

PARLIAMENT OF KENYA

THE SENATE

THE HANSARD

Thursday, 4th October, 2018

*The House met at the Senate Chamber,
Parliament Buildings, at 2.30 p.m.*

[The Speaker (Hon. Lusaka) in the Chair]

PRAYER

Sen. Olekina: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I rise to support this Petition by the good citizens of Isiolo County. The County Government of Isiolo is notorious for violating the Public Finance Management Act. I listened to Sen. Dullo read all those functions which are forwarded to the international Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) called Living Goods Limited. From the little Google search, Living Goods Limited is an NGO that deals with issues of health.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, earlier on, I stood here and spoke about the way money collected from the game parks is deposited in accounts of a company called The Kenya Association of Tour Operators (KATO). This is completely in violation of Section 157 of the Public Finance Management Act which is clear. It gives the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in charge of a county the authority to appoint a revenue collector. However, there are certain prerequisites that must be done to ensure that the money is deposited directly into the county revenue account.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this portrays the County Government of Isiolo to be completely incompetent. Since the Constitution is alive, I wish to refer to Article 189 that focuses on the cooperation between the two levels of Government. If the County Government of Isiolo is unable to perform devolved functions, then it should discuss this issue with the national Government so that it can ensure that the money is safeguarded.

We have lost a lot of money from such agreements. This is an issue in the national Government too, where there was a moratorium on universities signing Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) just to be able to safeguard public money.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in this case, this is something that requires immediate action. To say that you will take this matter to a Committee without taking immediate steps may just be a little bit too late. We are still trying to pursue the Governor of Isiolo County on issues to do with money that was collected and deposited in the account of a company called KATO and it has not been accounted for. Therefore, this is another situation where we will lose all the money.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I agree with Sen. Mutula Kilonzo Jnr. that this calls for us to immediately engage with the Auditor-General and the Controller of Budget to ensure that

money which is sent to county governments to help improve the standards of living of the people of Isiolo County is safeguarded. This is just a way for money to be lost. I am perturbed by all the services. I would have thought that may be, the citizens of Isiolo County, who are competent enough to draft this Petition and elaborate on the issues of healthcare in their county can come together with the governor, thorough a public participation forum and discuss on how best to ensure that these health services reach the people in a more accountable manner.

We have counties like Makueni and Kitui which are now experimenting with the introduction of universal healthcare. Sometimes, we may not need to go out. We might need to sit within our country and look at how other counties are operating. If we are completely unable to perform those functions, before we violate the Constitution and other relevant laws on fiduciary responsibility, we benchmark and then engage people.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like us to find a way for this House to stop that agreement from being implemented. This issue can be handled by the Committee on Health and the County Public Accounts and Investments Committee. They should be seized of this matter, travel to Isiolo County and immediately look at these accounts. When we engage in postmortem exercise, we give room to cartels and corruption deals which are highly risky in terms of ensuring that we protect the interests of our people.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I fully support this Petition.

Sen. Olekina: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I rise to support the Statement by my good friend, Sen. Khaniri. We need to make sure that we take care of the welfare of our people by ensuring we have proper guidelines. It is important that this country develops a system where the minimum wage is known out there by employees and employers.

One of the biggest problems that we face in this country is where employees work for a company for many years and--- The situation is different in county governments and the national Government. In fact, we should leave out county governments because they are just beginning the process of setting up pension schemes. When you work for a private company, you earn one salary which you never know when it will ever increase, yet you contribute to the good performance of the company and you are well versed with the income that is streaming into the company.

It is imperative that in this economy where we are all struggling to make ends meet, we need to ensure that when our youth are employed, they understand that if one has served the country for about three years, he or she should be able to, on a yearly basis, see a salary increase in order to better his or her welfare.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I support this Statement by Sen. Khaniri. I hope that we can once and for all get these regulations which are clear to everyone. We should all know that there are certain regulations that demand that the minimum wage is clearly followed. This is particularly so for the young men and women who come from all parts of the country to the urban areas in search of jobs. You might find companies negotiate good packages with private companies or maybe even the Government but the people who work end up being paid peanuts. So, having these guidelines will ensure that Kenyans know their rights.

I support.

The Speaker (Hon. Lusaka): Order, your time is up! Sen. Cherargei you will interfere with other contributors. Let us have Sen. Olekina.

Sen. Olekina: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I rise to support this Motion by Sen. Khaniri on the importance of recognising the work that is done by the KRCS. We all realise that in this country we have had a very haphazard way of dealing with disasters.

Every year, mostly in the pastoralist areas, in the months of February and March, the entire country is littered with carcasses of animals and people suffer. That is the time when everybody starts talking about needing help. We may want to look at that broadly and ask ourselves what it means for us to be “disaster prepared”.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, disaster is not only drought or floods. It encompasses the way we live and how we take care of these issues. I agree with Sen. Khaniri when he says that it is now time for us not to remain ignorant but to focus on how our county governments handle disaster preparedness and put this in their plans. They should also incorporate the work done by KRCS - an organisation that has really gone out there. Recently, when we had the crisis in Narok County, I reached out to Mr. Abbas Gullet who was able to come out there and support.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is important for the national and county governments to work together, link up their budgets and agree that: “We can give this to the KRCS or avail money in our budgets so that if need be, the KRCS can be outsourced to come and help solve a problem.” This is important and we cannot ignore. The KRCS has done it very well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir, the two minutes are over.

The Speaker (Hon. Lusaka): Proceed, Sen. M. Kajwang’.