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House overturns President's memo on county cash

In an unprecedented move, the Senate votes to overturn President William Ruto's Memorandum on County Allocation of Revenue Bill that sought to reduce the total allocation to counties by Sh20 billion.



Senator Boni Khalwale and Senator Eddy Oketch in a past meeting of the Finance and Budget Committee.



Senator Enock Wambua



Senator Ali Roba, the chairman of Finance Committee.

The Senate last week made history after Members rallied each other to defeat the President William Ruto Memorandum on the County Allocation of Revenue Bill, 2024.

The President had refused to assent to the Bill in the wake of the national protests early in the year that led to the withdrawal of the Finance Bill, 2024.

However, a total of 35 Senators rallied each and rejected the memorandum and instead voted to allocate counties Sh387 billion instead of the Sh380 billion the President had proposed.

"We have unanimously defeated the President's desire. The President had wanted counties to receive Sh380 billion and the Senate decided to defeat the President by making sure that the money is increased to Sh387 billion," said Majority Whip Boni Khalwale during the debate on the Presidential memorandum.

"We are sending a clear message to

those people who have been peddling lies that Parliament has been captured by the Executive. That it is not true. If we had been captured, we would not have moved to defeat the Presidential Memorandum. Since defeating the Presidential Memorandum requires a whopping 32 delegations, it shows the collective resolve of this House is to make sure that devolution succeeds."

All the 35 Senators in the House voted for the motion, offering a fleeting reprieve to counties that have struggled to deliver key services in light of unpredictable cash disbursement by the National Treasury.

This is the first time in the history of Kenya's Parliamentary democracy that Members of Parliament have overturned a Presidential memorandum on a Bill.

President William Ruto had last July refused to assent to the Bill and returned it to the House instead, with recommendations that total County equitable share

should be reduced to Sh380 billion, from the Sh400.1 billion that had been allocated to counties when the House first considered the Division of Revenue Act, 2024, which has since been amended.

After mediation with the National Assembly, Senators settled on Sh387 billion as agreed in the mediated version of the Division of Revenue (Amendment) Bill, 2024, which was also passed in both Houses last week.

Senator Ali Roba, the chairman of the Committee on Finance and Budget, says with the increase of the county equitable share to Sh387 billion, the Senate could not accommodate the President Ruto's recommendation of Sh380 billion, which necessitated overturning the memo.

He told the House that it was necessary to overturn the memo because of the Sh387 billion agreed during the mediation necessitated the changes.

Senator Samson Cherarkey supported

the amendment because it had increased allocation to counties through equitable shareable revenue by more than Sh2 billion.

"The counties received Sh385 in the 2023/24 financial year so we have added almost Sh2 billion to counties in this financial year," said Senator Cherarkey.

Deputy Minority Leader Enock Wambua said he fully supported the Mediation Committee of the Senate and the National Assembly that the figure be settled at Sh387.4 billion.

"The truth of the matter is that we are being called upon to defeat the Presidential Memorandum that has reduced the allocation to counties from Sh400 billion to Sh380 billion.

Senator Eddy Oketch urged the House not only to pass and support the increase of the funds to counties, but the fight must continue to the extent that fire is put in the bottom of the governors to make sure that the money goes back

to the villages.

Senator Sheikh Abbas said there is nothing to celebrate because constitutionally, the counties are supposed to get more than 15 per cent of the revenue collected nationally.

“I do not think this is even 15 per cent. It is less. This is the third time we have been allocating since this devolution started. We are now almost 15 years in and the money is still getting reduced by the day or by the year instead of increasing. Constitutionally, we must adhere to and follow the Constitution.”

Senator Richard Onyonka urged the Executive to devolve county functions still being held by the national Government and follow it with resources to make those functions operational.

He regretted that two and a half years since the President’s promise it had not happened and called on the Presidency to devolve the functions which must be devolved.

The House also approved the County Governments’ (Equitable Share) Cash Disbursement Schedule for the 2024/25 financial year.

The Schedule will take effect upon assent of the County Allocation of Revenue Bill, 2024.

The Schedule is a document that is intended for purposes of predictable cash flow to county governments. It indicates the amount each county is expected to receive on the 15th of every month as the National Treasury disburses funds allocated to County Governments in this financial year.

While moving debate on adoption of the Schedule, Senator Roba said the National Treasury has not conformed with

requirements that disbursement of cash be done by the 15th of every month to enable county governments to function.

“Since this document will facilitate the flow of cash in a predictable manner to our county government, we encourage the National Treasury to make sure that they comply with the schedule which they prepared,” he said.

Senators say county equitable share allocation will never reduce



Senator Edwin Sifuna stresses a point during the Mediation Committee meeting on Division of Revenue (Amendment) Bill, 2024. He is flanked by Senator Ali Roba (left) and Senator Eddy Oketch.

Counties will never receive equitable share that is less than what they received in the preceding financial year, this is one of the guarantees the Senate took away from the mediation of the Division of Revenue (Amendment) Bill, 2024.

The second guarantee is that because of inflationary trends and other things like the growth in annual wages, there always has to be, year on year, an increment in the allocation to counties, even if marginal, in exceptional years when, like 2024, there will be no Finance Act in place.

The third guarantee is that county governments will never bear any

shortfalls in revenue collected nationally, since the national Government has more headroom in budgeting.

“We convinced the Members of the National Assembly that these are very important principles,” said Senator Edwin Sifuna when contributing to debate on the mediated version of the Bill.

“It is the National Treasury that comes up with the estimates. County governments have absolutely no role. It is for the National Treasury to make sure that if they project revenues and there are shortfalls, that burden cannot be borne by county governments.”

In the new allocation contained in

the Bill, counties have been allocated Sh387.4 in equitable share for the 2024/25 financial year. The National Government equitable share will be Sh2.2 trillion, while Sh8 billion has been allocated to the Equalisation Fund.

In the case of the Fund, Sh7.8 billion is the 0.5 per cent threshold provided for in the constitution while Sh147 million is the contribution of arrears to the fund.

“I want the House to view the outcome of the mediation as the Senate saving Sh7 billion for devolution and not losing Sh13 billion.”

He was referring to the decision to settle on Sh387 billion from the Sh400.1 billion that had been agreed earlier in the

year and assented to by the President

The Division of Revenue (Amendment) Bill, 2024 had proposed that the two levels of government should share the burden in the event of revenue shortfall.

Senators on the Mediation Committee successfully pushed for the removal of the requirement and the clause was deleted in its entirety. This implies that the section where there will be a shortfall within the revenues in the financial year 2024/2025 was to be shared between the two levels of government and the capping of what was to be borne by the county governments at 15 per cent was dropped.

Drop in County Equitable Share as House enacts Bill



Senate in session



Senator Ledama ole Kina and Senator Mariam Omar



Members of the Committee on Finance: From left, Senator Shakilla Abdalla, Senator Eddy Oketch, Senator Mohamed Faki and Senator Boni Khalwale

Nairobi City County will receive Sh19.7 billion as equitable share in the 2024/25 financial year. Although this is the highest allocation of the Sh387 billion to be shared among the devolved units, it is a marginal drop from what the county received in the last financial year.

Nairobi received Sh20.02 billion, in the 2023/24 financial year, the highest ever allocation to a devolved entity since the advent of devolution 10 years ago.

The figure could have been lower if the Senate had not put its foot down to overturn President William Ruto's memorandum on the County Allocation of Revenue Bill, 2024.

Trans Nzoia County, got Sh7.5 billion in 2023/24 financial year, in the President's memorandum, the figure had slipped to Sh7.4 billion 89511 billion. Through the intervention of the Senate, Trans Nzoia will now get Sh7.54 billion which is slightly higher than what the President had recommended.

Same is the case for Busia, which received Sh7.475 billion in the last financial year. In the President's memorandum

there was going to be a reduction to Sh7.368 billion. However, the Senate stood its ground and ensured it received Sh7.514 billion.

In 2023/24 financial year, Bungoma County got Sh11.11 billion. The Presidential memorandum reduced the figure to Sh10.952 billion, but ended up getting Sh11.170 billion.

The original Bill, which the President refused to sign into law proposed Sh400 billion which the counties were to share.

The figure was revised downward to Sh380 billion by the President after the rejection of the Finance Bill 2024, before the National Assembly and Senate reached a consensus at Sh387 billion.

"I wish we were sending Sh400 billion to counties, but it is what it is. We got Sh387 billion, which is Sh7 billion more than the Sh380 billion that the President proposed. It is less by Sh13 billion of what we proposed but as it is, we have to send the money," Senator Ledama ole Kina observed.

The County Allocation of Revenue Bill, 2024, which was passed by the

House just before it adjourned for the long recess, shares out the Sh387 billion which has been allocated to counties as equitable share in this financial year.

Out of the Sh387 billion, there is Sh158.25 billion that has been ring fenced as an allocation ratio. This amount is shared out among all the 47 counties. The difference of Sh229 billion is shared among county governments using the third basis of revenue sharing formula.

The formula contains eight variables: population index, health index, agriculture index, urban index, poverty index, land area index, roads index and basic share index.

Nakuru County will receive Sh13.3 billion in this financial year, down from the Sh13.5 billion it received in 2024/25 financial year.

Kakamega share has gone to Sh12.7 billion from the Sh12.9 it received in the last financial year. Kiambu will receive Sh12 billion, down from the Sh12.2 billion it received in 2023/24, Kilifi has

been allocated Sh11.9 billion compared to the Sh12.1 billion it received last year while Mandera has dropped from Sh11.6 billion to Sh11.4 billion while Bungoma will receive Sh10.9 billion down from Sh11.1 billion.

Moving the Bill, Senator Ali Roba, said the decision to allocate the funds to counties was necessitated by the Presidential Memorandum containing recommendations to reduce allocation due to counties to Sh380 billion.

Senator David Wafula said the increment is not meant for entertainment or travelling but to deliver critical services to the people.

"As we push for an increment in resources, accountability and transparency, we also have to push for public participation to ensure the people of Kenya get value for their money," said Senator Wafula.

The Bill also contains budget ceilings for both the county assembly and executive for the 2024/25 financial year.

County Attorney Bill on the floor



Senator David Wakoli

A Bill which seeks to enhance the experience required for appointment to the Office of County Attorney has been introduced in the House. The County Attorney (Amendment)

Bill, 2024, went through the First reading on Tuesday and, if enacted, means that it will require one to have ten years' experience as an advocate of the High Court to qualify for appointment as a County Attorney.

Senator David Wakoli, who is the sponsor of the Bill, also want the tenure of office of a County Attorney to be tied to that of a Governor

"The County Attorney is charged with advising the county government on legal matters and therefore the qualification needs to be tightened. It is imperative to have more experience that relates to the responsibilities bestowed on that office," says Senator Wakoli in the Bill's Memorandum of objects.

The Office of the County Attorney Act requires the holder of the office to have five years' experience as an advocate of the High Court to qualify for appointment as a county attorney and county solicitor.

The Bill proposes to amend section 6 (1) of the County Attorney Act so that for one to be appointed as County Attorney must have 10 years' experience in legal practice.

The Bill further amends Section 17 (2) so that for one to be appointed as County solicitor, such a person should serve for 10 years instead of five.

The County Attorney is the principal legal adviser to the county government. The holder has the status and rank of a

member of the county executive committee, attends the meetings of the county executive committee as an ex-officio member of the executive committee.

The Act further obligates the holder to, on the instructions of the county government, represent the county executive in court or in any other legal proceedings to which the county executive is a party, other than criminal proceedings, advise departments in the county executive on legislative and other legal matters and negotiate, draft, vet and interpret documents and agreements for and on behalf of the county executive and its agencies.

Senator Asige and Senator Githuku seek answers on issues of concern



Senator Crystal Asige



Senator Joseph Githuku

Senator Joseph Githuku wants the Committee on Health to investigate claims of non-availability of essential medicine in hospitals in Lamu County.

The legislator says that despite the county government having allocated Sh23 million for pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical supplies to hospitals and healthcare facilitated during the financial year 2023-2024, essential medicine remains a challenge to the local residents.

"The Committee should provide a detailed breakdown of how the seed amount was spent, including documentation on the specific categories of the supplies purchased and the quantities involved," says the Senator in his request for a statement.

He wants the Committee, which is chaired by Senator Jackson Mandago, to explain whether the procurement process complied with the requirement of the Public Procurement and Disposal Act and provide details about the awarded supplies, including the terms and conditions of these contracts.

He also wants the Committee to outline the measures the county government has put in place to ensure that the procured supplies actually reach the hospitals and healthcare facilities that are appropriately applied for the intended purposes, in explaining any mechanisms in place to track the delivery and distribution of pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical supplies to the hospitals.

Senator Crystal Asige is concerned about the plight of Rachel Nasimiya Barasa who has had to endure indirect discrimination.

Rachel, a 21-year-old student with Down Syndrome, was denied the opportunity to sit for her Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examinations (KCSE) by Siaka Mixed Secondary School in Bungoma County.

Her father, Mr Abraham Barraza, took the necessary steps to ensure that the school was aware of her special needs, enrolling her in Siaka Mixed Secondary School with the understanding that she would be given the necessary support.

Despite the initial agreement, Rachel faced mistreatment throughout the term,

and subsequently, her registration for the KCSE exams was overlooked.

The lawmaker now wants the Committee on Education to explain why Rachel was unjustly denied the opportunity to sit for her KCSE exams, despite her father informing the school of her special needs, requesting the school support and making efforts to ensure that she received the necessary accommodation and support.

She wants the committee to investigate claims that Rachel faced mistreatment, including harsh treatment from teachers and, ultimately, the failure by the school to register her for the KCSE exams, with a special focus on any reported instances of ill-treatment or discrimination due to her disability.

"The Committee should outline actions taken to address issues and state measures the Ministry of Education intends to put in place to help Rachel and her family recover from this emotional and psychological devastation resulting from the impact of the school's action, a situation that exemplifies indirect discrimination and a violation of Rachel's fundamental rights to education."

The Senator wants the actions of the school administration in the matter examined, focusing on whether Siaka Secondary School made any formal communication to Rachel, her father, or any other guardian regarding the decision not to register her for the KCSE exams, and if so, when, how, and what reasons were given for her exclusion. Whether the county director of education was involved in the decision, what role they played, how they were informed of the issue, and any steps taken to investigate and resolve the matter.

"How does the school ensure equal access for all students and do they provide any alternatives or accommodations to ensure that Rachel has equal access to education and the KCSE exams?"

She wants the committee to explain how they intend to rectify Rachel's situation and state how the county director ensures all schools under the jurisdiction comply with the laws regarding disability inclusion in education and exams, providing any steps to prevent such incidents in the future from occurring.

Seneta Onyonka azua maswali kuhusu utekelezaji wa CBC



Seneta Onyonka

Huku utekelezaji wa mfumo wa elimu wa CBC ukiendelea kuzua maoni mseto nchini, Seneta Richard Onyonka ametaka Bunge la Seneti kupewa taarifa ya kina kuhusu utekelezaji huo.

Seneta Onyonka amewasilisha ombi akiitaka Kamati ya Elimu kufanya uchunguzi na kuwasilisha ripoti kuhusu utekelezaji wa mfumo wa CBC.

“Mfumo wa CBC ulianzishwa ili kuwapa wanafunzi ujuzi wa kivitendo kwa karne ya 21. Hata hivyo, utekelezaji wake umebaini changamoto kubwa ambazo zimezidisha ukosefu wa usawa kwenye mfumo wa elimu katika nchi yetu. Shule za mijini, zenye rasilimali nyingi ikilinganishwa na za vijijini na wale wasiojiweza, imefanya kuwa ngumu kusawazisha elimu katika nchi yetu,” alifichua Seneta Onyoka.

Aliongeza, “Lengo la CBC ni kwenye miradi, kujifunza kwa vitendo kuhusu masomo ya msingi pamoja matatizo ya kifedha kwa wazazi wa familia hizi za kipato cha chini na shule nyingi kwa kawaida hazina rasilimali, hali hii imewaacha wanafunzi wengi wakiwa hawajajiandaa kwa ajili ya ushindani wa kimataifa na imeongeza tofauti za kielimu ndani ya jamii zetu.”

Kwenye ombi hilo, Seneta Onyonka anaitaka Kamati ya Elimu kuweka wazi hatua zinazochukuliwa na Wizara kukabiliana na tofauti ya rasilimali kati ya shule zote za mijini na zile za vijijini na watu wasiojiweza kando na kutathmini upya mfumo wa CBC na kupendekeza hatua za kuhakikisha kwamba mfumo mpya unaleta uwiano kati ya ukuzaji uwezo na upataji ujuzi muhimu wa kivitendo na kitaaluma.

Kamati katika matokeo yake

inatakiwa kueleza hatua zozote zilizopo kuwasaidia wazazi, hasa wale wanaotoka katika hali ya kipato cha chini ambao wanakabiliwa na matatizo makubwa ya kifedha kutokana na kuongezeka kwa mahitaji ya miradi ya darasa na vifaa vya kujifunza chini ya CBC.

“Kamati inapaswa kufanya kampeni ya uhamasishaji ili kuwafahamisha wadau wote wakiwemo wazazi, walimu na wanafunzi kuhusu mfumo wa CBC ikitathmini mahitaji na rasilimali muhimu ili kuhakikisha kuwa mfumo huu unatekelezwa kwa ufanisi ili watoto wetu waweze kupata fursa sawa ya elimu,” alikariri Seneta Onyonka.

Aidha Seneta huyo anaitaka Kamati hiyo inayoongozwa na Seneta Joe Nyutu kutoa ratiba za wazi za uwekezaji katika miundomsingi na kuweka wazi muda na nyakati za kutosha za masomo kwa shule za umma, haswa zile zilizo katika maeneo duni na kutoka kwa watu maskini ili kuhakikisha kwamba wanafunzi wote nchini wanapata fursa sawa ya kufaulu chini ya mfumo huo mpya wa elimu.

Maseneta waliochangia kwenye ombi la Seneta Onyonka akiwemo Seneta Edwin Sifuna waliunga mkono kwa dhati ombi hilo wakisisitiza umuhimu wa serikali hususan Wizara ya Elimu kuweka wazi kwa kina juhudi zinazofanywa kulainisha elimu nchini.

“Sio kuhusu madarasa au walimu. Ni masuala haya yaliyoorodheshwa hapa. Ninatumai kuwa tunaweza kuwaalika wanachama wa mamlaka kuu ya serikali wakati Kamati ya Elimu itakapokuwa inalishughulikia ombi la Kauli la Seneta Onyonka,” alisema Seneta Sifuna.

Kwa upande wake Seneta Wafula Wakoli alielezea kusikitika kwake na hali ilivyo kwenye Sekta ya Elimu akielekeza kidole cha lawama kwa wizara ya Elimu kwa kushindwa kuweka mikakati kabambe kulainisha elimu.

Alisema kama mwalimu anahuzunishwa pakubwa na jinsi masuala yanayohusu elimu yanavyoendeshwa nchini akitoa wito kwa Maseneta wenzake na wadau mbali mbali wa elimu kujitokeza kikamilifu kurekebisha hali.

“Nataka nikubaliane na Seneta Onyonka kuwa kama mwalimu kitaaluma, mfumo unaotekelezwa una tatizo kubwa. Kuna mapungufu makubwa kulingana na utekelezaji wa sera, mfumo wenyewe, mafunzo ya walimu na mpango wa ufadhili wa elimu. Ikiwa hatutaingia kwenye pengo sasa, kizazi chetu kizima kitalegea gizani na tutahukumiwa na yale tunayoyazalisha katika siku za halafu,” alikariri Seneta Wakoli.

Seneta Chute ataka majibu kuhusu malimbikizi ya madeni



Seneta Mohamed Chute and Seneta Mwenda Gataya Mo Fire.

Suala la malimbikizi ya madeni kwenye serikali za Kaunti limezidi kuzua hisia mbali mbali huku wito ukitolewa kwa hatua muafaka kuchukuliwa ili kuliangazia tatizo hilo.

Hali hiyo imesababisha Seneta Mohamed Chute kuwasilisha ombi la kauli Bungeni akitaka majibu kuhusu malimbikizi ya madeni.

“Naomba taarifa kutoka kwa Kamati ya Fedha na Bajeti kuhusu shughuli za

kisheria na za bajeti za Bunge la Kaunti ya Marsabit,” aliuliza Seneta Chute.

Katika taarifa hiyo, Seneta Chute anaitaka Kamati hiyo ilifahamisha Bunge la Seneti kuhusu madeni ambayo yamelipwa kufikia sasa na yale ambayo bado kwenye Bunge la Kaunti ya Marsabit katika Mwaka wa Kifedha wa 2013/2014 hadi sasa ikiweka wazi sababu za kucheleweshwa kulipwa kwa madeni hayo.

Kadhalika Kamati hiyo inahitajika kuwasilisha ripoti kutoka kwa Kamati iliyobuniwa na Gavana kutathmini malimbikizi ya madeni na kulinganisha na matokeo ya Bunge la Kaunti ya Marsabit kufuatia kuangaziwa kwa ripoti ya Mkaguzi Mkuu wa Hesabu za fedha kuhusu suala hilo mbali na kufafanua tofauti zozote zilizopo.

Kiongozi huyo aidha anaitaka Kamati hiyo kuipa Seneti taarifa kuhusu mgao wa

bajeti ulioidhinishwa na Bunge la Kaunti ya Marsabit, ikibainisha miradi muhimu na maeneo ya matumizi yaliyoainishwa kati ya Mwaka wa Fedha wa 2013/2014 hadi sasa, pamoja na bajeti zozote za ziada ambazo zimeidhinishwa katika muda uo huo.

Kadhalika Seneta huyo ameiomba Kamati hiyo inayoongozwa na Seneta wa Kaunti ya Mandera Ali Roba kuwasilisha kwenye Seneti orodha ya wasambazaji na wakandarasi wanaohusika kwenye utekelezaji wa miradi iliyoidhinishwa pamoja na ufafanuzi wa aina ya kazi, thamani ya mkataba mbali na kunainisha wale ambao wamelipwa kwa ukamilifu kufikia sasa na wale ambao malipo bado yanasubiri.

Kwa muda sasa kumeshuhudiwa na lalama nyingi kutoka kwa wakandarasi na wasambazi wa bidhaa na huduma hususan kwenye serikali za Kaunti kuhusu kutolipwa kwa fedha licha ya kufanya kazi au kuwasilisha bidhaa.

Licha ya shinikizo kutoka kwa Maseneta taarifa zinaarifu kuwa bado kuna malimbizi ya madeni ambayo serikali za Kaunti zinadaiwa changamoto inayodaiwa kuwafifisha pakubwa wakandarasi huku wengine wakilazimika kuporomoka.

Eliminate barriers that hinder women advancement – Senator Lemaletian



Senator Hezena Lemaletian

Senator Hezena Lemaletian has called on national leaders to take actions that will remove barriers hindering women's advancement so as to create a future where leadership reflects the diversity of the Kenyan society.

The lawmaker, in particular, called on Senators and leaders to support such actions with determination and urgency.

"We must ensure that women are empowered not only on the ballot, but

also within the corridors of power," she told the House.

"Gender equality in leadership is not just a matter of justice, it is essential for the long-term prosperity and sustainable development of our nation and continent."

Senator Lemaletian made the call when rose to make a statement on a matter of general topical concern – the African Women Audacity Conference, which was held in Kenya from October 28 to November 13, 2024.

The event brought together a diverse group of both seasoned and emerging female leaders from across Africa, alongside male champions of gender equality.

The conference served as a crucial platform for discussing the pressing need for increased female presentation in leadership roles across all spheres of governance, from politics to the private sector and civil society.

"The choice of Kenya as the host country is a testament to the significant strides our nation has made in advancing

women's leadership, she told the House, adding that Kenya has demonstrated a parallel commitment to gender parity.

She cited Chief Justice Martha Koome, Deputy Chief Justice Philomena Mwilu, Chief Registrar Winfrida Boyani Mokaya and Attorney General Dorcas Oduor as Kenya's notable female leaders in top leadership positions within the judicial and legal frameworks.

"Their leadership reinforces that gender equality in governance is not merely an aspiration, but a tangible reality that Kenya continues to actively pursue.

The conference featured several distinguished speakers, including Ambassador Gertrude Mongella of Tanzania and Dr Louisa Akaiso, the founder of Women Win Africa, who co-hosted the event with Senator Lemaletian.

Also present was Aya Chebbi, the Great Tunisian Pan-African.

"These distinguished leaders shared invaluable insights on the challenges that women face in leadership roles,

emphasising the urgent need for greater female representation at all levels of decision-making."

The Senator told the House that the conference was not just a platform for dialogue; it was a call to action. A key outcome was the recognition of the critical need for more women on the ballot.

"Female under-representation in elected positions remains a crucial barrier to the achievement of gender parity in governance," she said, adding the Women at the Ballot campaign was launched as an initiative to equip women with the necessary resources, tools and support to run for office, win, and lead effectively."

The conference also emphasised the need for increased female participation in appointive positions. Despite progress, women remain under-represented in key decision-making roles, which limits their ability to achieve truly inclusive governance.

Gender based violence is a collective responsibility, says Senator Kibwana



Senator Hamida Kibwana

Senator Hamida Kibwana has said the Global 16 days of activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) are a reminder that the fight against gender-based violence is a collective responsibility.

She observed that it is imperative for the Senate to take the lead in addressing GBV and TFGBV by enacting robust policies, allocating sufficient resources and championing the rights of women and girls.

"I urge my colleagues and stakeholders across the country to renew their commitment to ending all forms

of violence against women and girls so that Kenya becomes a safer and more equitable society for all," she said, in a statement read on her behalf by Senator Tabitha Mutinda.

The global observations of the 16 days of activism against GBV, which commenced on November 25, 2024, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and will culminate on December 10, 2024, International Human Rights Day.

Senator Kibwana said the campaign calls for urgent action to end all forms of GBV, a persistent issue that continues to affect millions worldwide, including in Kenya.

"GBV is not only a gross violation of human rights but also a significant barrier to achieving gender equality, sustainable development, and the protection of vulnerable populations," said Senator Kibwana.

The prevalence of gender-based violence in Kenya remains alarmingly high. According to the Kenya Demographic and Health Surveys 2022, over 38 per cent of women aged between 15 years to 49 years reported experiencing physical and sexual violence in their lifetime.

"Alarmingly, we have witnessed an upsurge in femicide cases, with

the National Crime Research Centre reporting a 35 per cent increase in femicide cases in 2023 alone," she noted, adding that Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) is emerging as a significant threat.

A 2023 policy study reveals that one in every three women in Kenya has experienced online harassment or abuse. This includes cyberstalking, non-consequential sharing of intimate images, and online threats, disproportionately targeting young women.

She said the socio-economic and emotional toll of GBV, including TFGBV, cannot be overstated.

"Survivors do face profound physical and psychological trauma, and the violence exacerbates gender inequalities in education, employment, and public participation," she explained, adding that GBV also affects Kenya's economic growth.

The National Gender and Equality Commission estimates that GBV costs the economy billions annually in lost productivity and health care costs.

As the country observes the 16 days of activism, the lawmaker suggested there is need to work on the measures that will address gender-based violence in all forms.

The first is the strengthening legislative frameworks, enactment of comprehensive laws to address TFGBV, ensuring clear definitions and penalties for perpetrators.

"Amend the Computer Misuse of Cybercrimes Act to include specific protections for women against online abuse and harassment," she said.

She also wants the state to promote prevention education, integrate digital literacy programmes into the education system to equip young people, especially women and girls, with the skills to navigate the digital space safely.

Another proposal is to launch nationwide public awareness campaigns to highlight the dangers of GBV and TFGBV, with a focus on empowering communities to act against these injustices.

"Invest in survivor support systems and establish and fund more safe houses, counselling centres, and legal aid services for survivors," she proposed, adding that the state should partner with technology companies to enhance online reporting mechanisms and ensure swift removal of harmful content.

Improvement of law enforcement and accountability, training of police officers and prosecutors to handle GBV and TFGBV cases sensitively and effectively.

Senator Murungi wants bold action to save miraa crop



Senator Kathuri Murungi

A senator is seeking answers for the challenges that have characterised the frequent suspension of flights delivering miraa to the countries in the Horn of Africa.

Senator Kathuri Murungi says this has led to severe impact on miraa export.

The Senator, who is also the Deputy Speaker, said in a personal statement that there is need for the matter to get full attention because the challenges have been recurring.

“The sector continues to grapple with the poor prices, cartel-like tendencies leading to the extortion of farmers as well as adverse effects of the ban of flights delivering miraa from Kenya,”

said Senator Kathuri.

He termed the stalemate as a matter of regional and national concern, citing the persistent challenges facing the miraa sector, particularly the ongoing crisis in the Somali market and the broader implications for farmers and Kenya’s agricultural sector.

“This is an issue that continues to threaten the revenues of thousands of miraa farmers, many of whom rely on this crop as a primary source of income. The drastic price reduction is the latest symptom of a sector plagued by mismanagement, inadequate support and the unchecked influence of cartels who continue to profit from the exploitation of farmers.”

He added: “As a result, the economic future of these farmers is in jeopardy, with many unable to meet basic needs due to the collapse of miraa prices. The Federal Government of Somalia’s decision to suspend flights delivering miraa to the Horn of Africa country has had a severe impact on the market for this key export crop.”

He called for a comprehensive report detailing the causes of the recurring Kenya-Somalia diplomatic tensions, which have contributed to the suspen-

sion.

The report, he said, should also include the steps being taken to resolve the tensions in the long term to ensure that Kenyan farmers are not disproportionately affected by diplomatic disputes.

“We must address this issue, not just in the short term, but through a sustainable solution that will guarantee access to Somalia’s market, which remains one of the largest for miraa from Kenya. The cartels operating in the miraa sector have long been the source of frustration for farmers and traders alike,” he said.

He noted that the government must provide a clear statement on whether the State Department for Trade has undertaken any significant actions to dismantle cartels, including an assessment of the impact of the cartels on farmers’ incomes and the broader miraa value chain.

He further said there is need to understand the transparency of the monthly levies charged at the airport for miraa exports, indicating the exact beneficiaries and how they are contributing to the overall development of the miraa sector.

The Senator also wants to know whether the government is considering a firm response to the decision by Somalia

to ban flights, including the possibility of closing the Kenya-Somalia border to push back against the decision.

“This is a critical matter, not just for the miraa sector, but for bilateral relations between our two countries,” he said, adding that the government must outline the potential implications of such actions on both the miraa trade and the livelihoods of Kenyans, particularly those in the affected regions.

Over-reliance on the Somali market is exposing Kenyan farmers to significant risks. Senator Kathuri said there is a need to explore new markets and trade routes to ensure the long-term sustainability of the miraa sector.

“Miraa farmers are facing the dual threats of cartels and diplomatic disputes, both of which are pushing them to the brink, putting their livelihoods, communities and the entire miraa value chain at risk.”

“The time to act is now. We must ensure that our farmers are given the support and protection they need to thrive. My statement is about the livelihood of the Meru community and this is the only option I have to communicate to the affected people,” Senator Kathuri said.

CBC IMPLEMENTATION

Fix gaps in CBC implementation, Senators direct MoE



Senator Richard Onyonka (right) and Senator Okiiti Omtatah

Senators have questioned the implementation of the Competence-Based Curriculum (CBC), warning that there are gaps in policy implementation, the curriculum itself, the training of teachers and the funding of the programme.

The lawmakers further warn that there is need for quick intervention to fix the challenges, failure to which a whole generation is likely to “limp in the dark”.

“We will be judged by the product at the end of the system. As a teacher, it really pains me to be churning out half-baked students. They are not critical thinkers, they think in terms of regions and have no sense of reality in them,” said Senator David Wakoli while commenting on the

request by Senator Richard Onyonka on the state of the implementation of the curriculum.

Initiated by the Uhuru Kenyatta administration, CBC was introduced to equip learners with practical skills for the 21st century, but Senator Onyonka says its implementation has revealed significant challenges that have exacerbated inequalities in the education system.

“Urban schools are well-resourced compared to rural schools ones has made it impossible to equate learning. The CBC’s focus on projects, hands-on learning over core subjects combined with the financial strains on the parents of the low-income families and most of

the schools are usually under-resourced, has left many of the students unprepared for global competition and it has deepened the educational disparities within communities,” said Senator Onyonka while making the request for the statement.

In his request, the Senator wants the Committee on Education to explain the measures being taken by the Ministry of Education to address resource disparity between schools in affluent urban areas and those in the rural and disadvantaged areas, re-evaluate the CBC framework and recommend measures to ensure that the new curriculum strikes a balance between competency development and the acquisition of essential practical and

academic skills.

The Senator wants the Committee to outline any existing measures in place to support parents, especially those from the low-income backgrounds who face extreme financial strain due to the increasing demands for class projects and learning materials under the CBC.

He also wants the Ministry to conduct a robust awareness campaign to familiarise stakeholders, including parents, teachers and students, with the CBC requirements assessment and the necessary resources to ensure that the system is successfully implemented.

He also wants the Ministry to provide clear timelines for investment in infrastructure and provide an adequate learning period and times with materials for public schools, particularly those in the under-resourced areas and from the poor areas of our communities, so that we can then ensure that all the students in our country have equal opportunity to succeed under this new educational system.

Senator Edwin Sifuna supported the statement saying it demonstrates that Senator Onyonka understands the issues to do with CBC. “Challenges of CBC go beyond school infrastructure and issues of the teachers or the staffing of our classrooms.”

Committee concern about the financial state of Mandera health facilities



Mandera Governor Mohamed Adan Khalif before CPIC, and right, Senator Godfrey Osotsi, the chair of the committee, during the meeting.



The County Public Investments and Special Funds Committee has uncovered widespread financial irregularities across multiple medical facilities in Mandera county. This is after it scrutinised operations at the Mandera County Referral Hospital, Elwak Sub-County Referral Hospital, Mandera North Sub County Level Hospital and Lafey Sub-County Level 4 Hospital.

The Auditor General's reports, spanning from 2021 through 2023, paint a troubling picture of systematic financial mismanagement and governance failures. Most notably, the institutions have consistently failed to maintain

transparent records of their assets and liabilities, with significant gaps in the documentation of property, equipment, and inventory valuations.

Most concerning is the pattern of unsupported expenditures discovered across these facilities. The audit revealed numerous financial transactions lacking proper documentation, raising red flags about procurement practices and financial oversight. This opacity in spending has made it virtually impossible to verify the legitimacy of numerous transactions.

The investigation also exposed an absence of fundamental operational

frameworks. Many of the healthcare facilities operate without approved budgets, risk management strategies, or disaster recovery protocols.

The absence of functional management boards has further compromised their governance structures, leaving critical oversight mechanisms dormant. The facilities have repeatedly failed to fulfil their statutory obligations, with consistent delays in remitting essential deductions for employee benefits, including National Social Security Fund and National Hospital Insurance Fund contributions.

Senator Godfrey Osotsi, the chair of the

Committee, expressed disappointment at the findings.

"The repetitive nature of these financial irregularities points to deeply entrenched systemic weaknesses in Mandera County's financial management and internal control mechanisms," he noted during the committee proceedings.

In their defense, facility administrators cited the unique challenges of operating in Mandera's remote setting, including persistent security concerns and their dependence on the County Executive for both funding and procurement processes. While they outlined ongoing remedial measures, the Auditor-General maintained that the financial accuracy of these institutions remains unverifiable, with significant compliance issues yet to be addressed.

As the committee continues its investigation, these findings underscore the urgent need for comprehensive reforms in Mandera County's healthcare financial management systems.

The ongoing probe promises to yield recommendations aimed at strengthening fiscal accountability and operational efficiency across these vital public institutions.

This Week in History

House debates motion on distribution of teachers in public schools



Senator George Khaniri

On December 14, 2017, the House debated the Motion which compelled the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology through the Teachers Service Commission to conduct a countrywide audit on the distribution of teachers in all public schools across the Country and report to the Senate within three months.

The Motion was sponsored by Senator George Khaniri who argued there is major inequality in the distribution and allocation of teachers among schools across the country leading to either over-supply or undersupply of teachers in some public schools;

"There are cases in the rural counties that we represent where the ratio of teacher to pupil is just pathetic and unbelievable," he told the House, adding that he had gone to a school where there were 102 pupils against one teacher in a classroom. "When you come to urban areas where everybody wants to be, the recommended ratio of teacher to pupil is 40 to one. However, there are public schools in these urban areas where the ratio is 25 to one. How do we expect these 102 children who are being attended to by one teacher to compete fairly with 25 pupils who have the privilege of being attended to by one teacher? There can be no competition. That explains why some of our rural schools have not been performing well in the national examinations."



Senator Samuel Poghiso said:

"This is quite emotional and emotive. Part of the injustices that need to be addressed in this country is the issue of equitable distribution of teachers in our primary schools. Since 1988, I have been representing the people of West Pokot in one way or another, except for, let us say, a year when I was expelled from the party and another time in 2013 when I lost the Senate seat. I have been in leadership in that county. I come from a place where most of the schools are in that category where the TSC will send only one teacher. Only the head teacher is employed by the TSC and the rest are employed by the parents. In Kasei Ward in my County, for example, one child in the recent Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) scored over 400 marks. The village did not even understand that and so, there was no celebration. The young man was just going about his business."



Senator Alice Milgo

"I support the fact that we are not only going to audit the number of teachers, but also the other facilities. As things stand right now, the Government is talking about building more classrooms and adding more facilities. That means there will be an influx of students. You will realise that many debates have gone on around the world about the issue of whether to have robots teaching, virtual learning or in this case, the use of other modes of teaching away from the teacher. However, nothing else can replace the human resource factor. That is why, right here, we are saying that when we talk about the issue of the teachers and distribution, it is itself an uphill task."



Senator Sam Ongeri

"If you look at the pronouncements of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology this time around, the transition rate as per the year 2017 going to 2018 is going to be 100 per cent. Look at the background at which this transition rate is being done. When you look at the rural public schools, the infrastructure element is one of the wanting elements that is so critical to a conducive environment for good education. Even if a teacher is willing to go to that school, the first thing they would want to know is the environment of infrastructure. Do I have an accommodation and good school? The majority of these public schools are mud schools. That is why it was specific at that moment."

Calls for integration as 14th EAC Interparliamentary games get underway in Mombasa



President Ruto leads participants in a procession from Mombasa Governor's office to the Mama Ngina Drive before the opening ceremony of the games.

President William Ruto has singled out sports as one of the strongest unifying force for the East African regional integration as the 14th East African Community (EAC) Inter-Parliamentary Sports Tournament commenced in style at the scenic Mama Ngina Waterfront in Mombasa county.

"Let us deepen, widen, tighten and strengthen the bonds of friendship among the people of the East African Community. If African trade is to be a reality, what

we do here must inspire the African Union," said the President during the opening ceremony of the event.

The opening ceremony of the event, which brings together legislators from Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, DR Congo, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), was characterised by calls deepen regional integration.

Speaker Amason Kingi echoed President Ruto's sentiments even as he paid



Speaker Amason Kingi delivers his speech during the official opening ceremony of the EAC interparliamentary games.

tribute to the visionaries who founded the EAC in 1963.

"We must remember and commend the late Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere and Milton Obote for planting the seeds of this dream," said Speaker Kingi, "It is our duty as leaders and citizens to ensure their dream of unity becomes a reality."

Speaker Moses Wetangula said the tournament is important in fostering unity over competition. "These games are

not about trophies but building friendships and strengthening bonds," said Speaker Wetang'ula.

EALA Speaker Joseph Ntakirutimana praised Kenya's Parliament and President Ruto for hosting the event, urging participants to promote unity. "These games are about coming together as one body, one community, and one family," he said.

The opening ceremony included a symbolic 2.3-kilometre procession led by President Ruto, alongside regional Speakers, from Treasury Square to the venue. Mombasa Governor Abdulswamad Nassir welcomed participants, expressing pride in hosting the tournament and showcasing the city's hospitality.

The games, running until December 18, feature disciplines such as football, netball, volleyball, athletics and basketball. With an action-packed schedule, the tournament aims to go beyond medals, embodying the spirit of an East African family united through sports.

Reflecting on the EAC's progress, Uganda's Speaker Anita Among urged the region to evaluate achievements since its re-establishment 25 years ago. She, alongside Speaker Wetang'ula, advocated for the Bureau of Speakers to be formally recognized as an EAC organ to enhance legislative coordination.



Senator Mohamed Faki displays his dribbling skills during the match between Kenya and Uganda parliaments.



Senator Aaron Cheruiyot in action.



Senator Allan Chesang dances with the ball past a Ugandan defender.



Senator Eddy Oketch plots how to penetrate the Ugandan defence.



Senator Mandago (5th from left) and his teammates in Parliament of Kenya volleyball team celebrate after beating Uganda 3 sets by 2 sets



1. Members of the Select Committee on Procedure and Rules of the County Assembly of Kisumu during their benchmarking tour of the Senate.
2. A delegation from UNITE and Unitaaid follow proceedings at the Senate Chamber when they toured Parliament Buildings.
3. Speaker Amason Kingi (third left), Senator Ledama ole Kina (left) and Senator Eddy Oketch (third right) follow proceedings during the East Africa Legal Society Annual General meeting in Kampala, Uganda.
4. Speaker Amason Kingi, Senator Ledama ole Kina (left), Senator Eddy Oketch (second right) and Senator Karen Nyamu (right) after a meeting with President Yoweri Museveni at State House, Entebbe. The Speaker was representing

- President William Ruto at the annual Ateker Reunion Festival.
5. Senator Wahome Wamatinga with members of his family after he was sworn in as Commissioner of PSC.
6. Senator Wahome Wamatinga (seated left), the newly appointed Member of the Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC), in a group photo with the Members of the Commission led by Speaker Moses Wetangula, (centre) who is the chairman. Others are Hon Mishi Mboko (seated right), Mr Samuel Njoroge, the Clerk of the National Assembly (standing left) Hon Mohamed Ali, Hon Patrick Makau and Mr Mohamed Ali, Deputy Clerk, Senate, who represented the Clerk of the Senate, Mr Jeremiah Nyegenye.



7. Senator Wahome Wamatinga and Hon Moses Wetangula, the chair of PSC, after the Senator was sworn into office as Commissioner.
8. Senator Wamatinga appends his signature to the oath of office after he was sworn into office as Commissioner.
9. Senator Wamatinga takes oath of Office as a PSC member looked on by Hon Moses Wetangula, PSC chair, and Mr Mohamed Ali, Deputy Speaker, Senate.



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