

DEVOLUTION | Don calls for proper planning of towns

Expert pegs success of counties on planning

Varsity lecturer advises local authorities to enforce by-laws and educate residents on dangers of poor planning

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Poor planning of towns is one of the biggest threats to devolved governance, a taskforce heard yesterday.

Dr Leonard Mulongo, a lecturer at Moi University, said most towns lack proper plans that will ensure smooth transition from local authorities to counties.

He said rapid population growth was exerting pressure on scant resources. This, he warned, could implode into a crisis if the devolved government structures concentrate services in the central business district.

Dr Mulongo called for proper planning to enhance resource use. He challenged local authorities to educate residents on the dangers of unplanned developments.

He asked the local authorities and investors to learn from demolitions of structures built on road reserves and

public land, adding that most towns lacked drainage systems.

"The engineer, who approved a building to be put on a wrong site, will be long dead or enjoying his retirement when his decision is reversed. The best thing is to avoid such mistakes from the word go," Dr Mulongo told the taskforce on devolution in Eldoret, yesterday.

Eldoret town clerk Stanislaus Ondimu said the council was addressing challenges such as congestion.

"Plans to have by-passes are in top gear and once operational, we shall have significantly addressed the congestion mess," said Mr Ondimu.

BACKGROUND

Team collecting views on counties

A taskforce on devolved governance headed by Dr Mutakha Kangu is traversing the country to collect views from Kenyans about how they wanted the devolved system of government structured. It will also make recommendations on legislation and operationalising the functions of each county.

HEAD COUNT | KPA begins audit of employees



GIDEON MAINDU | NATION

Kenya Ports Authority workers wait to be counted at the Kapenguria centre, yesterday. The port management has started a two-day head count to harmonise its records.

Ngilu wins libel suit against Kiss FM and the 'Weekly Citizen'

BY NATION
CORRESPONDENT

A Cabinet minister has won a defamation case against a media house and a weekly publication.

Judge Hatari Waweru entered a judgment against Radio Africa Limited which runs Kiss FM for airing a libellous remark about Water minister Charity Ngilu six years ago.

Mr Justice Waweru also entered judgment against politician Wanguhu Ng'ang'a, two Kiss FM employees Caroline Mutoko and Carol Radull who presented the morning radio programme, "The Big Breakfast Show." The judge struck out defences filed by the five defendants and entered an interlocutory judgment against them severally.

"The minister will proceed to proof quantum of damages," lawyer Cecil Miller told the judge.

Also to pay Mrs Ngilu for defamation is Headlink Publishers Limited which runs the *Weekly Citizen*.

Entering judgment against Headlink, Mr Ng'ang'a, Radio Africa Ltd, Ms Mutoko and Ms Radull Mr Justice Waweru said "they failed to present defences with triable issues."

He added the defendants defamed Mrs Ngilu who has a high public standing as a mother, grandmother and a Cabinet minister.

While allowing the application by lawyer Miller for Mrs Ngilu, the judge said the defences filed by the five were frivolous, vexatious and an abuse of the court process.

Mr Miller urged the judge to strike out the defence because they failed to indicate the nature of evidence the defendants intended to rely on.

The judge said the weekly

in its issue of July 4/10, 2005, falsely, maliciously and spitefully libelled the minister by alleging she had misbehaved at a parking lot in a members' club in Nairobi.

"The defences by the defendants are scandalous, frivolous and vexatious aimed to embarrass or delay the fair trial of the case and therefore an abuse of the court process," Mr Justice Waweru said in his ruling.

He said the minister tendered evidence to show she was in London at the time she was alleged to have been at the club.

She also tabled evidence of minutes of the committee of the club stating nothing "of that sort happened in that club."

The court said Mr Ng'ang'a did not tender evidence of a transcript of his address to the press when he allegedly attacked the minister's conduct and reputation.

CASE HIGHLIGHTS

The minister's accusations

The minister accused the 'Weekly Citizen' of publishing a defamatory article. That KISS FM reproduced the libellous article.

Radio presenters Caroline Mutoko and Carol Radull injured her reputation and character by repeating the false allegations in their "Big Breakfast Show".

Ngilu accused council chairman of the National Rainbow Coalition Wanguhu Ng'ang'a of injuring her character by alleging she was of loose morals with no respect to the institution of marriage.

Kenyans to be educated on the EAC

BY NATION
CORRESPONDENT

A programme to educate Kenyans on regional integration efforts has been launched.

For the next 100 days, residents of 24 counties and 107 constituencies countrywide will be taken through the process of the East African Community (EAC) integration under the Rapid Results Initiative launched yesterday.

The programme aims at driving the process of regional integration forward.

According to EAC minister Prof Hellen Sambilli and the Permanent secretary David Nalo, many Kenyans have little knowledge about the Community's activities.

"We have a lot to do in creating awareness," said Mr Nalo at the launch held at the KICC in Nairobi.

But speakers at the ceremony also took the opportunity to ask partner states to minimise challenges that stand in the way of integration efforts.

"Integration efforts have brought both benefits and challenges but the biggest challenge still facing the bloc is countries continuing to act nationally but seeking to reap regional benefits," EAC assistant minister Peter Munya said.

The Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KePSA) called for utmost trust and goodwill from partner states to drive the process forward.

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EAC assistant minister Peter Munya

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Dr Leonard Mulongo, lecturer