Local News June 15th 2010

PSC applauds budget allocation

The Parliamentary Select Committee on Finance has applauded the 3.8 billion shillings revolving fund set aside to mitigate effects of financial meltdowns during this year's budget. Committee chairman Chris Okemo said that the fund which will be distributed through banks and financial systems, will help mitigate the adverse effects of climate change, given that the budget affirms climate change as a key challenge in economic development. Speaking Tuesday in Nairobi Okemo said the budget forecasted that in 2010/2011, the Gross Development Product (GDP) will reach 5.1 percent, based on the premise that the economy has fully recovered from global financial crisis and the effects of post election violence. He said the other intervention will be through the 'Kazi kwa vijana' initiative, which is poised to support creation of jobs. Okemo, however, stressed on the need to have a strategy that goes beyond job creation to skills development.

Kenya rights watchdog welcomes arrests

The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights has welcomed the arrest of three Parliamentarians over allegations of spreading hate speech saying such action would deter incitement to violence. Chairperson Florence Jaoko Tuesday commended the government for the action and said "security organs should be able to investigate independently. Jaoko said the government should reign on hate speech to ensure sobriety and tolerance during the ongoing campaigns on the Proposed Constitution.

MPs Fred Kapondi, Joshua Kutuny and Wilfred Machage were arrested early Tuesday after recommendations by the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) and are expected to be arraigned in court on Wednesday. The three were accused of preaching ethic incitement during the launch of the NO campaign secretariat last week.

Annan condemns Kenya rally attack

The Panel of Eminent African Personalities Tuesday called for the arrest and prosecution of the perpetrators of Sunday's grenade attack at Uhuru Park, Nairobi. In a statement, Chief mediator Kofi Annan who is the chairman of the Panel condemned the attack that claimed six people and left 104 others injured.

The Panel urged Kenyans to remain steadfast in rejecting any actions which may jeopardize the legitimate aspirations of the people to participate in a credible and peaceful referendum.

He added that the Panel reiterates that violence must never be allowed to distract Kenyans from their legitimate aspirations for a more peaceful, stable and democratic country".

Saitoti to issue statement on Wednesday

Internal Security Minister George Saitoti is expected to issue a statement on the Sunday explosions on Wednesday. Saitoti will brief Parliament on the findings of the ongoing police investigations and what action will be taken to ensure the safety of Kenyans attending YES/NO rallies in future. Ikolomani MP Bonny Khalwale had earlier Tuesday sought a ministerial statement from the Prime Minister on the matter. Deputy Speaker Farah Maalim however ruled that Saitoti should address the matter as it was a security issue. Imenti Central Gitobu Imanyara also wants Saitoti to explain whether there were any religious leaders arrested alongside politicians alleged to have perpetuated hate speech during referendum campaigns.

NCCK wants internal security minister to step down over the blast
Leaders from the National Council of Churches of Kenya North Rift branch are calling for the resignation of internal security minister Prof. George Saitoti over the bomb blast incident that occurred Sunday at Uhuru Park Nairobi claiming he failed to provide security. The clergy lead by Eldoret Diocese ACK bishop Thomas Kogo said the government must give a clear explanation concerning the incident, alleging their was a sinister motive in the incident and the government should do thorough investigations. They are also asking government to initiate dialogue between the Yes and No camps to bring normalcy in the country. At the same time, the leaders stated that outsiders should keep off the process, saying that the document is for Kenyans who do not deserve any intimidation.
The NCCK leaders from the North Rift region are therefore calling for unity urging the government to stop being a player on the process but instead act as a referee. The church leaders were speaking Tuesday at the NCCK offices in Eldoret.
End…Carolyne Koech

Kenyan Minister denies incitement
Higher education Minister William Ruto appeared before the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) in Westlands on Tuesday to respond to accusations of irresponsible utterances and permitting hate speech on his Facebook fan page. Ruto was grilled for about one and a half hours by the Commission over the Facebook updates attributed to him, and which contain inciteful information.
The Eldoret North MP however said he has only one Facebook account and denied knowledge of eight others bearing his name. The Higher Education Minister now wants those claiming that he is involved in hate speech to substantiate their claims. Ruto also reiterated that the proposed Constitution should address deep-seated religious issues before it is accepted by Kenyans. He added that everyone's opinions should be respected at all times

Kenya 'serial killer' charged with murder
A self-confessed serial killer Philip Onyancha has been charged with the murder of a nine-year-old boy in April. Onyancha who is 32, and two suspected accomplices appeared in the high court today in Nairobi. Since his arrest nearly two weeks ago, he has been leading police on a hunt for the bodies of his alleged victims. He says he has killed 19 people and intended to kill 100 after joining a cult which told him to drink their blood for good fortune. He said he was recruited into the cult while at school by a teacher, who was arrested last week and is being questioned by police.
Richard Katola, head of Kenya's Special Crimes Prevention Unit, said that more murder charges were likely to follow, but some bodies had not been identified. Police were able to track down Onyancha through the mobile phone Samuel Muiruri had transferred money to electronically. After his arrest, Onyancha confessed to other murders, including several prostitutes, and led them to the site where Anthony Muiruri's remains were found.

Monaco leader calls on Kibaki
President Mwai Kibaki Tuesday at his Harambee House office held talks with Prince Albert II of Monaco who paid him a courtesy call. During the meeting, President Kibaki hailed Prince Albert II for supporting environmental and peace initiatives in Kenya. President Kibaki thanked

Monaco for supporting the Green Africa Foundation in Kitui and the Tegla Loroupe Peace Foundation in Kapenguria which have helped in environmental conservation and promoted peace initiatives in the country. The President also welcomed the appointment of Shahnawaz Murji as Honorary Consul of Monaco to Kenya, saying the move signified Monaco's commitment to strengthening her relations with Kenya. On his part, Prince Albert II reiterated his personal commitment to working towards enhancing the existing relations between Monaco and Kenya. The Prince of Monaco expressed optimism that the two countries will exploit more areas of mutual cooperation for the benefit of their citizens.
Present during the meeting were Cabinet Ministers Prof. Hellen Sambili and Prof. George Saitoti, Assistant Minister Richard Onyonka, Foreign Affairs Permanent Secretary Thuita Mwangi renowned athlete Tecla Loroupe and Green Africa Foundation Director Isaac Kalua among others

Stop the blame game: leaders asked,
Eldoret Catholic bishop Cornelius Korir has called for the end of the blame game between national and religious leaders over the Sunday's Uhuru Park blast until investigations are done. Addressing journalists Tuesday at his office Korir called upon respect towards various diverse views over the draft constitution among Kenyans in order to maintain peace at a time the country is going through national healing and reconciliation. At the same time the bishop has called upon the exercise of mature politics in the country to evade incidences that may jeopardize peace.

END ……..JAMES GITAKA.

Boys shine in Science congress national competition
The national science congress competition which was held in Matuga girls in Coast province saw boys' schools performing better than girls' schools. Some of the top schools included Samaj, Oshwal, Aga khan, Mang'u and Kamusinga high schools with most of the participants being boys. Stephen Mbuka, who is the Uasin Gishu district quality assurance officer, there has always been a notion that boys perform better in sciences than girls a stereotype that girls have always been fighting to overrule.
Nairobi province topped the competition followed closely by central, Nyanza and Western provinces as Eastern and north Eastern provinces trailed at the bottom. Schools from Rift valley province managed to scope 5 trophies out of the 13 top trophies with St. Mary's Tachasis high school taking away the biology Trophy.
Ends….Job Wesonga

Co-curricular activities directly linked to academic performance
Students who actively participate in co-curricular activities especially Drama and music do well in their academics too, this is according to an official from the ministry of education who sought anonymity. The officer who had an exclusive interview with Fish fm on Tuesday, cited Moi girls High school Eldoret saying that the top 10 girls in last years KCSE were active members of the drama club. The officer is therefore advising teachers and parents who have always associated these activities with wasting time to reconsider their stand.
It was also noted that boys perform better than girls because of their ability to work as a team among other reasons. According to the education officer, girls have to learn more on how to balance their emotions and be able to work as a team like their male counterparts. Girl schools

have been encouraged to invest more on the talents of the girl child because success is not only measured in terms of academic excellence.

Ends….Wesonga Job

Children Abduction and Trafficking, an Emerging Trend

Parents and guardians have been put on high alert to monitor the movement of their children, owing to an emerging trend of child abduction. Uasin Gishu District Children's Officer, Philip Nzenge has asked concerned citizens to help his office in carrying out its functions by reporting suspected child abductors without delay. Nzenge added that his office is greatly concerned about the vulnerability of children, and promised that adults who expose children to drug abuse among other socially unpleasant conditions will face the hand of the law.

In the recent past, children have reportedly been involved in illegal businesses especially where parents view illicit brewing as a legitimate family income earner.

Ends…Macharia

Stiletto warning for pregnant women

Pregnant women are risking their feet in the name of fashion by wearing the wrong types of shoes, experts warn. A poll of 1,000 pregnant women for the Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists found many regularly wore ballet pumps, flip flops, high heels and Ugg boots.

But Lorraine Jones from the society says none of these shoes are suitable because they offer little support. The survey also suggests half feel under pressure to keep up with the latest celebrity trends.

Yet seven out of 10 women admitted to suffering from foot problems including swollen ankles (37%), swollen feet (45%) and arch and heel pain (16%) while pregnant. High heels alter your posture, shorten your calf muscles and place increased pressure on your back and knees. The society is urging women to wear supportive, wide fitting shoes to minimise discomfort and avoid long-term damage.

Regional News

SPLM gets oil ministry in new Sudan cabinet

Sudan's president has announced his coalition cabinet, expected to be the last before a referendum due in January on secession for the oil-rich south. Omar al-Bashir was overwhelmingly re-elected in April's polls, although they were marred by an opposition boycott and fraud allegations. The newly created oil ministry has gone to Lual Acuek Deng, from the southern Sudan People's Liberation Movement.

The referendum was part of a north-south deal to end a long civil war. The south, where most of Sudan's lucrative oil lies, is expected to vote to split from the north but the exact boundary still has to be defined. The elections, the first multi-party polls in 24 years, have been recognised internationally, despite their flaws.

US-UBS tax evasion deal backed by Swiss parliament

Switzerland's parliament has voted to approve a deal which would see information on suspected tax-evaders be passed to US authorities. The lower house of the Swiss parliament backed the agreement, reversing its earlier decision to reject the agreement last week. The move is designed

to head off US accusations that the Swiss bank UBS is aiding tax evasion. The US alleges that 4,450 of its citizens hold secret accounts with UBS. It has already agreed to drop legal action against UBS if the details of those account holders are handed over before the end of August. But further delays could make meeting that deadline difficult.

Global News

Wikipedia unlocks divisive pages for editing

The online encyclopaedia Wikipedia says it has taken an "important step" towards making it easier to edit some of its most controversial articles. Up to 2,000 articles, including a page about former US President George W Bush, will have their strict editing restrictions relaxed. Users will now be able to submit changes to the selected pages for review by senior editors.

It is part of Wikipedia's ongoing efforts to curb vandalism of the site. Wikipedia's founder Jimmy Wales told BBC News that the new system, called "pending changes" will allow the site "to open up articles for general editing that have been protected or semi-protected for years. Wikipedia encourages editorial changes from everybody who comes to the site.

Sports News

World cup threatens fans work performance

This one month football season has brought all fans together to watch the game irrespective of circumstances. Most of the football fans our reporter interviewed said they would prefer absconding work for some few hours in a day to catch up with a game claiming soccer is part of them. However this trend has lead to low concentration and poor performance at work places since most discussions carried out by the employers and employees concern world cup expectations of various teams.

According to Cleophas Owino , who is one of the Eldoret resident , world cup comes only once in every four years thus every football fan should grasp the opportunity and get the gist of each game. Owino added that his work can not be a stumbling block towards him watching the tournament. Despite being a good football fan another Eldoret resident Carolyne Achieng called upon Kenyans to be much careful on their work since watching football would not bring food on their tables.

Ends……Gladys Kimaiyo

Hopes of Fans for Africa in World cup

As the FIFA word cup tournament enters its fifth day today, Kenyan fans have continued to elicit different views as to how far Africans teams will get in the competition. Those who spoke to our reporter early Tuesday expressed hopes in some African teams, with others expressing open dissatisfaction in the standard of African football.

Ends…Macharia

Dementieva pulls out of Wimbledon

Elena Dementieva has pulled out of Wimbledon because of a calf injury. The Russian world number five, 28, picked up the injury during her French Open semi-final against Francesca Schiavone and was forced to retire. Dementieva, who quit the match after losing a first-set tie-break, had said after her quarter-final win that she was struggling with a calf problem.

She reached the Wimbledon semi-finals in 2008 and 2009 but will miss this year's event, which starts on 21 June. Dementieva lost to Venus Williams two years ago and her younger sister Serena last year.

Business News

Cement manufacturers sound alarm over cheap imports

East Africa Cement Producers Association has warned that the whole cement manufacturing sector in East Africa is faced with imminent plant closures and job losses as a result of increased dumping of cheap and subsidized cement mainly from Asia. This follows what association says is a failure by the East African states to take into consideration their recommendations in the budget to level the playing field for the industry. EACPA Tanzania Chapter Chairman Mbuvi Ngunze said the Association had asked the governments to reinstate cement to the sensitive product status which would restore the Common External Tariff (CET) to 35 percent or US$50 per ton whichever is higher.

The Association had also wanted the governments to invoke additional anti dumping and countervailing duties in consultation with the industry and institute correct valuation of imports for assessment of taxes and duties. On its part, the government had promised to review its stance on the removal of CET once the manufacturers had invested in new capacity but this is yet to happen in spite of the ominous threat imports pose to the local industries. EA member states removed the Common External Tariff in 2008 for a period of two years which EACPA said opened doors for cheap imports to flood the market.

Kenya's KCB offers rights issue at kshs.17

Kenya Commercial Bank will sell its rights issue at 17.00 shillings ($0.210), a 21 percent discount on the stock's weighted average price over last six months, the bank's chairman said on Tuesday. With a total of 887.1 million shares being offered in the KCB Rights Issue, the bank targets to raise a total of Kshs 15 billion, which will be used to finance its consolidation plans. Currently, KCB has a total of 212 branches comprising 168 branches in Kenya, 14 in Uganda, 11 in Tanzania, Rwanda 9 and 11 in Southern Sudan respectively.

The bank has the largest number of ATM with a total outlay of over 370 ATMs and access to 110 PesaPoint units and over 250 Kenswitch outlets.

Access Kenya increases home Internet speed

Home internet users will now be able to access faster Internet and less expensive downloading of large quantities of data, helping reduce costs considerably. AccessKenya Group Tuesday announced that it had increased home internet speeds and extended night hours to enable its customers beat traffic while working from home. The internet service provider has increased home internet bandwidth speeds from the previous64kbpsto 128kbps during daytime.

The new move follows a survey that shows that over 85 per cent of home users prefer to use the internet from 6.00 p.m. to 10.00 a.m.

The same study shows that home internet will grow by 80 per cent by 2012. At the same time, customers will be able to beat traffic by working from home and later go to the office with the extension of night time speeds from 6.00 p.m. to 10.00 a.m. AccessKenya's Group Managing Director, Jonathan Somen said that the availability of internet access is a catalyst for innovation.