

Local news May 4, 2010

PM urges envoys to sell Kenya

Prime Minister Raila Odinga is now calling upon Kenya's diplomats to engage their host countries in trade and investment opportunities available in Kenya as opposed to seeking aid. The Premier noted today that the country had moved away from dependency on foreign aid and asked the envoys to ensure that Kenyan goods found market in their countries of accreditation. He also asked the attachés to engage in advocacy roles that would increase foreign investments in the country.

Raila who was speaking Tuesday in Nairobi after the 29 newly appointed Kenyan High Commissioners and Ambassadors paid him a courtesy call further asked them to paint a clear picture of the country. The 29 envoys have been undergoing a two week induction course before taking up their new appointments.

Back to school programme launched in Eldoret

The business community has been challenged to absorb former street children who have graduated from the vocational training institutions in their businesses to save them from going back to the streets. Speaking Tuesday in Eldoret town during the launch of back to school programme for the former street children, Judith Kibaki who is the chairperson of the street family rehabilitation trust fund said it needs a collective responsibility to care for the children since most of them have been abandoned by their family members. At the same time, Judy Kibaki advised the youth to obtain loans from the youth enterprise fund that will help them start businesses to improve the living standards. She said since the onset of the programme in 2003 which also saw the introduction of free primary education the number of street families has reduced drastically.

The programme is supported by Barclays bank and UNICEF and is set to equip teachers with the capacity on how they can handle street children in schools. Tuesday's function was organized by the Eldoret municipal council.

Kenya govt in new fuel levy

The government is set to introduce a new levy, for fuel inspection as fuel prices continue to rise. Industrialization Permanent Secretary John Lonyagapuo, Tuesday said that this would help reign in on a cartel of oil importers, whom he accuses of hiking pump prices under the guise of rising international prices. Talks of introduction of the new levy comes barely two months after the government suspended fuel inspection fee paid to Geo Chem as players in the oil sector passed on the cost to consumers.

At the time of cancellation, the government said it would refund oil marketers and ordered an immediate reduction in fuel pump prices. He however accused industry players of jumping the gun and frustrating consumers.

He revealed that the ministry would be working closely with that of Energy in cracking the whip on rogue players. Kenya Bureau of Standards is expected to conduct the inspection once the modalities of the tests are complete.

Kenyan met warns of extreme conditions

Weather experts in Kenya are now warning that extreme climatic conditions being experienced in some parts of the country are likely to persist. The experts say the floods will persist in certain parts of the country. Deputy Director at the Meteorological department Peter Ambenje is cautioning those living in mudslide and flood prone areas to move to safer grounds as they monitor meteorological reports. The warning comes after a mudslide claimed 16 lives in Marakwet East District.

Eight people are still missing, with hopes of finding them dwindling by the day. Last week at least 10 people were killed after a landslide buried houses in Cheptundu and Kitony villages in Tot division in Marakwet East district. The landslide which occurred on Friday morning was caused by heavy rains which have been pounding the area for the past four days causing part of the escarpment at Kakisoo in Embobut Location to cave in

Kenya to defend its human rights record

Kenya will on Thursday be put in the dock on her human rights agenda at the 8th session of the Universal Periodic Review scheduled under the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

The nation will be required to give a detailed account of her fulfillment of human rights obligations and commitments in Geneva's Palais des Nations, since the establishment of the UPR under the UN General Assembly resolution 60/251 of March 15 2006. According to the OHCHR website the review will be based on a national report prepared by Kenya among other reports. The website further explains that after Kenya is reviewed, a report will be prepared by the troika (a group of three states who act as rapporteurs and facilitate the review process) with her involvement and assistance from the OHCHR.

Further, the website explains that Kenya can choose to accept or reject the recommendations which will be documented in her final report. Editorial modifications can then be made by Kenya on her own statements within the following two weeks.

Teachers still not enough in Eldoret.

As students hurry back to school for the second term, the earlier complain of shortage of teachers is yet to be solved, the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) executive secretary Uasin Gishu Branch Sammy K. Bor has said. Bor says Eldoret district alone has a deficit of 700 teachers. He said shortage has been occasioned by the increase in the number of students in schools due to the introduction of free primary education programme.

The ministry of education is yet to fill the 6,000 teacher deficit countrywide.

Fares hiked as schools open.

As schools re-open, our reporter has found out that fare to various destinations have been hiked in most of the matatu terminals. Our reporter David Macharia who visited some of the matatu terminals found out that public service vehicles plying the Eldoret-Nakuru and Eldoret-Nairobi routes have increased their fares by 100 shillings and 200 shillings respectively. Some motorists confided that they had to increase the fares following a shortage of public service vehicles plying the Eldoret- Nairobi rout that currently has a high number of passengers. Meanwhile the fare hike has greatly affected parents taking their children to school using the Eldoret-Webuye route.

Ministry of youth launches a project to boost the youth

Tree planting project initiated by ministry of youth affairs has officially kicked off in Kapsaret Division. Speaking to fish fm in his office Kapsaret Division youth affairs Officer Elisha Yatito said the project that's targeting to plant 200,000 trees within 40 days has fully been funded by the government. Meanwhile, Yatito is encouraging the youth from Eldoret to train on entrepreneurship skills that will help them come up with projects that can be funded by donors. According to Yatito, youth polytechnics have been launched across the region with an aim of accommodating the street children to impart them with technical skills. He said this is aimed at improving their living standards.

Cry over rise in sub standard colleges in the country.

The Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) chairman Eldoret East, Noah Kemboi has criticized the rise of sub standard colleges in the country. Kemboi noted that most of those colleges do not meet the required standards and need to be assessed. Speaking Tuesday in Eldoret during an exclusive interview with Fish Fm, Kemboi asked the government to intervene and ensure that the laws governing the establishment of learning institutions in the country are adhered to.

Gvt asked to better school infrastructure.

The Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) official from Moiben division, Thomas Boit, is asking the government to be ware of the ongoing rains which he said may destroy the poorly constructed classrooms in the country.

Boit said that in the recent past many classrooms in various parts of the country were affected by heavy rains that have disrupted learning process. At the same time, Boit asked the government to provide more funds to be used in building better classrooms for a conducive learning environment for pupils.

More Kenyans register

The chairman of the interim electoral commission IIEC Issack Hassan is now urging more Kenyans to register before tomorrow, the end of the exercise. IIEC chairman Issack Hassan announced Monday that the Commission had registered 10,036,415 voters, the minimum target required to hold a referendum.

Hassan however urged Kenyans to register in large numbers so as to give credibility to the impending exercise. More people are expected to register with the electronic voter registration that ends on May 21 in 18 constituencies. The commission plans to register 1.8 million voters through the electronic system. IIEC Chairman said that the commission needs time to do scanning and also prepare the register so that people can have time to verify their names.

Regional News

'Attacks' hit Darfur peace talks

One of the biggest rebel groups in Sudan's Darfur region is boycotting peace talks with the government, accusing it of launching new raids. The Justice and Equality Movement said the army had carried out air strikes and attacked villages in contravention of a ceasefire signed in February. An army spokesman said its forces had come under attack. Darfur was relatively

peaceful during the April elections, which saw President Omar al-Bashir re-elected. But voting did not take place in much of the area because of the insecurity. The International Criminal Court has issued an arrest warrant for Bashir over alleged war crimes committed in Darfur - charges he strongly denies. Jem official Ahmed Tugod Hassan said that the fighting took place in the Jebel Moon area of West Darfur.

Zimbabweans find laughter to cope

Two women are planning to set up laughter clubs in Zimbabwe, one of the world's most challenging economies. Shilpa Shah and Celina Stockill believe they will help people cope with the strains of Zimbabwean life. They recently held workshops at the Harare International Festival of the Arts, with a range of exercises to encourage good hearty laughter. At their workshops, Ms Shah and Ms Stockhill encourage people to hold hands, make funny faces at each other and lie on the floor and kick their legs in the air.

They also ask them to pull their empty pockets out to laugh at each other's lack of cash, and to point and laugh at themselves. Last year a unity government halted the collapse of Zimbabwe's economy - which left the Zimbabwean dollar almost worthless - by allowing the use of foreign currency. But it has meant that those without access to hard currency are often in a desperate situation.

Sports news

Nigeria World Cup plans back on track

Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) has resolved its accommodation problems ahead of the World Cup in South Africa. The Super Eagles will now stay at the Protea Waterfront Hotel at Richards Bay after dumping Hampshire Hotel The Fifa accommodation office, Match, as well as the country's sports minister reached a truce with Hampshire Hotel at the weekend. This comes after Nigeria coach Lars Lagerback rejected Hampshire Hotel as their base during the tournament. With the hotel issue sorted out, the NFF has also finalized the Super Eagles friendly matches scheduled for the United Kingdom and South Africa.

Japan abandons 2018 World Cup bid

The Japanese Football Association has pulled out of the bidding to host the 2018 World Cup - but remains in the running for the 2022 tournament. Japan's exit leaves England as one of six bidders looking to host either tournament, with Fifa to name the hosts for both in December. Australia, Russia, the United States, Belgium/Netherlands and Spain/Portugal are also in the hat for both.

Qatar and 2002 co-hosts South Korea are bidding solely for the 2022 event. Confirming Japan's decision to focus on trying to win the right to host the 2022 World Cup, JFA president Motoaki Inukai suggested that Fifa is keen for the 2018 tournament to be held in Europe. Bidders must submit their final 'bid books' on 14 May ahead of Fifa inspections in August and September.

Business news

Increase in fuel prices yet to affected Eldoret town.

Most of the fuel stations in Eldoret have not increasing the prices. Some of the stations that our reporter visited early today said they will do so in a weeks time after they have clearing the

existing fuel stock. Fuel attendants from Caltex, National oil, and Kobil petrol stations in Eldoret told Fish FM that their prices currently remain the same. The present price for unleaded premium is 87 shillings .90 cents in almost all fuel stations with unleaded regular registering a slight difference in the price with Caltex selling it at 86 shillings and 90cents while Kobil selling at 87shillings and 40 cents.

Meanwhile, some of the matatu operators in Eldoret told fish fm news desk that the hike in Fuel prices will force review the traveling fee that they are charging passengers.

Kenya shilling eases versus dollar

The Kenyan shilling eased slightly against the dollar Tuesday taking its cue from other major currencies like the euro that have also weakened against the U.S. currency. Commercial banks quoted the shilling at 77.30/40 to the dollar, compared with 77.15/25 on Monday's close.

Traders said they expected the shilling to trade in the 77.00-77.50 range in coming days.

Traders said the market was otherwise quiet, with central banks staying away from buying dollars.

Inflation rate eases

The inflation rate in the country eased to 3.7 per cent last month from a double digit of 19.5 per cent in November last year. This is as a result of a government move revising the method it uses to compute inflation rates to match international best practice. The government now uses the geometric mean instead of the arithmetic average. The move was expected to improve the investment climate and spur consumer spending as the cost of living dropped.

However the progress, could be nipped in the bud as oil marketers drive their prices upwards.

The government had hopped that changing the method used in computing inflation figures in the country and increasing its coverage of the Consumer Price Index - CPI to cover all the eight provinces would bring down inflationary pressure. However the increase in fuel will only serve to compound the fluid situation.