

Kenya Domestic Media, February 21st 2011 (Covering Feb 15th – Feb 21st)

By Fatima Arkin, MIGS Reporter for Kenya

State Owned Media

KBC Online text website, Nairobi, in English 21 Feb 2011

“Court postpones nomination case to 2 March” by Mary Daraja

The constitutional court postponed the hearing of a case challenging President Kibaki’s nominations. A group of NGO’s that mainly advance the rights of women moved to court claiming that the nominations were unconstitutional as they ignored gender equality. PNU, ODM, International Commission of Jurists and the Federation of Women Lawyers in Kenya-FIDA want to be enjoined in the suit. The women who filed the case argue that the nominations set a dangerous precedence and contravene on the rights of women. Tensions persist as MPs in the PNU threaten to file a motion to reverse the speaker’s ruling. However, Prime Minister Odinga urged his allies to remain calm as they prepare for a full-blown war with the MPs.

KBC Radio, Nairobi, in English 21 Feb 2011

“US urges Kenya to resolve nomination row” by Judith Akolo/AFP

US Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, Philip Crowley, said progress in the implementation of the constitution can only be realized if the two principals worked together in a collaborative way that incorporates the views of civil society. While the US praises Speaker Marende’s ruling on the judicial nominations, Information and Communications Minister, Samuel Poghiso, and suspended Higher Education Minister, William Ruto, are asking the speaker to stop claiming the powers of being umpire between the two principals. MP Eugene Wamalwa says those hitting out at the speaker are only serving to divide the country further.

Private Media

The Star, Nairobi, in English 21 Feb 2011

“Israeli mercenaries’ reportedly stalk Kenyan premier”

Prime Minister Odinga is said to have switched his Mombasa home after acknowledging warnings from his security over the presence of the two suspicious characters. The two were allegedly with two locals, one said to be a retired CID officer and the other a local driver. The premier's spokesman, Denis Onyango, declined to comment on the matter. Two weeks ago, Lands Minister James Orengo claimed the premier's life was in danger and even recorded statements with the police.

NTV, Nairobi, in English 1800 gmt 20 Feb 2011

“Kenyan finance minister, MPs censure prime minister over ICC”

Deputy Prime Minister Kenyatta addressed a second public rally with the same message of support for President Kibaki and disdain for Speaker Marende’s declaration that the judicial nominations were unconstitutional. Kenyatta also denied allegations of a conspiracy to escape justice by backing Kibaki’s nominations, claiming “we will go there [the Hauge] and we will defend ourselves.” In the County of West Pokot, the same was replicated. Ruto accused Marende of interfering in the responsibilities of the executive and accused Prime Minister Odinga of being behind his woes with the ICC.

The Star, Nairobi, in English 19 Feb 2011

“CCK tenders for TV signal distributors” by Kingori Choto

The Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) invited bids from investors to set up and operate signal distribution networks, which will eliminate the need for broadcasters to build transmitters all over the country. According to the CCK, the move is aimed at easing entry into the TV broadcast business and enhancing competition in the industry.

“Kenyan minister names more suspected drug traffickers”

Former MP Gideon Moi, Deborah Sanapei and Prezzo are among new names revealed to be in a dossier of suspected drug traffickers tabled by Internal Security Minister George Saitoti. Saitoti told parliament that the dossier was compiled by the American government and presented to him last year by US Ambassador Michael Ranneberger. The same dossier was handed over to Prime Minister Odinga. A preliminary police report absolved accused MPs of any involvement and all publicly known suspects denied any involvement with drug trafficking.

Daily Nation website, Nairobi, in English 18 Feb 2011

“Kibaki insists nominations legal”

In response to Speaker Kenneth Marende's ruling on the controversial nominations, President Kibaki said that he'll await the decision of the constitutional court. Kibaki said that he "was within the law" and that the spirit of separation of powers among the three arms of government should've been respected.

“Kenya MP loses seat”

Justice Isaac Lenaola ruled against Ikolomani MP Boni Khalwale saying his election was not free and fair. Khalwale is the tenth MP to lose his seat in an indictment of the last polls. PNU's Joseph Gitari was elected the new MP for Kirinyaga Central.

Daily Nation website, Nairobi, in English 17 Feb 2011

“Speaker declares Kibaki nominees void” by Anthony Kariuki

Speaker Kenneth Marende said that President Kibaki did not carry out consultations as required by the constitution and the National Accord [and Reconciliation Act]. Immediately after the ruling, PNU MPs convened a news conference in parliament where they condemned the speaker's ruling and indicated that they will contest it. The MPs, who were led by cabinet ministers Uhuru Kenyatta, Kiraitu Murungi and Sam Ongeru, accused Marende of being a partisan player. In contrast, ODM MPs Millie Odhiambo, Rachael Shebesh and Elizabeth Ongoro dismissed the threat and said they were happy with the ruling.

The Standard website, Nairobi, in English 17 Feb 2011

“ICC suspect seeks to address court in vernacular” by Judy Ogutu

Radio journalist Joseph Kirwa arap Sang filed an application to address the ICC in Kalenjin. Sang argued that the charges against him are based on words allegedly uttered in Kalenjin. He wants Ocampo to be taken off the case and an order blocking an issuance of summons or warrant for his arrest until the office of the prosecutor demonstrates that it investigated exonerating evidence. Sang claims that Ocampo's incompetent and is driven by ulterior motives.

Daily Nation website, Nairobi, in English 16 Feb 2011

“SK Macharia's Debt 'Has Risen By Sh13 Million” by Paul Juma

Oceanfreight Transport Company told the high court the amount owed by Mr. And Ms. Macharia "will continue to rise every month if it is not paid". The transport company argued the debtors weren't entitled to a postponement because "being declared bankrupt will not render their appeal nugatory (not valid)". Additionally, the company claims the Macharias' application is based on false premises due to failure to disclose information to the court.

The Star, Nairobi, in English 16 Feb 2011

“29 parties want Ocampo Six taken to The Hague” by Nzau Musau

Twenty nine political parties, excluding ODM and PNU, demanded that MPs pass the electoral laws and allow the ICC to undertake in judicial process. The parties support the creation of a local tribunal that meets international standards. They called for an end to the politicization of the ICC.

The Standard website, Nairobi, in English 16 Feb 2011

“UK won't support Kenya's quest” by Maore Ithula

British High Commissioner to Kenya Rob Macaire said that Kenya should have directly lobbied the ICC to defer the cases. He confirmed that the British government is concerned with the standoff between President Kibaki and Prime Minister Odinga over the nominations. He said such incidences had potential to derail implementation of the constitution, which he regretted was behind schedule.

Capital FM radio, Nairobi, in English 1000 gmt 15 Feb 2011

“Kenyan crew freed by Somali pirates arrives in Mombasa”

Kenyan crew members arrived in Mombasa this morning, but have been blocked from seeing their families for unspecified reasons. Check-ups revealed no serious health problems aside from exhaustion. The sailors were greeted at the port by government officials and South Korean businessman Kim Jong-kyu who participated in negotiations that freed the ship from captivity.

Daily Nation, Nairobi, in English 15 Feb 2011

“Kenyan authorities on alert after clashes between Ethiopian, Somali militia”

Rival militia groups from Ethiopia and Somalia extended their fighting to northern Kenya. Muhammed-zuber, a businessman believed to be a member of the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), was shot dead by gunmen in Garissa. The attack is believed to be revenge for the murder of Mohamed Roble in Dadaab by members of a rival militia.

The Star, Nairobi, in English 15 Feb 2011

“Anxiety as British soldiers offload equipment at coast” by Maureen Mudi

Sighting of the British military offloading equipment caught many by surprise as claims circulated that the cargo was headed for southern Sudan. Kenyan military spokesman Bogita Ongeri said that there’s no cause for alarm as the equipment is meant for the British Army base in Nanyuki.

The Standard website, Nairobi, in English 15 Feb 2011

“Sheikhs targeted for murder in North Eastern” by Cyrus Ombati

Three sheikhs were killed in the past week with the last incident leaving Sheikh Hirsi Mohamed Dubed dead in a taxi cab in Garissa town. Provincial police boss Leo Nyongesa said that the Ethiopian Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) is a suspect in the murder. Nyongesa confirmed the murder of two other scholars in Mandera town and Dadaab. Although the killers remain unknown, members of the Somalian Al-Shabab are suspected to have killed the cleric in Mandera.