

Kenya Domestic Media, March 7th 2011 (Covering Mar 1st – Mar 7th)

By Fatima Arkin, MIGS Reporter for Kenya

State Owned Media

KBC Online text website, Nairobi, in English 1 Mar 2011

“Kenya closes border with Somalia” by Caroline Gakii

The Kenya-Somalia border has been closed indefinitely following threats of attacks by Al-Shabab. Mandera District Commissioner Benson Leparmoriga denied claims that Kenya allowed Ethiopian soldiers to operate from its border towns. Security has been increased and residents are slowly returning home since fighting ceased. One person has been killed by stray bullets fired from Somalia and 10 others injured.

Private Media

Capital FM radio, Nairobi, in English 1000 gmt 7 Mar 2011

“Kenyan premier visits Iran, meets President Ahmadinezhad”

Prime Minister Odinga and Iranian President Ahmadinezhad discuss strengthening ties by furthering political, cultural and economic relations. Odinga said a delegation of Iranian investors will visit Kenya soon to fine-tune areas of greater cooperation.

The Standard website, Nairobi, in English 7 Mar 2011

“Stalemate over rollout of digital television” by Peter Opiyo

At the centre of the tussle is the move by Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), through its subsidiary company, Signet, to sign a deal with Swedish Smart TV to broadcast digital content. Media Owners Association (MOA) accused Signet of giving Smart TV the eight channels local TV stations had given to Signet for testing purposes during the simulcast period. MOA Vice Chair Kiprono Kittony told the Parliamentary Committee on Energy, Information and Communication that they felt short-changed by the deal. Nation's Digital Division Manager Ian Fernandes expressed concern over the accessibility of Smart TV content. Information and Communications Minister Samuel Poghiso and his Permanent Secretary Bitange Ndemo said local TV stations were given time to adhere to the required procedures, but failed to do so. Local TV stations can still broadcast digital content as long as they give new content to KBC.

“Ten arrested over link to al Shabaab” by Cyrus Ombati

Anti-terrorism police officers rounded up the suspects during an impromptu operation in Eastleigh Estate and its neighbourhood. Commissioner of Police Mathew Itere called on Kenyans to be vigilant in social places and in public service vehicles following threats from Al-Shabab.

“Another ship ferrying Kenya arms held in Angola seaport” by Martin Mutua

A ship carrying anti-aircraft guns and ammunition supposedly belonging to the Kenyan military has been detained in Angola for the past twelve days. Strangely, the arms, which originated from the US, were being transported without any official documentation. Military Spokesman Bogita Ongeru refused to confirm or deny Kenya's involvement.

Daily Nation website, Nairobi, in English 7 Mar 2011

“Kenya will not join Somali war” by Aggrey Mutambo

Internal Security Minister George Saitoti said Kenya won't send forces to fight, but instead will beef up security at the border with Somalia to prevent fighting from spilling over. Residents started returning to their homes in upper sections of Mandera town. The border between Kenya and Somalia remains closed as security personnel patrol the area.

“Kenyan police release photographs of wanted Al-Shabab members”

Police released photographs of four alleged Al-Shabab officials operating in Kenya. Profiles are already circulating of five others whom police claim have been planning terror attacks on Kenyan soil. Nine others were arrested in a night operation in Nairobi's Eastleigh estate over the weekend. Arrest warrants have been sought for the suspects.

NTV, Nairobi, in Swahili 1600 gmt 6 Mar 2011

“Kenyan police arrest man on terrorism allegations”

Fatuma Sheh said that her husband, taxi driver Mahrum Siraj, was taken from their home by armed men claiming to be police officers. The family doesn't know Siraj's whereabouts or why he was arrested. Sources say it's possible that he was arrested on allegations of terrorism.

Daily Nation website, Nairobi, in English 6 Mar 2011

“Kalonzo accuses US envoy of being ‘ethnic’” by Kitavi Mutua

Vice President Musyoka accused US Ambassador Ranneberger of perpetrating ethnic animosity in his diplomatic cables to State Department superiors in Washington. Musyoka was particularly angry about a recent cable that claimed he couldn't win the presidential race due to his Kamba community's low population figures.

“Leaders happy with deferral of port sale” by Mark Agutu

The government called off the planned privatization of Mombasa port. However, leaders and workers say they won't rest until the gazette notice of 2008 is withdrawn. A parliamentary motion questioning the motive behind the intended sale of the port and seeking to have it stopped will proceed to its conclusion. Dock Workers Union Secretary General Simon Sang said the government should consult other stakeholders in the restructuring of Kenya Ports Authority management to ensure efficiency and accountability in operations.

“ODM wants Kibaki-Raila talks recorded” by Bernard Namunane

The Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) held a strategic meeting at Nairobi Club to agree on a draft they will submit to the Party of National Unity (PNU) as a guide to consultations between the president and prime minister. The decision to have talks recorded was driven by the need to avoid a fall out in the future.

Capital FM radio, Nairobi, in English 1300 gmt 3 Mar 2011

“Kenya, DR Congo agree on joint probe into gold smuggling syndicate”

Democratic Republic of the Congo President Kabila flew to Nairobi today to meet with President Kibaki, Prime Minister Odinga, Police Commissioner Iteere and CID Director Muhoro. Kenya and the DR Congo are carrying out a joint investigation into illegal gold trading between the two countries following the disappearance of 8 billion shillings worth of gold and the mysterious death of a senior official from the Kenya Revenue Authority.

Daily Nation website, Nairobi, in English 3 Mar 2011

“US police arrive for probe on narcotics” by Mathias Ringa

US Ambassador Michael Ranneberger revealed that US anti-narcotic police are in Kenya to help probe drug-trafficking networks. Ranneberger also said the US will help Kenya fight radicalism among youth who are being influenced by Al-Shabab. The two countries are working to broker peace in Somalia.

“Why Kenya voted against Libya” by Walter Menya

In defence of supporting Tripoli's suspension from the UN Human Rights Council, Acting Foreign Affairs Permanent Secretary Patrick Wamoto said "almost every other country has expressed dismay." Kenya experienced criticism for requesting Al-Qadhafi's support to have the ICC cases deferred. Deputy PM Mudavadi said that VP Musyoka owed the country an apology for seeking support of the embattled Libyan leader.

The Standard website, Nairobi, in English 3 Mar 2011

“Calls to punish those behind Standard Group raid” by Stephen Makabila

Five years after the Standard Group raid parliament has adopted the Arturs Investigation Committee report, but has yet to implement it. Vice chairperson of the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) Hassan Omar Hassan hinted that KNHCR will likely renew investigations given the new powers bestowed by the constitution. Standard Group Deputy Chairman and Chief Strategist Paul Melly supports Omar and emphasizes the importance of press freedom. MP Imanyara said he won't rest until justice is served.

Daily Nation website, Nairobi, in English 2 Mar 2011

“Government freezes printing of IDs” by Alphonse Shiundu

Immigration Minister Otieno Kajwang said the government has to wait until a state of the art plant is set up to create third generation ID cards. In the mean time, waiting slips issued to applicants are recognizable IDs valid in job applications. 2 billion shillings was last budgeted for 3G IDs, but Kajwang said that court cases over a firm`s procurement of the IDs stalled the process. MP Kabogo accused the government of "collective irresponsibility" while MP Mbadi`s concerned that millions of youth won`t have a valid ID and thus not be able to vote in next year`s elections. MPs urged the House committee on administration and national security, together with the Constitutional Implementation Oversight Committee to take up the matter.

“Thousands of Somalis flee fighting to Kenya”

Thousands of Somali refugees are pouring into Kenya to escape fighting between Al-Shabab and Transitional Federal Government forces. Kenya Red Cross spokesman Titus Mung'ou said 3 428 refugees are registered.

“New US budget boosts anti-drugs war efforts” by Kevin Kelley

The Obama Administration proposed a budget of 160 million shillings to fight drug trafficking in Kenya. US Ambassador to Kenya Michael Ranneberger announced that the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) will set up an office in Kenya and that "a hard-hitting report" on the local situation will be included in the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report. The US budget appears to favour Kenya. Funding for military, development and health programs will all increase in the coming year, amidst an overall decrease in American diplomatic and aid programs.

The Standard, Nairobi, in English 1 March 2011

“Kenya to recruit 14,000 new police recruits before 2012 elections”

Permanent Secretary Francis Kimemia said the main aim of the recruitment is to fill a gap that has been created by the 2009 moratorium. The first group will report in May and the second group will report early next year for training at the Kenya Police College and the Administration Police's Training College. The joint Kenya Police and Administration Police recruitment will be advertised next week.

“State steps up fight against piracy” by The Prime Minister's Press Service (PMPS)

Kenya and the EU will host a regional conference on piracy in the Indian Ocean. EU ambassadors met with Prime Minister Odinga to decide on the date. Odinga said piracy poses an expanding threat to Kenya's economy and appealed against the High Court who ruled that Kenya has no mandate to prosecute pirates captured in the high seas. EU diplomats and the government

agreed that a regional as opposed to national approach is needed because pirates are venturing into countries that weren't initially affected.

The Star, Nairobi, in English 1 Mar 2011

“Chiefs collect signatures to support local tribunal” by Hilton Otieno

Chiefs were directed to "secretly" collect signatures to reject the ICC process. Some of the chiefs admitted to forging names on the forms for fear of taking them to the public who supports the Hague. MP Yusuf Chanzu said that he's against the forms, which are circulating his constituency. He'll take the matter to the House this week.

“Al-Shabab threat changes budget” by Peter Kiragu

Treasury Permanent Secretary Joseph Kinyua said the security budget was increased to secure borders with Somalia. The amount is unspecified.

“Mau Mau asks Queen to help find Kimathi remains” by Wambugu Kanyi

Mau Mau freedom fighters urged the British government to tell the world whether their alleged leader Dedan Kimathi was buried at Kamiti or King'ong'o Prison.

“Deploy Kenya Army in Mandera, say MPs” by Isaac Ongiri and Hussein Salesa

Kenyan MPs demand reclamation of Mandera town “seized by Ethiopian militia”. Nominated MP Mohamed Affey blamed insecurity at the border of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia for the absence of a minister of foreign affairs. He said acting ministers aren't respected by their peers and called on President Kibaki to appoint a new minister.

Daily Nation, Nairobi, in English 1 Mar 2011

“No signal yet for pay TV station”

Kenyan court extends order barring Next Broadcasting NGB Kenya Ltd, trading as Smart TV, from operating. Six media houses accused the firm of infringing on their rights by unlawfully commencing with a nationwide paid television transmission. The temporary order will be in place until March 21st when the case will come up for submissions.