

LOCAL NEWS 27TH JULY 2010.

Security beefed in Eldoret ahead of the august 4th referendum.

Security has been beefed up in Eldoret town ahead of the forthcoming referendum to ensure that no crime is committed. In an exclusive interview with Fish FM on Tuesday, Eldoret OCPD Muinde Kioko said that the assured Eldoret residence of their security saying there is no cause of alarm Kioko added that only security organs in the country quantify the level of security and people should not perceive that violence may erupt after the referendum.

He at the same time called on Kenyans to cease from linking the 2007 election aftermath with the upcoming referendum saying the disputed presidential elections will not be same as the august 4th referendum.

End.....Stanley Magut.

International commission of jurists takes civic education to Eldoret,

The Kenyan section of International commission of jurists conducted a civic education exercise in Eldoret town Tuesday majoring on the land clause in the proposed document, just a few days to the August 4 referendum. Addressing journalists in Eldoret town on Tuesday, Research and documentation officer from the commission Kevin Ogema said the committee aims at educating the general public on the contents of the proposed constitution without campaigning for either side. The committee will on Thursday this week proceed to Kitale town on a similar exercise after holding such a forum in Kuria District last week.

End.....James Gitaka

No campaigners criss cross Kenya

Higher Education Minister William Ruto Tuesday intensified his No campaign in a rush against time, with a whistle-stop campaign tour of Rift Valley. The minister started off with a rally at Ndeffo area before flying off Kabarnet. Ruto reiterated his message that Kenyans should reject the proposed Constitution in next week's referendum and soon after start another process of amending it to eliminate discrepancies.

He said amendments to the draft will enable the country to "pass a Constitution that unites all the communities." At the Njoro rally, there was heavy police presence with over 100 officers being sent to ensure security. The Eldoret North MP later addressed other rallies at Tot and Marakwet before ending at Litein. He asked the communities living in the clash prone areas to co-exist peacefully regardless of the referendum results.

The No team led by Ruto is opposed to the provisions of the Lands chapter which it claims could re-open old wounds of the perennial land clashes especially in the Rift valley. The politicians are opposed to the powers given to the yet-to-be created Land commission which can institute proceedings to address historical land injustices. Also opposed to the new law, Church leaders have taken issue with the inclusion of Kadhis courts and a clause that they claim leaves a

loophole for the legalization of abortion

Kenya IDP's receive assurance

The Minister for Special Programmes Naomi Shabaan has denied claims that more people were returning to IDP camps in fear of violence during and after referendum. The minister says so far only 32,000 displaced persons are still in the camps adding that the government was still putting in place measures to ensure they are resettled. Shabaan however admitted that the resettling on IDPs has been slow but assures those still in the camps that the process was hastened. She was speaking to the press after meeting a Vietnamese delegation that is visiting the country to study the ways Kenya is dealing with HIV/AIDS issues.

Government committed to resettle remaining idp

Internal security Permanent Secretary Francis Kimemia has expressed the government's commitment to resettle remaining internally displaced persons by October this year. Speaking in Milangine district, Kimemia said security would also be enforced in violence hotspots across the country during the referendum.

Three years after the post election violence that left over three hundred thousand people displaced, a section of those who were affected are yet to be resettled. According to internal security PS Francis Kimemia, the government is working on a plan that will ensure that all IDPs who have not been resettled receive their compensation within the next three months. But even as the government issues the assurance, there have been reports of people moving back to IDP camps in fear of the implications of the referendum vote. Kimemia however says security will be beefed up in all violence hotspots.

Kenya house committee raps Uhuru

The budget parliamentary committee Tuesday hit out at Finance Minister Uhuru Kenyatta for snubbing its summons to answer questions on how his Ministry spent 190 billion Shillings of last year's Budget allocation. Speaking during the committee meeting at Parliament's continental house, the house team accused the Minister of belittling the significance of its hearings by ignoring the summons and sending a representative.

The Minister who skipped the meeting said he was attending to other "pressing national commitments" and instead sent his Finance Secretary Mutua Kilaka, to represent him.

Committee chairman Elias Mbau said it was wrong for the minister to give excuses saying they had called the minister to address policy issues and not to be "merely informed" about how the monies allocated to the Consolidated Fund Services were used. The committee chairman Elias Mbau (Maragua, PNU), John Mbadi (Gwassi, ODM), Martin Ogindo (Rangwe, ODM), Ekwee Ethuro (Turkana Central, PNU) and David Koech (Mosop, ODM) The meeting failed to kick off as Kilaka was sent away with an order that the Minister shows up with a letter from President Kibaki allowing him to skip the committee meeting in favor of the referendum campaigns.

The National Assembly Powers and Privileges Act, directs that parliamentary summons will take

priority over any other duties, unless with the permission of the President. Mbau said the minister had for the fourth time ignored summons to represent Treasury at the committee. The committee therefore concluded that the minister was unable to explain to parliament how the ministry had spent the allocation

Kenya bootleg deaths top 19

The death toll from the poisonous illicit brew in Nairobi's Kibera slum rose to 19 on Tuesday, after two more people succumbed to the effect of the lethal liquor. One of them died at the Mbagathi Hospital while another was found dead in his house at the Soweto area, police said. Officials at the City mortuary confirmed there were 19 bodies preserved there from the slum. The cause of their death at the mortuary was booked as 'sudden death'. He said relatives had been allowed to collect the bodies for burial, but none of them had showed up. Police said tests conducted on samples of the lethal brew had indicated it contained Methanol, a colourless volatile poisonous water-soluble liquid which is mainly used as a solvent, fuel or in antifreeze for motor vehicles.

Health officials sensitized on epilepsy is control

A seminar for Eldoret public health officers was held town Tuesday in Eldoret aimed at sensitizing them on epilepsy. The Kenya health association co-ordinator, Anne Gathoni urged the public to avoid stigmatizing epileptic patients saying the condition is not infectious. She at the same time called on the health officers to use the available opportunities they have to sensitize the communities at grassroot level about epilepsy and how to handle the patients. The forum is targeting public health officials from 8 districts in Eldoret town including Wareng.

END.....JOHN CHIKAMAI

Science journalists in Africa urged to scale up reporting

African Journalists have been challenged to change the course of science in the continent, by acting as the "broker between actors" in science reporting. Executive Director of the African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS) Dr. Kevin Urama says science journalists need to go out of their way to identify and focus on issues such as poverty which scientists and policy makers need to address.

Addressing a media workshop in Nairobi on Tuesday, Dr. Urama said that Journalists should be the pressure groups that will address problems facing society. The two day workshop on effective reporting on Science, Technology and Innovation, draws journalists who specialize in science and environment from the African continent. Development issues such as poverty eradication have gone under reported in many African media outlets, at the expense of bad news, which is perceived as selling more. These sentiments were echoed by Dr. Edwardina Ndhine from the Kenya National Council of Science and Technology.

Students injured in accident

Several students were Tuesday morning injured when their school bus was involved in an accident near Ringa along the Kericho-Nakuru highway in Kipkelion district. Five students, two teachers sustained serious injuries and are admitted to Kericho district hospital. According to Kericho OCPD Peterson Maelo, the bus rolled several times down a hill at about 7am local time. The bus was ferrying 43 students of St. Georges Secondary school in Muthaiti to Kisumu for a tour.

The police boss noted that the bus driver, four students and two teachers sustained injuries and are admitted to the Kericho district hospital in stable condition. Thirty other students and two teachers who sustained minor injuries were treated and discharged.

EU to informally post observers in Kenya

The European Union will closely monitor the August 4TH referendum albeit informally. Speaking in Kisumu, the European Union head of delegation Eric van Der Linden said that unlike in the 2007 general elections when the union had an official lead its delegation in monitoring the election this time round the union will informally post observers to several polling stations. The union will also consult none governmental organization and security agents in the perceived hot spots as they monitor the democratic progress made after the 2007 general election.

He said the union together with other development partners had set aside over 4 billion shillings towards improving health facilities, schools and small business in the country. The union is expected to construct ultra modern open air market in Kisumu to ease the increased hawker congestion in the Central Business District. He was speaking in Kisumu while touring various projects funded by the European Union.

Security Minister warns those inciting others ahead of referendum

Internal Security minister Professor George Saitoti has issued a stern warning to those threatening others over the August 4th referendum. Saitoti asserted that those out to prevent others from participating in the referendum will face the full force of the law. Speaking in Othaya constituency, the minister said it was criminal to prevent a person from exercising his or her constitutional right. Saitoti also said security forces have been put on high alert to ensure that the referendum was conducted in a peaceful atmosphere adding that security would be maintained after the exercise.

Kenya wages war on the illicit brews trade

The National Alcohol Beverages Association of Kenya (NABAK) has urged for firm action against illicit brews trade. The NABAK Vice-Chairman, Ken Kariuki, said in a statement issued Tuesday that the association was saddened by the recent incident in Kibera in Nairobi on Monday where 17 people died. Kariuki observed that illicit brews are detrimental to the Kenyan society due to their social and health implications. Kariuki commended the Government for its

efforts to deal with the issue but urged for the authorities to engage all stakeholders in a concerted effort to deal with the problem which seems to be growing.

Police lauded on the move to prevent referendum chaos

The police force has been praised barely a day after the Police Commissioner Mathew Itere announced measures they have put in place to prevent any occurrence of violence before and after the August 4th referendum. Kenya national Commission on Human Rights commissioner Hassan Omar has lauded the move saying the prevention strategies set by the police will assist in ensuring that the referendum process is peaceful especially in the so called volatile areas. On her part, Kituo Cha Sheria executive Pricilla Nyokabi wants the commissioner of police to adopt the recommendations of the Waki report in order prevent a repeat of the acts of the police as witnesses during the 2007-2008 post election violence.

The Police Commissioner Monday issued a strong warning that anyone found engaging in hate speech during the ongoing referendum campaigns will be arrested immediately. He further said that police officers have been instructed to be extra vigilant and to act decisively regardless of the position or status of those flouting the law.

End...Chumba Silvanoh

Regional news

South African 'racist video': Ex-students plead guilty

Four white South Africans have pleaded guilty to humiliating five black domestic staff at a university after a video of the incident was posted on the internet. The men on trial, all students from the University of the Free State at the time, were charged with *crimen injuria* - humiliating their alleged victims.

The video showed the five staff being made to kneel and forced to eat food which had apparently been urinated on by one of the students. The video caused a national outcry and anti-racists protests when it surfaced in 2008.

Egypt police in brutality trial over Khaled Said death

The trial has opened of two Egyptian policemen charged with brutality in the death of a 28-year-old man a month ago. Khaled Said died in police custody on a street in Alexandria in June. The case has caused outrage at home and abroad. After a brief session, the trial was adjourned to 25 September. The officers will remain in custody until then. Witnesses say Said died after he was dragged out of a cafe and beaten up. The government says he swallowed a packet of drugs and choked. An Amnesty International statement issued on Monday expressed concern that witnesses in the trial could be harassed and urged the government to ensure their safety. The US, EU and other human rights groups have all called for a transparent investigation.

African Union pledges to reinforce its Somalia force

African Union leaders have agreed to reinforce the AU peacekeeping force in Somalia to tackle al-Shabab militants. At a summit in Uganda, they approved a request to send 2,000 more troops to the Somali capital Mogadishu. Rules of engagement are to be changed to allow the troops to fire first if they are facing imminent attack. Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni had wanted a tougher mandate to "eliminate" the al-Qaeda linked group that allowed forces to go on the offensive.

He said that AU peacekeepers were "confused" by the current mandate. Dozens of people were killed two weeks ago in twin bomb attacks in Uganda's capital, Kampala, which al-Shabab said it had carried out.

Global news

BP to set aside \$32.2bn to cover oil spill costs

BP says it has set aside \$32.2bn (£20.8bn) to cover the costs linked to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The company said the charge gave it a loss of \$17bn for the three months between April and June - a UK record. BP's chairman said the costs estimate was based on the company's belief that it was not grossly negligent, and added the bill could be higher. BP also said Bob Dudley, head of the Gulf clean-up operation, will replace Tony Hayward as chief executive. Hayward will leave his post by mutual agreement in October. He is likely to retain a role within the company. BP plans to nominate him as a non-executive director of its Russian joint venture, TNK-BP. BP also announced it would increase its asset sales over the next 18 months to \$30bn, a total that includes the \$7bn-worth earmarked for sale last week.

The \$32.2bn cost of the clean-up includes the \$20bn already set aside in an escrow account for compensation claims.

US 'fails to account' for Iraq reconstruction billions

A US federal watchdog has criticised the US military for failing to account properly for billions of dollars it received to help rebuild Iraq. The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction says the US Department of Defence is unable to account properly for 96% of the money.

Out of just over \$9bn (£5.8bn), \$8.7bn is unaccounted for, the inspector says. The US military said the funds were not necessarily missing, but that spending records might have been archived. In a response attached to the report, it said attempting to account for the money might require "significant archival retrieval efforts".

Burma's Than Shwe welcomed with red carpet in Delhi

Reclusive Burmese junta leader General Than Shwe has received a red carpet welcome in the Indian capital, on a state visit condemned by rights groups. He is meeting Indian PM Manmohan Singh in Delhi on a rare five-day trip that aims to deepen the economic and strategic ties between

the two nations.

The Burmese leader laid a wreath at the mausoleum of Indian independence leader and non-violence hero, Mahatma Gandhi. On Monday, pro-democracy protesters demonstrated against the visit. They shouted slogans and carried posters in Delhi labelling the leader, whose regime crushed pro-democracy protests led by Burmese monks three years ago, a murderer and dictator.

Sports news

African athletics championships open in Kenya

Over 700 African athletes will be meeting in Nairobi this week for a five-day continental championships being held under tight security after deadly bombings in neighbouring Uganda. Continental heavyweights Kenya and Ethiopia are fielding their top runners including world champions Linet Masai and Vivian Cheruiyot and double Olympic champion Tirunesh Dibaba, who is making a comeback after a long lay-off.

Kenya, hosting the African Athletics Championships for the first time, will field a full strength of 144 athletes, that includes sprinters and field event competitors, who have in the past felt marginalized and neglected due to lack of investments by Athletics Kenya (AK). New head coach Stephen Mwaniki believes the participation of the sprinters and field events will give the team an all-round performance and a force to be reckoned with.

The championships will be held in a newly-refurbished Nyayo National Stadium in central Nairobi which has seen a fast-paced painting work, track-laying and lighting as well as mounting an electronic timing board. Security has also been heightened in the city following the July 11 bomb blasts in Kampala by Somalia's Al-Qaeda-linked Shebab rebels which left 76 people dead. Kenya police announced the setting up of a special unit to protect the athletes during training, competition and at their hotels. As this is a non-Olympic or World championships year, most of the athletes will use the championship to prepare for the up-coming Commonwealth Games in New Delhi, India in October.

Rangers target South African pair

Rangers chief executive Martin Bain has held initial signing talks with the agents for South African World Cup pair Bongani Khumalo and Katlego Mphela. The club website has confirmed press reports that manager Walter Smith is keen on defender Khumalo, 23, and 25-year-old striker Mphela. Both players scored against France in the finals and are rated at £1.5m each. Khumalo captains Supersport United, while Mphela was top scorer in South Africa's league last season. Those 17 goals earned Mphela the players' player of the year award. He started out at Jomo Cosmos, then had two years in France with Strasbourg and Stade Reims. His return to South Africa was with Supersport United after which he moved to Mamelodi Sundowns in January 2008 after a disappointing 14 months. Now with 35 caps, he scored twice on his international debut and before his goal against Les Bleus in the World Cup finals had also scored for Bafana Bafana against Spain in last year's Confederations Cup third-placed play-off.

Gatlin set to return in Estonia

American sprinter Justin Gatlin is set to return from a four-year drugs ban with two races in Estonia next month. Gatlin, who has won Olympic and world sprint titles, will race in Rakvere on 3 August and in Tallinn on 8 August. Gatlin won the 100m and 200m sprint double at the 2005 World Championships to add to his 2004 Olympic 100m title. He was suspended after testing positive for testosterone in 2006, although he has always insisted that he has never knowingly taken a performance-enhancing substance.

Many expected him to have difficulty finding races in Europe because of a Euro Meetings recommendation not to invite athletes who bring the sport into disrepute. However, the Estonia meetings are not part of the Euro group and organisers said they would welcome Gatlin.

Kenya to surpass 1m tourists this year

The Kenya Tourist Board (KTB) has expressed optimism of surpassing the one million-tourist arrival mark this year. KTB Managing Director Mureithi Ndegwa said on Tuesday that first half tourist estimates indicate arrivals to the country had surpassed those witnessed in 2007, Kenya's benchmark year for the highest tourist arrivals.

Statistics from KTB show arrivals in the first six months grew 20.5 percent to 403,996, compared to 400,362 arrivals witnessed in 2007. In 2007, the country earned Sh63.5 billion from 1,048,732 tourists. Growth in the sector was however frustrated by the combined effects of the post-election violence and the global financial crisis that cut travel resources. The 2010 first quarter results released in May showed the sector had recorded a 16 percent rise in international arrivals.

Ndegwa attributed the growth to market diversification efforts that have seen emerging markets such as China and the (Arabian) Gulf region play a major role as well as traditional source markets. Of particular interest to KTB is the increase in the composition of business travelers to the country. The MD was however quick to challenge industry stakeholders to upgrade their facilities in an effort to attract more tourists.

Actis buys into Egyptian cards company

Actis, a private equity investor in emerging markets has announced the 100 percent management buy-out (MBO) of Mediterranean Smart Cards Company (MSCC), an electronic payment processor in Africa. Actis will become the majority shareholder, while the management team, led by Madame Hoda Shoukry, has also invested for a stake in the business. Africa is the last continent to move away from a cash society. The acquisition of MSCC reflects Actis's belief in the fundamental shift in consumer and business behaviour from cash transactions to electronic payments.

MSCC was founded in 2001 and has built on its leading market share in Egypt to penetrate over 20 countries

SA hotel buys Holiday Inn

South African hotel chain Southern Sun Hotels will take over Nairobi's Holiday Inn from next month. The hotel group will from August take over the ownership of the city hotel and change its name to Southern Sun Mayfair Nairobi. Holiday Inn, formerly known as Mayfair Court Hotel, is one of the leading establishments in the city, mainly attracting the conference niche. The management is still tightlipped on the cost of the whole deal. Holiday Inn is part of a global hotel chain known as InterContinental Group of Hotels which runs Nairobi's InterContinental and manages the newly opened Crowne Plaza in Nairobi. Holiday Inn has been run for the last fifteen year by a company called And Beyond whose lease ends this week.

This marks the first major acquisition by a South African firm in the hotel industry as they have previously focused their attention on banking, telecoms and manufacturing where they have made a number of acquisitions and buy-outs.

Southern Sun, which was founded in 1969, is one of the leading hotel groups in South Africa and has been expanding its presence in the region and beyond. It has hotels in Zambia, Nigeria, Seychelles, Tanzania, Mozambique as well as in Dubai

Kenyan traders want business simplified

The government has been urged to simplify business registration and investment procedures for domestic investors in order to reduce bureaucracy and corruption in their operations. Survey findings from TNS Research International show that Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) particularly those in the rural areas are more susceptible to bribery and corruption which the organization's chairman Mutahi Kagwe attributed to increased bureaucracy. Kagwe was reacting to results of the 'Retailer Confidence Index of June 2010' which showed that the number of retailers who claimed to have been asked for a bribe between April and June, when the survey was carried out, had gone up from 17 percent to 25 percent. According to SMEs, the same support systems and treatment given to foreign investors such as tax-based incentives and investment allowances, would help bolster local investor confidence and investments to spur development.

The SME sector employs nearly 80 percent of Kenya's workforce and contributes about 20 percent to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) but it has time and again complained that it is not given the attention it deserves.