

## **LOCAL NEWS-20TH MAY 2010**

### **The church applauds the red and green symbols,**

The church has announced its satisfaction on the given Red and Green colors to be used as symbols during the August 4th referendum. Speaking to journalists today at a civic education exercise organized by the NCKK, Dr Charles Jakait a civic educator on the abortion clause said the red color for those opposed to the draft had also been used by the church during their No Campaign launch at Uhuru park Nairobi.

At the same time Dr. Jakait said the civic education process is currently facing some challenges, noting that most Kenyans have not accessed it including those with special needs, thus Kenyans needed more time to go through the document before voting in the referendum. The civic education exercise organized by the national council of Churches of Kenya begun on Monday and ended today. It targeted pastors from various denominations within the North Rift region.

*End.....James Gitaka.*

### **Kenyan economy grows by 2.6 pc in 2009**

Kenya's economy grew by 2.6 per cent in 2009 from a revised 1.6 per cent a year before, boosted by growth in tourism, construction and communications, the government said on Thursday.

Kenya's economic growth was slowed down sharply by a bloody post-election crisis in early 2008, and a prolonged drought and the global economic crisis compounded the effects. Minister of state for planning and national development Wycliffe Oparanya, while releasing Kenya's 2010 economic survey, said the agriculture sector declined by 2.6 per cent Agriculture accounts for roughly one quarter of gross domestic product in east Africa's largest economy. The government had earlier put 2008 growth at 1.7 per cent.

### **TJRC to take statement in Mt. Elgon starting Monday next week**

The Truth Justice and Reconciliation Commission -TJRC is set to kick off its exercises of taking statements beginning next Monday in Mount Elgon. Addressing journalists in Eldoret the commission's CEO Patricia Nyaundi said they will kick off the exercise at Kapsokwony where they will be taking statements from the displaced persons in the area and those in Bungoma prisons.

The exercise will take two weeks or may be extended depending on the need and the statements recorded will form the basis of investigations. From Mt. Elgon the commission will roll out the exercise across the country after recruiting staff. After that the commission will commence hearings and Nyaundi is confident they will be able to finish their work within the stipulated time by November 2011. The mandate of the commission is to look into historical injustices and to bring national healing.

*Ends ..... Carolyn Koech*

### **New forest act enforced**

Kenya forest service has now enforced a new law that will help them deal with forest offenders in a more severe way than in the past. The act that was first discussed in 2007 allows Kenya forest service to prosecute forest offenders using their own prosecutors and advocates as opposed to previous law that forced them to use police prosecutors. According to Solomon Mibey, the head of Kenya Forest Conservancy North Rift Region, the new act imposes heavier penalties on forest offenders unlike before when the penalties were not stipulated.

Mibey added that the prosecution and law enforcement process will now be assured as he accused the Judiciary of not taking forest cases serious since they were releasing forest offenders making efforts of forest conservation difficult. He also urged farmers to practice agroforestry as a way of increasing the acreage under forests which will help in soil conservation and increase productivity in case they use leguminous trees. He further encouraged the public to partner with them in conserving forests saying they have currently managed to plant over 1592 hectares of land with trees. He revealed that they are targeting to plant trees on 3930 hectares of land by the end of this year.

*Ends.....Job Wesonga*

### **Gender violence being fought in Eldoret**

Family Health Options Kenya Eldoret branch today released a report on assessment of the current sexual and gender based violence interventions in Eldoret town and its environs. Family health options Kenya program youth manager, Simon Wahome said the act of gender violence has been rampant in Eldoret due to poverty Wahome asked the residents not to take cases of gender violence for granted but instead take them seriously by reporting them to necessary authorities. At the same time, Wahome revealed that they are going to use young people to educate people at the grassroots on dangers of gender based violence.

*END.....John Chiks.*

### **Vendors in Eldoret municipal market have decried the on going rains**

Vendors in Eldoret municipal market have decried the on going rains destroying the farmers' produce thus hiking their commodity prices. Prices of Commodities such as tomatoes, potatoes and onions have gone up due to the ongoing rains making them to rot in the farms and the high cost of transport due to impassable roads. The traders have also expressed fears of losing their customers as most of them can't afford to buy the commodities due to rising prices.

*Ends.....Stanley Magut.*

### **Malindi Police Retrieve arms**

Police in Malindi Wednesday( yesterday) retrieved five AK47 rifles, 400 rounds of ammunition, a pistol and six cartridges hidden by the shore of the sea. According to Malindi deputy OCPD Willy Simba 4 suspects were arrested in connection to the arms, and six others of Somali origin

and also suspected to be pirates had been arrested by dawn today. Elsewhere, Residents of Kwale and Kinango divisions are facing acute shortage of charcoal, following an earlier ban by the government against charcoal burning, in a move to secure the endangered forest cover in the province.

According to Kinango District Officer Karen Komen, a huge percentage of residents depend on charcoal for fuel since they haven't access to alternatives like electricity. And finally, Kisauni DC Tom Ajeri has said that his office is aware of the rising cases of insecurity in his area and vowed that he will not relent in hitting back till the situation normalizes. Ajeri has said that plans are underway to set up AP camps at Mwakirunge, Mkomani and Showground, adding that the one at Mkomani is not enough. He also called on the public to work with police to free the area of the problem.

*End...David Macharia*

### **Medical College Strike Thwarted.**

Attempts by students of the Kenya Medical Training College (KMTC) in Kilifi to go on a strike were yesterday halted by police before gaining momentum. The students cited poor service delivery despite high fees as their reason for agitation, noting that some of them have had to share a bed in the college hostels due to shortage of the facility.

The principal, Grace Mwalalo, speaking to the press urged the students to embrace dialogue with their Board of Governors, as going up in arms would not solve the situation. However, the chairman of the college's students' union George Ouma vowed that students would not be cowed, and that protests would persist till their cry is heard.

The country has in the past witnessed chains of college and varsity strikes, with the latest cases being the Mombasa Polytechnic University College as a result of alleged insecurity and University of Nairobi, following chaos that led to the disbandment of the Student Union, SONU.

*End...David Macharia*

### **Sports News**

#### **Roads closed for Kenya's Sotokoto marathon**

Three Major roads will be closed this Sunday during the 2nd edition of the Sotokoto half marathon to be held in Nairobi. Motorists who will intend to use Langat Road, Mbagathi Way and Aerodrome Road will be forced to use alternative routes to pave way for the race that will start and end at the Uhuru Gardens along Lang'ata road.

While outlining the roads to be used by the Motorists Deputy Traffic Commandant Nairobi Area Leonard Katana urged the public and the motorists to accord the police traffic cooperation for the success of the race. So far 2,500 athletes have registered with the number expected to increase following the extension of the deadline from the 15th to the 18th of this month. Meanwhile the Kenjiro Shinozuka driven solar car that will lead runners at Sunday's Sotokoto Safari Half Marathon will arrive at Nairobi by Friday. The innovation that weighs less than 60kgs arrived in Mombasa more than a week ago and its coming to the capital is among the last pieces

of the organizational jigsaw for this year's event.