

❖ **Mystery as Pattni land files vanish**

Preparations for construction continued on prime public property linked to Goldenberg man Kamlesh Pattni in spite of fresh orders by Lands minister James Orengo stopping dealings in the plot.

Mr Orengo ordered all transactions halted on the property given to a company believed to be associated with Mr Pattni, describing the whole thing as “tainted with fraud”.

It has also emerged that the original title deed and file on the property has vanished from Lands.

❖ **New system to catch cheats at the ballot**

The process of eliminating ghost voters started on Monday with the introduction of the new electronic voter registration system.

Voters in 18 constituencies will pioneer the system, which the Interim Independent Electoral Commission said would be tamper-proof.

Unlike the current elector’s card, the electronically generated one captures a voter’s face and thumb print, using digital cameras and a thumb print reader.

❖ **French firm in threat to quit Kenya over Sh28bn claim**

The first phase of negotiations over the Sh28.875 billion (\$385 million) claim France Telecom has slapped on the government has ended amid secrecy even as it emerges that the French have now indicated that they may pull out of Telkom Kenya if the matter is not resolved.

“The Frenchmen have made it clear that their future investment plans will be jeopardized if Telkom Kenya does not recover within one year,” said a source familiar with the negotiations.

❖ **Kiplagat likely to face tribunal**

The embattled Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission chairman could face a tribunal, if his commissioners’ request for an investigation is granted.

Sources said a meeting of TJRC commissioners on Monday agreed to ask for an investigation into allegations against Mr Bethuel Kiplagat in a bid to give the commission the required credibility to exercise its mandate.

❖ **Chang’aa dealer is sent to jail**

A mother of three is to spend two years in prison for being found with 20 liters of chang’aa.

Ms Jane Wanjiru is among 146 people who were on Monday charged with consuming or dealing in the illicit spirit.

Many of them denied the charge but some, like Ms Wanjiru, who pleaded guilty, were jailed.

Most of those in court were women. There were also a number of children among the group. They were seized during a police raid at the weekend.

❖ **Bamboo now the plant of choice**

Farmers who heeded a government order to uproot eucalyptus trees on river banks are replacing them with a fast-maturing bamboo variety.

Anticipating increased demand in bamboo, the Kenya Forestry Research Institute (Kefri) and other groups have been training farmers on how to grow the plant.

Last month, Kefri said fibre-rich bamboo shoots could be used as food.

❖ **Chaos victims want security**

Some witnesses and victims of the post election violence in the North Rift region want the law amended to guarantee them security.

They made the plea as a team from International Criminal Court prepares to start investigations into the 2008 chaos.

“The process of applying for protection is tedious and exposes us to security risk from individuals to be grilled by the ICC team for their involvement in the violence,” said one of the victims in Eldoret.

❖ **G4S man accused of theft collusion**

A G4S Security Services Kenya Limited supervisor was on Monday accused in court of stealing Sh34.6 million together with other top company managers.

Defence lawyer Daniel Kinyanjui suggested to Mr Essau Munyiri Gitau that he and others stole the money and put newspapers in the bags before sealing them.

❖ **Weather services ‘poorly funded’**

African governments have been urged to increase investment in meteorological services.

The call was made by Environment minister John Michuki in a speech read for him by assistant minister Ramadhan Kajembe at a regional conference on meteorological services, which opened in Nairobi on Monday.

Mr Michuki said meteorological services in most African countries were deteriorating due to poor funding.

Business News

❖ France Telecom in threat to quit

he first phase of negotiations between the Kenyan Government and France Telecom over Telkom Kenya have ended with the French threatening to pull out of the country's third mobile telephone service provider if the matter is not resolved.

"The Frenchmen have made it clear that their future investment plans will be jeopardised if Telkom Kenya does not recover within one year," said a source familiar with the negotiations.

❖ 560 bags of free fertiliser to benefit poor farmers and needy families

The government on Monday released 560 bags of CAN fertiliser to be issued free to what it called economically deprived farmers around the country.

The 50 kilogramme bags would be distributed by 12 non-governmental organisations chosen by the government.

According to a criterion set by the government, families with members affected by HIV\Aids would benefit as will those households headed by women or children.

❖ Sofapaka fury as late penalty rescues Ulinzi

Week eight of the Kenyan Premier League has just concluded. And what a week it has been, full of talking points and incidents. We had pitch invasions, world class diving and problematic officiating.

Referee Amos Wanjala was nearly roughed up in the Ulinzi Stars versus Sofapaka match in Naivasha for awarding the hosts a 'questionable' penalty.

❖ Semenya welcome to run in Nairobi

Caster Semenya, who came under the spotlight over gender determination and currently the world 800 metres champion, is welcome to run in Nairobi during the Senior African Athletics Championship in July.

David Okeyo, the championship's Chief Executive Officer, has rolled out a red carpet to receive Semenya in Nairobi in July, which will be her first major race since controversy clouded her young career at last year's Berlin's World Championships.

❖ **Draft Constitution runs into fresh storm**

Attorney General is ready to publish the Proposed Constitution this week but is holding off to give time for voter registration.

Meanwhile, Church leaders have picked negotiators to deal with the State on contentious clauses, with a rider their demands stand.

❖ **Kenya enters era of electronic voting**

Kenya stepped forward into the era of electronic voting after registration under a pilot project to test the system was launched in 18 constituencies simultaneously.

❖ **How did GM maize enter Kenya?**

Parliament has embarked on investigation to establish how 240,000 metric tonnes (about three million bags) of genetically modified maize was secretly imported into the country.

❖ **I won't support draft until amended, says Ruto**

The Interim Independent Electoral Commission (IIEC) launched the pilot electronic registration exercise in Agriculture Minister William Ruto's Eldoret North Constituency with the minister seizing the occasion to drum up support for his campaign against the Proposed Constitution.

Mr Ruto impressed on the locals about the merits of his 'No' campaign, saying he would not reverse his position until three chapters were reviewed.

❖ **'No' campaigners are hypocrites, Raila claims**

Campaign for or against the Proposed Constitution intensified with Prime Minister Raila Odinga accusing the leading proponents of the 'No' vote of hypocrisy, saying they had questionable track records.

The PM, without naming names, said the 'No' team had leaders who grabbed huge public land and forests, which they later attempted to sell to the Government and that they were now against the draft because it would take away their ill-gotten parcels.

❖ **President appoints envoy to Libya**

Kenya has appointed a new High Commissioner to Libya to replace Mr Ephraim Ngare, who became the country's top envoy in the United Kingdom late last year.

The new envoy to Tripoli is Mr Antony Muchiri, who has been director of administration at the Foreign Affairs ministry.

❖ **We are not in Ruto's camp, Coast MPs say**

Coast MPs have vowed to drum up support for the Proposed Constitution, saying the document is better than the current law.

The leaders distanced themselves from Agriculture Minister William Ruto's 'No' team, claiming the move would take Kenya a step backward in the quest for reforms.

❖ **Treasury sweats over Sh9b to fund referendum**

Up to Sh9 billion of taxpayer funds will go down the drain should the proposed new constitution be rejected in a referendum due in July.

And that is not counting the hundreds of millions already spent by the Committee of Experts collecting views of citizens across the country, and by Parliament in hosting MPs to build a consensus for the draft.

❖ **Church accuses State of betrayal in constitutional talks**

Church leaders have accused the Government of betraying their trust in the ongoing talks on the Proposed Constitution.

The clerics came out breathing fire from the talks meant to unlock a standoff, which threatens a unified campaign for the draft constitution.

They also came up with fresh demands to President Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga.

❖ **Micro-finances top credit market**

Last week, pro micro-finance model lobbyists proved they had come full circle in their quest to have the world adopt the poor man's banking concept in the process opening new opportunities for the unbanked poor.

For a first, The MicroCredit Summit Campaign brought over a thousand delegates to Nairobi, the largest ever such a conference since the movement held its first meeting in 1997.

❖ **Flower council bets on higher export earnings**

Kenya's flower exporters target maintaining last year's output and earnings this year as delays in tax refunds and bad weather reduce the impact of a recovery in demand.

Flowers accounted for slightly more than half of the Sh71.6 billion (\$925.6 million) earned by horticulture exports last year

❖ **Dutch road races good for Makau**

Dutch road races are good for Patrick Makau. The 25-year-old stormed to the fourth fastest marathon of all time with his 2:04:48 victory at Rotterdam on Sunday.

On March 14, he ran his ninth half marathon at The Hague, winning in 59:51.

❖ **Kipchoge tops in Carlsbad**

aEliud Kipchoge gave a world record-worthy performance at the Carlsbad 5000 on Sunday, but Mother Nature did not support his bid to lower the 5K top mark.

The best time stands at 13:00, set by compatriot Sammy Kipketer at the same event in 2000 and matched by the same runner the following year.