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Millions lost in housing rip-off



A union leader, Mr. Peter Odede, addressing a workers' Kamukunji at the Great Court last Friday. The workers threaten to go on strike tomorrow.

Plots over-valued

By MUMBI KYALO

Members of Chuna Housing Co-operative Society are in deep trouble. The future of the multi-million society hangs in the balance following a massive rip off.

Plots which members bought in Kitengela for Kshs 150,000 per acre in 1993 were overvalued by 400 per cent. The market value then was Shs 30,000 per acre.

To add insult to injury, members who had been informed that the money they remitted was for one eighth of an acre have discovered that the plots that were allotted to them are ridiculously smaller, with some measuring one sixteenth of an acre.

Members suspect beacon certificate issued to them are fake. Beacon numbers that were deliberately marked with ink have been washed off by the rains.

And last Wednesday a noisy and highly charged crisis meeting of the society demanded a special general meeting in Taifa Hall on June 19.

Amounts of money running into millions is alleged to have been pocketed by officials. Indeed, late last year, Mr. S. O. Obura, who was then the accountant for both the Chuna SACCO and the Housing Society, astonished an Annual General Meeting (AGM) when he

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Workers threaten to down tools over pay

By DENNIS ONYANGO

Unionisable employees of the University of Nairobi have threatened to go on strike if the Vice-Chancellor does not respond to their demands by tomorrow.

Officials of the Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied workers (KUDHEHIA), told *The Anvil* they want workers' allowances increased as recommended by the Omollo Okero Report. The chief shop steward, Mr. Alfred Mulati, lamented workers at the University of Nairobi are getting a raw deal.

The leaders said they have tried to meet the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Francis Gichaga, in vain adding that he has ignored their letters. "Each time we raise issues affecting us, the University administration think we are being used by the Opposition," the union chairman, Mr. John Ongoro, said. He asked the VC to admit inability to handle the case so that they can see the Chancellor, President Moi.

In a bid to contain the situation, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration and Finance), Prof. Raphael

Munavu, told the union officials he had appointed a committee to look into the workers' demands.

Addressing a workers' Kamukunji at the Great Court last Friday, the officials urged the workers to remain united and stop betraying one another. They asked the workers to be prepared for anything from Wednesday, a call that was met with cheers from the angry workers.

The union leaders also called for the resignation or immediate replacement of the Administrative Registrar Mr. J. G. Wachira accusing him of misleading the VC and awarding himself a salary of a full professor. They also accused Students Welfare Authority (SWA) director, Prof. Joseph Kimani, of tribalism claiming he appointed his tribesmen to key positions in the Authority.

Among the things the workers demand are an increase in commuting allowance popularly known as *Mguu*, increase in housing allowance, hospitalisation allowance and equal and fair treatment for all university workers.

A letter addressed to the VC demanded a Kshs 1500 flat rate housing allowance for all staff, revision of owner-occupier rates and incorporation of unionisable

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THE SCANDAL AT A GLANCE

- Members demand a special general meeting on June 19 at Taifa Hall.
- Frozen account re-opened 'secretly'.
- Accountant admits to sharing out Shs 1.2m and pocketing Shs 1.8m.
- Kitengela plots worth Shs 30,000 sold at Shs 150,000.
- Members asked for a further Shs 50,000 fee for infrastructure.
- Plots measure far less than expected.
- Beacon certificates fake?

disclosed that he and the officials had shared a whopping Shs 1.2 million, money taken from the members. He argued that none of the officials was clean. Mr. Obura, who resigned from the University, admitted publicly that he pocketed the society's Shs 1.8m which he promised to repay.

The chairman of the housing society, Mr. Romanos Philip Onyango, says Mr. Obura's case will not be handled as a criminal one. "Obura admitted in writing that he owes the society money. We will deal with this as a civil case," he said.

Following the rip-off, a probe team under the chairmanship of Dr. Vincent Simiyu of the Department of History was set up to investigate the historic theft after demands by members.

This team has compiled its report. However, the report is yet to be tabled because Mr. Onyango has declined to call an AGM.

In an interesting turn of events, the Provincial Co-operative Officer, Mr. J. O. Oseno, has condemned the probe committee arguing that it has no legal basis. And the Commissioner for Co-operative Development, Mr. Raymond Bonett, appointed a two-

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Chaos as female students strip male 'intruder' - Back page

Irate students repulse city askaris

By OBI OKEIGA

A recent attempt by Nairobi City Council askaris to flatten kiosks along Mamlaka road, next to the Prefabs at the University of Nairobi, was thwarted by irate students.

The askaris, who arrived in three trucks and a bulldozer in the evening, attempted to demolish the kiosks most of which are owned by students.

"They thought the students were out for classes at that hour. But when we raised the alarm, some of the students who were in the halls of residence, the ADD (Architecture Design and Development) building rushed to our rescue," Peter Mang'ui, one of the kiosk owners, told *The Anvil*.

Nairobi has of late seen menacing

City askaris assisted by armed Administration Police flatten kiosks and arrest hawkers in an effort to end hawking within the Central Business District.

There is doubt whether demolition of these kiosks at the University can be accomplished. "We will not move from this site. We feed majority of the University population," said Maina Kang'ethe, who is employed by one of the students. "Students will not allow that to happen. The askaris had to drive off today as students threatened to burn their vehicles," he added.

The Anvil established that some students run these kiosks in partnership with outsiders in an effort to make ends meet. Most of the students who spoke to the reporters agreed that running the kiosks has helped them meet their fee payments and day to day expenses.

"I educate my wife, brother and sister from the income," argued Moses Ng'ang'a who was armed with stones. The student confided in *The Anvil* that they were keenly monitoring the situation and had immediately appointed guards



Picture courtesy: Nation Newspapers

Food preparation in a kiosk: University authorities say such cooking is unhygienic

amongst themselves to keep watch in turns in case of a night raid by the police and askaris.

This standoff between students and those bent to have their way is bound to have serious implications

to the students. They claimed that although the kiosk owners exploit them by charging exorbitantly for items on sale, university meals were more expensive.

The university authorities have time and again pointed out that the food sold is unhygienic. This concern has been refuted by students who argue that the authorities are bent on forcing them to take university meals that are expensive. *The Anvil* spoke to Mamlaka kitchen supervisors asserted that university subsidised meals are cheaper. The hostel janitors said cooking in students' residential rooms could lead to unhygienic since food remains block sinks when students clean their utensils, leading to spewing of dirty water all over the hostels.

As can be detected there is a conflict of interest here. The university authorities are expected to back the Government crackdown on hawking within the university confines. The students on the other hand look set to hold out on such attempts.

Prof. J. Musuva back to teaching



Prof. Jeremiah Musuva

By ONAYA-ODECK

The former embattled Executive Chairman of Kenya Railways, Professor Jeremiah K. Musuva, has returned to his lecturing job at the University of Nairobi.

Sources at the University indicate that Prof. Musuva wrote a letter to the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Francis Gichaga, requesting to be allowed to resume lecturing at the University.

Professor Musuva was on leave of absence from the university during his tenure at the railways. The Vice Chancellor has accepted Prof. Musuva's request and a letter to this effect issued by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Administration and Finance, *The Anvil* established.

Prof. Musuva's return was well received in the department of Mechanical Engineering, and the Faculty as a whole. He was once the head of department rising to be Dean Faculty of Engineering.

The current Chairman of the Department of Mechanical Engineering, Dr. Stephen Mutuli, said, "Prof. Musuva's return will strengthen the Applied Mechanics Unit which has suffered shortage of staff as some have left for greener pastures. The Master of Science programme which is worst hit will benefit immediately. Prof. Musuva could not be reached for comment as he has been granted permission to proceed on leave, accumulated since 1989, before he went to Kenya Railways.

Kikuyu campus water problems now solved

By PATRICK KAMANDA

Kikuyu Campus of the University of Nairobi, has solved its water problems once and for all following the sinking of a borehole recently at a cost of Ksh 2 million. It is capable of producing enough water for the institution's population of over 2000 students and members of staff.

The College Principal, Professor Lucia Omondi, thanked the University administration for undertaking the project which was commissioned by the Vice Chancellor, Professor Francis Gichaga, on April 6. Speaking to *The Anvil* Prof. Omondi said, "Money saved from this venture will be used to finance other projects at the college."

According to the Acting College Registrar, Ms Joyce Mang'oka, the campus was previously being supplied with water by the Ministry of Water



Picture by Bernard Njuguna

Prof. Lucia Omondi

Development from a borehole at Ondiri at a cost of over Ksh 500,000 per month.

The University has been experiencing severe water shortages annually, especially during the dry spell. "But despite the serious drought that was experienced in this country last year, the main campus always had water.

Previously, the University was paying the City Council astronomical bills per month. "Sometimes the Women's Hall water bill alone would amount to over Ksh 10 million per month!", disclosed Mr Choka.

There was also the inconvenience of constant disconnections due to delays in processing of water bills which sometimes led to students' unrest.

The college's Maintenance Superintendent, Mr Samuel Mworio, said that the new borehole, fitted with an electric water pump is able to sufficiently serve the institution.

But problems related to the previous water supply are far from over. The Ondiri supply is yet to be disconnected, and the Campus still owes the ministry of Water Development thousands of shillings in unpaid bills. The institution is not keen to pay the outstanding bills until the Ministry accepts to refund money spent on replacing borehole equipment stolen from Ondiri station which the college bought.

College starts new programme

The Faculty of Commerce has introduced an Executive Masters in Business Administration (MBA) degree programme for part-time students. Speaking to *The Anvil*, in his office, the Dean Faculty of Commerce, Prof. Peter K'Obonyo said, "the programme was started in line with the new spirit of self reliance. It is intended to train people already in industry."

Although the idea was conceived in 1981, the process of implementation started three years ago, with faculty members working

By KEMUNTO OIRURIA AND REBECCA GIKURU

out the modalities. "Classes should have been on as from July this year, but it has not been possible due to logistical constraints," the programme coordinator, Dr. Wainaina Gituro added. He, however, assured *The Anvil* that the programme will take off in September, this year, as there is only course description to be done.

"Classes are scheduled for 5.30 p.m to 9.00 p.m. during weekdays, and full day on Saturdays. The

maximum duration for the course will be five years, and the minimum will be two years," Dr. Gituro said.

The faculty normally offers the academic MBA course for full time students. To accommodate part-time students, the programme has now been modified and a new curriculum made. The central administration promised to facilitate the initial stages of the programme.

Asked about eligibility, Dr Gituro said holders of a bachelor's degree are admissible. We would want 75 per cent of the entrants to be from industry", the coordinator noted.

Germans sponsor lecturer

By JEMOSBEY MISOI

A lecturer at the School of Journalism, Mr Edwin Nyutho, has been offered a four week scholarship to attend a radio production seminar at *Radio Deutsche Welle*, Germany.

The Training of Trainers Seminar, sponsored by the German Government, is scheduled to take place between June 28 and July 27. It is the first of a number of seminars scheduled to take place annually until all the staff at the school are trained.

The sponsorship is a result of Kenya-German cooperation which has existed for a long time, and a meeting between Mr. Christian Rumpelcker, the Cultural Attache at the German Embassy and the Acting Director of the School of Journalism, Mr Zeke Waweru.

Early this year, Mr Rumpelcker presented the school with radio and television training materials on behalf of Radio Deutsche Welle. He lauded the cordial relationship between the school and his government and promised to consider the number of students who undertake educational tour of Germany every year.

UON must contain maintenance lethargy

This country lacks a maintenance culture - Riungu

By VINCENT MAKORI

If you spot a light blue bus anywhere, with polythene paper for windows, a dilapidated bodywork loosely held together with plenty of rust and broken seats without cushions, it will definitely be bearing the inscriptions, University of Nairobi, if they still hold. The bus will not be on its last trip to a junk yard, no! It will most likely be ferrying students or staff from one point to another, or going to pick them up.

To most members of this university, the decay is symbolic of the culture of negligence that has over the years crept into this citadel of excellence.

The transport system is only the tip of the iceberg. The magnificent buildings which blend with beautiful flowers to give the university such a paradisiac look, are just a facade. They are perhaps reminiscent of the biblical whitewashed tombs.

The interior of most buildings looks like open ulcers, with peeled ceiling boards, others hanging precariously waiting to fall onto peeling floor tiles. The School of Journalism offices and lecture room are perhaps a microcosm of the decay that has pervaded the entire institution.

Step into the SoJ Director's office and you will be forgiven if you thought it was a victim of a demolition squad which did not finish the job. Large gaping holes have replaced ceiling boards, which have over the years succumbed to the power of rain water from the leaking roofs.

In the SoJ Lecture Room, the

situation is worse. During the wet season, classes have to be suspended or the venue changed.

When asked to comment about the appalling state of facilities and buildings, Professor Joseph Nyasani, the Principal of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences said, "I am in charge of administration and academic affairs of this college. The man who can tell you why things are the way they are is the Estates Manager Mr Cyprian Riungu. He is in charge of the buildings here, Kikuyu, Kabeté, Parklands and Chiromo." Prof. Nyasani further said that he is not only amazed, but also disgusted at the state of facilities in the university.

Mr Riungu cited a number of reasons why the decay at the university is going on unstopped. "I see this as a national problem. In this country, we lack a maintenance culture. We wait until it is too late and then it becomes very expensive to restore the structures." He complained that

property. So a student will pluck off a socket, put it in the pocket and walk away." He added that even some members of staff have been known to engage in vandalism of university property. And the devastation continues.

The picture is replicated in all the buildings within the university. Even essential facilities like toilets are becoming very scarce. Not a single toilet is in working condition at the magnificent Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library, except for one or two that are permanently under lock and key. Users of the library must literally get out of the building to use the toilets in the Education Building. Here too, toilets at the basement of the building do not have locks, compelling users to hold onto the doors as they relieve themselves. What happened to the locks?

Way back in 1975, following the J. M. Kariuki assassination, there was a fierce confrontation between the General Service Unit (G.S.U) and students of this university. In their bid to flush out students who had taken cover in the toilets, the virulent GSU shuttered the door locks. The locks were never replaced and thus for the last 22 years, the doors have been without locks.

No building at the university has been spared. If it is not leaking roofs, it is broken ceilings, blocked toilets, cracking walls or broken equipment. All this is as a result of negligence and lack of repairs.

The transport system has been grinding slowly and someday soon, it might come to a halt. It boggles the mind that those rusty, rattling masses of metal can move on any road in the



Picture by Bernard Njuguna
KYF 104 used to ferry disabled students from their lecture theatres to the halls of residence. Since its breakdown, these students have to find alternative means.

world, for any distance. That they are unroadworthy, even a blind man can tell. Seats are broken, others torn and the sponge cushions look burnt.

According to the Transport Officer, Mr. Lawrence Thaiya, nothing has been done on the bodywork of these buses since they were bought. For instance, a BMC 35 seater, registration number KMC 709, bought in 1968 and a Leyland KZL 377 in 1985, still have the original coat of paint.

One reason advanced for lack of maintenance of buses is that there are very few buses for the number of activities they are used for. The Vice Chancellor's Personal Assistant, Mr Kimaita Kirimania, told *The Anvil* that "There are very few buses which are used every day for academic programmes, research activities and ferrying students and staff from one point to another." He concurred with

the transport officer that these activities cannot be suspended for the buses to be taken for repairs.

Mr. Thaiya argues that some of the buses need many days to be restored and this is not possible because academic programmes have to run. The buses are also used for staff welfare, many times transporting mourners to funerals of colleagues all over the republic.

Scramble

He shifted blame on students for the state of the buses, accusing them of breaking windows as they scramble to get space in the buses, while some deliberately damage the seat covers and cushions.

Kirimania and Thaiya however drew *The Anvil's* attention to the fact that the situation of the transport system is not hopeless. Five new buses are expected soon although the date of arrival could not be confirmed.

Decay continues

The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Francis Gichaga could not be reached for comment. He was said to be in day long meetings and a few times out of the office. Eventually, he directed *The Anvil* to his personal assistant Kimaita Kirimania, who could not give authoritative answers to most of our questions. He glossed over some, dismissed others and concluded by citing the now over used expression, "lack of funds."

Meanwhile, the decay continues and the future looks bleak. The cost of restoring the buildings and facilities as they are today, runs to millions of shillings. Maintenance costs continue to rise as the deterioration spreads further. Who will save The University of Nairobi?

"The culture in this university is that this is public property. So a student will pluck off a socket, put it in the pocket and walk away."

although he would like to maintain the structures, he operates on a very tight budget. "The maintenance vote is a victim of slashing. Whenever the authorities here feel there is need to trim some vote, it is the maintenance vote that is slashed," lamented Riungu.

The Estates Manager also blames members of the university for contributing to the decay. "The culture in this university is that this is public

SATIRE

Weak and beautiful all the way

By MUTHONI KAREGA

Cars, ships and countries have traditionally belonged to the female gender. They have taken the pronoun "she" as easily as the members of the female race. While it is not clear how they came to be seen as female, perhaps it has something to do with their capacity to carefully carry and tenderly bear us in very much the same way our mothers do.

Concerning the cars, perhaps the image originates from the traditional image of the faithful, fragile woman that unquestioningly serves the male gender and in return has to be "taken care of".

Among male owners, the car enjoys a highly privileged position. They will pamper a car the way they would a loved wife. They will hover around, touch, pat and generally admire their car. They will give their car a lot of care ranging from careful maintenance to regular cleaning. Some will fit their car with extra gadgets and furnishings in an attempt to enhance not only the image of

the car but more so their own. When the car is out of order, others will worry very much the same way they would if the wife had a touch of flu.

Vehicle manufacturers have consciously and at times unconsciously helped to reinforce the differentiation of gender by the images inherent in the choice of names they give to their models. The smaller "made-for-women" vehicles on our roads have names derived from the soft world of music, theatre, poetry, nature, entertainment and style. They have a strange preoccupation with form and passive acquiescence. Among such cars are the following models.

Daihatsu *Charade* - for the driver, the car is entertainment itself. It is to be manipulated for entertainment.

Daihatsu *Applause* - meaning appreciation, praise or show by clapping as found in theatre.

Honda *Accord* - in agreement, harmonious, with a tendency to act spontaneously. Agreeable

Honda *Ballade Encore* - where ballade means a study of poetic metre (prosody) and encore means repeated performance

on demand.

Hyundai *Accent* - A distinctive characteristic of style, pattern, attention or emphasis.

Hyundai *Sonata* - A piece of music to be played on the piano (to be manipulated).

Maruti *Omni* - combining form Toyota *Corolla* - petals of a flower, beautiful, capable of giving pleasure

Toyota *Corona* - garland, prize Renault *Clio* - Greek muse of history. A muse is a Greek goddess, a source of inspiration.

A quick glance at the May/June 1996 issue of *Autonews*, the magazine of the Automobile Association of Kenya reveals that as the vehicles become bigger, tougher and rougher, their names correspondingly toughen and roughen. We now begin to see names like Rocky (hard and rough), Rover (given to travelling on rough terrain), Pajero (a rough, hands-on fellow).

The vehicles also take on names from the battlefield (where men are an overwhelming majority), like *Defender*, *Nissan Patrol*, *Toyota Land Cruise* (like those cruiser missiles in Operation Desert Storm), *Mahindra Armada* (a fleet of

armed ships or aircraft), *Mahindra Commander*, *Mahindra Bushrange* (away from civilization).

The names become more "macho", what with Toyota *Stallion* (a male horse for breeding), Nissan *Hard-body*, *High-rider*, *Matador* (bullfighter) and the most "macho" of all, the *Mahindra Macho*! (typically masculine in strength). There is also the Suzuki *Samurai* (a Japanese fighter).

The images also represent the power struggle between the genders. The more powerful men become in life, the more they aspire to drive powerful, big, tough, rough vehicles to project their power. In organizations, the size of vehicle sometimes the size of salary earned.

When women who are doing well realize that there is power in the vehicle image, they too go for large ones. Unfortunately for women, most of them are not as well paid as the men. They end up buying the same small vehicles designed to diminish their power and the image persists.

Utilize research findings well

BY OBI OKEIGA

The gist of an exhibition, involving the 'perusal' of theses and dissertations, went largely unnoticed at Kenyatta University recently. The event, which should have been a useful academic forum for scholars and the public exchange, became memorable more for the display of verbal warfare between a lecturer and a Vice-Chancellor.

The concern raised by Kenyatta University's Faculty of Education lecturer, Daniel Sifuna, about the effect of the excessive power wielded by VCs on the management of education, was legitimate enough to deserve a sober approach. Yet in his reaction, Egerton University Vice Chancellor, Prof. Japheth Kiptoon, defended his lot saying they do a 'commendable job' and instead lashed out at lecturers like Prof. Sifuna as frustrated and not qualified enough. He dismissed their views as 'hogwash talk' not based on knowledge or research.

This scenario, itself a display of the VC's know-it-all and condescending attitude, is a testimony to the lack of academic tolerance and freedom. It is this academic liberty that *fora* like the exhibition at Kenyatta University provided. One only wishes there were discussions and further arrangements to facilitate research, and implementation of the bagged researches.

Indeed, Prof. Kiptoon has been reported calling on Kenyan public universities to find ways of marketing themselves. This was not surprising as there have been complaints of intellectual lethargy as a result of academics coming up with workable ideas that are eventually shelved in bound form for 'reference', never to be opened again. We need a conscious approach towards realising research recommendations in all sectors of the economy. A lot has been researched on but what is lacking

are the *fora* to exploit the potential in these works.

A joint exhibition by all public universities could show links in researches in such a way that Literature departments and other fields become 'profit centres'.

The way to go about this is for graduate students to give us serious, well thought pieces; work meant to improve our society's social, political and cultural well being. Follow-ups in research after college are necessary. The current lapsing in scholarly writing after attaining certificates shows how disgruntled academicians are, justifiably believing they cannot make a living out of researches.

The annual science congress competitions for secondary schools have had most of us excited by what we see. But what purpose they have served so far is yet to be seen. Livestock and crops in agricultural shows leave us wishing for those results on a grand scale but disappointing enough, immediately we get out of the show grounds, memories are laid to rest till the following year.

The way out for scholars includes:

- Go for areas that need your researches.
- Find sponsors for these researches as the funds is one of the obstacles hindering further researches.
- Enter into entrepreneurial agreements so as to sustain your own researches in future.
- Form associations and unions based on disciplines and interrelated disciplines, through which, funding and focusing of researches can be mooted.
- Step up public exhibitions in order to enhance interest in the researches as well as encouraging young researchers.

All in all, enforcement of what is already in stock is inevitable, for herein lies the magic key to industrialisation by the year 2020.

That women have been subjugated by society for many centuries is true. But equally true is the fact that given similar conditions, they would be as good or better than men in every aspect of life.

Hence, in the present era where gender equity is sought for through an increasingly global crusade, Kenya's Mass Media, with all their attendant power of communication, is expected to succinctly articulate the course for the emancipation of women.

However, that has not happened because the media have not played their role as expected. Instead, they have continued doing what society has done for many centuries; portraying women negatively and peddling the myth that they are inferior to men. This means that they have upheld and perpetuated the age-old

societal dichotomous motif towards women - a view in which they are seen only through two perspectives - either as virgins or whores.

The virgins, supposedly the good women, are presented as good mothers, dependent on men, ineffectual, possessing humility and lacking initiative. The whores, considered the bad ones, are associated with modernity, are career women, independent, have self control and are not subordinate to men. Very clearly, this mode of categorization is flawed and conjures up a stereotype woman. Therefore, the mass media must boldly step up, and exercise to the fullest, its potential in order to set the record straight.

One way in which the media can eradicate such stereotypes is by

Opposition hijacks agenda

By MISHAEL ONDIEKI

When opposition political heads turned up for the May 3rd National Convention meeting at the Kamukunji grounds, Nairobi, most Kenyans believed that they had organised it.

Except for Kenneth Matiba and Raila Amollo Odinga, all other opposition chiefs claimed credit while all they did was, just like other members of the public thirsting for political reforms, turn up for the meeting where they were repulsed by the police.

Saba Saba

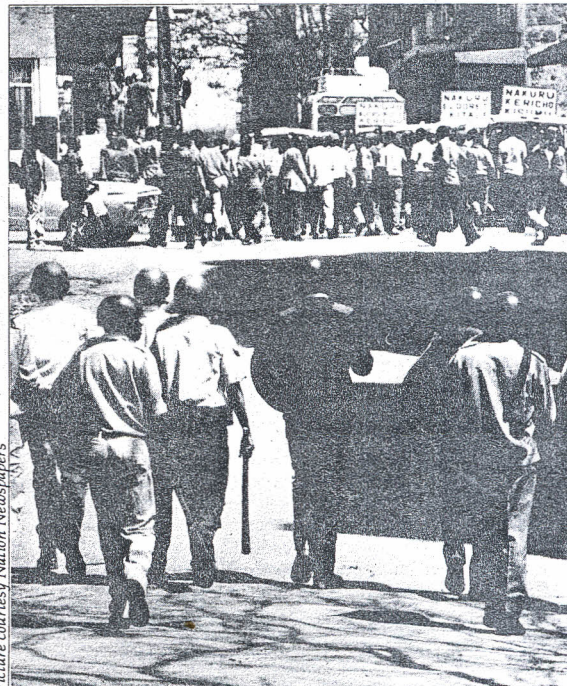
When the two politicians joined in supporting the May 31 meeting, people likened it to the 1992 Saba Saba meeting at Kamukunji which aimed at forcing the government repeal section 2A of the constitution.

Most politicians deliberately ignored the fact that these crucial meetings were organised by the National Convention Executive Committee led by a Nairobi University don, Prof. Kivutha Kibwana. After the first two successful meetings, opposition leaders took an opportunistic chance of manipulating issues to fit their circumstances. Ngengi Muigai, for instance, could be seen around town on the material day in a car with public address system telling people to re-converge at Jeevanjee Gardens.

Unlicensed

Church leaders like Dr Timothy Njoya, one of the convenors, took a brave move of addressing the few people who turned up at Uhuru Park before the political leaders arrived.

Leaders of this convention, who were following resolutions they had reached earlier this year in Limuru, planned to hold several unlicensed meetings in the provinces to sensitise



Picture courtesy Nation Newspapers

Policemen in confrontation with wananchi in a past demonstration.

the public of the need for change. Before they could effect the plans, politicians took over the matter and made it their own. They have now organised such meetings in Kisumu and Mombasa on 21 of June.

Going by the past such meetings, the police will be planted in all strategic positions to clobber whoever comes their way.

If the political leaders in these areas will not be brave enough to attend the meeting, chances are the ordinary wananchi might also decide not turning up. Solidarity will be a key factor here.

Meanwhile, the National Convention Executive Committee has called for a stage-in at parliament buildings on budget day. Such a meeting should not be taken lightly.

It is absolutely important to note that as was with the French revolution, the leaders of this convention are lawyers and church leaders.

Protest

It must be remembered that cardinal Sin of Philippines led a massive protest which resulted in the ouster of dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

The kind of adamancy shown at Uhuru park on 31 May by Dr Timothy Njoya depicts the kind of commitment he has in leading the people to political changes.

Now that the convention has planned a protest meeting at Parliament Buildings on June 19, it will be interesting to see how the opposition leaders will behave.

Cover women positively

By KIPLON KANGOGO

highlighting events only on the basis of their news-worthiness without any regard as to whether they are covered by women or men.

Similarly, decisions on what is and what is not news must be left in the hands of professionals in the media houses and not to male chauvinists who have no regard for gender issues. Interestingly, there are media women who are also "male chauvinists". They believe that men are superior to women and thus give media coverage only to female relatives of prominent men. They do not appreciate the fact that Kenyan women who have risen to positions of leadership, such as cabinet minister Nyiva

Mwendwa, assistant minister Agnes Ndeti, members of parliament Catherine Nyamato and Kaluki Ngilu, and the three Women permanent secretaries, efficiently execute their duties.

Reporters and editors also need to be gender sensitised to ensure that they produce gender sensitive media.

Traditional women pages and programmes, in both the print and electronic media respectively, must be scrapped and instead all news and features allowed to compete for space on the basis of their newsworthiness. This is because these pages and programmes perpetuate societal demeaning attitudes towards women.

Advertisements of whatever nature, and particularly of cosmetics, must also

be undertaken consciously so that they crusade for the emancipation of women and not expose them as sex objects. Unfortunately, this has not been the case in some of the advertisements in the past.

When the Kenyan society as a whole becomes gender sensitised, the issue of human rights, defined as "the inalienable rights of every person to justice and freedom", will be achieved. It is then that women will unshackle themselves from the numerous bonds: poverty, illiteracy, poor health, taboos, cultural and religious practises which have forcefully pinned them down for many years.

The wheel of gender sensitisation will roll round the country, and eventually the world over, faster than ever before so that in the next millennium, Kenya may boast of a woman president and the world of a woman Pope.

American Football introduced at UON

By TSUMA CHRIS

Kenya became the second country in Africa, after South Africa, to have an American Football team when the spot was launched at the University of Nairobi on January 24, this year by the Vice

Chancellor, Professor Francis Gichaga.

The game, also called Gridiron, is being introduced and popularized in Africa by Mr Tom Kelly of the 'Gridiron Diplomats'. This is a group of thirteen coaches from the United States who aim at making it an Olympic sport during

the 2004 Olympics. The climax of this programme will be a playoff between sixteen African teams culminating in the African Superbowl tentatively slated for January 17, 1998.

The University of Nairobi already has a team, Mean Machine, which draws most of its players from the Mean Machine Rugby Club. But speaking to *The Anvil*, the University's Games Tutor, Mr John Ngugi, said his department plans to get their players elsewhere to avoid a clash in cases where the games or training sessions are scheduled for the same place at the same time.

Asked how they planned to finance the game, Mr. Ngugi said the university has benefited from a donation of playing kits from Mr Kelly. He added that while on a

tour of the United States to familiarize himself with the game recently, he successfully solicited for playing kits from several universities and high schools. He said that although most of the kit donated was second hand, it is still in good shape.

A player must be attired in a helmet, shoulder pads, boots, a jersey and tight-fitting pants. It is the helmets and the pads that make the game expensive and certainly beyond the financial means of many African countries.

Messers John Kamau Thenya, Aaron Muriungi and Simon Kimani, all of the university of Nairobi are being trained as local coaches and are scheduled to proceed to the United States for further training. Mr Victor Flores from the Mexican Embassy in

Nairobi will assist in coaching the team. Mr. Ngugi revealed that they are organizing a sports seminar in Kenya next year, to discuss American football among other sports.

On how they intend to develop the game without any team to play against, Mr Ngugi said he was confident the game will pick up and become popular, contrary to what some people think.

He disclosed that the game has also been introduced at Makerere University which the Nairobi team played against on February 9 this year, losing 16-19. There are also plans to introduce the game at Moi University soon, making Kenya the only African country to have two teams.

A big task for sports dept

By TSUMA CHRIS

Inadequate funds, an inconsistent academic calendar and class timetables are to blame for the decline of sports activities at the University of Nairobi.

Speaking to *The Anvil* recently, the Games Tutor of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Mr Joe N. Mutua, said each college is allocated about Ksh. 80,000 per year for sports. This particularly affects university teams participating in national competitions. Badly hit are Mean Machine, the rugby team, Terrorists, the men's basketball side, among others.

On academic calendars and lecture timetables, Mr Mutua said it is difficult to raise a team or conduct a training session because players are either attending lectures, which sometimes go up to 7 p.m or at home on long holidays.

He said the cost-sharing measures introduced at the universities have also contributed to the decline in sports because the students barely get enough food to survive, leave alone cope with the rigours of games.

Mr. Mutua also revealed that the university sports department lacks equipment and that many of the sports facilities need repair.

He said the main campus

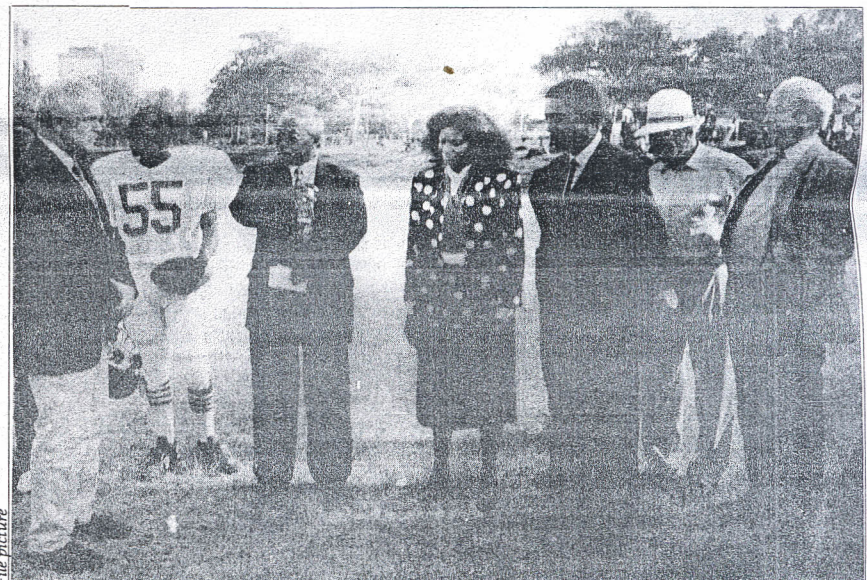


Mr. John Ngugi, The Games Tutor

swimming pool is in bad shape as its circulation tanks leak and when the engines are switched on. The tanks, which were installed in 1975, requires Ksh. 700,000 to replace. A further Ksh. 400,000 is required for new tanks at the Parklands Campus pool which also has a similar problem.

The athletics track often floods when it rains and the grass and weeds growing on it making it unusable. The flooding problem also affects the football pitch.

Students urged the university administration, to take sports more seriously. Harold Otieno, a Mean Machine and American football player said high standards of sports could help market the university now that there are many other universities.



Deputy Vice-Chancellors Prof. R. M. Munavu (A&F) (3rd left) and Prof. F. A. Karani (A) during the launching of the American Football at the University in January 1997

Mean Machine on its death bed

By STELLA OTIENO

Mean Machine is slowly but surely sinking. Victory is a forgotten story.

Mean Machine Rugby team was established in 1977. It was the first non-European rugby club in Kenya. Before this, rugby was an all white game. In the years that followed, the club made progress and by 1980 had become a force to reckon with. During the years that followed it

dominated the Rugby scenes winning both the Kenya cup and the Eric Shirley leagues in 1989 and 1990. It has produced some of the most successful players in Kenyan rugby. Edward Rombo Kenya's only professional, leads the team of former players. Others are Absalom Mutere, Martin Ndeda and Oliver Khabure.

More recently, players like Tolbat Onyango, Thomas Opiyo and Sammy Khakame have carried the mantle left to them by their predecessors. The club

has acted as a breeding point for other clubs. Most of the formidable players have moved to join top clubs at the end of their courses. The club has produced some of the most formidable players in the in the rugby scene.

According to Mr J. J. Ngugi, the University's Games Tutor, this forces the team to start a fresh with players who are inexperienced. This year Mean Machine lost all former players who finished their courses at the university.

The semester system has had its

toll on the team and it affects the general co-ordination of the team.

Administrative problems and those caused by the structural adjustment programme have pushed the club further into the drain. Students have to buy their own food and more often than not they do not get the type of diet that is suitable. This has clearly been seen in the kind of players that are there. Gone are the days of physically fit players, in come the weak, underfed looking players who can hardly sustain

energy for 90 minutes.

Since the last coach, Mr. Absalom Mutere left in 1994, the club has not hired a coach. Mr Ngugi however said that they are now enlisting the services of brothers, Allan and David Bukusi on voluntary terms. He hopes this will help alleviate the problems engulfing the club. Some more serious measures have to be taken if the team for the next season.

Women students strip male visitor in hostel

Chaos as vengeful male students defend 'colleague'

By JACKSON MWALULU AND JOSEPH NGURE

Chaos and mayhem reigned at the University of Nairobi's halls of residence when female students stripped a male student believed to be from Daystar University on Friday night.

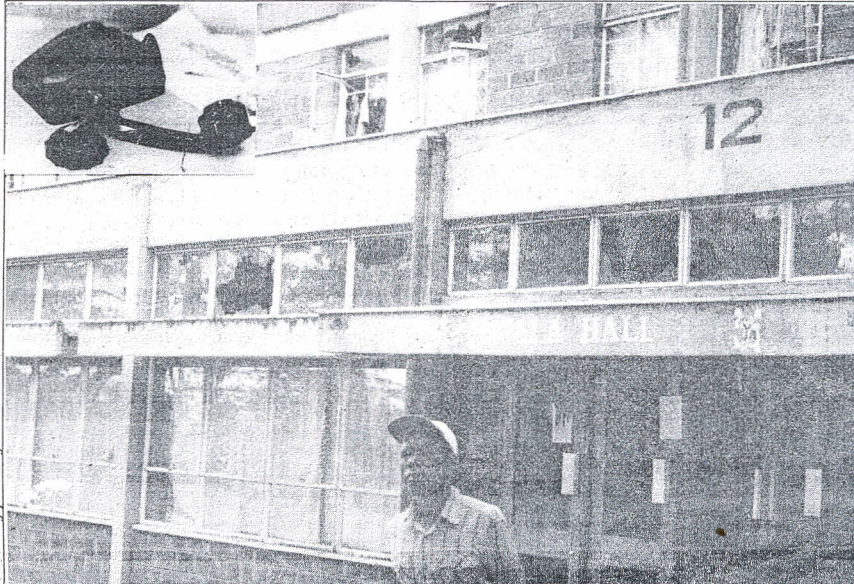
A female student who requested anonymity told *The Anvil* vengeful male students responded by stripping one female student near the Nairobi chapel.

The strange happenings started at around 9.00 p.m. when a female student spotted a man peeping in the bathroom as a colleague was showering at Hall 12. The lady screamed, attracting the attention of the other female students who swiftly apprehended the young man.

The angry ladies thoroughly beat the naked 'intruder', and dragged him to the custodian's office, amid demands of his identity. They then soaked him in cold water and dragged him back to the bathroom where more beating followed, before he was frog-matched to the security offices near Hall Nine as the crowd shouted thief!

The matter degenerated into a male versus female students conflict as male students who were coming from the library rushed to rescue their 'comrade' from being framed by their female colleagues and the university security.

Students stormed the security office in the ensuing fracas, extensively damaging all the furniture and other equipment. When *The Anvil* visited the scene, papers, broken window glass and chairs littered the office floor. A telephone set was also vandalised. After rescuing the victim, they marched to Hall 12 and Women's Hall (popularly known as Box),



Hall 12, the scene of Friday fracas, where male students unleashed terror to avenge a colleague's humiliation. Inset: vandalised telephone set in the security office.

where they smashed windows and doors.

A third year female student told *The Anvil* cases of male students caught peeping in their bathrooms were very frequent. She said "in this week alone, three of them have been caught in the act." This was confirmed by the Hall 12 janitor.

Other sources said the animosity between the male and female students started after the mysterious death of former Kikuyu Campus student leader Mr. Solomon Muruli. The source said as male students demonstrated in the streets of Nairobi, female students were having it easy in their rooms. Annoyed by this unco-operative behaviour, male

students invaded "Box" and burnt down two parked cars suspected to belong to 'outsiders'. Other students attribute the fracas to the usual stress that characterises examination period, as well as financial constraints as most students did not qualify for the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) bursary.

Meanwhile, a student called for a meeting on Monday evening, between students and their representatives, to iron out the differences. The student, Mr. Shivachi Kizito, decried the culture of violence now spreading among university students. He termed the Friday incident barbaric and debasing.

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members into the pension scheme. Citing circulars from Kenya and Jomo Kenyatta universities, the officials challenged Prof. Munavu to prove them wrong. Last week, the DVC challenged the workers to prove they are paid less than their counterparts in other universities.

The circulars, copies of which were availed to *The Anvil*, confirmed workers at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) get commuting allowance of Shs 1500 per month while those of the University of Nairobi get Shs 350.

Another circular from JKUAT detailing housing allowance show workers in grades I and II get Shs 1,600 while those in grades three and four get Shs 2,000. On the other hand, grade one workers at the University of Nairobi are paid Shs 1,030, grade two get Shs 1,200, grades three and four get Shs 1,300 and Shs 1,540 respectively.

The officials had earlier written to the V-C asking him to implement the new rates from July 1992. Commuting allowance was to be Shs 780 for grade I, Shs 1,290 for grade A-F and Shs 1,770 for the academic staff.

The union officials said the administration has implemented the new scheme for themselves and wondered why the university of Nairobi should lack money while other universities under the same chancellor have money.

Mystery fire breaks out in campus room

By DENNIS ONYANGO AND MISHAEL ONDIEKI

A fourth year civil engineering student narrowly escaped death when a mysterious fire broke out in his room at the Main Campus, University of Nairobi, on Sunday night.

The hostel fire comes shortly after the death of former Kikuyu Campus student leader Solomon Muruli in a ghastly fire in his room on the night of February 22-23. His death is the subject of an on-going inquest.

In the latest incident, D. G. Kiama saw flames and smoke at his door in Mamlaka "A" Hostel. He jumped out through the window on the fourth floor and was pulled into the room below his by a fellow student. He escaped unhurt.

Students who helped put out the fire said it must have been started using petrol as there was a strong smell of petrol all over the place. Pieces of bottle

were seen at his door step which was darkened by the smoke. His room mate, G. O. Otieno had gone to visit his relatives in the city estates.

"I was reading when I heard footsteps and opened the inner door to my room. When I saw flames of fire gaining entry, I struggled out through the window and made it to the room on the third floor," said Mr Kiama who looked shaken.

A student who sought anonymity said he saw about four men running from the scene after the fire. Police had not arrived at the scene by midday. The university chief security officer, Mr. A. K. Gacheru, said he could not talk on the issue until he consulted with relevant authorities.

Society officials pocket millions

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man team to "investigate" a part of the rip-off. He has also communicated to Mr. Onyango, a Senior Assistant Registrar in charge of Personnel in the University of Nairobi, advising him not to hold the AGM until the commissioner instructs him to do so.

Mr. Onyango dismissed the allegations levelled against the officials as "a product of malice, ignorance and communication breakdown".

Dr. Simiyu refused to divulge the

contents of the report but conceded that the findings were "explosive".

Last February, Mr. Bomett authorised the re-opening of the society's bank account which had been frozen at last year's AGM pending the probe committee's report. Members had resolved there would be no financial transactions whatsoever.

Yet space has since been bought to advertise for tenders to put up infrastructure on the Kitengela property. In addition, some members have been asked to sign forms to facilitate borrowing of Shs 50,000

per person, per plot, to finance the said development that is unknown to the owners of the society.

The bone of contention among the members was whether this is not a clean way of having their land auctioned. They argue that the housing co-operative society has a diversity of members with varying income levels. "Just in case some members do not pay up this loan in the stipulated time, what next?" posed one member who wanted to remain anonymous.

Picture by Bernard Njuguna



Mr. R. P. Onyango, the Chuna Housing Society chairman