

LOCAL NEWS 13TH AUGUST 2010.

Human Rights organization tells ODM to embrace democracy.

Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Eldoret has told the ODM party leaders to embrace democracy and shun dictatorship. Speaking today, Programme director Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, Nick Ombito said that a move to punish politicians who campaigned against the new constitution scuttles freedom of expression.

Ombito added that ODM's stand contradicts the presidents' message of unifying Kenyans and working together in building the nation. At the same time, he called upon Kenyans to distance themselves from political intrigues saying that it will divide citizens.

Ends.....Stanley Magut.

Rift Valley leaders threaten to ditch ODM

Various leaders including a section of councilors from the North Rift region led by Eldoret Mayor William Rono have sharply criticized the leadership of ODM party terming it undemocratic and full of tribalism. Addressing journalists today in Eldoret the leaders threatened to ditch the ODM party including the close to 3 million voters who voted against the new constitution from the rift valley region. The leaders have also condemned ODM chief whip Jakoyo Modiwo and Anyang Nyong'o for undermining the No voters from the Rift Valley

region by threatening to suspend their leader William Ruto. At the same time the leaders have hailed Party Of National Unity for demonstrating the spirit of nationality in its leadership.

ENDJAMES GITAKA

Kenyans warned over fake motor insurance

Traffic police in Nairobi are warning motorists to be vigilant when purchasing insurance certificates for their vehicles due a rising number of fake stickers on sale. Nairobi Traffic Commandant Patrick Lumumba said the Association of Kenya Insurers (AKI) had alerted them of thousands of motorists who were using fake insurance certificates sold to them by unscrupulous brokers.

He said traffic officers across the city are under firm instructions to scrutinise insurance stickers displayed on vehicles to identify the fake ones. Once you purchase insurance, you should look at the back of the sticker issued to you where there is a box which when scratched, reveals the word 'valid.' Lumumba told journalists that several motorists had been arrested since last week, and charged in court. He said traffic police would work jointly with officials from AKI to identify the culprits. Under the Traffic Act, it is an offence to drive an uninsured vehicle.

Kenya PM's new office complete

The state-of-the-art office of the Prime Minister is now complete and ready for occupation.

Prime Minister Raila Odinga will anytime from now be moving to the five-storey Shell and BP House that cost the exchequer Kshs 329 million to renovate. Public Works Minister Chris Obure who toured the complete building, appealed to other government ministries to make use of personnel in his ministry in order to cut costs when undertaking similar projects. The PM and his staff can now occupy the building at

their own convenience. The government acquired the building on Nairobi's Harambee Avenue at a cost of 700 million shillings.

Last year, the government came under criticism for using Sh33.4 million for the renovation of the PM's private residence. The government also intends to spend Sh1.6 billion to put up a modern office for the President at Upper Hill.

Reach for Kenya mobile TV to expand

DSTV Mobile plans to expand its network to cover Kisumu, Nakuru and Eldoret by next year. The service which offers satellite television on mobile handsets currently covers Nairobi and Mombasa only. Digital Mobile Television (DMTV) - a subsidiary of MultiChoice - which runs the service, says it is conducting consumer research to establish what content and pricing module would be most suitable

He added that with the changes in technology consumption of television was becoming increasingly personal with consumer convenience playing a central role. This has seen broadcasters go out of their way to find new ways through which consumers can access their preferred content on the move. DSTV Mobile currently offers 14 channels on its bouquets including Channel O, SuperSport7, SuperSport3, Cartoon Network, Africa Magic, BBC, CNN and the current Big Brother Show.

Kenya, EA states to harmonise blueprints

The East African Community (EAC) is mulling over ways to align the long term development blueprints of its five member states to enable it achieve its common goal of deeper regional integration. The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of East African Community David Nalo said on Friday that since the countries have agreed to work together, there is a need to have one vision that guides them towards transforming East Africa into an industrialised region with greater economic development and improved livelihoods for the citizenry.

Kenya has already started implementing its flagship projects outlined in its Medium Term Plan of its Vision 2030 which aims to transform the country into an industrialised, middle-income state, while Uganda's Vision 2035, which was revised from the old Vision 2025 document, aims to transform it into a prosperous nation.

Kenya's civil servants get travel pay

The government has announced a commuter allowance for civil servants in job groups A to Q, following negotiations with the Union of Kenya Civil Servants. Public Service Minister Dalmas Otieno said the payment would be implemented in two phases, with the first one backdated to July this year. In the first phase, those in job groups A to F would get Sh1,100, those in job groups G to J will receive Sh1,400 while K and L will get Sh1,800.

Those in job groups M and N will be paid Sh2,500 as commuter allowance, while P and Q will get Sh3,600. The initial payments range between 35 and 37 percent of the full commuter allowance package.

The government approved payment of commuter allowance for all civil servants in 2006 following the development of a Transport Policy.

Kenyan parliamentary seats declared vacant

In a Kenya Gazette notice published Friday, National Assembly speaker Kenneth Marende has issued the writs for Starehe and Wajir South constituencies. This follows high court rulings last month in favour of election petitions filed against the incumbent members of parliament. Starehe MP Margaret Wanjiru lost her seat on July 30th after Justice Kihara Kariuki ruled that she was not validly elected as the poll was marred by massive tampering of election material.

However, Justice Kihara declined to grant prayers by the petitioner Maina Kamanda who had requested the court to declare him the validly elected Starehe MP to avoid a by-election. Mid last month, Wajir South MP Abdirahman Ali Hassan's election was nullified with Justice Luka Kimaru criticising officials of the defunct Electoral Commission of Kenya officials for transferring two polling stations only 24 hours before the election therefore confusing voters. Hassan had won the seat on a KANU ticket and the petition was filed by the then ODM candidate Mohamed Sirat.

We have no apologies, declare ODM rebels

ODM MPs who opposed the new constitution say they have no apologies to make. This comes a day after ODM parliamentary group meeting announced that the party will be taking unspecified disciplinary action against members who were in the NO camp. Addressing a press conference at parliament buildings Friday, Chepalungu MP Isaac Ruto said the legislators were exercising their democratic right and will not be intimidated by threats from the party.

Ruto said the MPs will continue to marshal support from the house to push for amendments on various contentious issues. On Thursday, ODM Secretary General Anyang' Nyong'o said that Higher education minister William Ruto who led the NO campaigns will not be included in the parliamentary constitutional implementation committee for defying the party's policy to support the new constitution. MPs Joshua Kutuny, Charles Keter also campaigned against the new law.

Without giving details, Nyong'o said that the meeting initiated the process of disciplining members who go against the party ideals.

KACC says due process will be followed in returned property.

Kenya Anti Corruption Commission says due process of law will be followed to deal with public property that people wish to return. The commission insists that pardon will only be given those who are ready to face reforms. Advisory Board Chairman Okongo Omogeni says that set laws will be followed while dealing with those who wish to return stolen property. Omogeni says there have been consultations with the Attorney General to have a way forward on how to handle such cases.

Marende's makes call to parties

National Assembly speaker Kenneth Marende wants political parties not to hinder anyone from being part of committees including the constitution implementation oversight committee. Marende says as long as that individual is ratified by their party they can join any committees of legislation. Parties have been lobbying for membership of the implementation committee amid calls not to victimize those who were

opposed to the passing of the proposed law. Marende is asking political parties to see to it that they conduct the process of implementing the new law in unity.

International Youth Day held in Kenya

The youth in Cherangany Constituency have been commended for being peaceful and are being urged to be part of rebuilding the country. During celebrations to mark the International Youth Day, Jesse Masai who contested for the parliamentary seat said the youth have the capacity to move the country forward. He says the youth are bold, wise and articulate values that are needed in developing the country. Masai says the youth of Cherangany have the role of involving themselves in the development agenda of the nation and urged them to emulate leaders who have their interests at heart.

Kenya to host world's city planners

Kenya will next month host the annual International Society of City and Regional planners (ISOCARP) congress, a platform for discussing issues of city planning and organizations. Lands minister James Orengo, said the conference will provide an opportunity for planners to address challenges of urban planning, as well as add professional value for the local industry.

Orengo, confirmed that he is satisfied with the planning and progress that has so far been made by the local organizing committee ahead of the September congress. He revealed that the 46th International ISOCARP Congress will tackle topical issues on the challenges of urban planning and opportunities that can be tapped for proper urban planning.

Regional News

South Africa: Bodies found in gold mine after shooting

Four bodies have been found in an unused shaft of a mine run by relatives of South Africa's President Jacob Zuma and ex-leader Nelson Mandela. Police said investigations were continuing into reports that up to 20 alleged illegal miners were shot dead by security at the mine on Monday. The owners of the Grootvlei gold mine east of Johannesburg confirmed their guards had clashed with some miners. The governing African National Congress (ANC) has condemned the shooting. The Grootvlei mine is owned by the company, Aurora Empowerment Systems, whose chairman is President Zuma's nephew, Khulubuse Zuma. The company's managing director is Zondwa Mandela, the grandson of the anti-apartheid fighter.

France condemns conduct of officer after Togo dispute

French officials have condemned a senior soldier who was filmed threatening a Togolese journalist. In a video released on YouTube, Lt Col Romuald Letondot is shown ordering the journalist to delete images from his camera during a protest in Lome. When the journalist refuses, Col Letondot threatens to smash his camera and have him arrested.

French defence officials said they wanted an investigation and said the soldier may face punishment. The foreign ministry said it "firmly condemned" the soldier's actions. The footage shows Col Letondot involved in an argument with local photographer Didier Ledoux.

Building collapse in Nigeria capital kills 14

Rescue efforts are continuing in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, after a condemned building collapsed, killing at least 14 people. The building, said to be three to five storeys high, fell down on Wednesday in the

Garki district. Locals said around 50 people had been squatting inside. Officials said people had been told the structure was unsound, but that they had ignored the warning to vacate it.

But survivors insisted they had not been aware of the risk of collapse. The frequent use of substandard materials and violation of building regulations mean building collapses are relatively common in Nigeria.

Federal Capital Territory Minister Bala Mohammed said Wednesday's collapse was the third in the city since he took office three months ago.

Zimbabwe again in spotlight at summit

Southern African leaders meet Monday in Namibia's capital to discuss Zimbabwe's strained unity government and its refusal to adhere to rulings by a regional tribunal. Officially, the summit of the 15-nation Southern African Development Community (SADC) marks the 30th anniversary of the organisation's creation.

Then the grouping was known as the Front Line States, which sought to coordinate liberation movements in Namibia and apartheid South Africa. Since Namibia's independence and the end of white-minority rule in South Africa, the organisation has struggled to assert itself as a political force -- mainly because its members are unwilling to submit to regional decision-making. The case in point is Zimbabwe, which signed a treaty creating a regional court based in Windhoek but has refused to obey its rulings.

Global News

Iran nuclear plant start date set

Russia says it will undertake a key step next week towards starting up a reactor at Iran's first nuclear power station. Russia's state atomic corporation, which is building the plant, said engineers will begin loading the Bushehr reactor with fuel. However, it could be six months before the reactor is fully operational. Russia has been helping build the plant since the mid-1990s, amid tensions over Iran's nuclear programme.

Iranians will remain sceptical until they see the Bushehr plant finally working and generating electricity, 35 years after the project was started under the Shah. Many in Iran believe that the endless delays in the civilian project were designed either to extract more money from them, or as a result of Western pressure.

Sports News

Fulham admit interest in Bellamy

Fulham manager Mark Hughes says he is interested in signing Manchester City's out-of-favour striker Craig Bellamy. City boss Roberto Mancini confirmed on Friday Bellamy would not make their 25-man Premier League squad and that the 31-year-old should find a new club. Hughes has signed Bellamy twice before, at Blackburn and City, and was also his manager when in charge of Wales.

Fulham are the latest club to take an interest in Bellamy, with Celtic keen to take the forward on loan for a second time, while he has also been linked with Sunderland and Spurs. Bellamy, who had a four-month spell with Celtic in 2005 while on the books of Newcastle, is surplus to requirements at Eastlands after a summer of heavy spending.

Wenger to sign new contract

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger revealed on Friday that he expects to pledge his future to the Gunners

by signing a new contract shortly. Wenger will be out of contract at the end of this season and it had been suggested he could leave Arsenal if the team endured a sixth successive year without a trophy. But the 60-year-old Frenchman, who moved to the Premier League club in 1996, confirmed he is willing to stay because he believes his squad is close to fulfilling their potential. Wenger last won a major trophy back in 2005 when Arsenal beat Manchester United in the FA Cup final and it is six years since they were crowned champions of England.

But Arsenal briefly threatened a title challenge late last season and, after persuading captain Cesc Fabregas to stay at the Emirates Stadium, Wenger expects a more sustained bid for honours this season.