the unrest in Tanzania and the measures put in place to enhance future preparedness in safeguarding Kenyans living abroad who may be caught in similar crises across the world.”

Articles 2 and 3, but specifically Article 126, of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community speaks to the gradual intention of the East African nation states to coalesce into a union in five stages.

Senator Tom Ojienda said the Customs Union and the protocol of the free movement of persons, goods and services is a pointer towards free movement within East Africa by all citizens. “East African states and governments should treat citizens of East Africa as one and ensure that human rights of every individual are protected,” he said in his support for the Statement.

“The protection of human rights in different perspectives and the regional obligations of states in East Africa point to the obligation to ensure that every person living in a country, even though they are residents or persons belonging to another state, have a right to equal protection as their own citizens.”

Senator Beatrice Ogola said nationals from all countries are doing businesses in Kenya, some of them small businesses that would not be expected to under-

take.

“As Kenyans, we respect their rights and give them the freedom of movement,” she told the House, wondering why other countries find it difficult to reciprocate what the Kenyans do for them.

Senator Wahome Wamating challenged the House to come up with a framework that will ensure that communities that find themselves displaced and moving to neighbouring countries, can be integrated.

“They should get an acceptable way of living that includes access to good education and employment. This is one of the many things we should do as the East African Community (EAC) to promote regional integration. As politicians, ask ourselves: “Through our utterances, how much do we fund, fuel or cause civil strife that ends up disintegrating our societies?”

Senator Catherine Mumma said it was sad to hear of Kenyans losing their lives, property or being injured, simply because of their nationality noting that Parliament has a duty to stand up for the rights of every Kenyan, whether they are in Tanzania, Uganda or elsewhere.

She challenged the Committee on Foreign Relations to report to Parliament on how many Kenyans have lost their lives, property or have been injured as a result of the attacks. “As a country, we must continue respecting international treaties and welcoming all Tanzanians, Ugandans and other foreigners within our borders. Their rights must be protected,” she said.

Senator Veronica Maina challenged

the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) to establish the facts surrounding the violence and the killings.

For example, she wants the regional assembly to identify the people who were killed and why they were targeted during the demonstrations that reportedly led to the deaths of several foreigners. “It was very disarming and heart-wrenching for Kenyans to watch Tanzanian authorities boldly declare that those who were killed were foreigners, most likely Kenyans,” she said, citing the reports of a Kenyan teacher who died during the protests.

“This is not a friendly political act. Kenya has always maintained cordial relations with Tanzania. It is troubling that our citizens could be targeted there. If you walk through some streets in Nairobi today, you will find small traders from Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania. Our salons are run by Congolese and even the person who cuts my hair is not Kenyan. Kenya has been friendly to all foreigners who live and work here and it is, therefore, worrying that neighbouring nations would be hostile towards Kenyans. It is uncalled for.”

Deputy Speaker Kathuri Murungi, who was on the chair during the debate, directed the Committee to report back to the House in two weeks.

“Listening to the Senators who have spoken, this is a matter that needs some urgency because Kenyans in the neighbouring countries maybe suffering. The Committee should report back in two weeks so that we can know the fate of Kenyans in Tanzania,” he said

## Debate on adoption of clean cooking technologies starts

The Senate has appealed to both the national and county governments to fast-track the adoption of clean cooking technologies, warning that continued reliance on firewood and charcoal is threatening lives, forests and the environment.

Senator Hamida Kibwana urged the Council of Governors (CoG), the National Treasury and the Ministry of Energy to work jointly to develop policies and budgets that will mainstream clean cooking into county and national development plans.

“Article 42 of the Constitution guarantees every person the right to a clean and healthy environment, which includes access to safe energy options,” she said.

And added: “However, over 900 million Africans, including more than 90 per cent of households in Kenya’s rural areas, still rely on traditional biomass for cooking.”



Senator Hamida Kibwana

The lawmaker noted that dependence on firewood and charcoal has led to high levels of indoor air pollution that cause premature deaths.

“In Kenya, indoor air pollution has been linked to over 23,000 annual deaths, with women and girls bearing the greatest burden. They spend long hours collecting firewood and cooking in unsafe conditions, which limits their education and economic opportunities,”

she told the House.

The Senator Kibwana warned that traditional cooking methods contribute significantly to deforestation, greenhouse gas emissions and climate vulnerability at the county level.

This, she said, undermines the national commitments under the Energy Act, 2019, the Climate Change Act, 2016 and Kenya’s Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

She called attention to the Africa Clean Cooking Summit held in Paris in 2023, where USD2.2 billion was mobilised to support clean cooking projects.

“The International Energy Agency has recommended urgent financing and policy action to achieve universal access by 2040. We must act now,” she said.

The Motion calls on the CoG to develop county-level policies and budgets for clean cooking.

The National Treasury and the Min-

istry of Energy will now be required to prioritise the sector in financing frameworks.

County governments will on the other hand be required to incorporate clean cooking targets into their County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs).

The Motion also seeks fast-tracking of letters of authorisation to unlock carbon finance markets under Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement and the CORSIA framework.

It also seeks that the engagement with private sector and community organisations expand access and create local jobs.

The lawmaker said some counties and private actors had piloted clean cooking projects “but these remain small-scale and fragmented”.

She insisted that counties must institutionalise clean cooking as part of their energy and health mandates to save lives and forests.



1. Speaker Amason Kingi and Hon John Kiarie with invited guests at the 11th General Assembly of the World Scouts Parliamentary Union at Safari Park, Nairobi County during the award ceremony dinner and bonfire lighting.
2. Speaker Kingi awards some of the Scouts during the event.
3. Hon Kiarie salutes Speaker Kingi before receiving his award.
4. The Speaker joins other scouts in a photo session.
5. Speaker Kingi and Senator Esther Okenyuri.

## Health Committee tour Kiambu County



Members of Health Committee, led by chair Jackson Mandago, pose for a photo with some County Executive Committee members during their inspection tour of health facilities in Kiambu County.



Senator Jackson Mandago (right), Senator Stewart Madzayo and Senator Joseph Githuku listen as they briefed on the operations of the Kiambu County Referral Hospital during the tour.



Senator Madzayo inspects drugs at the Kiambu Referral Hospital Pharmacy.



Members of the Committee speak to patients detained at the Kiambu Referral Hospital for failing to clear their medical bills.

The Committee on Health conducted an inspection tour of the Kiambu County Referral Hospital as part of its mandate to assess health-care service delivery, infrastructure and resource utilisation in public health facilities across the country.

During the visit, the Committee raised concern over mothers who had remained in the hospital for more than three months due to unpaid medical bills. After deliberations with the County Executive, the leadership agreed to clear the pending bills under the Wamatangi Care programme. Senator Jackson Mandago, the

chair of the Committee, commended the county government for addressing the matter, noting that the affected mothers, categorised as indigents, would be discharged within 48 hours.

The Committee also highlighted the alarming rate of teenage pregnancies recorded at the facility and urged Kiambu County leadership, including Members of the County Assembly, to prioritize community sensitization to address the rising numbers.

Additionally, the Committee encouraged residents to register for the Social Health Authority (SHA), noting that

many women admitted to the maternity ward lacked SHA coverage, which could otherwise ease their financial burdens and improve access to services.

On infrastructure, the lawmakers expressed concern over the hospital's non-functional incinerator and emphasised the urgent need to improve medical waste management. County Assembly members assured the Committee that provisions for procuring a new incinerator would be included in the next supplementary budget. There were gaps in the mortuary section, including inadequate equipment, and the Committee

recommended that the county government provide the necessary tools, offer permanent employment to staff and consider promotions for long-serving personnel.

The visit also covered Ruaka Level 3 and Karuri facilities, where the Committee inspected ongoing improvement works.

The Committee directed the County Assembly Health Committee to follow up with the County Executive as the Senate prepares a comprehensive report to be tabled before the House for consideration.

## Land Committee engages stakeholders on Nairobi eviction



Senator Edwin Sifuna speaks during the meeting with Governor Sakaja. Senator Johnes Mwaruma (left) and Senator Joe Nyutu look on.



Senator Mwaruma makes his comments.



Senator Karen Nyamu speaks as Senator Mohamed Faki, the chair of the Committee on Land, look on.

Governor Johnson Sakaja has said the management of the Nairobi River riparian corridor is a matter that requires urgent attention. This is because of the city's hydrologically dense nature and the increasing degradation of its drainage systems due to unregulated development, solid waste pollution, and climate-change induced rainfall fluctuations.

The Governor cautioned that repeated flooding events recorded in 2016, 2020, 2023 and 2024 underscore the need for proactive intervention to mitigate potential loss of life and property.

He made the remarks when he appeared before the Committee on Lands, Environment and Natural Resources, which is chaired by Senator Mohamed Faki for a consultative meeting with the Governor, the Nairobi Rivers Commission and the Pumwani Riyadhha Mosque Committee.

During the meeting, the Committee engaged the stakeholders on two key petitions, one regarding the eviction of the Korogocho community residing along the Nairobi River Corridor following its declaration as a Special Planning Area, and another by the Cultural Environmental Care Society (CECARE Society)

concerning the alleged conversion of LR No. 209/2378/1 Pumwani Majengo from public to private land.

In his submission, Governor Sakaja noted that while the Constitution guarantees fundamental rights, it equally underscores sustainable development and environmental protection as key principles of governance. He noted that the County Government has a statutory obligation to plan and regulate development in pursuit of public interest, as outlined in the Fourth Schedule of the Constitution, the County Governments Act, the Urban Areas and Cities Act and the Physical and Land Use Planning Act.

Referring to a Cabinet resolution of April 2024, Governor Sakaja noted that the National Government had advised residents living along riverbanks to relocate to higher grounds, in anticipation of heavy rains and heightened flood risk. He also cited alignment among various sectoral laws, including the Survey Act, EMCA, Agriculture Act and PLUPA 2019, all of which discourage human activity within riparian zones to preserve their ecological integrity.

The Governor assured the Committee that, as of the latest site inspection, no demolitions or survey pegging had been



Governor Sakaja during the meeting.

conducted in Korogocho. "Residents of Korogocho are very special to me, and any inhuman eviction is wrong. However, the law governing riparian corridors must be followed to save lives, and compensation where applicable must be fair," he affirmed.

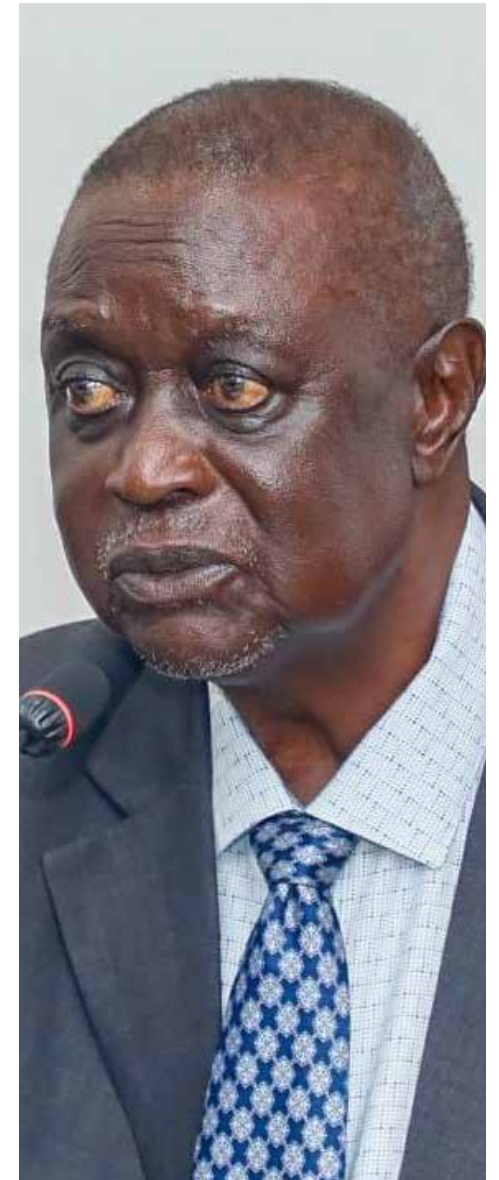
The Nairobi Rivers Commission, in its response, clarified that the declaration of the Nairobi River Corridor as a

Special Planning Area does not authorize evictions or displacements without due legal process, a resettlement action plan and fair compensation. The Commission added that residents displaced during flood evacuation exercises would be identified by the National Government Administration Officers (NGAO) for compensation and prioritization in allocation to nearby social housing projects.

## ICT Committees engages stakeholders on Energy Bill



Principal Secretary Ministry of ICT Stephen Isaboke (left) and Communication Authority boss David Mugonyi.



Senator Oburu Oginga, chair, Energy Committee.

The Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy has warned that a proposed amendment to the Energy Act could disrupt the rollout of national broadband and digital infrastructure.

The amendment seeks to allow county governments to levy charges on public energy infrastructure without first getting approval from the Cabinet Secretary for Energy and Petroleum.

In its submission to the Committee on Energy, the Ministry said the proposal could have serious and far-reaching implications for national connectivity projects.

Principal Secretary Stephen Isaboke warned that the plan would fragment regulation, slow down project implementation, and raise costs for critical networks such as the National Optic Fibre Backbone Infrastructure (NOFBI) and the Last Mile County Connectivity Project (LMCCP).

“While the Ministry supports devolution and recognises the importance of empowering county governments, the proposed amendment would undermine national cohesion and efficiency,” said

PS Isaboke when he appeared before the Energy Committee

Senator Edwin Sifuna urged the Ministry to ensure counties benefit from revenues generated through the ICT infrastructure mounted on the Kenya Power transmission network.

“The PS should collect the revenue from ICT infrastructure on the Kenya Power line network and give it to counties,” Senator Sifuna said, urging the Ministry to disclose the amount telecommunications companies pay for using public infrastructure.

Senator Boni Khalwale supported the need for fairness, saying both levels of government should benefit from infrastructure-related revenues.

“Why can’t we provide a level playing field for both national and county governments so that the two levels of government share the benefits?” he posed.

The Principal Secretary defended the centralised revenue model, saying it ensures equitable distribution through the national system. “Centralisation of revenue from the Kenya Power line network helps in pooling resources together. County governments then get the reve-

nue as shareable resources,” explained the PS.

Ms Pauline Kimotho, legal counsel for the ICT Ministry, added that the major challenge with devolving such charges lies in the lack of consistency among counties. “The issue is the unpredictability of levies from different counties. We need harmonisation and a standard rate for each county,” she said.

Ms Fiona Asonga, CEO of the Technology Service Providers of Kenya (TESPOK), called for a more supportive regulatory environment for the data industry. “We are requesting a special tariff from the Ministry of Energy, through EPRA, for the telecommunications and data industry—just like the special tariffs extended to the manufacturing sector,” Ms Asonga said.

The Ministry reiterated that both energy and communications regulation fall under the National Government as outlined in the Fourth Schedule of the Constitution. It warned that giving counties independent power to impose wayleave fees could create legal conflicts and breach Articles 186 and 209(5), which bar counties from introducing taxes

that harm national economic policy or cross-county investments.

Officials further noted that the proposal contradicts national frameworks such as the Digital Economy Blueprint (2019) and the Strategic Plan (2023–2027), which emphasise harmonised and affordable infrastructure rollout.

“Uncoordinated levies would inflate broadband costs, delay rural connectivity, discourage private investment, and ultimately raise consumer prices for digital services,” the Ministry warned.

To avoid disruptions, the Ministry proposed a joint policy framework involving the Energy and ICT ministries and the Council of Governors to standardize wayleave charges and align roles between the two levels of government.

It also called for a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) before the amendment is enacted to assess its financial and operational implications.

“The amendment may boost county revenue in the short term, but it would destabilize the national framework for ICT deployment, drive up project costs, and delay broadband expansion,” the Ministry concluded.

## Energy inspects LPG refilling plants in Nairobi County



Senator Veronica Maina and Senator Edwin Sifuna with EPRA Director General Daniel Kiptoo (in green tie) during the tour of LPG refilling plant in Nairobi.

The Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA) is intensifying a nationwide crackdown on illegal Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) refilling plants and counterfeit cylinders to dismantle cartels and enhance consumer safety.

Director General Daniel Kiptoo told the Committee on Energy revealed that numerous illegally refilled cylinders have already been confiscated as part of the ongoing operation.

The Authority leadership had appeared before the Committee to explain the ongoing regulatory actions in the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) sector.

The discussions centered on the handling of seized gas cylinders, enforcement measures against illegal refilling sites, and the overall impact of these actions on LPG dealers.

“We are committed to ensuring that every cylinder in the Kenyan market is genuine and safe for use. Eliminating illegal cylinders is not just regulation — it is a matter of protecting lives,” said Mr Kiptoo.

Senator Edwin Sifuna sought clarification on the enforcement of safety standards, particularly as schools and other public institutions transition to LPG use. He questioned how EPRA intends to pre-



LPG cylinders packed in truck ready for delivery.

vent future disasters similar to the recent gas explosion in Embakasi.

The Director General assured the Committee that strict safety measures have been implemented to prevent such incidents, noting that the removal of fake cylinders from circulation remains one of the agency’s top priorities.

EPRA further briefed the committee on plans to subsidise government-issued LPG cylinders to make them affordable for low-income households. Senator Veronica Maina questioned why the cylinders would not be distributed free of charge, given that the intended beneficiaries are vulnerable households.

Mr Kiptoo clarified that while the cylinders will be heavily subsidised, a small fee will be charged to maintain sustainability and ensure the continuity of the programme.

“Our goal is affordability and safety — not free distribution. The subsidy ensures access while enabling EPRA to sustain the programme,” he said.

The Committee toured EPRA’s storage site where seized illegal cylinders are kept, many stored in large shipping containers pending further legal action.

## House starts debate on Motion on referral hospitals

Senators have started debate on an important Motion that seeks to establish regional national teaching and referral hospitals across Kenya. The aim is to ensure equitable access to specialised medical services.

The Motion, moved by Senator Johnes Mwaruma, notes that only five national referral hospitals are serving the entire population of over 50 million Kenyans.

They are Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH), Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH), Kenyatta University Teaching, Mathari Hospital and the National Spinal Injuries Hospital.

“This is an injustice to millions of citizens forced to travel to Nairobi for advanced treatment. Some die on the way,” Senator Mwaruma said, while moving the Motion on Wednesday last week.

He argued that decentralising tertiary healthcare would actualise Article 43 of the Constitution which guarantees every Kenyan the right to the highest attainable standard of health and align with Universal Health Coverage (UHC) goals.



Senator Johnes Mwaruma

Western, North Eastern and Coast lack referral-level facilities despite high disease burdens.

The Motion is seeking to compel the Ministry of Health to prioritise construction and equipping of new hospitals with oncology, dialysis and trauma units.

The Motion is proposing that each regional hospital should be linked to a medical training institution to support research, internship and capacity building.

The Senator wants the Ministry of

Health to establish National Teaching and Referral hospitals in the Coast, Eastern, North Eastern, Nyanza and Western regions and fully equip the National Teaching and Referral Hospitals with modern medical equipment, medical supplies and personnel.

He also wants the County Governments to allocate more funds to their respective health dockets to adequately facilitate their County Level 5 and Level 6 hospitals to enhance the provision of critical health services to reduce the demand for such services from the Nation-

al Teaching and Referral Hospitals.

Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) has 1,800 beds and it is the largest in East and Central Africa. It serves as a teaching and referral hospital for the University of Nairobi.

Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH) has a capacity of 1,020 beds and serves as a teaching and referral hospital for Moi University. Mathari National Teaching and Referral Hospital (MNTRH), has a capacity of 800 beds and it specialises in mental health services.

Kenyatta University Teaching and Referral Hospital (KUTRH) has a capacity of 600 beds.

The fifth is the National Spinal Injury Hospital (NSIH) located in Nairobi. It deals with treatment and rehabilitation of spinal injuries.

The facilities are crucial as they provide specialised services and are equipped to handle complex medical services. They are operated and financed through the Exchequer from the national Government.

# Committee decries understaffing at Kakamega, Bungoma health facilities



Senator Jackson Mandago (third left) and Senator David Wakoli (left) at the record management section of the Bungoma County Referral Hospital.



Senator Wakoli (in green) and Senator Mandago get a brief from the Bungoma County Hospital management during their tour.



Senator Mandago speaks to Bungoma Hospital staff as Senator Mariam Omar (right) checks the record books.



Senator Wakoli and Senator Mandago at the Kakamega County Referral Hospital.

An inspection tour of Bungoma and Kakamega County Referral Hospitals, as well as other health facilities in the two counties, have exposed significant understaffing among healthcare workers, a challenge that continues to hinder effective service delivery.

The tour was conducted by the Committee on Health as part of its mandate to assess the status of healthcare service delivery, infrastructure and resource utilization in public health institutions.

The Committee, which is chaired by Senator Jackson Mandago, directed the county executives to convert Universal Health Coverage (UHC) staff into permanent and pensionable terms, noting that the national government has already provided resources to support this transition.

“We have noted shortages of staff across facilities in the country, and that is why, as a committee, we want a conversation with the unions, the Salaries Remuneration Commission and the

County Public Service Boards to address this issue. We have enough well-trained personnel, our challenge is resources, but we can still do better with what we have to improve service delivery for our people,” Senator Mandago stated.

The Committee also raised concern over the state of the morgue in Bungoma County, which has a capacity of 20 bodies but is currently holding more than 50. In contrast, the Kakamega County facility was commended for its improved standards and its ability to almost generate revenue sufficient to pay its own workers.

The lawmakers noted widespread system failures across facilities, leading to service delays and poor records management. “We urged county governments to fully digitalize their health records and invest in stable, efficient systems to enhance service delivery,” said Senator Mariam Omar, the vice chair of the Committee.

The Committee further observed and expressed concern over the alarmingly



Senator Wakoli speaks to patients at the Kakamega County Referral Hospital.

high rates of teenage pregnancies across all facilities. “The statistics show that out of every ten pregnant women, eight are under 18 years. I am calling on the

people of Bungoma and all Kenyans to take action, because if this continues, the lives of future generations will be greatly affected,” said Senator David Wakoli.

## Senate to scrutinise NYS Commercialisation Plan

The Government has unveiled a plan to commercialise the National Youth Service (NYS) in what officials say is a strategic shift to make the agency self-sustaining and a key driver of youth employment.

Mr Geoffrey Ruku, the Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes told the House the plan involves setting up a state-owned company — NYS Enterprises and Services Limited — to run commercial operations in construction, agriculture, textile production, hospitality and security.

“The NYS Act 2018 empowers the Service to engage in enterprise activities. We are now operationalising that provision to create jobs and generate revenue,” CS Ruku told the lawmakers on Wednesday.

He said the company’s registration was underway at the Attorney General’s Office and it would function as a commercial arm of NYS.

NYS will own 99 per cent of the company while the remaining one per cent would be owned by the National Treasury. The commercialisation agenda aims to reduce NYS’s reliance on the Exchequer by raising Sh4 billion annually.

He said the NYS currently trains 18,000 recruits yearly but plans to expand to 40,000 in 2026 and 100,000 by 2028.

Senator Karen Nyamu, who had filed the question, sought assurance that urban youth, particularly in Nairobi’s informal settlements, would benefit from the initiative. “Marginalisation also exists in urban slums. Will Kibra and Mathare youth get opportunities under this plan?” she asked.

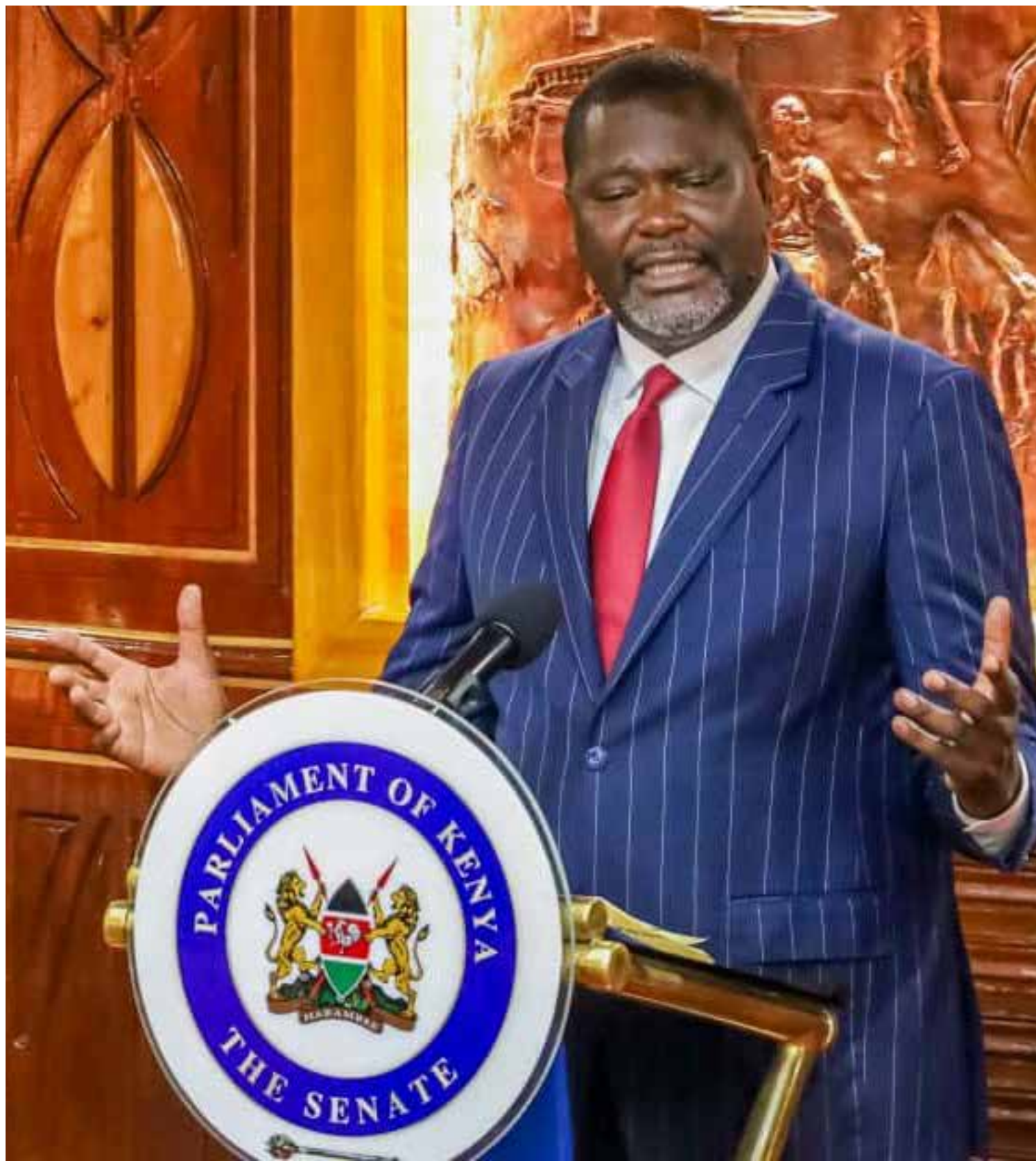
Senator Mohamed Faki cautioned that the plan risked repeating mistakes of the 1980s when NYS lost billions in failed transport ventures. “The Government must not repeat historical blunders that made NYS buses obsolete,” he warned.

Senator Kathuri Murungi proposed merging all youth empowerment initiatives, including those under Trade, Cooperatives and Youth Affairs ministries, into one umbrella for efficiency.

“The youth are confused by scattered programmes across eight ministries,” he said.

Senator Veronica Maina asked whether procurement opportunities within NYS would prioritise young contractors and suppliers.

Senator Beatrice Ogola demanded to



*Cabinet Secretary Geoffrey Ruku.*

know the identities of officers currently under investigation by the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) for alleged graft at NYS.

Others, including Senator Wakwabi Consolata and Senator Wakili Sigei, questioned whether the proposed company duplicated existing NYS functions and how land commercialisation would align with the Government’s leasing programme.

CS Ruku assured Senators that the company would operate under strict anti-corruption safeguards, including au-

ditions by the Auditor-General, Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) and EACC.

He disclosed that three NYS officers accused of misconduct had already been suspended pending investigations. “We are restoring accountability with military precision. There will be no repeat of past scandals,” he said.

The CS clarified that the new enterprise would not replace NYS but complement it. “The Service remains a training and discipline body. The company will employ NYS graduates for prof-

it-driven projects, similar to the University of Nairobi Enterprises and Services (UNES) model.”

He added that NYS would engage in mechanised agriculture, affordable housing and industrial textile production, turning its vast land and machinery into income-generating assets.

“When drought hits Turkana or Marsabit, NYS will grow fodder, sell it and fund more youth training instead of waiting for Treasury allocations,” he said.

## House to push Gender Ministry reforms

The dire state of Kenya's child protection system was laid bare on Wednesday with Senators pushing for urgent reforms, increased funding and accountability from the Ministry of Gender, Culture and Children Services.

Cabinet Secretary Hanna Cheptumo admitted that the country's State Department for Children Services is struggling with severe underfunding, acute staff shortages and logistical challenges that have crippled its ability to protect vulnerable children.

"We have only 714 children officers serving an estimated 18 million children across 47 counties. This translates to 2.7 officers per 100,000 children, far below the ideal standards," the CS told the House during Wednesday's Question Time.

The CS, who was responding to a question from Senator Miraj Abdullahi, disclosed that the ministry has adopted a multi-pronged strategy to advocate for higher budget allocations and mainstream child protection within the national development agenda.

She revealed that the Ministry has proposed a budget of Sh12.3 billion for the 2025/2026 financial year, including Sh9.13 billion for cash transfers to orphans and vulnerable children, Sh180 million for the Street Families Rehabilitation Fund and Sh100 million for the Presidential Bursary Programme.

However, Senators were alarmed that the development budget stood at a mere Sh244 million, which they termed grossly inadequate to rehabilitate dilapidated children's remand homes and expand county-level protection offices.

Senator Mohamed Chute sharply criticised the uneven deployment of officers, noting that vast counties such as Marsabit and Turkana had only nine and eleven officers respectively, yet Kajiado had 28.

"Have you ever visited Marsabit or Turkana? How can the biggest counties with difficult terrain have fewer officers than smaller ones?" he asked. Senator Kinyua questioned why the Ministry was allocating Sh100 million for a "Presidential bursary" while its development vote remained negligible.

He also sought clarity on whether the Sh10 billion additional funding request had been approved.

CS Cheptumo admitted that the request had not been approved by the National Treasury and said the Ministry was working with the Public Service Commission (PSC) to recruit 500 new officers once funds are available.

Senator Kathuri Murungi drew atten-



*Cabinet Secretary Hanna Cheptumo.*

tion to an alarming statistic where over 4,000 teenage pregnancies were reported in Meru County this year alone, with 17 girls sitting national exams from maternity wards.

"We are losing an entire generation of girls," he lamented and urged the CS to expand adolescent reproductive health programmes.

The CS acknowledged that teenage pregnancies had reached "a national emergency," citing the National AIDS Control Council report indicating 240,000 pregnancies among school-age girls in 2024, including 660 cases of defilement.

"We must admit this is alarming. We are engaging in community sensitisation and multi-agency interventions involving the Ministries of Education, Interior and religious organisations. Parents must also take responsibility during holidays to keep children safe," the CS said.

She revealed that the World Bank-supported adolescent plan will be rolled out to address reproductive health, while the National Care Reform Strategy will transition the 44,000 institutionalised children back into safe family environments under social supervision.

Senator Esther Okenyuri pressed the CS to explain why street rehabilitation

efforts had failed, alleging that "cartels were exploiting street children for profit". CS Cheptumo disclosed that a national census of street families had been conducted and its report would be launched by December 2025 to guide reintegration efforts. "Nobody belongs to the street. Many of these families are not Kenyan citizens. We will identify their origins and reintegrate them through cross-border collaboration."

She also promised to operationalise the Victims Protection Fund following Senator Miraj's revelation that no child victim had benefited from it due to lack of policy guidelines.

## Developers defy Tribunal Orders on Lang'ata Link Road



Senator Edwin Sifuna



Senator Hamida Kibwana

**R**evelations that developers along Lang'ata Link Road in Nairobi have defied orders from the National Environment Tribunal (NET) halting construction on contested parcels of land has angered Senators.

The matter was raised by Senator Hamida Kibwana who expressed concern that the construction works are going on despite an injunction issued by a tribunal on June 9, 2025.

"Despite being duly served, the respondents have reportedly continued with construction in open defiance of the tribunal's directive," she told the House in a Statement, noting that this raises

concerns about enforcement of environmental and judicial orders."

The disputed land is linked to the Shree Cutch Satsang Swaminarayan Temple Trust, which had been sued by residents of Phenom Estate through their chairperson, Mr Dennis Wanjau Wathira.

The residents sought to stop construction pending determination of environmental and zoning concerns. However, developers allegedly ignored the court order and continue to work under the protection of rogue officials.

"What message are we sending if religious institutions can flout the law and get away with it?" Senator Kibwana

asked and said: "It undermines public trust in environmental governance."

Senator Edwin Sifuna described the situation as a "crisis of impunity", warning that land grabbing and illegal construction were spiraling out of control in the capital.

"Even religious organisations who should be moral exemplars are now defying the law," Senator Sifuna lamented and added: "We are witnessing total breakdown of enforcement in this country."

The Senators demanded answers from the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), the Ministry of En-

vironment and Nairobi County Government, accusing them of failing to enforce the tribunal's order.

Senator Kibwana called for the Committee on Lands and Environment to summon all parties involved and determine why the rule of law was being undermined. "If orders of the tribunal can be ignored so blatantly, then justice becomes meaningless," she said.

Senator Sifuna noted that the government must restore public confidence by punishing officials who enable illegal developments. "We cannot have two sets of laws — one for the rich and another for ordinary citizens," he argued.

## House demands probe on nonpayment of salaries in Machakos

**T**he House has directed its Committee on Labour and Social Welfare to critically look and establish the status of employees in the County Government of Machakos in the Solid Waste Revenue and Education Departments.

The lawmakers want the Committee to establish the cause of the delay in paying the salaries and whether those affected are casual workers, workers on contract or permanent employees and explain why they are working and then they are not being paid.

"We cannot be happy about that kind of unlawful way of keeping staff, yet they are working in very key areas - on waste management, revenue and education," said Senator Beatrice Ogola, adding that the environment in which they



Senator Agnes Kavindu

are working is sensitive in the current world.

She challenged the Committee to compel the County Government of Machakos to explain how it expects the workers to meet their family obligations.

"I know they have families, children going to school and they have to take care of many obligations. We must also be told who is behind this unlawful ac-



Senator Beatrice Ogola

tivity. All that must be brought out."

Senator Ogola was responding to a request for Statement by Senator Agnes Kavindu on the delay by the County to pay staff salaries for up to two years. Senator Kavindu wants the Committee to state the total amount owed by the County Government in terms of salary and arrears and plans in place to ensure the staff are paid without any further de-

lays.

She wants the Committee to table a report on the current employment status of the affected staff, the action the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection is taking to safeguard the rights and welfare of staff working under the administration of county governments and policy intervention and measures being implemented to ensure timely disbursement of salaries and other related benefits to staff in the County Government of Machakos.

"It is unfortunate that we can have public officers working for county governments or the national Government, giving their services to the public, and it comes out that they have not been paid, and specifically for two years," said Senator Ogola.

## Maseneta waishinikiza serikali kuwalinda Wakenya na rasilimali

**M**aseneta wameendelea kuibua hoja muhimu bungeni wakitaka serikali kuchukua hatua za dharura kuyashughulikia masuala yanayohusu usalama wa raia na usimamizi wa rasilimali za umma.

Seneta Samson Cherarkey aliongoza wito huo kwa kuitaka serikali kupitia Wizara ya Mambo ya Nje na Uhusiano wa Kigeni kutoa kauli kuhusu usalama wa wakenya wanaoishi nchini Tanzania, kufuatia machafuko yaliyoripotiwa baada ya uchaguzi mkuu katika taifa hilo.

Seneta huyo alisema kuwa hali ya taharuki nchini humo imezua hofu miongoni mwa Wakenya wanaofanya kazi na kuishi nchini Tanzania hasa katika maeoneo ya mpakani, hivyo serikali inapaswa kuchukua hatua za haraka kuhakikisha usalama wao.

“Ni jukumu la serikali kuwalinda raia wake popote walipo duniani. Tunataka kujua hatua zilizochochuliwa kuhakikisha wakenya walioko Tanzania wako salama, wanapata taarifa sahihi kuhusu hali ilivyo na kama ubalozi wetu nchini humo umejiandaa kukabiliana na dharura,” alisema Seneta Cherarkey.

Aliongeza kuwa serikali inapaswa kutoa tathmini kamili kuhusu hali ya usalama na maelezo ya hatua zinazochukuliwa kushirikiana na Jumuiya ya Afrika



Seneta Stewart Madzayo.

Mashariki (EAC) na Umoja wa Afrika (AU) ili kuhakikisha amani na utulivu vinarejea katika taifa hilo jirani.

Seneta huyo alisisitiza umuhimu wa kuweka mikakati ya muda mrefu ya dharura kwa raia wanaoishi nje ya nchi, ikiwemo mfumo wa mawasiliano wa dharura na kituo cha msaada kwa raia wakati wa migogoro.

Kwingineko, Seneta Stewart Madzayo, ameitaka serikali kutoa ufafanuzi wa kina kuhusu umiliki na usimamizi wa jeti la Mnarani lililoko katika Kaunti ya Kilifi, kufuatia mvutano wa umiliki unaodaiwa kuwapo kati ya mashirika ya serikali na wawekezaji binafsi.



Seneta Samson Cherarkey.

Akiwasilisha ombi kwenye Kamati ya Seneti ya Ardhi, Mazingira na Maliasili, Seneta Madzayo alisema kuwa eneo hilo ni muhimu kwa jamii ya Pwani kwa shughuli za uvuvi, utalii na biashara ndogo ndogo, hivyo lazima serikali ihakikishe linaendelea kutumika kwa manufaa ya umma.

“Ni muhimu serikali iweke wazi ni nani hasa anayemiliki jeti hilo na kuhakikisha kuwa shughuli zote katika eneo hilo zinafuata sheria, huku maslahi ya wananchi wa Kilifi yakipewa kipaumbele,” alisema Seneta Madzayo.

Aliongeza kuwa jeti la Mnarani lilikuwa kivukio muhimu kabla ya ujenzi wa daraja la Kilifi mwaka 1980, lakini sasa

limegeuka kitovu cha biashara na shughuli za kitalii zinazovutia wawekezaji kutoka ndani na nje ya nchi.

Seneta Madzayo pia aliitaka serikali kutoa maelezo kuhusu mvutano unaoendelea kati ya Huduma ya Misitu ya Kenya (KFS) na Mamlaka ya Bandari ya Kenya (KPA) kuhusu umiliki wa eneo hilo, akisema kwamba hali hiyo imechangia kuchelewesha uwekezaji na maendeleo ya kijamii katika Kaunti hiyo.

“Serikali lazima iweke mfumo wazi wa usimamizi wa ardhi za umma, ili kuepusha migogoro inayozuia maendeleo. Wakazi wa pwani wanahitaji uhakika kwamba mali za umma hazizuiwa kiholela au kuhodhiwa na wachache wenye nguvu,” aliongeza.

Maseneta hao walisisitiza kuwa ni jukumu la serikali kuhakikisha kwamba masuala yanayohusu usalama wa raia na usimamizi wa rasilimali za taifa yanashughulikiwa kwa uwazi, kwa mujibu wa Katiba na sheria za nchi.

Naibu Spika Kathuri Murungi alitoa agizo kwa Kamati ya Usalama kuliangazia kwa kina suala la usalama wa wakenya waliopo nchini Tanzania na kuwasilisha ripoti kwenye Seneti katika muda wa majuma mawili.

## Shinikizo kupunguzwa ushuru uliopendekezwa kwenye zao la mrangi

**K**ampuni ya Kenya Bixa imeiomba Seneti kuingilia kati Kanuni za Mazao ya (Bixa) 2025, chini ya notisi ya kisheria nambari 145 ya mwaka 2025, ikionya kwamba baadhi ya vifungu vyake vinaweza kudhoofisha ukuaji wa sekta changa kama ya mrangi yaani Bixa nchini Kenya.

Wakati wa kikao mbele ya Kamati ya Sheria Andamizi inayoongozwa na Seneta Mwenda Gataya, Mkurugenzi Mkuu wa kampuni hiyo, Dkt David Kisa aliwasilhi Maseneta kutathmini upya ada iliyopendekezwa ya asilimia moja ya thamani kwa bidhaa zozote za mrangi, akipendekeza ishushwe hadi asilimia 0.1.

“Hii ni ada ya juu mno na ya kuadhibu na inashusha ushindani wa bidhaa za mrangi kwenye masoko ya kimataifa. Hatua hii itarudisha nyuma juhudi za kukuza zao hili jipya nchini,” alisema Dkt Kisa.

Aliongeza kuwa kiwango hicho ni kikubwa zaidi kuliko kinachotowza katika sekta zilizokomaa kama za maua, matunda, makadamia na korosho.

“Ada hii inapita kwa mbali viwango vya sekta zilizoendelea kwa miaka mingi



Seneta Mwenda Gataya Mo Fire.

kwenye mauzo ya nje ya matunda, maua na mazao ya karanga,” alifafanua Afisa huyo.

Dkt Kisa alieleza Kamati hiyo kuwa hoja kama hizo zilitolewa pia wakati wa ushirikishwaji wa umma, lakini hazikujumuishwa kwenye rasimu ya mwisho ya kanuni hizo.

Katika maelezo yake, alipendekeza kuwa badala ya kutoa motisha ya kuuza nje mrangi ghafi, serikali inapaswa kuongeza ada ya mauzo ya nje ya malighafi hiyo kutoka asilimia tatu hadi asilimia tano ya thamani ili kuzuia usafirishaji wa malighafi badala yake

kuhimiza uchakataji na uongezaji thamani ndani ya nchi.

Kampuni hiyo pia ilitoa maoni kuhusu Sehemu ya Pili ya Kanuni inayohusu usajili, leseni na vibali. Ilieleza wasiwasi kuhusu sharti la ukurasa wa 1401, kifungu cha 8(3)(d), linalotaka mwombaji anayetaka kuanzisha kiwanda kufanya utafiti wa uwezekano na kutoa maelezo ya chanzo cha malighafi, shamba la msingi, wakulima waliowekewa kandarasi au mawakala wa zao la mrangi.

Kampuni ya Kenya Bixa ilipendekeza sharti hilo libatilishwe ili wachakataji wawe na wajibu wa kuendeleza vyanzo vyao vya uzalishaji badala ya kuwategemea wengine.

“Mapendekezo haya yatahamasisha wawekezaji kuwa na dhamira ya muda mrefu katika kukuza zao la mrangi,” alisema Dkt Kisa.

Kuhusu utafiti na ubunifu, Dkt Kisa alisisitiza haja ya dharura ya kukeza katika kuboresha aina za mrangi zenye mavuno mengi, kiwango kikubwa cha bixin na uwezo mzuri wa kustahimili hali ya hewa ya Kenya. Alisema kuwa bila utafiti wa kutosha, Kenya haitaweza kushindana kikamilifu kwenye soko la

kimataifa.

Kwa upande walo, Baraza la Magavana (CoG) lilionesha kuunga mkono Kanuni hizo kikamilifu, likisema kuwa Kaunti zilitambuliwa na kushirikishwa ipasavyo.

“Baraza linaunga mkono Kanuni za Mazao (Bixa), 2025, kwa kuwa zinazingatia misingi ya ugatuzi na kutambua majukumu ya Kaunti katika kilimo. Mashauriano yalifanywa na maoni ya Kaunti yalizingatiwa kikamilifu,” alisema taarifa ya CoG kwa Kamati.

Mwenyekiti wa Kamati hiyo Seneta Gataya aliwahakikishia wadau kuwa Kamati itafanya mashauriano ya kina na Wizara ya Kilimo pamoja na taasisi husika kabla ya kutoa uamuzi wa mwisho.

“Tutawashirikisha washikadau wote muhimu ili kuhakikisha kuwa kanuni za mwisho ni za haki, zinatekelezeka na zinaimarisha ukuaji wa sekta ya Bixa,” alisema.

Maseneta wengine waliokuwepo ni pamoja na Betty Montet, Issa Juma Boy wa Kaunti ya Kwale, Daniel Maanzo wa Kaunti ya Makeni na Consolata Wakwabubi.

## Rumpus in House over infrastructure in public hospitals



Senator Jackson Mandago



Senator John Kinyua



Senator Seki ole Kanar



Senator Agnes Kavindu



Senator Godfrey Osotsi



Senator Okong'o Omogeni

The deplorable state of infrastructure in public hospitals has angered Senators who fault both the national and county governments for the “shameful deterioration” of the public health system.

From medical equipment, drugs to medical infrastructure in public hospitals, the lawmakers say the situation is a major concern to the health of the nation.

Senators say cases of equipment malfunction and run down buildings are only exacerbating the suffering being endured by the patients. In most, if not all, the Computed Tomography (CT) scan, for example, rarely works, forcing the patients to be referred to private hospitals for such basic service.

“This House and Senators, wherever we come from, must step up and stand for our people. The state of medical in-

frastructure in virtually all the facilities is wanting,” said Senator David Wafula during debate in the House, adding that some facilities dump medical remains in open air which expose risks to children. “When you look at their data, you find they have taken over three months before disposing of the things.”

The debate followed a statement by Senator Samson Cherarkey on the status of medical infrastructure and personnel in Nandi County, in which he painted a grim picture of the health situation in the County, revealing stalled hospital projects, idle medical equipment, understaffed rural clinics, which have eroded public trust in the healthcare system.

The Senator said County health sector is facing critical gaps across all seven sub-counties. This include stalled infrastructure projects, under-equipped facil-

ities, acute staffing shortages, particularly in rural areas and underutilisation of newly-constructed health centres in all the six sub-counties that is Emgwen, Chesumei, Aldai, Nandi Hills and Tinderet, among others.

He told the House that inconsistent rollout of digital health systems and limited community engagement have exacerbated disparities in access and eroded public confidence in the county’s ability to deliver timely, equitable and quality health care starting from Kapsabet County Referral Hospital. Urgent and coordinated intervention is required to address these shortcomings and restore trust in the health system.

Senator Cherarkey wants the Committee on Health to investigate the county and, among other things, explain the availability and functionality of medical

equipment in upgraded and new facilities, including plans to operationalise diagnostic units and surgical theatres that remain idle due to equipment gaps or lack of trained personnel.

Senator Wafula, who is a member of the Health Committee, supported the Statement noting that the status of infrastructure, equipment and human resources in various health facilities is wanting and in a downward trend.

“As a committee, we have visited various county referral facilities in the country. It is perturbing to visit facilities that by their names are huge, but their services are pathetic and inhumane. We visited the morgue in Kiambu County. However, it did not have refrigerators to keep bodies safe. People were lumped there as garbage. The situation was not humane. Kenyans are suffering, toiling

and moiling. In hospitals, they are being exposed to serious medication pain and in death, they are dumped as if no one cares.”

Senator Godfrey Osotsi supported the statement, saying the situation in Nandi County is a replica of what is happening across the country.

“In Vihiga, the CT scan at the referral hospital has been broken for six months. Patients are forced to seek simple diagnostic services in private facilities. This is not unique to one county. It is a national disaster,” he said, urging the Health Committee to probe hospitals in all 47 counties, adding that the shift from the Managed Equipment Service (MES) to the National Equipment Service (NES) had made costs higher, “draining county resources.”

Senator Eddy Oketch echoed the concern as he blamed the county governments for failing to pay Community Health Promoters (CHPs) — who serve as the frontline workers.

“The national Government’s contribution is not getting to them. The county governments are even more notorious. It is not paying these people and yet, they are working diligently day and night to complement and supplement some of the services provided by these health centers and even dispensaries. We have

pieces of legislation that should guide these issues, which are not being followed.”

Senator Richard Onyonka urged the lawmakers to conduct their work in the field because the impact of their work is felt only when they conduct site visits. “In every single place we have visited, we have seen changes. When we went to Machakos, the employees who had not been paid their salaries for one year, others one and a half years, were paid after about two days. The governors gave us access.”

Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot called for accountability on funds disbursed under the Social Health Authority (SHA). He challenged the Committee to guide the House in appreciating the compensation that is going to specific counties and to health facilities.

“Though the Cabinet Secretary promised this House that would be part of the reports that he shall be filing with this House in compliance with Regulation 42 of the health laws, could we have it as a special report, so that I know how much has been paid as compensation in lieu of service to the various health facilities in my county?” he asked and added: “When health facilities are compensated and the resources are properly managed they cannot be appropriated to

do anything else. They can only be used to improve the operational standards of our health facilities.”

Senator John Kinyua blamed governors for neglecting health facilities while Minority Leader Stewart Madzayo described the conditions in Kiambu Hospital as “an affront to human dignity”.

“Bodies were piled on top of each other. Patients wait for hours without being seen by doctors. This is a national shame that must be stopped,” he said.

Senator Okong’o Omogeni brought a personal touch to the debate, revealing that his uncle had died of cancer due to lack of oncologists and diagnostic machines. “In Nyamira, we don’t have a single oncologist or MRI machine,” he said, adding that SHA only paid Sh218,000 out of a Sh1.3 million medical bill.

Senator Edwin Sifuna accused the government of betraying its promises.

“When SHA was introduced, the President said no Kenyan would have to hold harambees for hospital bills again. Yet here we are. People are still dying for lack of care,” he said.

Senator Okiya Omtatah quoted the Social Health Insurance Act which defines universal healthcare as access to treatment without financial hardship and noted that: “If people still pay millions out-of-pocket, then SHA is not work-

ing.”

Senator Seki added that even outpatient services under SHA had failed.

“I pay for my grandmother’s cover but she cannot access outpatient care. In NHIF, that service existed. In SHA, it doesn’t. This scheme must be reviewed urgently,” Senator Seki said.

Senator Agnes Kavindu Muthama complained that county health staff were still casual workers despite presidential directives.

“The President ordered counties to employ UHC workers permanently but most are still on contract. Governors must explain this,” she said.

Senator Jackson Mandago, who chairs the Health Committee, defended the SHA, saying it was working “for those properly registered.”

He accused some governors of misusing reimbursements meant for hospitals. “We found one county that took Sh5 million meant for health and used it for an agriculture seminar,” he revealed.

He challenged his colleagues to hold governors accountable for failing to absorb community health promoters and mismanaging hospital funds.

## This week in History – November 19, 2019..

### House concerned about Kenya’s inability to mitigate natural disasters



**Senator George Khaniri**

On November 19, 2019 Senator George Khaniri sought a Statement from the Chairperson of the Committee on Lands, Environment and Natural Resources concerning the inability to manage and mitigate natural disasters in the country. In the Statement, the Senator wanted the Committee to why Kenyans across the country are still experiencing adverse negative effects of floods and drought caused by normal and predictable weather conditions, measures taken by the national Government to encourage counties to set aside funds to be used for implementation and mitigation of effects of climate disasters as stipulated in the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) 2018/2019. He also wanted the Committee to explain the measures put in place by the national Government to promote harvesting, storage and distribution of rainwater for domestic use across the country during dry seasons.



**Senator Abdullahi Ali said:**

“This country is in a mess. When there is drought in Northern Kenya, people die as a result of lack of water. There is also hunger and all manner of things. When it rains like now, there are floods, hunger, inaccessibility and all manner of problems which results in people suffering. They get hungry because they cannot access food. This has been happening on and off for the last 50 years. Every time when there are these problems, we complain here in both Houses of the Senate and the National Assembly, year in, year out, yet nothing happens. The national Government does not have any disaster mitigation action. Actually, there are no policies or plans. The National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) has been there for the last 20 years. We do not know what it does.”



**Senator Agnes Zani said:**

“We have left our natural resources in a disorganized manner for far too long. Communities have cried out over and over again. We know what the issues are and what happens every year. At one time and one season we have a lot of water and the next time we do not have it. The next thing is that we have communities that need to have certain money or assets. Although they have been very rich in supplying certain natural resources, they end up not being able to do that. There are so many Bills that are stuck on this. Recently, we have seen many Kenyans asking about the oil sale that was done and what revenue went back to the communities. In this House we have worked so hard overtime to ensure that this sector is organized. We have the Disaster Management Bill that Senator Johnson Sakaja has mentioned and the Natural Resources Bill. Unfortunately, all these have ended up as money Bills at the National Assembly.”



**Senator Ledama ole Kina said:**

“This House was created to defend the interests of counties and their governments. I do not think it is the role of the national Government to encourage county governments to come up with mechanisms on how they can harvest water. It is our duty and we need to take it up seriously. We need to engage the county assemblies. I am quite happy that some of the MCAs from Trans Nzoia are here today. If you experience drought and floods in your county, the first thing you should do is to ensure that you have a disaster management policy in place. In your budget, the first thing to do is to settle pending bills which you should pay out. The second charge in your account should be the issue of disaster. This is a problem. I do not think us complaining, lamenting or even asking my good friend, Sen. Mwangi to investigate this matter will resolve the problem. It is about time that we come up with proper legislation and engage county assemblies so that we can take our people’s interest at heart.”



1. Senator Esther Okenyuri and Manyatta MP Gitonga Mukunji in Embu County where they attended culture night organised by students from Kisii region.
2. Senator Okenyuri with students from Kisii region studying in universities based in Mt Kenya West region.
3. Senator Okenyuri with student leaders from the University of Embu.
4. Senator Okenyuri received by Prof Paul Thakanio, the deputy Vice Chancellor of Embu University.
5. Speaker Amason Kingi presided over the meeting of the Committee on Powers and Privileges last week. From left, Senator Munyi Mundigi, Senator Shakila Abdallah, Senator Esther Okenyuri and Senator Wahome Wamatinga.



Senator Tabitha Mutinda and Senator Esther Okenyuri toast during the dinner hosted by National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetang'ula in honour of the 11th General Assembly of the World Scouts Parliamentary Union.



Senator Consolata Wakwabubi, Senator Okenyuri and Senator Mutinda join members of the scouts Union for a dance before the dinner hosted by Speaker Wetang'ula in Parliament Buildings.



Senator Okenyuri and Senator Mutinda pose with members of the Scouts Union at Parliament Buildings.

TRANSITION

Sudden death of staffer stuns Parliament

The Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC) is in mourning following the sudden death of Ms Nancy Atieno Ogola, a Telephone Assistant deployed to the Human Resource Development Department.

The late Agola died on Saturday, November 15, 2025, after she collapsed in her House. Family and friends are meeting at her residence to plan for burial arrangements.



Members of the Bunge Volleyball team pose for a picture in memory of the late Nancy Ogola after lighting up candles during one of the training sessions at Nyayo Stadium gymnasium.



The late Nancy Ogola during the 2025 PSC Staff Sports Day. In this picture she holds the trophy for the Womens' tug of War title.

## Staff Step Up Challenge hits the 40 million mark



Parliamentary Staff celebrate after climbing to the top of Ngong Hills during one of their hiking expeditions.

The Senate Wellness Committee has applauded staff for their overwhelming response to the StepUp Challenge, urging everyone to keep the momentum going for their personal wellbeing.

The Committee expressed excitement after new data confirmed that staff are on track to hit the 100-million-step target as planned. So far, participants have clocked 40,559,924 steps in just two and a half months — a sign that they could cross the finish line well before the June 2026 deadline.

Launched on September 12, the challenge encourages staff to walk a combined 100 million steps by June 2026. This is made possible through a free app used for tracking steps, joining friendly competitions, and taking part in step challenges. The app records steps, distance and calories, and syncs easily with a user's phone.

The goal is to help parliamentary staff gradually build the strength, control and coordination needed to feel light on their feet.

Ms. Carol Njue remains in first place for the second month in a row. She has recorded 1,201,988 steps, covering 879.3 kilometres—an average of 27.5 kilometres per day, a truly championship-level pace. Nasser Ahmed follows in second place with 815,550 steps, equal to 596.6 kilometres. His daily average is 18.6 kilometres, showing he is keeping in the race.

Marlene Andia has registered 689,676 steps, averaging 21,552 steps a day—about 15.8 kilometres. In total, she has covered 504.5 kilometres, proving she is staying in strong form.

A staff member identified as © has accumulated 682,521 steps, covering 499 kilometres. Their daily average stands at 21,328 steps, or 15.6 kilometres, show-



The Staff pose for a picture before their hiking expedition of the Ngong Hills.

ing consistent steady-pace walking.

Angela Kagunyi has reached 562,812 steps, averaging 17,587 steps daily, and has covered 412 kilometres—a sign she is keeping up a good stride.

Mohamed Osman has recorded 542,659 steps, translating to 396.9 kilometres, with a daily average of 16,958 steps. Others performing strongly include:

J. Ndegwa – 532,607 steps, Kelvin Wandera – 523,625 steps, Lydia Mutenyo – 462,078 steps and #BM, who completes the top ten with 452,139 steps.

With this level of energy and participation, the staff look ready to go the distance and possibly hit the 100-million-step goal ahead of schedule.



# Achieving Personal Financial Fitness: From Awareness to Action.



**Maj. (Rtd) Bernard Masinde**

Deputy Chief Serjeant at Arms-  
Parliament of Kenya

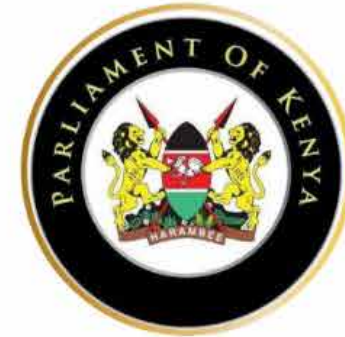
**DISCUSSANT**



**Mr. King'ori Gathinji**

Head of Investments &  
Financial Fitness Academy -  
Stanbic Bank Kenya

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**



**Ms. Lillian Wata**

Secretary, Board of Pensions  
Trustees- Parliament of Kenya

**DISCUSSANT**



**Dr. George Wakah**

Director AFC-CPST- Parliament  
of Kenya

**MODERATOR**



**Prof. Nyokabi Kamau, EBS**

Executive Director, CPST,  
Parliament of Kenya

**HOST**

**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

**11:00 A.M. -1:00 P.M**

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**NB: THIS WEBINAR IS TAILORED FOR PSC STAFF ONLY**





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**Email:** [Senate.weekly@parliament.go.ke](mailto:Senate.weekly@parliament.go.ke)

**Editor:** Ibrahim Oruko

**Team Leader:** Lucianne Limo

### Writers

- Otiato Andayi
- Njeri Manga
- Josphat Ngeno
- Derick Luvega
- Stanley Gikore
- Nandemu Barasa

- Juliet Masinde
- Violet Nalianya
- Lemeteki Lorinyu
- Kevin Lomenen

**Hansard:** Erick Kipkoech

### Photographers:

- James Kimiti Nyambura
- Job Owaga
- Russells Kipngetich
- Alex Fondo

### Designed by:

KENYA LITERATURE BUREAU

Publishers and Printers

Belle-Vue Area, KLB Road, Off Popo Road

P. O. Box 30022-00100, GPO Nairobi,

Telephone: +254 (20) 3541196/7,

Mobile: +254 711 318 188/ +254 732 344 599

Email: [info@klb.co.ke](mailto:info@klb.co.ke)

Website: [www.klb.co.ke](http://www.klb.co.ke)