



# COUNTY NEWS

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**Kisumu > Ranguma calls on health workers to make realistic demands**

## County chiefs fault State over cash for nurses' pay

Governors say their hands are tied as the national government has not released funds

BY ANGELA OKETCH

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Governors yesterday accused the national government of failing to release funds for nurses' salaries.

This comes amid confusion on who should pay the health workers.

The governors spoke barely a day after the Salaries and Remuneration Commission said the responsibility of paying the nurses falls under the ambit of the county chiefs.

But the Council of Governors (CoG) Health Committee chairman, Mr Jack Ranguma, yesterday told the *Nation* that their hands were tied since the national government had not released the funds to counties.

"We have to deal with the reality here. Counties depend on money coming from the national government. As long as it puts that money into our accounts, we will pay the nurses," said Mr Ranguma.

The CoG had earlier asked the salaries team to approve an increase in nurses' salaries before they can effect it. The governors said it is the commission's responsibility to approve the increase.

Mr Ranguma said the nurses' case was different from the doctors' since the latter's collective bargaining agreement had been

budgeted for. "We don't have the money to pay the nurses," said Mr Ranguma, who is also the Kisumu Governor.

The Kisumu regional government needs over Sh130 million more to pay the 3,000 nurses in the county.

"Unless we find other ways of generating revenue to pay the

nurses, we will have to wait for the national government to release the cash," said the governor.

Mr Ranguma called on the nurses to make realistic demands. "They may not wish to hear it right now but the truth of the matter is that they should stop demanding more. Why do they want a call allowance yet they do not make office calls? Why do they want the uniform allowance to be increased from Sh10,000 to Sh50,000?" he asked.

"They should remain ethical because it is not all about money. We are not refusing to pay them but they should also consider that people are dying," he added.

"The SRC is not an employer. I think that needs to be clear. The SRC does not generate revenue," said the commission chairperson, Mrs Sarah Serem.

Counties depend on money coming from the national government. As long as it puts that money into our accounts, we will pay the nurses,"

Jack Ranguma, CoG Health Committee chairman

## CSs attend Kaimenyi's kin funeral

**Meru >** Transport and Infrastructure CS James Macharia and his Foreign Affairs counterpart Amina Mohammed lay a wreath during the burial of Lands Cabinet Secretary Jacob Kaimenyi's brother Cyrus Kirima in Mulathankari village, Imenti North yesterday.

PHOEBE OKALL | NATION



**Nakuru >**

## I was too drunk to notice lover was dead: Waitress

BY PETER MBURU

A waitress accused of killing her boyfriend yesterday said she spent the night with the corpse without knowing it because she was drunk.

Ms Mary Mung'au told the Nakuru High Court that her boyfriend, whom she identified as Paul, invited her for a drink at a local bar.

"I arrived at the pub around 9 pm and joined my boyfriend who was already drunk," Ms Mung'au told the court.

She added that, as they were drinking, Paul began complaining of pains but the situation was not serious.

"I asked him to book a room because we could not reach home in the state we were in," Ms Mung'au said.

She added that before they slept, Paul asked

her to wake him early in the morning.

"When morning came, I called and shook him many times but he did not respond," she said, adding that she called the guards who told her that the man was dead.

During the hearing yesterday, the prosecution admitted that it relied on circumstantial evidence, adding that Ms Mung'au was charged with murder because she was the last person seen with Paul.



## BRIEFLY

**Mombasa >**

### Sonko helps man whose son's body was held over unpaid bills

Nairobi Senator Mike Sonko has come to the aid of a Migori man whose son's body was held at the Pandya Memorial Hospital mortuary over unpaid bills of nearly Sh1 million. Mr Mwita Paul Koroso from Kuria East had appealed to well-wishers to help him raise the cash to clear the medical and mortuary bills for his first-born son who died after a road accident in Mombasa last month. After the *Nation* highlighted his plight last week, the Jubilee candidate for the Nairobi governor seat contacted Mr Mwita, who is blind, and offered to settle his bills. Mr Mwita said Mr Sonko also offered to provide transport and meet the funeral expenses. "The Sonko Rescue Team will transport the body from the mortuary to Migori. I don't know how I can repay the *Nation* and Mr Sonko for helping me."

— Winnie Atieno and Galgalo Bocha

**Embu >**

### 20,000 senior citizens set to benefit from cash programme

At least 20,000 people aged above 70 years in Embu County have been identified to benefit from the Inua Jamii programme targeting vulnerable groups from January next year. Public Service CS Sicily Kariuki said the beneficiaries will be paid a monthly stipend and be enrolled in the National Health Insurance Scheme. Speaking at Nembure grounds in Embu North when she launched the programme, she noted that already, 2,000 people had been registered in the county in the last one week, adding that more efforts will be made to achieve the target. The CS said social officers will begin door-to-door registration to ensure all the aged are enrolled. She asked locals not to politicise the programme.

**Kwale >**

### Titanium company allocates Sh75 million for scholarships

A mining company in Kwale, Base Titanium, will offer Sh75 million in scholarships. The money has been set aside in the firm's 2017/18 financial year budget. The scholarships will be distributed to the all the four sub-counties in Kwale and Likoni sub-county in Mombasa County. Since 2014, the firm has disbursed over Sh150 million to support high school, college and university students. Over 950 students in Kwale have benefited from Base Titanium's scholarship and bursary programme. The programme is part of a negotiated Community Development Management Plan between Base Titanium, the community and the county government.

— Winnie Atieno