

Mount Kenya Crisis

Recently, Mt Kenya politicians met the head of state at Sagana State Lodge, where they raised various issues affecting their people.

The head of state curtly told them off, and banned them from discussing these matters in public, including in parliament.

Some of the issues the politicians raised affect the whole country, but most affect Mt Kenya people the most.

Education

In every county in Kenya, most residents are poor.

Due to historical reasons and other factors, some counties, on average, have a higher percentage of very poor people.

Because of the imbalance in levels of development, counties are funded, taking into consideration this factor, and also poverty levels.

This is commendable.

However, while narrowing the gap between 'rich' counties and marginalised counties, there should be fairness and reasonableness.

If a needy student in Mt Kenya gets sh5k bursary, while one from marginalised county receives sh12k, that is fair.

But when a needy student in Mt Kenya gets sh500 bursary, while one from marginalised county receives sh50k, that is not only unfair, but pure discrimination against the Mount Kenya needy student.

What is happening in county allocations cannot be allowed to go unchallenged.

And to make matters even worse, now that university fees have been increased by a huge margin, many Mt Kenya students who come from poor families, will have to forfeit higher education.

The issue of county allocations/bursary funding is so important that it needs to be addressed urgently.

NATION

EDUCATION **PRIME**

Education for the rich: Concern as thousands set to miss out in new varsity funding model

Friday, August 11, 2023

University education will likely be out of reach for thousands of students who will miss out on government funding under the new financing model, as only those with deep pockets will afford it.

Unfortunately, elected Mountain politicians have been banned from talking about this very crucial matter, by the head of state.

And they have obeyed that order, maybe out of fear.

Who will help suffering students from the Mountain, if their elected leaders won't address their plight?

Farmers

Most Mt Kenya farmers have seen prices of their crops nosedive, in the past year.

From coffee, macadamia, avocado...prices have dropped significantly in the past 12 months, due to cartels invading the sector.

This issue of cartels impoverishing farmers in the Mountain is very serious and needs to be addressed urgently - in public barazas, in county assemblies and in parliament.

However, once again, elected Mountain politicians have been banned from talking about this very crucial matter, by the head of state.

Cash crop farmers pained by low prices

Saturday, June 17, 2023



A farmer tends to a coffee bush in Nyeri town on May 10, 2023. Coffee, macadamia, rice, tea and avocado have recorded a drastic drop in prices in recent months as powerful cartels invade the agriculture sector, threatening the livelihoods of thousands of farmers nationwide.

Jospeh Kanyi | Na

Coffee, macadamia, rice, tea and avocado have recorded a drastic drop in prices in recent months as powerful cartels invade the agriculture sector, threatening the livelihoods of thousands of farmers nationwide.

Coffee, which was retailing at least Sh100 per kilogramme last year, is now fetching only Sh42. A kilo of macadamia is now selling at Sh20, down from a high of Sh200 in 2019.

It is the same sad story for tea, rice, sugarcane and avocado farmers as prices dip with farmers piling pressure on the Kenya Kwanza government to fulfil the minimum guaranteed returns to cushion them from heavy losses.



SAM WANYOIKE | August 6, 2023 | Counties



Meru farmers cut down miraa trees over 'cartel' interference

A section of Meru farmers have cut down their miraa trees over what they term as neglect by the government to create a market for their produce resulting in cartel interference.

According to the farmers, their produce have been affected by cartels who have been controlling the market thus leaving the farmer earning peanuts.

At Gaciongo village in Mutuati sub county Igembe North constituency, Alexander Mwenda cut down his mature three-acre miraa trees due to frustrations.

Mwenda says for over 20 years, he had been getting a lot of money from his farm but now left with no other options than to replace the green gold trees with other crops.

He said initially his farm was giving him a total of more than Sh50,000 upon harvest but at the moment he can't even get a quarter of it.

Who will help suffering farmers from the Mountain, if their elected leaders won't address their plight?

Economy, Generally

The country's economy is not doing well.

Jobs are not being created.

Businesses are downsizing.

Investors at Nairobi Stock exchange have lost more than sh1.2 Trillion in the past 12 months.

Cost of living has shot up.

The shilling is becoming weaker and weaker, thus making imported goods - medicine, machinery, spare parts etc - to become extremely expensive.

MPs - including those from the Mountain - should be pushing government officials to act to reverse the trend regarding weakening shilling.

But, once again, Mountain MPs cannot raise this matter in public, including in parliament, lest they anger the head of state.

NOTE: Their voice is needed in this matter, because they make about 30% of parliament.

Business Daily

ECONOMY LIFE & WORK OPINION VIDEOS SPECIAL REPORTS

ECONOMY

Kenya's debt up record Sh1.56trn

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 16 2023

Kenya borrowed the largest amount of money in a single year during President William Ruto's first year in office, pushing the debt levels past the ceiling amid shortfalls in tax collections and increased repayment obligations.

Gross debt stock climbed Sh1.56 trillion for the financial year ended June, fresh data released by the Treasury shows, breaching the Sh10 trillion mark by Sh189.53 billion.

Kenya ended the last financial year in June with a gross total debt load of Sh10.19 trillion, a growth of 18.08 percent over Sh8.63 trillion a year ago, which was the last full fiscal year for former President Uhuru Kenyatta.

Some of the reasons behind failing economy and weakening shilling are:

- (a) Expensive electricity;
- (b) Sabotage of manufacturing sector.

Expensive electricity: About 9 months ago, KPLC claimed that the sudden increase in electricity price was because it was not raining.

Then it rained, yet the bills still remain high.

If in this matter of sabotage of the economy by KPLC, Mt Kenya MPs joined hands with the other side - who have about 40% of MPs (they were more, but we all know what has been going on) - then they could have impeached Energy CS, since KPLC falls in this ministry.

Sabotage of manufacturing sector: For some bizarre reason, many senior govt officials consider local industrialists as their enemies, and have been actively sabotaging the manufacturing sector.

For instance, Trade CS formed a company, that he used to import cooking oil, to sabotage local cooking oil manufacturers - leading to job loses, and lower taxes paid to KRA by the manufacturers.

If, in this matter, Mt Kenya MPs joined hands with the other side, they could have impeached Trade CS.

How Ruto's first Cabinet meeting birthed questionable edible oil deal

Monday, June 19, 2023



President William Ruto and Cabinet Secretaries during a past cabinet meeting at State House, Nairobi. President Ruto's first-ever Cabinet meeting passed a resolution that gave blessings to an importation deal that has seen private firms import oil tax-free, and then sell the commodity to a government agency at a higher price.

PC:

The figures show that the whole import plan would generate nearly \$76 million (Sh10 billion) waiver in taxes that the government granted to KNTC.

Shehena Trading Commodity Limited is 100 per cent owned by Invest Africa (FZCO), a company registered in a Dubai-free zone. It will supply Sh1.33 billion worth of oil. The company is said to be closely associated with a top cabinet secretary.

Cabinet Secretary is Moses Kuria, CS Trade - he made several billions in this deal

Purma Holdings Limited is owned by the chairperson of the board of the Communications Authority of Kenya, Mary Wambui.

Multi Commerce FZC, a company registered in a Dubai free zone, won an LPO for a Sh8.12 billion supply. The company is reportedly owned by a prominent politically-connected businessman, said to be associated with a major new mall in Nairobi's Eastleigh.

Charma Holdings Limited will supply Sh2 billion worth of oil.

For now, taxpayers will lose over Sh9 billion through the KNTC, its intention to provide cheaper commodities including cooking oil

Summary

It is the same sad story in other ministries/govt departments where inefficiency and incompetence is the norm - even head of state said on 1st August this year that, most of the people he has appointed to top government positions are incompetent.



Citizen TV Kenya @citizentvkenya

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President Ruto to Cabinet Secretaries: The moment I know more than you know about your ministry, there is a problem. Explain to me how you will advise me if you have less information than I do. I call many PSs and ask them what is going on here and they have no clue.

How do you run a department if you don't have knowledge? That is the highest level of incompetence.



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If Mount Kenya MPs were acting on behalf of their peoples' interests, most of these problems would be solved, for the benefit of wananchi.

But, for whatever reason, elected Mountain politicians fear fighting for their peoples' interests.



UDA Laikipia Senator John Kinyua Proposes Abolishment of the 5-year Presidential Term Limit

16th August 2023

During the vote for the recent FINANCE/TAX BILL 2023, only 1 Mt Kenya MP dared oppose it.

A few days later, the head of state went to this MP's constituency, to intimidate and humiliate her.

There were many MPs from other regions who also voted NO for the FINANCE/TAX BILL 2023, yet the head of state did not go to their constituencies to intimidate them.

Therefore, it is only Mt Kenya MPs (and other Mountain elected politicians), who are not allowed to act in their peoples' interests.

Is this right?

Will the elected Mountain politicians call a meeting and decide to now start acting only in the interests of their employers - their people?

If they don't do that, won't it then mean that, technically, Mt Kenya people have no political representation, either in parliament, or in county assemblies?



Armed assailants behead five in Lamu villages attack

Monday, June 26, 2023



One of the houses torched by armed assailants raided Salama village in Lamu at around 7.30 pm on Saturday and killed five. Kalume Kazungu | Nation Media Group

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NATION

Nairobi Metro Coast Mountain Lake Region Rift Valley Northern

Two killed, Lamu MCA and 10 others injured in suspected Shabaab attack

Tuesday, August 01, 2023



Hindi Ward MCA James Njaaga, his wife and several other road users were injured on August 1, 2023 after suspected Shabaab militants laid an ambush in Mwembe area, Lamu County.

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2nd September 2023