REPUBLIC OF KENYA

COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF LAIKIPIA

THE HANSARD

Tuesday, 11th March, 2025

The House met at the Assembly Chambers at 2.30 p.m.

[The Speaker (Hon. Lantano Nabaala) in the Chair]

PRAYERS

QUORUM CALL

Speaker: Clerk, confirm whether we have quorum?

(Lack of quorum confirmed)

Speaker: Without quorum I direct the bell to be rang for ten minutes.

(The bell was rang for six minutes)

Hon. Parletto Lekopien: Hon. Speaker, I think we have quorum.

Speaker: Clerk confirm whether we have quorum now?

(Clerk confirmed achievement of Quorum)

Speaker: I direct that the bell stops ringing and we move to the business of the House.

PAPERS LAID

LAND USE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

a) Laikipia County Spatial Plan 2021-2031.

b) Local Physical and land use development plan for Naibor Market center (2024-2034).

c) Local Physical and Land use development plan for Nakwang market center (2024-2034).

d) Local Physical and Land use development plan for Kona Bahati B market center (2024-2034).

e) Local Physical and Land use development plan for Ihigaini market center (2024-2034).

f) Local Physical and Land use development plan for Mithuri market center (2024-2034).

g) Local Physical and Land use development plan for Kona Bahati A Market center (2024-2034).

h) Local Physical and Land use development plan for Ex-Longolois market center (2024-2034).

(Hon. John Gichuki laid the Papers on the Table)

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Speaker: Thank you. I direct that the laid Papers as stated and listed a-h by Hon. Gichuki are committed to the Committee, Finance and Planning.

NOTICE OF MOTION

ESTABLISHMENT OF COTTAGE INDUSTRIES

Hon. Stephen Ndiritu through Hon. Mugambi Gatati: Honourable Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following motion;

THAT, AWARE THAT industrialization with a focus on urban development and infrastructure is a key agenda of the National Government;

FURTHER AWARE THAT cottage industries are small-scale, home-based enterprises that provide employment opportunities, especially for women, youth, and marginalized groups, while promoting self-reliance and poverty reduction;

COGNIZANT OF THE FACT THAT Kenya has a rich supply of raw materials, including agricultural produce, natural fibres, and traditional crafts, which can be processed at the local level to add value and create wealth;

NOTING THAT many talented artisans and small-scale producers lack adequate support in terms of infrastructure, training, and market access, leading to unemployment and underutilization of local resources;

RECOGNIZING THAT the establishment of cottage industries will promote industrialization at the grassroots level, enhance skills development, and encourage innovation and entrepreneurship;

This House URGES the County Government to formulate a policy on establishment of at least one cottage industry in every Ward to absorb polytechnic graduates to alleviate unemployment.

MOTION

ESTABLISHMENT OF COTTAGE INDUSTRIES

Hon. Stephen Ndiritu Through Hon. Mugambi Gatati: Honourable Speaker, I beg to move the following motion;

THAT, AWARE THAT industrialization with a focus on urban development and infrastructure is a key agenda of the National Government;

FURTHER AWARE THAT cottage industries are small-scale, home-based enterprises that provide employment opportunities, especially for women, youth, and marginalized groups, while promoting self-reliance and poverty reduction;

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RECOGNIZING THAT the establishment of cottage industries will promote industrialization at the grassroots level, enhance skills development, and encourage innovation and entrepreneurship;

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This House URGES the County Government to formulate a policy on establishment of at least one cottage industry in every Ward to absorb polytechnic graduates to alleviate unemployment.

Hon. Speaker, this a good motion that was brought by Hon. Kagondu. You are aware that nowadays cottage industries doesn't exist in so many areas. The reason is well known that even the previous ones have fallen. If we can put some policy and introduce every cottage industry in every ward at least the polytechnic graduates that most of them beg you Hon. Members who are sited here to give them employment will be sorted.

Mr. Speaker, every Member sited here get job request daily. If you visit somewhere someone sees like you are potential employer immediately. You will have to know the language to use. In Kenya, nowadays people are somehow emotive due to the national issues. This is a timely motion and I thank Hon. Stephen for bringing it in to this House. I request Members to support it. I request Hon. Member from Segera to second.

Hon. Salim Edung: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I second.

(Question proposed)

Hon. Paul Leshuel: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I rise to support. It is important to have policies that support people from the ground. We have many people who have gone to small scale training in polytechnic but the challenge is the environment where they can exercise their skill. If we have policies, we can be able to identify the potential area and then we build those small cottages.

Mr. Speaker we have many products. Beads and others and if we utilise the opportunities that are there, people will get income. If we don't create ways where people can get income, we will continue having pressure from the ground. People are sleeping without food, school fees problem and those crises, we can manage with very little amount of money.

The moment there is no income, we will realize that all pressure lands to the elected leaders. That is why there is a lot of politics going around. When people are poor and they have no activities to do, definitely people will look for leaders. It is as if the leaders are making them poor.

Mr. Speaker, it is very important to have a policy and to make sure that we implement those policies. We can have policies in the ground but implementation and budgeting will be an issue. It is better to have a policy then we budget for that so that we can be able to know the small opportunities. Mr. Speaker, people are working in the ground. Kenyans are very active but the problem is how they access the income, enterprises and the National Funding. Those are the biggest challenges.

If you go to the ground and get a woman there asking about funds, she will never tell you if there is. Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of people in the Executive but they are not moving from these offices. They are just here. When you go down there, you will work as an MCA, staff and an extension officer. The extension officers should guide, advise and train those people. They should give us the technical way of surviving. Otherwise, those people are suffering.

If you go to the pastoralists and not use your knowledge to treat your animals, you will never get an expert from the County Executive to give you guidelines on the right medicine to buy. It is not the government to buy for them. They should give a technical way so that they can be able to utilise the chance that is there. Mr. Speaker, it is very important to have the

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regulations but now it is our responsibility to push the Executive to come up with those policies so that we can be able to have a budget and put money for the implementation.

Mr. Speaker, this motion is very important because it has touched the people on the ground and the poor people who are living in our county. It is very important and I support. Mr. Speaker, I wish all the Members can see the importance of this and then we can be able to put pressure on the Executive to make sure we come up with those policies. Mr. Speaker, I support, thank you.

Hon. Daniel Mugweru: Thank you, Hon. Speaker for the opportunity given to me this afternoon to make my contribution as we talk about empowering the community, the youth, women and even men. Hon. Speaker, this is a timely motion. It has come at the right time when this nation and Laikipia have so many people who are languishing in poverty. Poverty brings so many things that could not be expected in a nation or family.

Hon. Speaker, before I make my contribution it is important to touch a number of things that are affecting our county directly or indirectly. Hon. Speaker, it is very unfortunate because until now, and this year whereby we are approaching the end of the third year of our leadership, there are people in this county who are still in Egypt. There are people out there who are still thinking of things that cannot happen.

Hon. Speaker, it is unfortunate that yesterday I saw people trying to make Laikipia look like Meru where people live doing hide and seek games. Until now there are people of Laikipia who are looking at Hon. Leshuel walking and think that he was elected to impeach Hon. Mugweru, the Governor or anyone else. There are people who just look at Hon. Gatati while defending an agenda in the House, they think that that courage or boldness is meant for impeaching Hon. Lekopien or somebody else.

They think that when Hon. Lekopien was throwing bottles of water in the House, that energy can only be used for impeaching the Speaker and anyone else. It is the high time we make the people of Laikipia understand that we do not do things because they are just done. Hon. Speaker, some of us in this House are very independent and they think for themselves. Today, if anybody in Laikipia whether rich or poor, wise or unwise feel to impeach the Governor or Speaker, it is not done in social media.

You do a petition and bring into the House. If there is a valid reason, then anybody in this House can move the motion. You do not just sit down and plan your own silly things thinking that this House will accommodate such. Hon. Speaker, some of these things are touching because you do not just wake up, because you want to please your master and do things that are unnecessary. Hon. Speaker, this is Laikipia or Meru.

Meru is where a Governor is elected today, tomorrow is impeached, brought back by court, the third day is impeached and brought back by court and the fourth day is impeached. Mr. Speaker, this is Laikipia. We know the leaders who were elected, we know we are in support of what they are doing. When they do otherwise, that is the time we should be thinking of such things. The people of Laikipia have a responsibility of informing this Assembly wisely.

If there are people who feel they can serve this county better, even if they are government officials, these things are done by government officials. Some of these people who right on social media, we know the owner of the dogs. Some of them are very senior in this government and if they truly feel they want to impeach the Governor Irungu today, tell them to do a petition.

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A petition is not sent on social media but it is brought into this House whereby everybody in this House can move the motion, second the motion, make contributions and defend the motion as long as your petition has valid reasons. Hon. Speaker, we do not need to live by these silly games. Some of these things are done by Honourable Members maybe whom we have in this House.

We cannot live hiding in the sand. Instead of thinking how we can raise quorum in this House, instead of thinking how we can have a cottage industry and thinking what we should do for the people of Laikipia to benefit. We want to start going around here financing young people who are jobless. Instead of creating jobs for them, we are giving them this devilish work. Give them business to do, let us have cottages in every ward, let us engage them in better businesses instead of engaging them in dirty things through social media.

Hon. Speaker, to be precise, I Daniel Mugweru, MCA for Umande Ward know my work. I am a performer and I know I perform. Dirty things are not done by performers. Look for a non-performer and tell them to do the dirty things not performance. How do I perform without the government? I am performing because the government is stable. If I am not performing then I will feel the government is unstable.

That time, is the high time we should do the needful Hon. Speaker but as at now, being neighbours with Meru, it doesn't make us behave like them. We were elected in 2022 to serve the people of Laikipia until 2027. The people of Laikipia voted for us and because they voted, that is work done. We are the ones who are indebted. We pay the debt of the vote that we casted that time. That is what we are doing. Everybody should pay that debt. Let us not start thinking of things that will come after many years.

We are here to stay, the Government of Laikipia is here to stay and it will remain stable unless you bring something to prove that the government should not be stable or you substantiate how the government is unstable. Hon. Speaker, for now the government is stable, it will remain stable and for Members who have sober minds who know what they are doing, they will support it to the end.

Hon. Speaker, today we have a motion here brought by Hon. Mugambi Gatati. It is a good motion that if the Government of Laikipia and if all Members of the County Assembly can support this through budgeting and talking to our people, we can have cottages in every ward. That is how we are supposed to engage our people.

Today we are talking about CBC and I may not talk much about it because the teachers will understand it better but what I am seeing is that we are bringing our nation back to where we were when we were young. When I was in school, if you go to Gakio Primary School, the first thing that you will meet in the office of the Head teacher is a basket.

That basket was made by me when I was in class seven. We also used mud and grass to make the blocks with which the kitchen in that school is built. That is what we used to do during those years when we had art and craft. Today, I see people drawing and doing those things.

Hon. Speaker, if you want to build a house for me, the person who will design that house is me, not the mason. I was taught to do it in primary school when I was young. Today, our young women see a weaved basket and think it is imported. They regard to it as something very strange. I recall very well a sister of the late President Mwai Kibaki; everybody saw her on TV. That was her business. She used to weave so many baskets, and they were hung there.

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Why can we not wake up as a county and have cottage industries in every ward? It is not expensive to do this. It is very cheap.

Mr. Speaker, if we as Members wake up, when setting the budget, if we mean well for the people who are jobless out there, we can make a budget to have a cottage industry in every ward. Some of these cottage industries do not even require more than two million shillings. What is wrong with allocating thirty million for fifteen wards? Where is the big deal in us doing that? We will then be engaging those people in meaningful business instead of them just observing the walking style of John Gichuki and imagining that he can do other things. We can engage them meaningfully.

Yesterday, I took milk at a place called Kinyumbani in this town. The few people who are good at walking around town know the place. That *mursik* has been made right there. I can see that some Members are shocked. It is in this town, and it costs us nothing to start small things in this county. To purchase a packaging machine for pasteurized milk costs us six or seven hundred thousand. Why can't we have at least one of those packaging machines in every ward. We only need one million. Almost every ward represented here has a milk cooler. Why do we have a milk cooler that is not operational yet we can use one million to pack the same milk and sell?

Hon. Speaker, if you go to Cedar Mall or Quickmart today, you will find cheese named Sirimon cheese. It is made at Umande by an Indian. Why can't we have cheese that is made by a Meru, Maasai or anyone else? Some of the Members here can confess what they were doing before being elected. If Hon. George Karuiru was here, he would tell you that he was very good in the business of hides. I know of someone in Nyahururu who used to make suits, and there are some Members here who wear those suits branded as *Jimco.* They are made in Nyahururu.

Hon. Speaker, why can't we wake up and set up those cottages to empower our people at the grassroots so that one day we will be remembered for that? Why can't you do a meaningful thing that can cause you to be remembered for many years instead of being remembered for dirty, silly things which you are doing? I really support this motion because it has come at the right time when we all need to wake up and help our people, not just to sit down and wait for 2027 to dish out money and get re-elected.

Hon. Speaker, let us give those people opportunities to do small businesses, to manufacture small items which they can sell so that even when that time comes, you will meet someone who will tell you that they have walked around the whole of Umande town and had tea and other things from you, and that now is their time to pay back. So, I support and call upon the Hon. Members to not just support but also work on making sure that between now and June, we do some budgeting. Let us not just say things here then fail to budget. We are in the process of budgeting, so let us budget.

Hon. Speaker, even if we are going to try with five wards, let us try. If we tried the first year and did five, the second year we would have done another five, then another five in the third year. By now, all wards would be having cottage industries. Let us not forget that there was one to which we donated a lot of money. We should not forget that we donated millions of shillings. We need to wake up and ask where it is, whether it is helping the people of Rumuruti and Sosian.

Hon. Speaker, we invested heavily, and they owe us. When you make a contribution, you are given a prerogative to question. You can question. So, because we contributed, we need to question. I think we contributed Kshs.250 million and we need to see where it went. It is either we get it back or we get a project that matches that amount, because that was the

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agreement. We make Kshs.250 million, they must give 250 million, and we get a good industry at Kshs. 500 million. If we cannot get that, then we must get our 250 million back to set up small industries in these wards and we will be good to go. Thank you, and I support.

Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Mugweru. I now want to give the chance to Hon. Mwaniki.

Hon. Nicholas Mwaniki: Thank you, Hon. Speaker. I rise to support this motion on establishment of cottage industries across Laikipia County. As Hon. Daniel has stated, we invested heavily as a County Government at Rumuruti on establishment of an industrial park so that we can have small industries in our county and be able to support Laikipians through industrialization.

Mr. Speaker, having invested heavily, I being a member of the Infrastructure Committee say that we need to do an oversight visit of that project because it had a very big chunk of our budget invested in it. As this motion states, we also need establishment of cottage industries in our wards. As we have stated, having TVETs already established in our wards, that is where skills are nurtured. Young people are being enrolled there in droves and we are still offering bursaries to the young people in our TVETs and polytechnics.

Mr. Speaker, if we could visit Tigithi Vocational Training Institute, there is a bakery there. What we need to do is to create a brand for the bread made at that institute and train our people on how to manufacture bread and give more inputs for doing so. That is a cottage industry by itself. If we can open up our TVETs, give more funding and create more workshops financed by the County Government, we can help young people by nurturing them to produce more at the TVETs.

Those are small cottages, so if we can establish metal works and fabrication, we can manufacture metal doors and windows for the buildings being established by the electorate. If we can establish a similar workshop at each ward, our people will be able to purchase such items from our TVETs. So, as we nurture talents, we will be doing production, doing sales and making profits from the same establishment. Having a plumbing workshop will also enable us to nurture our people.

Today, many people in our wards are drilling boreholes. In Kenya today, there is no college that is offering matters concerning drip irrigation. If at all we can have our young people being trained, we can have an industry either to offer those services and employ young people on matters to do with installation of drip irrigation systems and they can make more money. That is the trend in the society installation and conservation of water and that is why as a County Government we should make more input as we conserve water.

As we train our people on matters of drip irrigation systems Mr. Speaker, this is an industry that can be able harness our young people so that they can be able to earn a living out of skills that are left out by TVETs. As I support this motion, more needs to be done and more need to be practiced by this government on the part of Executive because we have got a budget for this. The budget can also be expanded so that it can cover more on small industries so that our people can be able to employ themselves because white collar jobs are no longer available in our society. Thank you.

Hon. Veronica Ikunyua: Thank you, Mr. Speaker for giving me this chance to support this report. Cottage industry is a small manufacturing business that can help people in this Laikipia. When I walk around in this town, I find so many youth following me asking for jobs. If we can only take this business seriously, we can open those small businesses because we

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have products like tomatoes for tomato paste and tomato sauce because in Laikipia we produce a lot of tomatoes and especially in Rumuruti and Hon. Salim's area.

Mr. Speaker, we can also do milk products because we produce a lot of milk in this county. It is only that we are not taking things seriously and as leaders, I would like to challenge ourselves. If we allocate a lot of money and get serious in starting those small businesses, we will definitely open those small cottage industries in our county and the problems of employ me here and there will cease.

Mr. Speaker, we are neighboring Meru County and even in our county, we do a lot of potatoes where we can also do potato crisps. In Machakos, the Governor was doing tomato sauce and tomato paste like five years ago and was doing very well. She had employed a lot of young people in that area and also promoted the farmers. So I would like to appreciate the leader who has brought this report to us and I would wish to urge the committee of Finance and Budget to push the Executive to add more money so that we can be able to support those industries.

Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Veronica. Looking at the mood of the House, allow me to take this opportunity to invite the mover of the motion to reply.

Hon. Samuel Mugambi: Thank you, Hon. Speaker and all the Members who have supported the motion. As you have heard, the Members have got knowledge of the cottage industries that are needed in their ward. I would wish that every Member could speak on behalf of their wards and they have spoken.

I also heard what Hon. Mugweru said and I would like to echo the same words that instead of empowering our young men with cottage industries, they have now resulted to creating posters. I woke up at night and found a poster that they have somebody with boreholes. I did not understand which boreholes they were talking about. They have found someone with balls to impeach the Governor and surely, they posted our names. Even the first person I met at the gate, I don't know whether I usually look like a suspect or how some people view me. Imagine someone just taking my image and posting it somewhere that Hon. Mugambi has got balls to impeach the Governor. That is very wrong because a Governor is not impeached in utopia, or hallucinations.

Things must be done according to order but cannot just wake up and bring a motion to impeach the Speaker. No, because everything must be approached with respect. So, I wish to say that putting our names on the internet was very wrong. Hon. Mugweru was also mentioned of having balls. We need to be told what these balls are because from my English, balls means something else.

They also want to paint our names so that we will be perceived as anti-government MCA's and you know how that perception puts someone in this country. You can see how Wamunyoro is facing hot soup. It is not okay and I don't want to pass that route. So, I want to put my record straight here that I Mugambi Gatati don't have any intentions to impeach the Governor.

Thank you Members for supporting the motion. The motion is very appropriate and Hon. Veronica has put it well that we can put important cottage industries to support a specific line like milk line and dressing. One day Mr. Speaker and I want to thank you for facilitating us to travel to Arusha some days ago, we went there day 1 with Hon. Lekopien and in our daily routine we met a young lady though I cannot remember which route. That lady makes only African prints on dresses.

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She has got an online market only, so she does not sell to walk in walk out customers. So, the first thing there is somewhere you book online. If not that you are asked to go and book online and then come and pick the order. That lady makes beautiful African prints. So, I want to thank you for taking us to Arusha and I would wish to ask you that next time you take us to Rwanda. Thank you.

(Question put and agreed to)

ADJOURNMENT

Speaker: The sittings of this House now stand adjourned until tomorrow Wednesday, 12th March, 2025 at 10.00 a.m.

The House rose at 3.30 p.m.

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