

NEWS GENERAL

REACTION TO DUSIT ATTACK

Authority disowns comments on arming of private security guards

Private Security Regulatory Authority says law has to be amended to allow enforcement

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The board charged with regulating security firms has disowned statements by its chief executive Fazul Mahamed that guards will be issued with guns in June.

The Private Security Regulatory Authority yesterday said the plan to arm guards can only be enforced after the law barring such a move is repealed.

During a meeting at Railways Club in Nairobi last month, Fazul suggested the agency would begin vetting guards to determine their suitability to handle guns.

He said the board would advertise for institutions to conduct training of private security personnel before they are armed. But PSRA vice chairperson Erick Okeyo said the board has yet to decide on any timelines for arming the guards, as an existing law is against it. It has to be amended if they are to be armed.

"There exists no pronouncement by the board on this issue. The board transacts its business by way of resolution," he said.

"For now, our focus is to help the PSRA to fully implement the Act as it were. As the PSRA, we can't amend the law."

Section 53 of the law establishing the PSRA says any security firm that arms guards will be liable to Sh2.5 million fines. The Firearms Act equally bars the arming of a civilian to protect another person for monetary gain.

Dismissing Fazul's assertions as premature, Okeyo said the authority will engage Interior CS Fred Matiang'i to send a memo to Parliament to initiate the amendment.

Security firms will engage the board on measures to be put in place to amend the law.

"Arming guards would be helpful to us, employers, in terms of revenues. We'll charge our clients more for the additional protection. We cannot oppose the idea," Okeyo said.

A meeting has been called at Harambee House on Monday. This will be the second since the PSRA met last May to deliberate on the issue.

The PSRA membership comprises Interior, the National Treasury and Labour PSs, the Inspector General of Police, the Kenya National Private Security Workers Union, the Kenya Security Industry Association, the Protective Security Industry Association, the Residents Associations and Kepsa.

The call to arm private security guards was escalated following last month's terror attack at Dusit hotel, Nairobi, which left 21 people dead.



Private Security Regulatory Authority vice chairman Erick Okeyo during an interview in Nairobi yesterday /JACK OWUOR

Jonathan Njuguna of the African Policy Institute, in an opinion published in the Star last week, advised against rushing the plan.

"Instead, it should look into other alternatives to engage the private

security more effectively," he said.

"Kenya's 450,000 guards working for over 2,000 registered security companies should be transformed into the first line of preventative action."

KID GLOVES

Ministry on the spot over Sh750m owed by oil firms

MOSES ODHIAMBO/ The Energy ministry yesterday was put on notice for failing to collect Sh750 million owed by eight oil exploring companies.

The National Assembly Public Accounts Committee yesterday accused the docket of "treating the firms with kids' gloves", yet the country is struggling to meet revenue targets.

The five firms are Lion Petroleum Corporation, A-Z Petroleum, Kamac Energy Ltd, Rift Energy Ltd, and E&P Energy Ltd. Auditor General Edward Ouko (pictured) flagged the issue four years ago following a scrutiny of the ministry's 2015-16 accounts.

Yesterday, PS Joseph Njoroge was at pains to explain why they had not recovered the cash. He told the committee that they will compel the firms to pay. Njoroge said they have collected Sh24 million from Afren/Octant and another Sh2 billion was remitted by Tullow Oil, Africa Oil, Andarko/ENI, and Far Limited.

Ouko said that had the dues been cleared, the Petroleum Training Fund would have reported a surplus of Sh724 million, instead of the Sh29.8 million deficit. Eleven oil firms have licence to conduct fuel explorations, mainly in Northeastern, Turkana, and other parts of Rift Valley.



COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF WAJIR



ADDENDUM

EXTENSION OF TENDER CLOSING DATE

Wajir County Government wishes to notify the General public that closing date for the tenders No **WCG/T/RT/43/2018-2019 - WCG/T/E/61/2018-2019** which appeared on THE STAR NEWSPAPER on Wednesday 6th February 2019 has been extended.

New Closing Date is on Tuesday 26th Feb 2019 at 10.00am.

All other terms and conditions of the tenders remain the same as per the BQs but changes have been made on the Bill of Quantities for tender number WCG/T/E/61/2018-2019.

**Ag. Director of Supply Chain
For County Secretary
Wajir County Government**

JOBS AT STAKE

MPs oppose bid to have KQ run Jomo Kenyatta airport

GIDEON KETER/ The proposed takeover of the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport by the Kenya Airways will not be viable, MPs have said.

The National Assembly Public Investments Committee yesterday opposed the plan. Chairman Abdulsamad Nassir said there is a lot at stake. The Kenya Airports Authority has been running the airport.

Nassir said the deal between the national carrier and the KAA raises a lot of questions than answers. The committee has written to the Public Investment secretary to disclose full ownership of KQ and its partner, Dutch Airline KLM.

"From the face value, this is a bad deal. As a committee that plays oversight on such investments, we want to get the nitty-gritties. Jobs are at stake and we'll also be interested to know why they want to give it to a loss-making entity," Nassir said.

The government, through the National Treasury, has invested in KQ as part of efforts to return

it to profit making. KLM, which signed a 22-year venture with KQ, is reported to own a 13.71 per cent stake, the government 46 per cent and 11 by commercial banks. The banks converted their debts to KQ into equity.

In June last year, the Cabinet, in a policy statement, said the planned merger was part of the financial restructuring to save the airline from collapse. It was also expected to reposition and model its operations along that of its main rival Ethiopian Airlines, which runs Addis Ababa's Bole International airport.

The public-private partnership was to be signed last September. It would have enabled the takeover of all KAA staff and operations and expansion of its services such as ground handling, maintenance, catering, warehousing and cargo.

The policy, 'Project Simba', showed the Sh75 billion state bailout was insufficient to resolve KQ's problems and recommended that it operate under a comprehensive national aviation policy.

OWED SH2BN

Mission hospitals accuse NHIF of holding on to dues

GIDEON KETER/ Mission hospitals yesterday complained about the delays by the National Hospital Insurance Fund to pay them Sh2 billion.

They said the debt threatens to cripple their services. This came after The Star had exclusively reported that Kenyatta National Hospital is in deep financial trouble following failure by NHIF to pay it Sh800 million.

"Mission hospitals are there to augment services by public health facilities. With such outstanding sums owed, such facilities are struggling to make ends meet," NCKK secretary general Peter Karanja said.

He led a delegation to Senate Speaker Kenneth Lusaka. The Kenya Conference of Catholics Bishops was one of the organisations represented. Lusaka praised the churches for improving healthcare, education and shaping morals.

"I encourage the Church to always speak out and offer guidance."