

AUDACIOUS BANK ROBBER AND THIEVES Targeting Cash in Transit Run Short of Ideas After Bagging Loads of Cash, Leaving Trails that Give Them Away to Scrupulous Hawkshaws



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QUEST FOR GLORY: DCI Volleyball Women Eye the Highest Podium



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The DCI

April 2024 | Issue 009



DCI's Resolute War on Fake-Gold Scammers

In the wake of transnational organized criminal rings out to fleece gold merchants through shady deals, detectives move out for the bloodsuckers, round up dozens and seize billions of fake US currency.



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I am so delighted to introduce to you the April, 2024 edition of *The DCI* magazine. This is the 9th publication of DCI's biannual journal that highlights human interest crime stories to keep you in the know about our country's security status. As I take over the stewardship of this magazine as the new Editorial Director, I acknowledge the great job done by my two predecessors; Mr Joseph Henry Ashimala, and Mr N. Ireri Kamwende, who led a team of very dedicated editorial board members in keeping this magazine alive. I, too, commit to maintain, if not improve the set standards for this periodical.

I also acknowledge with great admiration the wide readership *The DCI* has pooled since the inauguration of the 1st edition in August 2020. I thank every reader who took their time, not only to read but also to offer the much needed feedback that has enabled us to make major improvements in subsequent publications.

In this edition, *The DCI* delves in the world of most dreaded city fraudsters that fleece cash-rich businesspersons, by luring them into non-existent gold deals before holing up with loads of cash. In our main story, we give detailed accounts of foreign gold merchants who visited the country for business, only to lose millions to gold scammers. Our writers dig into the evolution of the scams in Kenya, citing reasons why the precious metal is still in high demand as well as the state of the industry and its regulatory framework. Still in the story, find out why Kenya's capital, Nairobi, is at the centre of the global gold racketeering rings, and how the arrest of grifters creates a semblance of justice for victims of gold scams.

In the same story, find out how powerful transnational organized syndicates involved in multi-million dollar scams use foreigners against their own to orchestrate major frauds, before issuing death threats to victims who press charges. Luckily, specialized units in the Directorate of Criminal Investigations that are deployed to curtail the shameful trend arrest,

parade and arraign notorious suspects rounded up in various botched deals, significantly crippling criminal networks and ensure justice for the victims.

The highly emotive land issues are also covered in this edition. The man at the helm of the investigative unit charged with land fraud cases gives an insight into Kenyan land fraud and sagas that have generated significant public attention in the recent past, including the repossession of 4,298 acres of land belonging to the East African Portland Cement Company Limited (EAPC) and the disputed Gershon Kirima's 1000-acre parcel located in Njiru, Kasarani. The investigation mechanisms employed to nab culprits involved are also discussed.

In the beat crime section, read about Airbnb nightmares and how underworld activities fuelled by the business have sent shockwaves in the country. Among the incidences covered include the appalling deaths of Scarlet Wahu and Rita Waeni, and the narrow escape of two varsity students saved from the jaws of death at an Airbnb in Kitengela.

Hairdresser Jennifer Mwendé's story is also among the highlighted crime stories, narrating how a phone call led the mother of one to her death trap. A chronological account is given indicating how painstaking investigations by the Homicide detectives saw the arrest of three women implicated in the gruesome murder.

It is my hope that these and many other thrilling and informative stories found in this read will keep you at the edge of your seat, as I wish you safety, security and prosperity in the year 2024.

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I am privileged to lead the country's foremost investigative agency as the 12th Director of Criminal Investigations and mention that my commitment to transforming the DCI into an effective, professional, and transparent law enforcement institution has made undeniable progress on many fronts. Having been at the helm of the institution since taking over in October 2022, we have witnessed major milestone achievements in different scopes ranging from enhanced investigative capability, bolstered partnerships, and augmented efforts in the fight against crime, among others.

The law enforcement landscape has been rapidly evolving in tandem with technological advancement creating not only new opportunities but also new vulnerabilities and threats. As law enforcers, we must not be outpaced by criminals. As such, and under my stewardship, the DCI has systematically and deliberately adopted innovative practices that are more suited to 21st-century policing. This endeavour is anchored on a three-levered strategy: technology, intelligence, and training.

The deployment and leveraging of new technologies and state-of-the-art equipment at the DCI's National Forensic Laboratory and the equipping of the Biology Section of the laboratory with DNA equipment is a key milestone in the practice of forensic science in Kenya. This combined with Technical training and mentoring in all forensic disciplines will ensure DCI forensic experts remain at the cutting edge of forensic techniques and methodologies thus setting the National Forensic Laboratory on the path of the top-performing forensic laboratories in the world.

In the complex, globally interconnected, cyber-enabled criminal environment in which law enforcement agencies across the world operate, a strong and professional

criminal intelligence function is an essential asset. The Criminal Research and Intelligence Bureau Directorate has devolved its Units across the country to provide operational intelligence support to operations and investigations.

Article 244 (d) of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 requires the National Police Service to "train staff to the highest possible standards of competence and integrity and to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms and dignity." In that regard, we are hastening the move to make the National Criminal Investigations Academy a premier institution that will not only train DCI officers but also other government agencies.

In the past years, DCI officers have been undertaking their promotion courses in other National Police Service training institutions. However, after extensive consultations, the Inspector General-National Police Service Mr Japhet Koome approved our request for the DCI to train our officers for Police Constable to Corporal, Corporal to Sergeant, and Sergeant to Senior Sergeant promotion courses.

In this regard, I wish to register my most profound gratitude and appreciation to the Inspector General for believing in the DCI's capacity to train our officers for promotions. Further, this year, we made an important resumption of the Sub-County Criminal Investigations Officers' Course at the National Criminal Investigations Academy. This is one of the many courses lined up to further improve the standards and quality of our investigations. The emergence of new crimes and the evolution of traditional crimes give rise to the need for law enforcement officers to adapt their efforts and capacities accordingly.

Amidst the pangs of limited resources, the strongest pillar of the DCI in dispensing its mandate, is partnerships. The DCI undertakes deliberate and conscious efforts to foster strong and effective partnerships and collaborations nationally and internationally and to train and benchmark with international agencies on service delivery, innovations, and best practices.

Recently, 131 forensic experts graduated having undergone six different forensic courses that were sponsored by the International Criminal Investigative Assistance Program (ICITAP), an initiative of the United States. Suffice it to say that we have immensely benefited from ICITAP's support under its mission to work with foreign governments to develop effective, professional, and transparent law enforcement institutions that protect human rights, combat corruption, and reduce the threat of transnational crime and terrorism. These were just but some of the many courses offered by the United States through their various Programs in Kenya. Moreover, the US Government extended its generosity by donating vehicles, motorbikes, forensic equipment and other crime-fighting resources.

Through our close partnership with United States law enforcement, our law enforcement officers apprehended the Kenyan fugitive Kevin Kang'ethe, suspected to have murdered Margaret Mbitu in Massachusetts sometime between October 30 and November 4, 2023. The United States and Kenya are committed to strengthening law enforcement cooperation to apprehend criminal offenders, eliminate criminal activities, and advance justice.

A fully revamped computer laboratory equipped with 30 work stations and an uninterrupted power supply was handed to the National Criminal Investigations Academy courtesy of the German government. The German embassy through the GIZ program continues to play a vital role in offering tailor-made programs to crime scene detectives, as well as providing key evidence collection and documentation tools that have enhanced the professional capacity of the officers in crime scene management.

Equally, the British government has also been vitally supportive of our endeavour to create a safer nation. The National Crime Agency has facilitated specialized courses aimed at improving our investigative capacity in dealing with organized crimes such as drugs and human trafficking. Further, the Home Office International Operations (HOIO) through the British High Commission in Kenya has sponsored diverse training programs that have

In line with His Excellency President William Ruto's tree-planting campaign, the Directorate partnered with the Israeli government to restore part of the Karura Forest

enhanced the capacity of our officers in dealing with transnational crimes. The British High Commission has also been unwavering in its support of the Directorate, especially in dealing with serious organized crimes and also assisting the Child Protection Unit, through the British, National Crime Agency.

The Canadian Government through the Canadian High Commission has sponsored the training of our officers in operational intelligence analysis. The High Commission of Canada in Nairobi has been working closely with the DCI in efforts geared towards advancing investigations with a transnational nexus including but not limited to transnational and serious organized crime, cybercrime, human trafficking, and child sexual exploitation.

The Italian government is sponsoring the training of our investigators through a program that aims to share best practices and strengthen cooperation in police

training, information sharing, counter-terrorism, drug trafficking, and the fight against transnational organized crime.

In line with His Excellency President William Ruto's tree-planting campaign, the Directorate partnered with the Israeli government to restore part of the Karura Forest. Our cordial bilateral relations with the Israeli government saw the donation of a greenhouse that will be used for intensive vegetative tree growing, a shortcut for seedling production. Moreover, as an institution, we adhered to the calling of planting trees not only during the National Tree Planting Day but on every occasion across our formations and regions.

These among other partners whom we work closely together with including INTERPOL and the United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime (UNODC) have contributed to the positive results that the Directorate has posted so far.

In fulfilment of our investigative mandate, the DCI has made the best use of every capability to find practical and creative solutions to national security challenges. Through painstakingly intelligence-led operations, our officers have dismantled stolen mobile phone syndicates with those involved having their day in court. In support of the Public Service Commission, the DCI is leading investigations targeting public servants who used forged credentials to acquire public service jobs and promotions. The DCI is also leading the war against vandalism of KPLC cables and transformers.


The Directorate has also performed commendably in the fight against counterfeit and contraband products by embracing a multi-agency approach between the Directorate, the Kenya Revenue Authority and other relevant stakeholders in ensuring that tax evaders are arrested and compelled to give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar. This is after it was discovered that businessmen especially those dealing in alcoholic products had devised ways of evading taxation thereby denying the government the much-needed revenue for development and other critical services such as the provision of security, healthcare and education.

Similarly, the Directorate has been at the forefront in the fight against drug trafficking where remarkable success has been realized through conducting intelligence-led operations that have led to the recovery of highly addictive drugs including heroin and marijuana. The swoops conducted in major cities have been targeted at masterminds of the highly secretive gangs involved in the illegal business that has ruined the lives of many young people.


The DCI has also registered great success in anti-money laundering efforts and in the fight against fake money scams, fake gold scams and what is commonly referred to as “wash wash” leading to the platitude “*Deals ni mingi, shida ni DCI.*”

While labouring to fulfill our mandate, I wish to recognize and appreciate the dedication and resilience of all the officers across all Formations, Directorates, Regions and Units who despite the significant challenges we encountered amidst the prevailing financial constraints and with the available resources, together we continue to achieve commendable success.

On an auspicious occasion, the DCI End of Year Party, we honoured our gallant men and women who performed outstandingly in the discharge of their duties, some of whom were at the edge of exiting the service having served the country diligently. These officers were pinned on the DCI’s Wall of Fame which was established on December 6, 2023, a first of its kind.



While thanking the officers for their dedication in service, I want to call upon them to retain their steadfast devotion to our mission of embracing a proactive and professional approach in the investigation of crimes, protection of life and property and apprehension of offenders to ensure we live up to our constitutional mandate.



We boasted of the glory brought by our sportsmen and women led by the African Champion, Corporal Ferdinand Omanyala, the Women’s Volleyball team and the Shooting team to mention but a few.

Importantly, we paid tribute to six of our colleagues who gave their lives while serving our country by unveiling the DCI Roll of Honour. It was a momentous occasion to cherish all officers who paid the ultimate sacrifice without seeking commendation or appreciation. In doing so, it was my wish that every man and woman in uniform take lessons from the heroes to relentlessly remain committed to the cause of our country’s safety and security which our fallen colleagues defended with their last breath.

My end-of-year conference with Directors of various Directorates, Formations and Regional Commanders radiated an in-depth analysis of the year 2023 and consequently, imploring substantial

expectations and what we envision for this year as we discharge our duties guided by our Constitution, the National Police Service Act and the Service Standing Orders.

One of the emerging security concerns in the country is *Femicide*. The surge in the murder of women has grabbed our attention. As a Directorate, we stand committed to creating a nation where everyone, including women and girls, can live free from fear of violence. In response, we formed a team comprising criminal intelligence analysts and forensic experts under the Homicide Directorate, who will partner with other stakeholders to come up with swift and comprehensive preventive strategies that will address this atrocious violation of human rights.

However, in our tireless efforts to fulfill the Directorate’s mandate, I am keenly aware that the nature of our work is closely tied to post-traumatic stress disorder. It is for this reason that we have institutionalized the Directorate’s Chaplaincy comprising an Imam, a Catholic Priest, and a Protestant Reverend who will address the psychosocial issues of our DCI officers.

Meanwhile, the Directorate acknowledges and appreciates the support it has received from the members of the public. It is my wish that we strengthen the existing relationship for a safer and more secure nation.

While thanking the officers for their dedication in service, I want to call upon them to retain their steadfast devotion to our mission of embracing a proactive and professional approach in the investigation of crimes, protection of life and property and apprehension of offenders to ensure we live up to our constitutional mandate.

Mr Mohamed I. Amin, CBS, OGW, ‘ndc’ (K)
Director of Criminal Investigations



Clueless Gold Merchants Losing Millions to Ruthless Gold Diggers Stationed at Africa's Most Strategic Transit Route, Nairobi

By Martin Mwangi

Gold: The symbol and measure of wealth from the beginning of time. Even in the age of fiat currency and cryptocurrency, the demand for gold remains high.

The precious metal is in high demand because it helps individuals in countries with economic sanctions trade without the US dollar. Moreover, the gold industry has weaker regulatory frameworks than those governing the use of reserve currencies like the dollar in the global banking system.

Second, the wave of economic instability in most countries means more central banks are rushing to buy gold as a reserve for their currencies. After all, the US dollar is the primary reserve currency because the highest gold reserve backs it.

Statistics for 2023 and 2024 show that the global demand for gold is way above the historical average. And as the demand for this precious metal rises, so does the number of gold grifters deploying all manner of scams.

Why local and foreign gold racketeering syndicates camp at Kenya's capital Nairobi

On the one hand, Kenya's gold reserve value is way below that of most African countries; Africa supplies one-quarter of the world's gold. Consequently, only artisanal gold mining takes place in the country. So, why do foreigners come to Kenya to buy gold instead of going to African destinations with higher gold reserves, like South Africa or North African countries?

Kenya lies along the transit hub for the illicit gold trade that entails smuggling gold from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to East African countries and finally to tax havens like Dubai. Foreigners take advantage of the unrest and poor regulatory framework in the DRC to purchase gold at a substantially lower price and re-sell it for massive profit in their home countries. Also, Kenya's

geopolitical position makes it a safer travel destination than the DRC.

Therefore, two parallel gold-related crimes are occurring in the country:

- The illicit gold trade, which includes actual gold from the DRC
- The fake gold scams characterized by bogus gold exports that lure greedy foreigners seeking to make a quick fortune from the illicit gold trade. Alternatively, the gold grifters may employ the bait-and-switch scam, whereby they present real gold to their targets and switch it for fake gold without the buyer's knowledge.

One report established that the profit generated from gold scams equals or exceeds that generated from the legitimate gold trade. Moreover, some legitimate gold traders become grifters when they discover they can make more money by selling one batch of gold to multiple buyers.



Golden kitchenware used by a scammer to hoodwink investors. PHOTO /DCI

The Evolution of Gold Scams in Kenya

However, bogus gold export scams are anything but new in Kenya. The mother of all gold scams, by every definition, is the infamous Goldenberg scam dating back to the early 1990s.

You must have heard about the Goldenberg scandal unless you live under a rock. The most prominent names implicated as the masterminds behind the scandal were Kamlesh Pattni (later Brother Paul) and the late James Kanyotu, former Intelligence Director.

So, what was their role in the scam?

Kamlesh Pattni and James Kanyotu were the directors of the two companies implicated in the scam, Goldenberg International and Exchange Bank Ltd.

The two entities received a monopoly to export gold and diamonds in return for privileges, including government subsidies. However, the condition for the subsidies was that the two companies prove foreign exchange gains from their exportation exploits. One thing that shocked the world was that Kenya had trace gold deposits and no diamonds. Therefore, it beats logic how the government paid subsidies to two companies exporting non-existent minerals.

As per the trade policies back then, subsidies were paid in either cash or through indirect means like cash breaks. Goldenberg International and Exchange Bank Ltd received an estimated USD600-USD1500 million in cash between 1991 and 1993 (actual figures remain unknown). Statistics estimate that the highlighted amount accounted for approximately 10% of Kenya's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 1990.

Besides its grand scale, another distinguishing factor about the Goldenberg scam is that its masterminds were the political elite and the politically connected. Their status explains why high-level government officials released such an obscene amount of money to companies conducting bogus exports.

In contrast, the masterminds behind the gold scams dominating Nairobi today are young, common criminals hiding behind an opulent facade. They drive top-of-the-range vehicles, occupy supposed office spaces in the affluent parts of town, and live a lavish lifestyle.

Second, while the Goldenberg scam was a purely white-collar operation, present-day gold scams can escalate to violent crimes like kidnapping and robbery with violence.

Third, while the Goldenberg scam targeted the government and plundered an entire nation, present-day gold scams target foreign nationals. They may also target high-net-worth individuals seeking to expand their investment portfolios.

Fourth, unlike the Goldenberg scam that went unreported for years, the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) has made headway in several reported gold scam cases, including arrests and arraigning the suspects. The Arrests of Grifters Creates a Semblance of Justice for Gold Scam Victims

Below is an overview of the gold scam cases the DCI's operations team has investigated, nabbed suspects, and arraigned them in court.

China Man's Millions Washed in Fake Gold Scheme

When Yong Sheng Yong landed in Kenya on a tourist visa on 8th September 2017, his only intention was to enjoy Kenya's world-famous tourist destinations. Abiding by his travel itinerary, he managed to tour and explore various tourist attractions including the coastal beaches and the Maasai Mara National Reserve, before traveling back to Nairobi where he set a temporary base. While at the Maasai land, someone must have hinted to him of a suitable place of abode, the Swiss Lenana Mount Hotel in Kilimani, Nairobi. Unbeknownst to him, that is where his woes would begin.

Nice to Meet You, Fellow Countryman

The Chinese population in Kenya has been growing steadily in the last decade, and the Swiss Lenana Mount Hotel is among the Nairobi-based establishments frequented by revelers of Chinese origin.



Tools of trade used by gold scammers to hoodwink gold merchants. PHOTO/DCI

Consequently, Yong felt at home at the hotel and even made friends with a Chinese lady residing in the hotel. She identified herself as Vong IOC I.

As the friendship blossomed, Vong revealed to Yong that she was aware of a lucrative business dominant within the Capital's Kilimani area. Being a business owner back home in Hong Kong, the prospect of participating in a lucrative business piqued Yong's interest, causing



103,600. Amount in USD that Global Investment Limited released as downpayment for the supply of 40kg of gold



him to press Vong for details.

Vong therefore informed Yong that she owned a company named Bella ARTI (HK) Limited back in China, one that dealt with various types of businesses including sale of precious stones. According to her, she had some agents in Kenya who bought gold on her behalf and did all the paperwork. They then transported the gold to China, and she would only pay for the precious metals upon receiving the package in Hong Kong where her company was domiciled.

Thrilled at the prospect of dipping his toe in the gold business, Yong asked Vong to link him up with the agents involved in the trade, a request to which she obliged. On 30th October 2017, Vong took Yong to an apartment in Kilimani for a face-to-face meeting with the agents involved in the said gold business. Therein, he was treated to a house tour where he viewed large quantities of what he believed were gold bars. Yong indicated that they took a sample of the said gold to the Ministry of Mining, where it was tested for purity. The test results confirmed that the sample was pure gold. He paid Sh500 for the test and received a receipt No. 3372237 from the Ministry.

Several meetings later, Yong was satisfied that Vong OIC I was doing legitimate business. Therefore, he entered into a contract with Bella ARTI (HK) Limited through his company, G.S Global Investment Limited. Consequently, Global Investment Limited released \$103,600 to Bella ARTI (HK) Limited on 3rd November 2017.

The understanding behind this company-company transfer was that Bella ARTI (HK) Limited would supply 40kg of gold to G.S Global Investment Limited; the gold would be delivered to Hong Kong. Under Vong's instructions, Yong left Kenya for Hong Kong after the money transfer cleared and went home to await the receipt of his goods.

Delivery Failed

However, the due date for the gold delivery lapsed by 20 days, and no delivery was made to Hong Kong. Worried, Yong called Vong, demanding an explanation for the delay. She informed him that one of the individuals doing the paperwork clearing the gold for transportation to Hong Kong had lost a relative, hence the delay. That was the first of many flimsy

excuses he would receive each time he followed up on the matter.

Yong found the delay disconcerting and decided to fly back to Kenya. Upon arrival and in company of a Kenyan friend, the duo embarked on a mission to establish Vong's whereabouts. When their efforts bore fruits they confronted her over the delay. She promised to provide the prerequisite documents so the business deal could proceed as agreed.

However, that turned out to be another empty promise. Frustrated, Yong sought recourse with the Kenya Police by making a formal complaint.

After recording his statement with the police, Yong directed the investigating officer to Vong's location. The investigating officer traced and arrested her, thereafter escorting her to Kilimani Police Station for investigative interviewing.

He Said She Said

While at the Station, Vong confirmed to the investigating officer that she was in Kenya for business but was a resident of Hong Kong and the United Kingdom. Additionally, she stated that she owned an art business in Hong Kong in the name of Bella ARTI (HK) Limited that dealt with western pictures and Asian Jade-seals.

She further admitted to meeting Yong in October 2017 at Swiss Lenana Mount Hotel, where the two became friends. According to her, they discussed various types of businesses that they could do together in future. Moreover, they discussed the procedures for obtaining work permits to enable them to transact business in Kenya.

But that is the far their stories aligned. Vong contradicted Yong's version of events by indicating that it was he, Yong, who had started the gold business conversation. According to Vong's statement to the investigating officer, Yong had inquired about how the said business was done in Kenya and whether she knew any Kenyan or friend who would introduce him to it. At that point, Vong informed him that she had a friend named Fred and would ask whether he would assist.





Crushed padlocks used to defraud a gold investor Sh1 million in a January, 2022 gold scam in Nairobi: PHOTO /DCI

Enters Character No. 3

Later, she, Yong, and Fred, met at the Swiss Lenana Mount Hotel and discussed the sale of gold. Fred accompanied her and Yong to a meeting with a Kenyan agent named Goddy, who would later show them gold. Once done with the mission of the day, Yong called a Hong Kong company named G.S Global Investment Limited and the company expressed interest in purchasing the gold.

According to Vong, at this point, Bella ARTI (HK) and G.S Global Investment Limited entered into a private agreement dated 2nd November 2017. In the agreement, Vong, through Bella ARTI (HK), was to get gold nuggets from Kenya upon payment of a 103,600 USD downpayment. As per the agreement, G.S Global Investment Limited was to deposit the downpayment to Vong's HSBC account number 640-203725-838, account name Bella ARTI (HK) Ltd., registered to the Bank's Hong Kong branch. The money was deposited on 3rd November 2017.

On receiving the money, Vong indicated that she transferred the money to her Kenyan-based lawyer, a Kenyan citizen named Alois Omita. The money in question was supposed to cover the shipment of the gold, tax payments, and other related expenses. During the arrest, Vong informed the investigating officer that Goddy had failed to honor his part of the bargain.

Having taken statements from Yong and Vong, the investigating officer and his team launched a manhunt for another individual, a Tanzanian national named Godfrey Elifadhi Mronga. The investigating officers tracked and arrested

him at the Hilton Hotel before taking him to Kilimani Police Station.

While at Kilimani Police Station, Godfrey made a statement that cast more confusion into the case. He introduced himself as a Kileleshwa resident and revealed to the police that he met Yong in Hong Kong after Vong sent him to the city-state to discuss the sale of gold. He further stated that he had met Yong's brother before they had made a downpayment for the purchase of gold.

Additionally, Mronga stated that after the discussion in Hong Kong, he returned to Kenya hoping to hear about Vong's progress and get a payment for the gold. Furthermore, he claimed to have received no payment by the time of his arrest. Consequently, he promised unconditional cooperation with the police to ensure all the victims receive justice.

According to the Investigating officer, Vong OIC I had documents relating to the botched gold sale during her arrest.

However, she refused to give the account details of her supposed lawyer, Alois Omita, to whom she claimed to have sent the money from G.S Global Investment Limited.

The investigating officer further established that the agent said to have handled the sale of the said gold was not captured in the agreement between the two companies. Furthermore, whereas the parties met and discussed the deal in Kenya, the financial transactions were conducted outside Kenya, further complicating the search for justice.

And so We Wait

After years of investigation and correspondence between the Directorate of Criminal Investigations and the Office of the Director Public Prosecution, only time will tell whether the adage, "the wheels of justice turn slowly, but grind exceedingly fine," stands true.



Fake US currency recovered in a major raid at an office set-up within Nairobi's Thome Estate:

PHOTO/ DCI

EJECTED FROM FLIGHT

In yet another case of ruthless underworld operators crawling to the land of the living hell-bent to cannibalize traders, the month of October, 2023 saw detectives neutralize a ring of fake gold dealers when a renowned political figure implicated in the vice was arrested.

Having escaped several police dragnets few months prior, one of Nairobi's infamous gold scammers Jonathan Okoth Opande alias Okoth Magawi was rounded up.



Jonathan Okoth Opande alias Okoth Magawi when he was ejected from a Kisumu-bound KQ flight in October, 2023 over gold scam deals: PHOTO / DCI

Opande, also known as Chairman or Kiongozi, was ejected from a Kisumu-bound KQ flight on October 6, 2023 afternoon, by hawk-eyed sleuths who had gotten wind of his last minute travel itinerary. The suspect who unsuccessfully contested the Nyakach parliamentary seat in the 2022 general election had been engaging detectives in cat and mouse games and remained on police radar, after he was named in a fraud case involving two Thai nationals. In the case, Kiongozi had allegedly swindled the two over Sh13 million in a fake gold deal.

According to a complaint lodged at the Royal Thai Embassy in April, 2023 by Messrs Kitvisit Songsri and Nutsaphol Songsri, the suspect posing as the Chief Executive Officer of Blu Afrique LTD obtained money from them in the pretext that he would supply them gold whose quantity was not immediately established.

The two foreign nationals had traveled to the country on April 17 to seal the deal when they realized days later that they were the latest victims of Nairobi's notorious fake gold dealers.

The duo had been introduced to Kiongozi by his accomplice Fred Obach Oliech, who was arrested on August 23, and made to have his day in court.

A raid conducted at the office of Kiongozi in Lavington's Gatina area led to the seizure of KRA export seals, a dust coat branded Ministry of Mining and digital weighing scales among other crucial exhibits. The suspect and the exhibits were processed at Buruburu Police Station.

Back up arsenals for raw deals

But this was not the first time big names borne by influential and political figures were being adversely mentioned in, not just gold scams but also other forms of money laundering. By the time Jonathan Okoth's criminal deals were being uncovered in October 2023, detectives' hands were still tied to yet another common face in the world of scam. This was Seth Steve Okuthe, who was on February the same year implicated in Sh67.3 million gold scam. Steve's was not just the fake gold or the 534,000 USD he and his gang swindled, but also the discovery of two firearms and over 470 rounds of live ammunition.

Steve, a two-time aspirant for the Karachuonyo Member of Parliament seat in the 2017 and 2022 general elections, albeit unsuccessfully, was found in possession of a Beretta pistol loaded with 13 rounds of ammo. His accomplice, Samuel Waithaka, was in possession of a Sigsauer P229 pistol. Detectives believed there was a third firearm, a Gilboa rifle, based on the confiscation of hundreds of 5.56mm ammo that are fired by the submachine gun.

Steve, also the director of NewSkys Global Cargo Movers was the first to be arrested in his Kilimani suburb offices. The rest of his team was rounded up at the leafy suburbs of Lower Kabete, Kitisuru. In the case, Ms Marjorie R. Grant, an American-based investor from Los Angeles was crying foul. She had lost millions to a syndicate that was proving more dangerous, given the weapons found on them.

Indeed, her case suffered a rough sail at Milimani Law Courts when she didn't show up to give evidence, perhaps for fear of her personal security while in the country. Other exhibits collected from Steve's offices included cheque books, laptops, stone bars coated with golden and silver colours, metal analyzer tools, cash counting machines, rubber stamps among others.

In the course of the operation, an Indian national who had just jetted into the country was saved from the jaws of a Sh25 million gold scammer. Just like Marjorie Grant, Siva Sakthi Veru had travelled all the way to seal a business deal with Steve,

only to be caught up in the police raid. Had police not showed up in the nick of time, Sakthi would have touched down back to Mumbai Sh25 million poorer.

Deeper into the diddles

But it was not the first time Steve was at loggerheads with the law over scam. In 2020, he was among four suspects nabbed by the DCI for defrauding a Niger national Sh21 million. He was the main suspect, who lured the foreigner to his Lux Cargo Group offices located at the Sigoin warehouse within Jomo Kenyatta International Airport. In the fraudulent scheme, Steve pretended to be facilitating the smooth and expeditious movement of the victim's gold from Abidjan in Cote d'Ivoire. After receiving the payment, the scammers had vanished leaving the Niger man stranded, until detectives stepped in.

Again in May 2021, the fangs of the then 51-year-old Okoth, poisoned an Italian preacher-turned-gold merchant, when he washed the foreigner of Sh19.5 million. Jointly with a Nigerian national identified as Gideon Nuka, Seth Steve entered a deal with the Italian to deliver a shipment of gold to Dubai but failed. From the onset, no delivery worth the amount was to be made. Word had it that the Nigerian suspect had been following the preacher in his gospel missions all over the world, but not as a faithful. His was a plot to find the opportune time to strike.

When he finally landed in Kenya, Nuka introduced him to Seth who showed him a cargo which he believed was gold. Thrilled, he bought some of it and even went ahead to pay a significant amount to have a private jet deliver his consignment in Dubai. That transaction marked the beginning of his woes and a court battle with the two.



A branded dustcoat found at a crime scene in Gatina, Lavington where Okoth Opande had set up his office. PHOTO/DCI

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Underworld Activities Fuelled by Airbnb Businesses Send Shockwaves in the Country

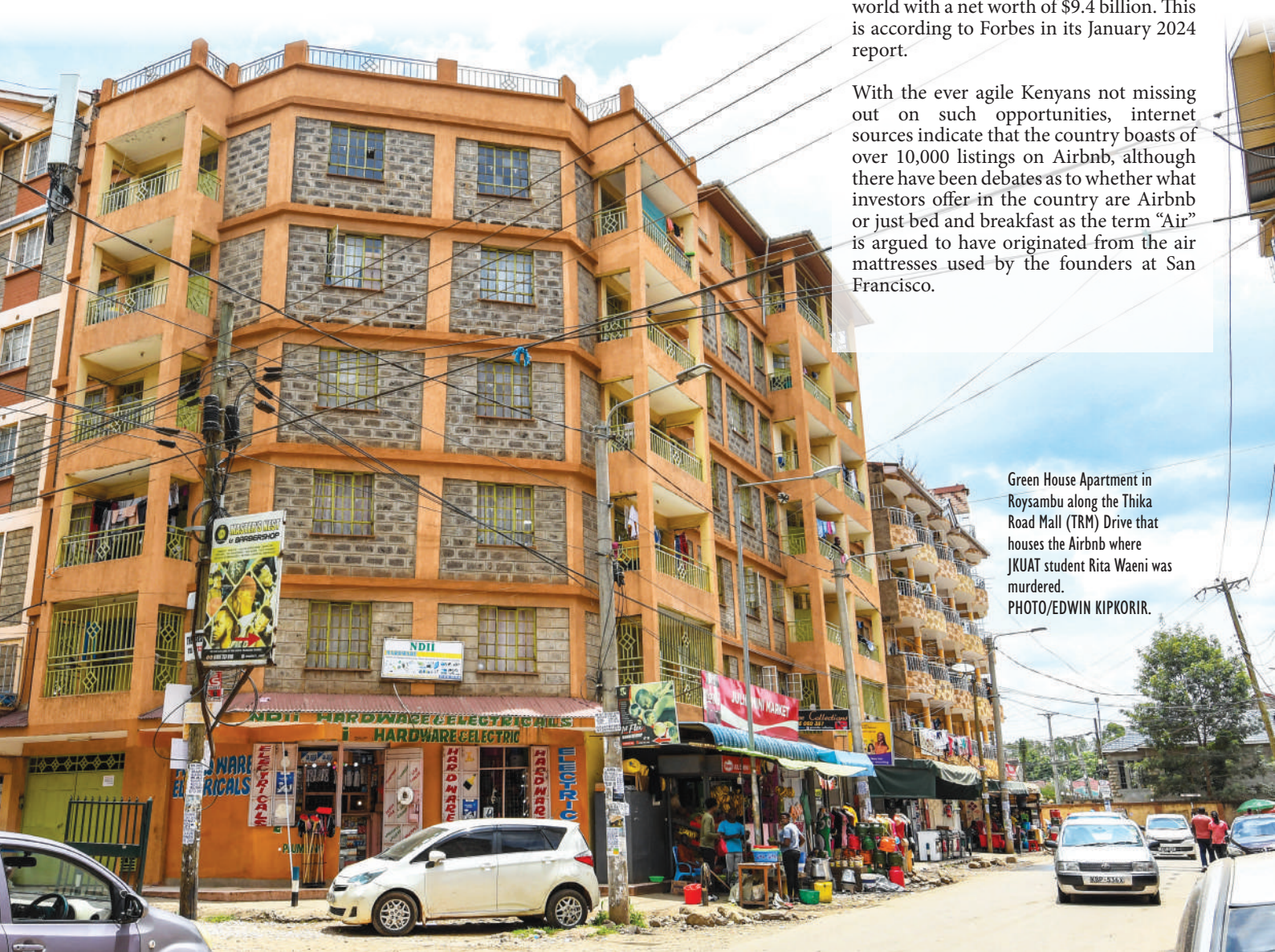
By Jonah Kimani

Usually, bed and breakfast (commonly referred to as Airbnb) is a service that allows house owners to rent out their spaces to travellers or tourists for a short-time stay. It is a business said to have been founded in 2007 by two roommates in San Francisco, when the two who were struggling with their house rent identified an opportunity during a design conference. With just an extra air mattress, Brian Joseph Chesky and Joe Gebbia are said to have earned a fortune when they turned their living room into a lodging space to accommodate guests attending the conference at a fee.

The idea then spread fast across the globe, putting millions of people into business. So much for an idea that sprung from a sad state of poverty, Chesky, 41 ranks 232nd among the richest persons in the world with a net worth of \$9.4 billion. This is according to Forbes in its January 2024 report.

With the ever agile Kenyans not missing out on such opportunities, internet sources indicate that the country boasts of over 10,000 listings on Airbnb, although there have been debates as to whether what investors offer in the country are Airbnb or just bed and breakfast as the term "Air" is argued to have originated from the air mattresses used by the founders at San Francisco.

Green House Apartment in Roysambu along the Thika Road Mall (TRM) Drive that houses the Airbnb where JKUAT student Rita Waeni was murdered.
PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR.



But this marketplace that offers accommodation-booking services online has not been without controversies in the country, with citizens calling upon the government to further regulate and adopt more stringent measures of control owing to the recent spate of crimes perpetrated by clients.

Going by the trend, it is a business that has taken a shift from budget-conscious customers who looked for convenience and affordability to target holidaymakers seeking unique experiences. But not just for the business, merrymaking and convenience, evil has also found a way of creeping from the underworld through this opening, the effects of which are shocking.

Whereas many criminal cases have been reported revolving around these vacation homes within the decade that the business has been operational, criminal investigators noted a rapid surge from 2023, with the said rooms being turned into hostage facilities for abducted victims. In some unfortunate occasions experienced in the recent past, the hostages end up dead and it is after days of scrupulous search that their bodies are discovered.

In one such cases where detectives came in time to overturn a would-be double homicide for tertiary level students, kidnappers booked an Airbnb in Kitengela, Kajiado county where they held their victims for 6 days.

In the classic case of 'All are not hunters that blow the horn' reported at Kiambu Police Station on October 29, 2023, an alleged lady who identified herself as Debbie Zablon separately lured two 21-year-old male students for a meet-up at a common venue in Nairobi, and just like the biblical Samson in Delilah's arms, surrendered them to their kidnappers. The suspects who allegedly waited in a private car had then led the terrified students to an apartment in Kitengela where they started demanding for a Sh6 million ransom from their parents.

But painstaking investigations by DCI sleuths who took over the matter revealed a rather interesting modus operandi by the kidnappers, who would be ambushed days later in a stealth operation.

In the establishments, detectives learnt that the victims had not just been caught up in a coincidental kidnapping, but that a background check targeting one, a student at the Kenya Aviation College had been properly analysed.

The suspects, Brian Ombasa Omoso, 25 and Humphrey Hinga, 22 were believed to have stalked the student (whom The DCI



Brian Ombasa Omoso, 25 and Humphrey Hinga, 22 in cuffs after they were arrested in Kitengela for kidnapping two varsity students. PHOTO / DCI

shall identify by one name, Lemaiyan) through his facebook posts, and somehow used a contact to know the financial muscles of his parents before embarking on an abduction plan.

The miscreants had then used a stolen identity card belonging to a female Ms Zablon Debbie to register a Safaricom line. The owner (Zablon), who was later identified to be a female student at Catholic University, had reported the loss of her ID card at Langata Police Station. She had lost it while at Tom Mboya Street in Nairobi CBD.

Armed with the sim card identifying him as Zablon, Brian Ombasa verified the use of a female voice feature that made him sound like a damsel, before hitting the Lemaiyan's inbox with romantic messages.

He also stalked the actual Zablon's online platforms and downloaded her photos, which he used to upload on his newly

acquired account to further lure his victim.

With a young woman bearing his true definition of beauty calling, Lemaiyan gave in to online conversations but not before insisting on knowing how "she" had gotten his contacts.

But Ombasa was top on the game. He had been following the Lemaiyan's online posts which included several family events. He therefore referred to one such family event conducted by the Lemaiyan's brother, and alleged to have been in attendance. Somehow convinced and hoping to gather more details after their first meet-up, he was in for a date.

Meanwhile, to bring the second suspect into the picture without raising any suspicion, Ombasa (still in the guise of a lady) reminded his target that "she" would usually pass by "her" dad's office to help him in the afternoons after which a family driver would drop her home. Hence, on the material day when they were ready to strike, Ombasa brought on board his accomplice Hinga, who hired a car from a taxi driver based in Kariobangi and changed the registration number plates into fakes.

Ombasa then called Lemaiyan informing him that "she" was sending him their driver to pick him up and take him to the intended venue. The venue was to be a party organized by "Zablon", hence it was okay if Lemaiyan tagged a friend along. Ombasa then shared Hinga's number and asked them to coordinate on the pick up since "she" would be held up for some moment clearing her desk.

Lemaiyan reached out to his friend Issack, a student at Kenyatta University and together set out for the "party". After picking them, Hinga called and a female voice directed them to Quiver Lounge in Kitengela, but not before picking up another friend along the way. While the communication between the driver and "Zablon" did good in convincing the two sheep being led into a slaughter house that all was well, what never occurred to the was the fact that the alleged "friend" would be Ombasa in his true criminal nature.

for a ransom of Sh600,000 from Daisy's family. They then drove to Ruiru around OJ restaurant where they took a 2 bedroomed Airbnb and locked Daisy in one of the bedrooms.

Mwende who had since joined the kidnappers took the other bedroom where they made merry with her partner, after Daisy's family raised and sent an initial Sh50,000. Unbeknownst to the thugs, detectives who had received a distress call from Daisy's family were closely monitoring their movements as they operated between Thika, Murang'a, Kajiado and Ruiru during the day, in a bid to outwit the officers.

After obtaining actionable intelligence, Crime Research and Intelligence Bureau detectives sharpened claws on the four with the stealth of a leopard and finally pounced on them on January 30 at the apartment. A brief altercation had ensued as sleuths introduced themselves to the thugs who were in denial that roads had closed on them. Defying orders to willingly surrender and lead the detectives to the hostage, the suspects engaged the officers in a fistfight but were neutralized with the use of minimum force. The successful raid which was supported by detectives from Nakuru and Ruiru saw four suspects arrested and Daisy rescued.

Further investigations revealed that the main suspect, Simon Akuteka, was a fugitive who had several cases of stealing motor vehicles pending before courts in Nairobi and Kisumu. A second suspect,



John Mbau, 38, also had similar motor vehicle stealing cases pending before several courts, while the third Elijah Chege, 31, was a small-time miscreant based at Witeithie in Kiambu, who was just an intern in the world serious crimes. As for Faith Mwende who conspired against her friend and course mate, being a guest of the state for the first time in her life killed her dreams of ever convincing anyone that she was a beautiful soul.

In both incidences, the victims were lucky to escape with their lives, although it took months for them to recover from the shock of their close shave with angels of death.

But not so lucky for Starlet Wahu and Rita Waeni whose monstrous murders in two separate vacation rooms sent the entire globe into jitters. The horrendous scenes left behind by their killers only depicted hours of untold pain they suffered in the hands of men they had trusted to give them love in the least.

In her case, Wahu's body was discovered on the morning of January 4, 2024 at a 4th floor Airbnb room Y32 of Papino apartments located in Nairobi's South B, after the watchman reported seeing the main suspect, John Matara flee. He was in bloodstained clothes.

The female owner of the house who had let it out to Wahu and Matara for a night had to use a spare key to unlock the house which the suspect locked from the outside while fleeing. When the door flung open, right in front of curious neighbours spread the horrifying scene of the deceased's body sprawled on the floor.

Makadara detectives who were alerted rushed to the scene to find the young woman's body soaked in a pool of flood, lying midway from the



bed towards the main door, an indication of an attempt and struggle to call for help.

Examination of the body revealed a stab wound on the head near the left ear, a deep cut on the right thigh and a human bite on the left arm. Broken glasses and splattered blood throughout the room evidenced a moment of life and death struggle.

John Matara, 34 would later be traced to Mbagathi Hospital where he was seeking treatment for slight arm and leg injuries. He was arrested alongside his 25-year-old friend who was helping him at the hospital and escorted to Industrial Area Police Station. His friend was later released when the detectives learnt that he had no clue nor involvement in the murder, but only rushed to Matara's aid on word that he had been attacked by robbers.

Investigations conducted pointed to a possible serial sexual offender who thrived on blackmail to his victims, and who could be part of a criminal ring that targeted women on online dating sites and other social media Apps.

Indeed, when Matara was mentioned as the main suspect in the murder, young women in their numbers took to social media to narrate their ordeals in his hands.

But even before the dust could settle with detectives cautioning members of the public to beware of such felons in the guise of lovers, who promised heaven but unleashed hell on those who fell for their plots, another more disturbing murder



Some photos of the late Starlet Wahu shared on her social media account. PHOTOS/ COURTESY

at an Airbnb was reported in Kasarani, Nairobi.

The dismembered body of a young lady stashed in polythene bags was discovered dumped in a garbage collection point of the residential apartment that housed the Airbnb at Roysambu, Kasarani. This was Rita Waeni, a fourth year student at the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT).

A man who invited Waeni had on January 13, booked the Airbnb from the property

manager identified as Risper Muthoni, who guided him on where he would collect the key to the room. The unidentified middle aged man had then moved in with Waeni, and it was until the following day morning that the lady's mutilated body was discovered. The man was long gone.

Although investigations that are still ongoing have seen several suspects linked to the gruesome murder arrested, one can only imagine what the last moments of the varsity student felt like. Truly, not even an

animal set for slaughter or anything with life need to go through what Waeni faced towards her last breath.

Wahu and Waeni's cases triggered a nationwide campaign in the country condemning femicide and calling upon men to respect the place of women in the society. Indeed, it wasn't just about the killing, but any form of molestation that women went through in the hands of men whom they believed were there to protect them.

On January 30, 2024, the DCI on its X and Facebook accounts joined the campaign, further indicating that a team of specially trained investigators from the Homicide Directorate had been firmly instructed to expedite investigations on serious sexual offences and murder incidents involving women, with a view to put to an end the worrying trend of femicide in the country.

The team which comprised criminal intelligence analysts and forensic experts was to come up with swift and comprehensive preventive strategies to address the atrocious violation of human rights.

It was a trend the Director of Criminal Investigations Mr Mohamed I. Amin swore to wipe out, pointing out that the killings had cast a dark shadow over the country safety and security and it was DCI's responsibility to put the menace to an end with remarkable speed and finality.



John Matara in court in answer to summons over rape, theft charges. PHOTO /COURTESY



Photos of Miss Rita posted on her social media platforms- PHOTO/COURTESY.



DCI partners with UNODC, EAPPCO and CTCoE in a terrorism workshop at Ole Sereni Hotel Nairobi on November 7, 2023. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR



Director DCI Mr Mohamed Amin receives state of art forensic equipment from the United States, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Agency represented by the Director Kevan Higgins at the DCI Headquarters on February 8, 2024.

PHOTO/ELIJAH GAKUYA



Mr Mathias Walls, the US-Drug Enforcement Agency country Attaché during a courtesy call to Director DCI Mr Mohamed Amin on February 12, 2024.

PHOTO/LAWRENCE SAFU



The Deputy Director DCI Mr John Onyango (centre) during the closing of Interdicting Terrorist Activities course in partnership with US Anti-Terrorism Assistant Program at National Criminal Investigations Academy on February 16, 2024. PHOTO/NELSON NGALA



The Canadian High Commissioner to Kenya H.E. Christopher Thornley and the Director DCI Mr Mohamed Amin in a group photo shortly after closing Operations Intelligence Analysis Course at the NCIA that was sponsored by the Canadian Government on February 3, 2024. PHOTO/ELIJAH GAKUYA



DCI Director Mr Mohamed I. Amin operates one of the 30 computers donated by The Federal Republic of Germany to the NCIA on January 11, 2024. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR



The Anti-Terrorism Police Unit Chief Mr Said Kiprotich (far left) with Staff Delegates from the United States led by the Staff Director of the House Rules Committee Ms Kelly Dixon Chambers in a courtesy call to ATPU Headquarters on February 20, 2024. PHOTO/DIANA GITHAIGA



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How Nairobi's Fake Gold Scam Syndicates Operate

As highlighted above, most criminals in Nairobi's gold scam live a flamboyant lifestyle. Consequently, they hide in plain sight among Nairobi's elite in affluent neighborhoods like Kilimani, Kileleshwa, Runda, and Kitisuru.

The affluent facade they present allows them to lower and disarm their victims by earning their trust. Moreover, they introduce themselves to the victims using aliases rather than their actual identities. Also, while they are not politically elite, in most cases, they claim to have ties to government officials who have the influence to hasten the purchasing process. Moreover, others impersonate government officials.

The criminals target foreigners primarily because of their high net worth and often look to expand their investment portfolios. Additionally, foreigners are unfamiliar with Kenya's import-export regulations. Therefore, they are susceptible to bogus charges masquerading as consignment clearance fees, taxes, mining fees, and licensing certificates. Their ignorance allows the gold grifters to pull off long cons by inventing lengthy procedures and demanding money to cover bogus costs with each step.

Based on the cases highlighted above, the most prevalent gold scams are counterfeit gold, failed gold delivery (because it's nonexistent), fraud, and bait-and-switch. So, how can buyers avoid falling into the traps of these scammers? Keep reading to find out.

Tips to Avoid Falling for Gold Scams

- Do not pay cash for any gold transactions. Gold scammers insist on cash payments to avoid leaving a paper trail. Also, carrying such large amounts of cash makes you a target for robberies, which can escalate into violence very quickly.
- Use a trusted Escrow service to hold the payment and only authorize the release of funds after receiving the agreed product.
- Avoid shady underground deals. Only purchase gold from a licensed and registered seller. Contact the Ministry of Petroleum and Mining, State Department for Mining, to verify all dealer and mineral licenses before any trade.
- Walk away from any deal that feels rushed. The scammers often create a sense of urgency while counting on you to get caught up in the excitement of a quick deal so that you lower your guard.
- Consult an independent legal counsel, an advocate of the Kenyan high court with sufficient knowledge of gold purchase and customs regulations. Such an expert will flag any bogus processes intended to make you shell more than agreed in the deal immediately.
- Conduct due diligence on gold traders to ensure they use their real identities. You can also investigate any court cases or previous run-ins with the law.

Bottom Line:

The most significant challenge to curbing the gold scam upsurge is that most victims operate on the fringes of the law. They come to Kenya to partake in illicit trade, a crime in itself, making it challenging for them to receive justice in court. Indeed, in a 2021 ruling regarding a case where a Swiss national alleged to have been defrauded 143,762 USD in a raw gold trade, the presiding magistrate freed the suspect on the wonder why an international businessman (complainant) has been so comfortable moving around with loads of cash when the world had moved to paperless transactions.

Nonetheless, the DCI is committed to maintaining law and order and preserving the dignity and property of all individuals within Kenya's borders.

Gold-hunting Foreign Couple Kidnapped, Robbed

Fake gold scams can switch gears from white-collar cons into violent crimes, as happened in Nairobi on October 28th, 2023. During the business deal that turned into a kidnapping, four suspects attacked and robbed a foreign couple over Sh13.5 million in cash and valuables.

The couple, an Australian man and his Ugandan wife, came to Kenya from Uganda after their would-be attackers lured them to Nairobi to close a gold business deal. A contact person who identified himself as 'Raymond from England' had days earlier connected the couple with one Felix Ochieng Nyongesa, who posed as the seller.

Felix engaged the couple via Whatsapp before asking them to meet him at Village Market in Gigiri, Nairobi, where

they were to conduct business on the material day. The couple went to the venue, and Felix sent a driver who picked them up in a Toyota Prado.

The driver took them to an office setting building along Glory Road in Runda. Unbeknownst to the unfortunate couple, more than ten men lay in wait at the entrance.

The band of men lying in wait ambushed and subdued the couple, unleashing violent blows and even strangling the husband. On the other hand, they handcuffed, slapped, and molested his wife.

Eventually, the criminals robbed the couple of \$60,000 in cash and other valuables, including jewelry worth \$30,000. They hurled them back into the vehicle and dumped them at Rehema House within Nairobi CBD while badly injured. Fortunately, good Samaritans helped the traumatized couple to a South B Hospital, where they received treatment before reporting the incident to DCI Gigiri.

On receiving the report, a DCI operation team and crime research detectives launched a manhunt for the perpetrators. Forensic evidence placed four suspects, Jack Ouma Okwiri, Nashon Otieno Angudha, Felix Ochieng' Nyongesa, and Ronald Arani Kirera at the crime scene.

Consequently, the detectives traced and arrested the first three suspects at the Social House Hotel in Nairobi. At the same time, they caught the fourth suspect at an office setup building in Runda Glory Valley no. 685.

The detectives also recovered cash-counting machines, metallic boxes, forged certificates of mines, customs reflector jackets, military boots, KRA certificates,

Fake Gold scams can switch gears from white-collar cons into violent crimes

stamps, a Kenyan flag, and fake golden metal during Arani's arrest.

Upon completion of investigations and in consultation with the Director of Public Prosecution, DCI officers arraigned Nashon Otieno Angudha, Felix Ochieng' Nyongesa, and Jack Ouma Okwiri at Kibera Law Courts. All three suspects pleaded "not guilty" to charges of robbery with violence and committing an indecent act with an adult.

They also pleaded "not guilty" for being in possession of forged bank notes, making a document without authority, forgery, and conspiracy to defraud. They were released on a Sh1 million bond with an alternative of Sh 300,000 cash bail. The case continues at Kibera Court number 5.

Scam, Scam and More Scams

Suspects in Baffling USD 439 Trillion Fraud Arrested in Nairobi

Before delving in the underworld of the elephant in the room (actual gold scams), the DCI has had to deal with twin menaces, whose fashions and styles take after gold scam schemes; money laundering and other serious frauds. Well, unauthorized ventures in mineral trade are majorly involved in money laundering, a practice

they shield behind to blur their money trail in an attempt to evade justice. DCI crime investigators have, however, been top of the game, hunting them down relentlessly. This is in the institution's endeavor to preserve the Nation's dignity as a hostile zone for crime and criminals.

In November 15, 2023, a near-success fraud almost threw Kenya's name as Africa's business hub to the dogs, when in a brazen show of impunity, suspects attempted one of the world's most outrageous frauds; intercepting money allegedly belonging to the Central Bank of another sovereign state. DCI Operation Support Unit that pursued the case confirmed that USD 439 trillion was in record, as the amount allegedly being transited from Togo to Dubai facilitated by some Netherlands nationals.

"We were shocked when we received the report from the complainants. Personally, I had never heard of such an amount of money, one that way exceeded Kenya's economy. I thus mobilized my team to pursue the fraudsters," said Mr Zachary Kariuki, the Head of the Operation Support Unit.

For starters, DCI officers launched an operation and arrested eight suspects in a botched multi-trillion-dollar scam in Nairobi. The detectives arrested the eight as they executed the final phase of a long con intended to fleece two Dutchmen of USD 36,000.

The well-orchestrated scam began when one of the suspects posed as a Kenyan customs officer and contacted the two foreigners via a WhatsApp call. During the call, the suspect allegedly informed the Dutchmen that their consignment of 40 pallets was held at the Kenya Customs Warehouse pending a duty fee payment of USD 36,000.

According to reports, the complainants had allegedly entered a cash-on-transit deal to transport USD 439 trillion to Dubai from the Central Bank of Togo.

Consequently, the imposter informed them that the first batch of 40 pallets containing USD 4 billion was being flown through Kenya to facilitate clearance and smooth entry to Dubai. The suspect further told their targets that the consignment was held at the Kenya Customs Warehouse pending a duty fee payment of USD 36,000.



The three suspects arrested and arraigned over the robbery involving a foreign couple in Nairobi's Runda Estate.

Given the urgency with which the suspect portrayed the matter, the two Dutchmen booked a Kenyan-bound flight and landed at the JKIA, hoping to clear the required duty fee immediately.

Unbeknownst to both parties, DCI operatives had gotten wind of events and trailed the two foreigners as a contact person led them to the warehouse where the cash consignment was supposedly held. The detectives stormed the warehouse as the eight put up a show, attempting to convince their targets to part with the thousands of US dollars.

The culprits, Moses Otieno, Peter Aura, Brian Waweru, John Kalombo, Peter Kisanya, Noah Ouma, Charity Njeri, and Mercy Cheptoo, were cornered and arrested. Detectives seized several boxes stashed with fake US 100-dollar bills, suspected stolen jungle fatigues for Administration Police Service officers, military boots, and customs reflector jackets, among other recoveries. The investigation continues as detectives grill the two foreign nationals to shed light on the business deal in question.

Prime suspect in the fraud arrested

Isaiah Aluodo Belek, believed to have been the brains behind the thwarted multi-trillion-dollar fraud, thought he had made a clean break. However, it only took detectives a day to arrest him. The detectives from the Operation Support Unit flushed him out of his Gigiri hideout in Nairobi.

Detectives believe Belek initiated communications with the complainants

(the two Dutchmen). He joined his eight accomplices who had been arraigned at Milimani Law Courts, facing charges of conspiracy to defraud, being in possession of forged banknotes, and possessing police uniforms. His Mercedes Benz, believed to be a proceed of fraud, was impounded and detained at a police facility.

Over Sh8 million lost in a botched hides and skins business deal

Incidences of millions lost in botched transactions in Kenya typically bring to mind cases of high-profile goods like gold or even the infamous fake currency scam dubbed "Wash Wash."

Contrary to your frame of reference, nothing about the goods involved in this botched business deal is high-profile. "Hides and skin," the skin from your 2023 Christmas "mbuzi" is probably still drying in the sun somewhere in your compound." So, what makes someone invest millions of Kenyan shillings in hides and skin?

According to the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) Discussion Paper No. 221 of 2019, the leather industry is among the strategic industries offering opportunities for Kenya's economic transformation and sustainable development. The sub-sector contributes approximately 1.9% and 4.0% to the country's GDP and the Agricultural sector's GDP, respectively.

Moreover, data from the discussion paper highlights that the industry employs approximately 14,000 persons, with 10,000 being in the informal leather sector. Furthermore, projections indicate that the

sector can employ over 35,000 individuals by 2030 if stakeholders exploit its full potential.

How is this so?

Well, there is a rising demand for leather products on a global scale; statistics estimate that the said demand increases by USD 100 billion annually. The sector's long value chain (the number of steps it takes to create a finished product) provides immense potential for job creation, income generation, and poverty alleviation throughout the value chain.

The global demand for animal hide products, and a lack of value addition in Kenya could be some of the reasons that led a Malaysian national to a trap that would punch a massive hole in his finances.

Kathiresan Naidu Subramanian is a Malaysian national with a professional background in manpower supply and student placement for colleges and universities. The year was 2016, and Mr. Naidu was minding his business when a Chinese national visited him in Malaysia. The two entered into a business agreement in which the businessman from China would fund the purchase of donkey hides and skin while Naidu Subramanian would source for suppliers.

Naidu Subramanian searched online and settled on two Kenyan businesses that supposedly sold hides and skins. He weighed his two Kenyan options, and his deductive powers led him to settle on a company named Triple Agro Investment. Unbeknownst to him, his choice of supplier would have massive negative financial implications.

Tripple Agro Investment presented itself as a dealer in hides and skins, which were in high demand in Asian countries in 2016. Naidu's first contact with the company was via a gentleman named Cliff Obwogi Moseti; Moseti claimed to be Tripple Agro Investment's salesman.

Following the first interaction between Naidu and Moseti, Naidu spoke to his business partner, and they agreed that he (Naidu) should travel to Kenya to meet Moseti. Naidu arrived in Kenya on 2nd January, 2017, and Moseti met him at the airport.

Upon arrival, Moseti escorted him to the Woodmere Serviced apartments, where he had booked his accommodation.



The eight suspects implicated in the baffling USD 439 trillion mega fraud. The money was allegedly on transit from the Central Bank of Togo, through Nairobi to Dubai.



Fake gold pellets, bars, a laptop, stamps, seals and other exhibits confiscated at a scammer's warehouse in Nairobi. PHOTO / DCI



The following day, Moseti took Naidu to Triple Agro Investment Limited offices in Upper Hill, along Bishop Road. While at the offices, they showed him donkey hides and skin samples.

Pleased with the samples, Naidu commenced price negotiations with Triple Agro Investment Limited's representatives. The company's representatives paused negotiations and took him to Kenya's first donkey slaughterhouse in Naivasha, Nakuru County, to allow him to familiarize himself with the suppliers.

Satisfied that the deal was ripe, Naidu paid Sh2.7 million to Allan Aloni alias Allan Kiprotich Chesang, a director at Triple Agro Investment Limited. The transaction was made on 5th January, 2017. Chesang apparently received the payment twelve days later.

Additionally, Naidu made another cash payment of Sh5.4 million to a second director named Cliff Moseti Obwogi and received a receipt for the transaction. Besides the receipt for the transaction with Obwogi, Naidu received copies of the two directors' traveling passports as assurance that he was dealing with the right people.

Lastly, the Malaysian national received airway bill documents, policy cover documents, a certificate of origin from East Africa, and the Triple Agro Investment Limited import proforma invoice. Obwogi and Chesang then informed Naidu that the hides and skins consignment he had paid for would be airlifted to Hong Kong via Dubai.

Based on the assurances received from Obwogi and Chesang, an elated Naidu contacted his Chinese business partner. He informed his partner that the cargo of hides and skin would be delivered to Hong Kong and instructed him to plan on receiving

the goods. Unfortunately for Naidu and his business partner, the supposed cargo never arrived. Naidu became suspicious when the goods failed to arrive in Hong Kong. Therefore, he decided to visit a Kenyan friend and businessman named Mbugua and share his concerns.

During the visit, Naidu showed Mbugua the documents he had received from Triple Agro Investment Limited. Mbugua told him that the documents appeared legitimate at face value. Nonetheless, Naidu paid Mbugua Sh50,000 to assist him in establishing Triple Agro Investment Limited's authenticity, hence the legitimacy of the business deal he had made.

The following day, Naidu was shocked when Mbugua informed him that Triple Agro Investment Limited never existed. Mbugua advised him to report the matter to the police, so he filed a report at Kilimani Police Station.

In his statement, Naidu gave a detailed account of his experience with the fraudsters. He further surrendered copies of the documents Triple Agro Investment Limited issued him after the supposed sale.

The documents included a certificate of clearance, an endorsement risk insurance cover note, a KRA export/pre-export entry, and a global freight and cargo airway bill. He also submitted copies of the passports belonging to Cliff Moseti Obwongi, Kenneth Onyango, and Allan Aloni and copies of payment receipts indicating a payment of 2.7 million and another for 5.4 million.

Soon after recording his statement, he flew to Dubai to establish whether the said goods had actually been flown there as promised. While in Dubai, he engaged one of the fraudsters via WhatsApp. The fraudster asked him to pay an additional

\$2,000 to Tripple Agro Investment Limited's directors to facilitate getting a particular document from the Kenyan customs department. According to the fraudster, the document would enable Dubai customs to release his goods.

While in Dubai, the fact that he had been duped hit home, so he decided to return to Kenya. The only thing in his mind was that the investigations would bear fruit, arrests would be made, and the con men would be arraigned in court.

Meanwhile, investigators from Kilimani Police Station visited Triple Agro Investment Limited's offices and established that the suspects hadn't been there in a while. Additionally, they acquired information from the registrar of companies, confirming that Triple Agro Investment Limited was registered on 17th September, 2015, and the directors on record were Allan Kiprotich Chesang and Marvin Odhiambo Ochieng. However, the documents from the registrar showed that the company's premises were in Eldoret and not Nairobi.

Armed with this information and following crucial leads, the investigating officers left Nairobi for Ongata Rongai, hoping to arrest one of the fraudsters. However, the suspect escaped their dragnet. The manhunt continued until two months later, on 18th May 2017, when the officers caught and arrested a suspect, Kenneth Onyango Opar, at Caltex area within Donholm.

Onyango was among the Triple Agro Investment Limited directors based on the documents handed to Naidu after the cash transfer. Therefore, arresting officers escorted him to DCI Kilimani to be charged with obtaining money by false pretences.

In his statement, Onyango introduced himself as a 32-year-old marketer who worked for Agro Farm and Products Limited, a company whose offices were in Lavington, Nairobi County. Additionally, he stated that he was employed by his cousin Cliff Obwogi Moseti, a director at Triple Agro Investment, a company dealing in farm products.

Onyango further stated that he and Moseti went to JKIA to pick up Naidu and put him in a rented apartment. He also informed the investigating officers that they drove their client to Naivasha and showed him where animal skins are sourced. All three later returned to Woodmere apartments.

According to Onyango, it was at Woodmere serviced apartments that Moseti presented Naidu with documents, which the latter signed. However, Onyango denied having witnessed any cash transactions.

The search for Onyango's counterparts materialized nine days later. On 27th May 2017, the police arrested Cliff Obwogi Moseti along Ngong Road near Impala. Shortly after, they arrested Kenneth Onyango Opar and booked both suspects for processing and arraignment. However, Allan Aloni Rotich was still in the wind.

While recording his statement, Moseti introduced himself as a 32-year-old businessman dealing in pharmaceutical products, contradicting Kenneth Onyango's statement. Additionally, he introduced another individual named Mike Emmanuel. Moseti allegedly obtained Emmanuel's contacts from a LinkedIn profile, and identified Mike Emmanuel and Kathiresan Naidu Subramanian as the same person.

According to Moseti, he had retrieved Emmanuel's contact information from LinkedIn and reached out to him via phone, and the two had a conversation. During this alleged conversation, Mike Emmanuel revealed to Moseti that he would visit Kenya intending to start a job search and visa-processing business to assist Kenyans in securing jobs abroad at a fee.

The two allegedly agreed that Emmanuel would fly to Kenya and meet Moseti at the latter's friend's office in Kilimani. During this meeting, Mike Emmanuel allegedly informed Moseti that he intended to write a business proposal and send it to his partner in Malaysia for funding.



Kileleshwa home turned to an office where gold scammers in Sh2.85 billion deal operated from: PHOTO / DCI



Vehicles impounded by DCI OSU detectives from a Kileleshwa gold scammers home during a major raid: PHOTO / DCI

They took photos during the said meeting to accompany the business proposal as proof of contact. Moseti closed the statement by alleging that Mike Emmanuel left Kenya for Dubai after the Kilimani meeting, promising to fly back to Kenya for business.

At this point, only one suspect, Allan Kiprotich Chesang, remained on the loose, but not for long. On 22nd July 2017, the police arrested Allan Kiprotich Chesang alias Allan Aloni Rotich, a political aspirant who was an independent candidate running for office in Kwanza Constituency. They transported him to Kilimani Police Station for processing, ending the first phase of Naidu's search for justice.

Chesang refused to record a statement relating to the case. Nonetheless, the arresting officers processed him for arraignment.

Fraud addiction or what!

Despite the finality of the arrests, these unrepentant white-collar criminals were nowhere near done. Fortunately, they were no match for our officers, who arrested them each time they executed a con.

One such incident was in January 2018 when the police arrested and charged Cliff Moseti Obwogi, Allan Chesang and others for forging a Contract Document Reference No. MODP/SUPPIS/0451-270/2017-18/SP. They presented the forged document as a genuine and valid contract document authorizing the supply of goods between the State Department for Defence and WIL Developers and Construction Limited. Additionally, the police charged them with forging tender documents to accompany the forged contract document.

In a second incident concerning WIL Developers and Construction Limited, the suspects were also accused of making a fake notification of award for a multi-million tender to supply 50 kilogrammes Jute bags. They claimed that the Department for Defence issued the notice to WIL Developers and Construction Limited's managing director.

Also, the police charged them with fraudulently obtaining a total of Sh14 million from Johnson Mwanzia Wambua while pretending that they had acquired a tender to supply gunny bags to the Department of Defence. Mwanzia's case against the defendants also included a charge for presenting forged tender award documents to Mwanzia on January 22, 2018, at Panafric Hotel in Nairobi County. Further, the police charged Kenneth Onyango Opar and two others with obtaining over Sh 4 million from Phudit Pasit under false pretence. The trio lured the victim at Forte Granite along Bishop's Road in Kilimani between the 18th and 25th of May 2018. They pretended that they could sell him 25 tonnes of cashew nuts.

What a con game!

From international ass-skin traders, to State Department of Defence and political aspirants, all the way to cashew nut dealers! Indeed, if it sounds too good to be true, especially in Kilimani, it is too good to be true. Kenya detectives have done the groundwork by arresting these notorious fraudsters and collecting crucial evidence, and it's up to the courts to grant justice to all the victims.

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Bulldozers demolish homes on the disputed Portland land in Athi River on October 15, 2023. PHOTO/COURTESY

COMBATING LAND FRAUD:

**Perspectives from The Officer
Commanding Land Fraud
Investigations Unit (LFIU)**

By John Marete



Land is an invaluable asset in Kenya primarily because it is among the four factors of production. According to the Ndung'u Commission, "Land retains a focal point in Kenya's history. It was the basis upon which the struggle for independence was waged. It has traditionally dictated the pulse of our nationhood. It continues to command a pivotal position in the country's social, economic, political, and legal relations."

Kenya has a robust institutional and legal framework regulating land acquisition, ownership, and use. However, fraudulent land acquisition by well-connected individuals, facilitated primarily by a few rogue officials at the Lands Ministry, remains prevalent.

Kenya's land fraud and sagas that have generated significant public attention in the recent past include:

- The repossession of 4,298 acres of land belonging to the East African Portland Cement Company Limited (EAPC)
- The disputed Gershon Kirima's 1000-acre parcel of land located in Njiru, Kasarani.

Reforms in the land sector have been a major campaign pillar for successive Kenyan governments. The steps taken to actualize these reforms include establishing the National Land Commission (NLC) and reviewing and harmonizing Kenya's legal regime through digitization and decentralization.

Moreover, the *Ardhisasa* online platform that allows citizens to interact with land-related information and processes is a huge breakthrough in land reforms. These steps have contributed to streamlining a sector previously marred by irregularities.

In November 2023, the National Land Commission submitted its National Land Policy recommendations to Hon. Alice Wahome, the Cabinet Secretary - Ministry of Lands, Public Works, Housing, and Urban Development. The Ministry is reviewing Sessional Paper No.3 of 2009 on National Land Policy.

Kenya's government enacted the sessional paper to ensure efficient, sustainable, and productive land use and address land challenges experienced in colonial and post-colonial eras. The policy is reviewed every ten years to respond to the evolving needs in view of social and economic dynamics in the land sector.

According to CS Wahome, the purpose of the ongoing review is to guide the country in achieving efficient and sustainable land use, land management, and administration. The highlighted goals align with the Kenyan Constitution, Vision 2030, and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA).

As the country's foremost investigative agency, the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) established the Land Fraud Investigations Unit (LFIU). The LFIU is dedicated to investigating land fraud and other land-related offenses.



National Land Commission Chairman Mr Gershon Otachi handing over the recommended National Land Policy to the Cabinet Secretary – Ministry of Lands, Public Works, Housing and Urban Development Hon. Alice Wahome PHOTO/COURTESY

On the one hand, the LFIU has registered significant success so far in achieving its mandate. Nonetheless, it still faces varying challenges, especially given the rising cases of land-related fraud in the country.

The National Crime Research Centre commissioned a study in 2020 to evaluate the prevalence and patterns of land-related crimes in Kenya. Results from the study established that the most prevalent land-related crimes were:

- Interfering with land boundaries and beacons
- Trespassing
- Land fraud and or exploitation
- Forcible entry and
- Land-related forgery.

Furthermore, the study determined greed, mankind's depravity, land grabbing, delay in the issuance of title deeds, fraudulent (double/multiple land sales), and land succession disputes as the primary causes of land-related crimes.

To gain more insight into land fraud in Kenya, The DCI sought perspectives from LFIU's boss, Mr Wilhelm K. Kimutai, OGW, HSC, CP.

Mr. Kimutai has a law enforcement career spanning over three decades. Moreover, judging from his titles, he is a decorated officer who has received multiple accolades from the highest office in the land. He speaks to us in his capacity as the Head of Land Fraud Investigations Unit (LFIU).

How are cases initiated with the LFIU?

Land-related cases are received at LFIU through the Directorate of Complaints - DCI Headquarters or referrals from the State Department for Lands and other government offices across the country.

Victims of land-related crimes can present their cases to DCI offices and Police stations nearest to them in any part of the country. Between January 2023 and December 2023, 433 land-related cases were reported to the Land Fraud Investigations Unit.

The cases fall under different categories, including forgery of title deeds, obtaining registration of land under false pretences, conspiracy to defraud, falsifying land-related documents, obtaining money through fraudulent means, forcible detainer, forgery of wills, trespass and forcible entry on land, malicious damage to property, interfering with boundaries, allocation of land to multiple 'owners', fraudulent transfer of land, illegal subdivision of land, theft of title deeds, missing land records, issuance of parallel title deeds, fraudulent transfer of leases, land ownership disputes, succession disputes, encroachment on public land, among others.

Most land-related crimes are instigated or committed by well-connected, well-financed, and very bold criminals who include: dishonest/untrustworthy land owners, neighbours who target underutilized/idle land within their vicinity, corrupt land buying companies, corrupt land officers and surveyors who collude with fraudsters to illegally register and sell other people's land to unsuspecting buyers, advocates who mislead innocent clients and knowingly engage in illegal land conveyance processes, national and county government officials who engage in illegal registration, transfer and sale of public land, caretakers who illegally transfer their absent masters' property without their consent, and politicians who seek voters' sympathy through illegal allocation of private/public idle land within their jurisdictions.

What does your strategy entail?

At LFIU, we have ensured that all cases reported to our offices are handled with the gravity that land issues demand; investigators are guided to ensure that cases are professionally and conclusively investigated. Upon conclusion, we forward the relevant police case files to the DCI Legal and Crime Affairs Section for perusal before onward transmission to the ODPP for further action. Through this process, we ensure there is independent review of evidence, concurrence, and consent by the DPP as per the Constitution of Kenya, before arraignment of those found culpable before courts of law.

We also assist the State Law Office to file replying affidavits and witness statements in response to Petitions and Judicial Reviews, which are filed by fraudsters through civil litigations, in attempts to frustrate the criminal cases filed by the Unit in Courts.

In order to ensure smooth prosecution of cases by the ODPP, we encourage Unit investigators to conduct joint pre-trials with the prosecutions and the courts prior to court sessions. Unit personnel are also rigorously trained in collecting intelligence, which has led to the curtailment of many criminal activities. The unit has adopted a multi agency approach, and has moved to strengthen inter-agency relations by closely and continuously engaging and consulting with stakeholders such as the State Department of Lands and Physical Planning, the National

Between January 2023 and December 2023, 433 land-related cases were reported at the Land Fraud Investigations Unit.



Land Commission, the Kenya Revenue Authority, among others. We are currently looking forward to the recently-proposed periodic meetings to sustain proper stakeholder counter crime solutions.

We are therefore working closely with all stakeholders and where necessary we request for placement of restrictions on disputed properties to avert further conflict. In the event that the ODPP grants consent for prosecution of suspects, we ensure swift and firm action by arresting suspects and arraigning them in court.

Fake Real Estate Firms Scams: The Lesedi Developers Limited Case

Mr. Kimutai highlighted conspiracy to defraud and obtain money through false pretense among the prevalent land-related crimes in the country. Real estate fraud committed by fake real estate firms sits smack in the middle of these two crimes.

Moreover, The Institution of Surveyors of Kenya and the Estate Agents Registration Board have raised alarm over the increase in "fake real estate firms" that defraud innocent people. The infamous Lesedi Developers Limited Case involved a fake real estate crime; let us explore how the LFIU handled it based on Mr. Kimutai's account of events.

"In 2023, we received several complaints against Lesedi Developers Limited. The Director had allegedly obtained a lot of money from people, promising to sell them plots within Thika Municipality at 350,000/= each. Investors consider Thika a lucrative investment option due to its high growth rate and proximity to Nairobi.

The company's Director took the buyers on a land visit to a parcel of land in Thika, which appeared to have been subdivided and even had visible beacons. The facade convinced more investors to come on board; moreover, they signed sale agreements with the supposed developer (Lesedi) upon paying the quoted price."

According to witness accounts, Lesedi Development Company's staff took the investors through a balloting exercise to facilitate the allocation of plots. Once balloting was complete, they asked the investors to wait for their title deeds, which were purportedly being processed. After some time, a section of the investors decided to visit the land only to find that the beacons they had viewed during the site visit were removed.

Perplexed, the investors reported the peculiar discovery to the DCI Headquarters. Upon investigations, the LFIU established that the parcel of land shown to buyers belonged to someone else. Moreover, the legitimate owner was unaware of the dealings undertaken by Lesedi Developers on his property.

Lesedi Developers Limited was a registered company under the sole directorship of one Mr Geoffrey Kahungi Kiragu, who was also the sole shareholder. Investigating officers arrested Geoffrey Kahungi pending his arraignment in court in October 2023. Although he was charged with obtaining money under false pretense contrary to section 313 of the penal code, more than 300 people had lost their hard-earned money in the Thika Land scam. The case is currently active before the court.

Land Scams Orchestrated By Corrupt Lands Registry Officials Aiding Criminal Syndicates

Most land fraud cases in Kenya are orchestrated by well-organized syndicates connected to the Lands Registry. Mr. Kimutai confirms that his unit has encountered cases where investigations revealed that land officials colluded with fraudsters by processing, issuing, or transferring land ownership documents illegally.

A case in point was in October 2023, when the Deputy Director for Land Administration, Mr Salesio Kaburu Jacob, was charged with fraud in a Sh4 billion land deal in Kwale County. The Kwale Court found Mr. Salesio guilty of involvement in the forgery of a notification of approval PPA2 for extending the lease of a parcel of land LR No. 14211.

The 63-acre piece of land in Kwale County was initially registered to Lunga Lunga Ranching Company Ltd. However, in 2019,

the National Land Commission (NLC) reverted the land's ownership to the Kwale County Government after determining that the ranching company had misused the land.

Following this determination, the Kwale County Government set the parcel of land aside to settle squatters within the area. Additionally, the county government planned to establish public utilities and pursue other development agendas on the land.

However, investigations revealed that in March 2023, cartels based at Ardhi House, Nairobi, in collaboration with notorious brokers, some of whom are still at large, fraudulently surveyed the land. Additionally, they forged a planning brief and the PPA2 before initiating the illegal extension. They even managed to secure a new grant or a confirmation of authority to act concerning the piece of land.

Following investigations by the (LFIU), Mr Salesio Kaburu was arrested on 24 October 2023 alongside Mr Frankline Kamau Kamathi, a city land broker, and the two were processed accordingly. On 25 October 2023, DCI Land Fraud investigators arraigned the duo at Kwale Law Courts, where they faced 16 counts of conspiracy to defraud, forgeries, and being in possession of falsified documents.

Mr. Salesio is not the only bad apple in the land registry office. Mr. Kimutai also highlights a case where a land registrar faces charges in a Ngong Court.

The East African Portland Cement Company Limited (EAPC) Case

The infamous EAPC case morphed into a national land saga because the victims lost their land in a court-sanctioned repossession. So, how did the LFIU handle this investigation?

The investigation began on 15th July 2023, after the Directorate received a complaint from the former Managing Director of EAPC PLC, Mr Oliver M. Kirubai. Mr. Kirubai claimed that EAPC PLC was the bona fide registered owner of parcels of Land Reference numbers 7815/1, 8784/4, 10424/3 (originally 10424), and 10425, all situated within Mavoko Municipality in Machakos County.

In the complaint letter, Mr. Kirubai raised the alarm over unauthorized groups, including the *Aimi Ma Lukenya* Society and *Kitanda Na Mbusya*, which had invaded the land. Furthermore, the groups subdivided the land and sold plots to unsuspecting investors; the investors proceeded to construct permanent and semi-permanent structures. Mr. Kirubai further expressed concerns that the unlawful invasion had affected the company's mining activities and was a security threat to EAPC's staff.

Detectives from LFIU investigated the matter in a process that included obtaining registration records for the parcel of land measuring approximately 4,298 acres. The State Department of Lands and Physical Planning, responsible for land registration, facilitated the LFIU's access to the records. As per the records, the LFIU established that the Grant to the land in question was first issued to Douglas Harcourt Stanley on 28th February 1961 on a 952-year lease. However, in April 1961, the land was transferred to the East African Sisal Estates Limited, which transferred it to East African Portland Cement Company Limited on 13th January 1977.

Therefore, the LFIU established that *Aimi Ma Lukenya*, *Kitanda Ma Mbusya*, and their associate companies did not own the land. Moreover, investigations revealed that the government had used part of this land to accommodate a section of the Speed Gauge Railway (SGR), Kenya Power and Lighting Company Limited, and KCB Bank Limited, leaving the rest for EAPC (PLC)'s utilization.

Ministry of Lands-Ardhi House.
PHOTO/COURTESY

Additionally, the detectives established that a Machakos court had issued an order striking out a petition filed by *Aimi Ma Lukenya's* officials against EAPC. The court rendered the decision on the matter ELC Case No. 74 of 2014 as consolidated with ELC Petition No. 10 of 2018 on 9th October 2023.

Empowered by the court order, EAPC (PLC) sanctioned the demolition of all illegally constructed structures on their parcel of land, LR No. 10424. The demolition began on 14th October 2023 to evict the investors, now viewed as squatters before the law, from the land. It led to the loss of property worth millions of Kenyan shillings in construction materials and household goods.

Consequently, the incident attracted both political and public interest. Since then, the LFIU has recorded statements from over 500 victims affected by the EAPC (PLC) land saga. Therefore, it is currently investigating other land-selling companies that victims have mentioned for having been involved in the illegal sale of EAPC (PLC) land. This matter is before a Nairobi Court, and three suspects - Mr. Julius Mutie Mutua, Mr. Alex Kyalo Mutemi, and Mr. Pascal Kiseli Basilio Mungui - are out on court bond.

Fraudulent Transfer of Land: The Mr. Mukeyoo Ole Parkeito Sikirari Case

The fraudulent land transfer incident highlighted below involves a family member's deceit. The plaintiff, Mr Mukeyoo Ole Parkeito Sikirari, is a visually impaired 90-year-old Maasai man. Per a title deed issued on 16th May 1996, he is the legally registered owner of a parcel of land in Kajiado, Kaputiei South, measuring approximately 90.31 Ha.



Mukeyoo Ole Parkeito Sikirari (centre) being assisted out of court by his wife accompanied by LFIU detective Kennedy Kusimba in July 2023. PHOTO /COURTESY

In 1997, Mr Mukeyoo Ole Parkeito Sikirari gave the title deed to the mentioned land to his stepson - Mr Surupen Ole Sentera. He instructed Mr. Ole Sentera to frame the deed to protect it from damage.

Mr Sentera took the title deed and returned it a year later, in 1998, framed as per his stepfather's request. Mr Mukeyoo received the framed document, trusting that his stepson would do him no harm. Moreover, his visual impairment prevented him from verifying the details on the document.

However, after some time, Mr Daniel Loommeori, Mr Mukeyoo's younger stepson, took a keen look at the framed title deed and noticed that the land reference number had changed. He also noticed that the size indicated on the framed title deed was 40.6 Hectares instead of the original 90.31 Hectares.

Daniel informed his stepfather about this, who asked him to conduct a search and confirm the land's ownership details at the Lands Registry in Kajiado. Mr Loommeori's investigations led him to

discover alterations in the land registration documents, prompting his stepfather to report the matter to the DCI.

The DCI's investigations established that the original title deed for the land measuring 90.31 Hectares had been closed for sub-division and two new title deeds issued. The DCI investigators further discovered that Mr Surupen had used forged documents in this fraudulent deal to allocate himself 50.5 hectares of land and left only 40.6 Hectares for his stepfather. Mr Mukeyoo did not consent to any transaction concerning his land.

Consequently, the DCI officers apprehended Mr Surupen Ole Senterawas and arraigned him in a Kajiado court. The prosecution charged him with two offenses; obtaining registration of title to land under false pretenses contrary to section 320 of the Penal Code, and conspiracy to defraud, contrary to section 317 of the Penal Code.

Mr Mukeyoo Ole Parkeito Sikirari (center) being assisted out of court by his wife accompanied by LFIU detective, Mr Kennedy Kusimba in July 2023

Corrupt Land Acquisition Companies: The Mwhoko Housing Company Limited Case

Besides fake real estate companies, legitimate businesses in the sector can also go rogue. Such was the case with the Mwhoko Housing Company Limited, as Mr. Kimutai narrates.

The LFIU is currently investigating several cases involving Mwhoko Housing Company Limited. Most of the victims caught up in this scam filed their reports in 2016 after the demise of the company's former director, Mr Stanley Kirima.

The East African
Portland Cement
Company Limited.
PHOTO/COURTESY

Mwihoko Housing Company had acquired two parcels of land, Mwihoko Phase I and Mwihoko Phase II, which it subdivided into smaller plots for sale. The company sold all the plots in Mwihoko Phase I and issued the investors with title deeds.

However, while selling Mwihoko Phase II, the company veered from the operational procedure observed in selling Phase I. Instead of title deeds, Mwihoko Housing Company Limited issued share certificates as proof of ownership to the investors who bought into Phase II. According to the victims' reports, the company purported that the title deeds were still being processed.

Unfortunately, Mr Samuel Kirima's family did not file any succession cause to appoint an administrator, and upon his demise. Consequently, his children took over the running of Mwihoko Housing Company Limited.

The heirs as it turns out had no regard for their late father's legacy, and as such, colluded with fraudsters to issue fake share certificates. Moreover, they used the fake share certificates to sell plots belonging to the original investors.

Additionally, they tampered with the original company registers by introducing fictitious names that they used to defraud unsuspecting individuals. The LFIU has initiated investigations into the allegations and made varying progress levels in each case.

Red Flags to Watch Out for When Purchasing Land: Mr. Kimutai's Advice

Most Kenyans perceive land as one of the most secure investment vehicles in the country, with most people aspiring to own a plot somewhere. Unfortunately, fraudsters take advantage of the insatiable demand for the limited resource by infiltrating the land sector and duping Kenyas of their hard-earned money.

Mr. Kimutai highlights the tell-tale signs of a potential land fraud transaction below. Kenyans should bail out from any land transaction with the following characteristics immediately.

1. When the vendor insists on involving only one advocate to represent both parties in the purchase process. On the one hand, Kenyan laws do not prohibit conveyancing lawyers from acting in the interest of both parties in an agreement. However, the

advocate must disclose to both parties that they represent both sides, and the clients must consent to legal mutual acceptance in writing.

Mutual acceptance means two things: One, the advocate cannot give you advice against the seller, nor give the seller advice against you. Second, they cannot reveal the full subject matter to either party.

Legal precedent has it that in the case of a breach of agreement, an advocate that represented both parties in the agreement can neither represent nor testify for either party due to a conflict of interest. Therefore, consider hiring your own lawyer, one you can trust to represent your full interest in the matter.

2. When a party to a transaction insists on getting a copy of your ownership documents before an agreement is drawn.

3. Engaging in transactions with entities such as societies and welfare groups that are not registered with the government under the registrar of societies. Moreover, The Estate Agents Registration Board (EARB) holds that only registered and licensed estate agents with a current annual practicing certificate can conduct estate agency. Also, you can visit the eCitizen portal and check society or welfare group's legal status under the registrar of companies.

4. When the vendor is reluctant to meet the purchaser face-to-face during the conveyance process. A purchaser should insist on seeing verified copies of Power of Attorney indicating details of the person representing a vendor in such a transaction.

5. The buyer should not just believe in face value information by the vendor. They should conduct their own due diligence before buying any parcel of land. This may involve personally visiting and the land collecting intelligence from the neighborhood concerning ownership of the land in question.

6. When the vendor insists that payment must be made in cash and not through any other means, they are trying to avoid leaving a money trail which could act as evidence in case of a court case.

Bottom Line:

Land fraud cases are challenging and emotive; they often leave a trail of pain and anguish for the swindled victims who likely invested their life savings in the scams. As the old country song by Colter Wall says, "The devil wears a suit and tie." Some victims have narrated how they lost all their savings in the hands of smartly dressed fraudsters masquerading as company directors.

So, what is Mr. Kimutai's parting shot?

"At LFIU, we work tirelessly to investigate these crimes and bring culprits to book. We have processed and presented many cases which are actively before court in different parts of the country. Some of our cases have been resolved through the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) window, on mutual grounds, and outside the courts system at the request of the victims. We advise land buyers to conduct due diligence personally or through trusted advocates to avoid falling victims of greedy fraudsters."



Land Fraud Investigations Unit boss Mr Wilhelm K. Kimutai with a client in his office at the DCI Headquarters. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR



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CS Interior, Prof Kithure Kindiki, PS Interior Dr Raymond Omollo, IG NPS Mr Japhet Koome, DIG-KPS Mr Douglas Kanja, DIG-APS Mr Noor Gabow and Director DCI Mr Mohamed Amin during a security meeting at Harambee House. PHOTO/KEVIN MACHARIA



Director DCI Mr Mohamed Amin and the Commandant General Service Unit Mr Eliud Lagat during a tour of the Magadi Field Campus on March 18, 2024. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR



Director DCI Mr Mohamed Amin during the official opening of promotional courses at Magadi Field Campus on March 18, 2024. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR



Director DCI Mr Mohamed Amin inspects a guard of honour at Magadi Field Campus on March 18, 2024. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR

Anti-Terrorism Police Unit- Emergency Response Team pose for a photo during closing of Mobile Tactical Operations training held at Kedong training camp in Naivasha on September 1, 2023. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR





DCI Director Mr Mohamed Amin donating food stuff to flood victims in Samburu County on November 17, 2023. PHOTO/CLAUDY OTIENO



Director DCI Mr Mohamed Amin flanked by Member of Parliament Saku Constituency Hon.Col(RTD) Dido Ali Raso during the commissioning of new DCI Offices in Marsabit on November 17, 2023. PHOTO/ELIJAH GAKUYA



Members of the public reading through the DCI Magazine during an Open Day in Ndihiwa Law Courts in Homabay on March 7, 2024. PHOTO/CLAUDY OTIENO



Director DCI Mr Mohamed Amin hands a certificate of completion to a graduate of Operation Intelligence Analysis course at the National Criminal Investigations Academy on February 3, 2024. PHOTO/NELSON NGALA



DCI officers offer sensitization services to school kids of Olympic Primary and Junior Secondary School about safer and better internet on Safer Internet day, February 7, 2023. PHOTO/ELIJAH GAKUYA



DCI Officers during the donation of food items to Maisha Girls Safehouse in a humanitarian exercise carried out on December 15, 2023. PHOTO/DIANA GITHAIGA



Athletics Kenya President Jackson Tuwei awards a trophy to DCI for emerging second during the National Police Service Cross-Country Championship at Ngong Race Course on January 19, 2024. PHOTO/LAWRENCE SAFU

Bank Heists

Detectives Fold Sleeves on Audacious Bank Robbers

By Harrison Mwaura
and Elijah Gakuya

A marked Toyota Probox occupied by security personnel chasing courier service vehicles, especially those providing cash in transit (CIT) services, is standard practice. So, most people wouldn't imagine that such a courier vehicle would lack enough physical and technological security to pre-empt any unauthorized access.

However, criminal masterminds are not like most people. Daring criminals can lurk in the shadows for months, even years. Like a rattlesnake observing and studying its prey, they master their target's modus operandi while orchestrating a master plan. Then, when the unsuspecting target least expects, they launch a vicious onslaught. No matter the cost, the mission is the king.

Such was the case on November 6, 2023. On the material day, Wells Fargo Limited staff and suspected accomplices stole over Sh94 million belonging to Quickmart Supermarket in Nairobi.

The Wells Fargo Heist, 2023

The event unfolded at 6.00 am when the driver and the crew commander of an Isuzu truck registration number KBA

517T broke company protocol. The two suspects, Daniel Mungai Mugetha (crew commander) and Anthony Nduiki Waigumo (driver), drove off shortly after their colleagues loaded the money vault. They left the police escort car waiting to be flagged off behind. The stolen funds were the proceeds from the day's sales at Quickmart Supermarket and were destined for Family Bank Kenyatta Avenue in Nairobi's Central Business District.

According to Wells Fargo's investigations manager, Mr George Jaramba, the two suspects, Daniel Mungai Mugetha (crew commander) and Anthony Nduiki Waigumo (driver), drove off shortly after their colleagues loaded the money vault. They left the police escort car waiting to be flagged off behind. The stolen funds were the proceeds from the day's sales at Quickmart Supermarket and were destined for Family Bank Kenyatta Avenue in Nairobi's Central Business District.

Oblivious that their day's assignment was a failure even before it kicked off, the armed escort team of Administration Police noticed that loading was taking longer than usual. Consequently, they inquired about the delay from Wells Fargo's management, only to be told that the loading was completed minutes earlier. Moreover, the management allegedly couldn't track the missing money truck or its crew.

Suddenly, the still morning at Wells Fargo offices turned chaotic. The escort team made phone calls to inform their immediate supervisors of the incident, hoping that operational teams would be activated in time to intercept the money truck.

Acting on the available leads, including the vehicle's tracking system, police in Lang'ata were mobilized to pursue the rogue duo. Their efforts traced the abandoned truck to South C. Unfortunately, their greatest fears were confirmed: a successful theft of cash in transit had just occurred.

Since the operational team's leads were a dead end, the police set a new plan to nab the heists' masterminds in motion. They deployed a team comprising Crime Research and Intelligence Bureau detectives and officers from the Operations Directorate to pursue the suspects and recover the money.

As investigations gained momentum, four men connected to the theft were arrested in different parts of Nairobi, and Sh9 million believed to be part of the proceeds recovered.



Sh9.1 million recovered at a rental house in Roysambu near the Thika Road Mall during a pursuit of Wells Fargo staff who stole Sh94,918,750 belonging to Quickmart Supermarket: PHOTO BY DCI



Photo of Wells Fargo trucks: PHOTO COURTESY

The operation, which incorporated detectives from the Nairobi regional command, kicked in after painstaking analysis of forensic-led clues. Fortunately, the detective work yielded results, pointing the team to Rongai, where the first suspect, Ismael Patrick Gitonga, was arrested.

Ismael Patrick Gitonga allegedly ferried Wells Fargo crew member Mugetha Nduiki and the stolen Sh94,918,750 from the company truck in South C using his Toyota Fielder registration number KBM 751W.

After Rongai, the forensic evidence pointed the hawkshaws toward to Njiru area in Kayole. They extended their investigations to this area and traced the said getaway vehicle to Michael Matoro Njeru and Samuel Onyango.

The investigating team ambushed Njeru and Onyango as the duo was attempting to modify the vehicle for concealment. Njeru and Onyango were arrested, and the vehicle was detained as evidence.

At this juncture, it dawned on the detectives for the first time that they were not dealing with a random decision by two staffers to disappear with the money. Rather, they suspected a well-orchestrated plan involving parties within and outside the company. Indeed, these were seasoned criminals with experience in similar criminal undertakings; hence, deploying advanced investigative interviewing techniques was necessary.

Moments after interrogation, detectives revved up to a hideout spot near the Thika Road Mall in Roysambu, where they arrested the fourth suspect, Martin Nderi Ng'anga. A search of his rented house saw the recovery of Sh9.1 million in cash, folded in small bundles and stashed inside

a 20-litre jerry can.

The detectives booked the four suspects before proceeding to a forest near Gataka Market in Karen, where they recovered the cash vault used to transport the stolen money. Detectives believe that the suspects had used the forest as a meet-up point, where they shared the loot before each one risked his way from the long arm of the law.

With the window to catch up with the two prime suspects closing, the investigators redirected their investigation toward Wells Fargo's cash handlers (i.e drivers and crew commanders). Interrogations on cash safety protocols conducted among the cash handlers revealed several loopholes, pointing to a possible inside job likely to implicate other officers working within the company. The inside job theory proved correct.

After thoroughly analyzing forensic evidence, the investigators apprehended four suspected accomplices, all employees of the courier and security company. These were Joel Oyuchi Mweseli (controller/planner), the in charge of drivers Mr Harrison Mugendi Njeru, fleet supervisor Caleb Ouma Okinyi, and the in charge of crew commanders Mr Ronald Ouma Oluu.

Besides negligence of duty, the four staffers were also believed to have conspired with prime suspects Daniel Mugetha and Anthony Nduiki, who remain at large.

Such money heist incidents, while uncommon, are not unheard of in Kenya. More daring thievery attacks where perpetrators were careful not to engage in any physical confrontations with law enforcers or victims occur occasionally. However, what stands out in this case is how money and the key suspects vanished without a trace for a relatively long time.

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OCEAN'S ELEVEN



The Hollywood Copycat Heists

Bank heist incidents before the Wells Fargo incident include the 2017 heist in Thika, Kiambu County. During the November 19, 2017 incident, a gang of three young men dug a tunnel to steal Sh52 million from the Kenya Commercial Bank branch in Thika. The incident became the talk of the college town for days because it seemed like something out of a blockbuster movie, and perhaps it was.

In line with the script from the renowned Hollywood film "Ocean's Eleven," the suspects – two brothers and a friend – replicated the events of a 2016 heist. In 2016, a different criminal syndicate dug a tunnel to Equity Bank in Kayole and disappeared with over Sh26 million. Fun fact: (anything but fun for investigators) "Ocean's Eleven" reportedly inspired many criminals globally; most of the bank heists following its script were clean jobs.

Unfortunately for the KCB Thika Branch robbery trio, the "Ocean's Eleven" copycat lucky streak was over. The police arrested them only 72 hours after the heist and recovered over Sh17.1 million in their possession. Besides the Kenyan currency notes, the arresting officers also recovered foreign currencies, including US dollars, Sterling pounds, Euros, and Canadian and Australian dollars, during the arrest. Surprisingly, the arrest appeared to have upset netizens. Kenya's social media space was abuzz with remarks that perceived the suspects as heroes and glorified the levels of skill and intelligence they employed in the robbery.

To effectively execute their plot, the three rented a shop next to the bank and pretended to sell books. However, the "bookstore" was but a front for the heist.

Behind the tinted glasses, serious excavation work that involved digging a 30-metre-long and 10-metre-deep tunnel from Thika City Friendly Stalls to the bank continued. This they did without raising suspicion among fellow tenants and the management of the Exhibition Centre where they had rented the space.

The trio, believed to have had a background in engineering, went ahead to fit planks supported by steel bars to act as the roof of the tunnel to prevent it from caving in. Also, they packed the dug soil into cartons, which they ferried from the stalls in saloon cars under the dark cover of night.

However, despite their indisputable intelligence and resourcefulness, it's highly improbable that the gang knew the bank's strong room location without the help of an insider, most probably a senior member of staff. The inside job theory also explains why they didn't incur major challenges avoiding CCTV cameras, which they also managed to disable alongside the alarm system to avoid detection.

The suspects - Halford Munene Murakaru, 32, his brother Charles Mwangi Murakaru, 30, and their friend Julius Ndung'u Wanaina, 32 - were arrested at Marurui in Kasarani Sub-County before the police moved to Juja where they recovered Sh17.1 million.

Besides the Kayole and Thika heists, another get-rich-quick attempt implicating bankers, police and G4S officers occurred on September 5, 2019. During the incident, Sh72 million was stolen from Standard Chartered Bank's Nairobi West branch when alleged crooks intercepted a G4S van in transit from G4S's headquarters to the said bank branch.

In the dramatic robbery that must have been an inside job, three armed men dressed in Administration Police uniforms stormed the bank as the money was being delivered. They diverted it to a separate vehicle without putting up a fight or firing a bullet.

Additionally, the armed men allegedly withdrew more cash from an ATM in Nairobi West after demanding the ATM passwords from the G4S employees. The masterminds stuffed cash amounting to Sh72 million into 13 bags, which they loaded into the waiting car and sped off, leaving the G4S personnel stranded at the bank.

To a witness, this would be a case of pure robbery where the G4S personnel could be exonerated for not having the tactical and arms capability to match that of the robbers. Any physical confrontations would mean engaging in a losing battle. But not so.

As events unfolded, detectives sharpened claws on the robbers, and revelations of a five-month plot orchestrated by over 20 players emerged. The culprits reunited at Thogoto forest to share the loot before going their separate ways. However, despite a successfully executed heist, many blunders after the fact would give them away in hours.

The DCI crime busters hunted them down like bad demons, from Kiambu county through Kisii to Kendu Bay. Suspects were arrested and arraigned, and millions of shillings and other proceeds of crime (including vehicles) were recovered.

While some of the suspects who were released on bond have lived to fight their battles in court while awaiting their fate, the mastermind of the heist, Wycliff Vincent Oduor, wasn't as lucky. Wycliff was felled by a gun months later in 2020 when his gang of three engaged detectives in a shootout.

In the fatal incident, police on patrol were responding to a distress call from a member of the public at Kayole Junction in Nairobi when the gang fired frenziedly at them as they escaped on getaway motorcycles. In the ensuing melee, Wycliff Oduor, aka "Vinii," who was out on a Sh500,000 bond, suffered fatal injuries. The police recovered a pistol & a kitchen knife from his remains.

Recently, the National Police Service has formed and deployed specialized teams to deal with die-hard criminals engaging in highway robberies, carjacking, kidnappings, and bank robberies. Besides tactical skills training, the specialized teams also possess quality investigative skills that enable them to respond to incidents promptly and precisely.



Sh9.1 million recovered at a rental house in Roysambu near the Thika Road Mall during a pursuit of Wells Fargo staff who stole Sh94,918,750 belonging to Quickmatt Supermarket: PHOTO / DCI



Halford Munene Murakaru, his brother Charles Mwangi Murakaru and their friend Julius Ndung'u Wainaina when they were arraigned at Thika Law Courts following the Sh52 million theft at KCB Bank Thika branch on November, 2017: PHOTO / DCI



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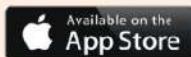
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PHONE CALL

That shuffled off Jennifer Mwende's mortal coil

By Jonah Kimani

News on the disappearance of hairdresser Jennifer Mwende Mwanzia alias Jane hit the headlines of mainstream media about a fortnight after she went missing. The news spread like wildfire as her family, friends, and the police frantically searched for her, hoping to find her safe. Unfortunately, their worst nightmare would be confirmed on September 12, 2023, when her decomposing body was found dumped in a pit latrine.

Jennifer was only 29, a mother of one, a sister and a daughter. She earned a living by working as a hairdresser in the Mlolongo town of Machakos County and had alleged involvement in the real estate business. According to her friends, Mwende was a happy soul who cherished her work and adored her child.

The deceased was just another ordinary Kenyan; little was known about her until the early morning of Friday, August 25, 2023, when she received a phone call. After this, her name would hit the headlines for all the worrying reasons.

Police came to learn of Mwende's disappearance on August 29 when her brother made a formal report at Mlolongo Police Station. The Officer Commanding Station (OCS) learnt that she had received a phone call from an unidentified individual and walked out of her working station, never to return.

After receiving the report, the OCS circulated a police signal of the missing lady to all station commands for a search. However, after days of fruitless search, they forwarded the case to the DCI, where fresh investigations were conducted, and statements were recorded from various persons of interest.

As the probe gained momentum, detectives learnt that Mwende had received a call from someone who posed as a client needing a hair stylist to render the service at their (the caller's) residence. The mysterious caller required Mwende to choose the ideal hair extensions for the desired hairstyle and carry them to their residence.

Her colleagues at Sly Beauty Salon and Cosmetics speculated that the job was a must-grab deal for Jane (or any other hairdresser). According to them, it was a difficult time of the month, and there were only a few days left for kids to report back to school. Therefore, Jane couldn't afford to turn the opportunity down owing to the expected pay, which must have been way better than what she was making at the salon.

Having interviewed Jane's colleagues, detectives moved on to her rented residence and interviewed the caretaker. The caretaker gave insights into the possible suspects behind Jane's disappearance.

In his statement, the caretaker indicated having been approached by two women twice earlier that week (August 22 and 24). The women had enquired about Jane's whereabouts, including the house where she stayed; Jane was away at work during both visits.

Meanwhile, the Crime Research and Intelligence Bureau detectives had their forensic tools in hand, analysing Jane's last moments to decipher viable clues. Their findings would reveal a non-coincidental disappearance and a well-orchestrated murder plot by more than one killer.

As more details emerged, detectives uncovered a love triangle involving the missing lady, another mistress and a married couple. The detectives established that Jane and another woman, identified as Phyllis Nzula Mbithi, were both mistresses to a married businessman, Januaris Musau Mulwa.

Whereas it was not evident at first whether Musau's wife, Evelyne Wanza Katumbu, was aware of her husband's affair with Jane, it was clear that Phyllis Mbithi was not cooking in the same pot with her fellow mistress. Perhaps she felt she was losing to Jane in a game of imperfect affection.

Phyllis came up with the abominable plan of settling scores with Jane and used a female neighbour identified as Faith Nthenya to lure Jane to her death trap.

While posing as a client, Faith Nthenya called Jane and informed her that some clients were seeking her services at a house she (Jane) would be directed to. Unbeknownst to the deceased, the

directions she received would lead her to her adversary's house, where both Faith and Phyllis were waiting.

Detectives learnt that once inside, Phyllis and Faith subdued Jane Mwendu with blows and kicks before Phyllis called Musau's wife, Evelyne. Apparently, Evelyne had become protective of her man and accused Phyllis of snatching him away.

To save her skin, Phyllis plotted to lure Musau's other lover before calling his wife and pointing fingers at the defenceless woman. It was three against one in a locked room, and there was no way Jane could convince Musau's wife otherwise.

One can only imagine what the harrowing experience was like for Jane. There she was, kneeling while writhing in agonizing pain, while a jealous rival, a jilted wife, and their backup, a woman eyeing a quick payday, surrounded her.

Indeed, Jane was helpless and defenceless, and her fate lay in the hands of the three women who had by then realized they had already crossed the line. Even if they had let her go then, they were already in for abduction and causing bodily harm. Indeed, investigations revealed that after

crime scene, where the victim's last moments were pieced together. Consequently, the police hunted them down and placed them behind bars. However, Phyllis, the prime suspect in what detectives and the family prayed to turn out as an abduction, made good her escape.

The police also arrested Musau, a renowned land agent and the man entangled in the love triangle. Although interrogations conducted by detectives exonerated him of any culpability, his insights into the puzzle, coupled with his wife's testimony, enabled the investigators to unmask a first-degree felony.

For more than a week, Evelyne and Faith took detectives in circles regarding where Jane or her remains were. The police had searched for her in hospitals and morgues, but all in vain. Given the time frame since her disappearance, it was apparent that Jane was long dead.

A taxi driver alleged to have transported the body after Jane's murder came into play, but in no time, detectives established that he never transported the body. The suspects had misled the police by saying that they took her body to Magongo forest in Makueni before changing the narrative to another misguiding location in Kiserian.

Faith and Evelyne's refusal to cooperate with the investigation was an insult to the family, who were drowning in a lake of despair and despondency. A body would at least help them come to terms with the fact that their kin was dead; knowing who murdered her and why would only be good for closure.

Relentless interrogations of the two suspects finally bore fruits when they came clean on the remaining events of August 25. They explained how Phyllis planned to have the body sneaked out of the compound to the said Magongo forest by the taxi driver. However, the plan failed

roughing Jane up and threatening her with death should she be seen anywhere around Musau, Phyllis and Evelyne feared that she would report them to the police.

They could not figure out a better way of covering their trails than committing a gruesome murder. So, Phyllis and Evelyne heinously strangled Jane with a bedsheet while Faith suffocated her with pieces of cloth to prevent her from screaming. And, just like that, the life of a young woman and mother was lost to Faith's betrayal, Phyllis' jealousy and Evelyne's need to cling to a wayward man.

Forensics placed Faith and Evelyne at the



Ms Jennifer Mwendu in an undated photo. PHOTO/COURTESY.

Jennifer was only 29, a mother of one, a sister and a daughter.

because they couldn't access the key to the main gate where the car was supposed to enter the residence.

With that option out of play, they resorted to dumping the body into a pit latrine. It was the last time Phyllis Mbithi, known to have a bone to pick with Jane, was ever seen in Mlolongo. Homicide detectives retrieved Jane's decomposing body and processed it for evidence before handing it over to the family for a decent send-off.

With that out of the way, all attention focused on hunting down the prime suspect in the murder. Phyllis, 36, was arrested on October 28 in Kitengela town after Crime Research and Intelligence Bureau detectives flushed her out of a Namanga-bound matatu minutes past 9 pm.

She was attempting to flee to Tanzania, as evidenced by the bus she boarded and a bag containing her clothes and toiletries. The arrest marked the end of the road for a suspect who had evaded justice for two months by holing up in Mombasa and Kibwezi. Her victim's blood would, however, haunt her to the corridors of justice.

By that time, her partners in crime had pleaded to a charge of murder. So, on October 30, Phyllis was arraigned at the Machakos Senior Resident Magistrate's court, which committed her to detainment at the Machakos GK Prison until November 14, 2023, when she would take plea. A mental assessment test conducted indicated that she was fit to stand trial. The case is ongoing at the Machakos High Court.

Jennifer Mwende's death in the hands of fellow women shocked the nation, with citizens wondering just how far one would go to fight for love. Questions on whether a love affair, if anything, was worth risking a lifetime in jail or dying for floated all over.



Phyllis Nzula Mbithi at Kitegela DCI Offices after she was ejected from a Namanga-bound bus in October 2023.



Pit latrine from which Jennifer Mwende's body was retrieved on September 12, 2023 after a two-week frantic search. PHOTO BY DCI



Evelyn Wanza & Faith Nthenya at Machakos High Court where they were charged with murder of Mlolongo hairdresser Jennifer Mwende. PHOTO COURTESY



Taxi Driver's Abduction and Ultimate Murder

But even before detectives could shake the dust off their boots, another disappearance was reported at Mihang'o Police Station in Kayole, Nairobi. A male taxi driver and his vehicle had gone missing. The missing driver was identified as Evans Bikundo Moracha.

Moracha's wife, Teresa Masesi Kerubo, reported her husband's disappearance on October 14, 2023, indicating that he had been missing for three days. His vehicle, a Toyota Vitz registration number KDH 833M, was also missing.

It was becoming apparent that the vices of abductions and kidnappings were crawling from the underworld. The worrying trend of disappearances was not something the police would take lying down; they had to be stopped.

Given the gravity of the situation, the DCI deployed established crime researchers from the DCI Nairobi region and mandated them to provide analysed intelligence on the perpetrators. Additionally, the crime researchers were to conduct criminal

profiling and launch a manhunt to rescue the missing man.

The team initiated a forensic analysis aimed at capturing Moracha's last moments. Coincidentally, they received a report from the Assistant Chief Githuri sub-location in Murang'a County that an unknown male body had been found in River Sagana. The male remains lay naked at the River bank and had multiple head injuries.

The area police took the body to Murang'a Level 5 Hospital Mortuary for autopsy and identification through fingerprinting and analysis at the National Registration Bureau (NRB) offices. Unfortunately, it was identified as that of Evans Moracha, whose wife had just reported missing.

The life of a husband and a father had just been cut short for reasons only known to his killers. It was the assignment of the detectives to hunt them down and surrender them to the mercy of the unforgiving law. But forensic-led intelligence revealed a well-choreographed murder plot that challenged the mere disappearance and sudden death of the 47-year-old Moracha.

Nairobi Region crime researchers, backed up by their Operations Department counterparts, took over the matter in a thorough manhunt for the monstrous faces behind the heinous murder. Acting on the gathered intelligence, the team proceeded to Ruring'u village in Nyeri County on October 24, 2023, and arrested Stanley Collins Muthika, the first suspect in the murder.

After interrogations, Muthika led the team of investigators to Olekasasi in Ongata Rongai, Kajiado County, where they cornered and arrested a second suspect, Kennedy Murimi Kinyua. Murimi's profile would reveal shocking details.

On processing Murimi, the detectives established that he was a police constable based at Akila Police Station in Lang'ata and designated as a driver in the station. However, he had been interdicted for deserting the service. The two suspects were placed in custody separately at Capitol Hill and Kilimani Police Stations as detectives recorded their statements and furthered interrogations.

As detectives did a deep dive into the case, they established that Moracha did not just disappear but that the killer duo picked him up from his house on the night of Oct 11, 2023. Moreover, the deceased's wife, Teresa, was present as they took her husband away. Days after Moracha's abduction, his car had been stealthily driven back to Teresa's neighbourhood and securely abandoned a safe distance from her house.

In a shocking twist of events, cyber-crime detectives whose services were sought linked Teresa to the two suspects after numerous conversations among the three were retrieved. The communication revolved around terms of the "job" and negotiations for payment, with word having it that the amount quoted was Sh500,000. The conversations dated back to before Moracha's abduction, during and after the recovery of his body.

Police hence believed that Teresa, whose arrest was imminent, was the mastermind behind her husband's abduction and subsequent cold-blooded murder. They also believe that she filed the missing persons' report as an afterthought after getting wind of the body's recovery in Murang'a. Therefore, they apprehended the widow to unravel the motive behind her husband's homicide.

With the three prime suspects behind bars, it was just a matter of time before the events surrounding Moracha's disappearance came to light. Kayole sub-county detectives, who had worked hand-in-hand with their crime research counterparts, took over the investigations and initiated fresh interviews on the three suspects separately. The fresh round of interviews revealed crucial information for the case.

First, detectives retrieved a Messenger App communication between Teresa and Kennedy Murimi (the interdicted police officer), who was informing her that a body had been found in River Sagana. In the message, Murimi also directed Teresa to report just her husband missing in case the unidentified remains turned out to be her husband's. The interdicted officer went ahead to assure her that the state of the body was already too bad for the detectives to identify.

It was also uncovered that the three accomplices had met before Moracha's abduction. During the meeting, they had agreed that they would each purchase a new subscriber sim card solely for the job and dispose of the lines afterwards. To further cover their trail, they would only communicate through the Messenger App, hoping that all communication was end-to-end encrypted.

Given her husband's large build, Teresa agreed to poison her husband when he arrived home. Moreover, she was callous enough to administer the poison while her children, aged 14 and 16, watched. Once Moracha was incapacitated, she invited the two, whose task was to dispose of the body.

However, Moracha held on to dear life longer than they had anticipated; he struggled with the poison for hours. Though weak and helpless, he wouldn't give up his spirit.

The woman just watched and, worse still, subjected her children to the trauma of watching their father die.

In the dead of the night, she called in the waiting accomplices, who finished the job by strangling Moracha before bundling him in his Toyota Vitz. They then drove to Murang'a and disposed of the body, washed the car and drove back to their own families like nothing had happened.

A search conducted in Murimi's house saw the recovery of the deceased's mobile phone and a stun torch, which the suspect confessed to having used to light their way to River Sagana, where they disposed of the body.

But why would a woman who once vowed to live with her husband in health and sickness turn on him in such a deadly manner? It emerged that the deceased husband had not started his family as a taxi driver. He was once a man of means; he had even worked as the protocol officer to a former president. However, things went south two years before his murder, when he lost his job at the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs after he was implicated in a charge of forgery.

The late Moracha had been accused of forging documents that enabled several individuals, who were later arrested and deported, to travel abroad. Given the overwhelming nature of the change, his siblings advised him to work as a taxi driver. They believed driving would help him keep busy and manage the job-loss-related stress.

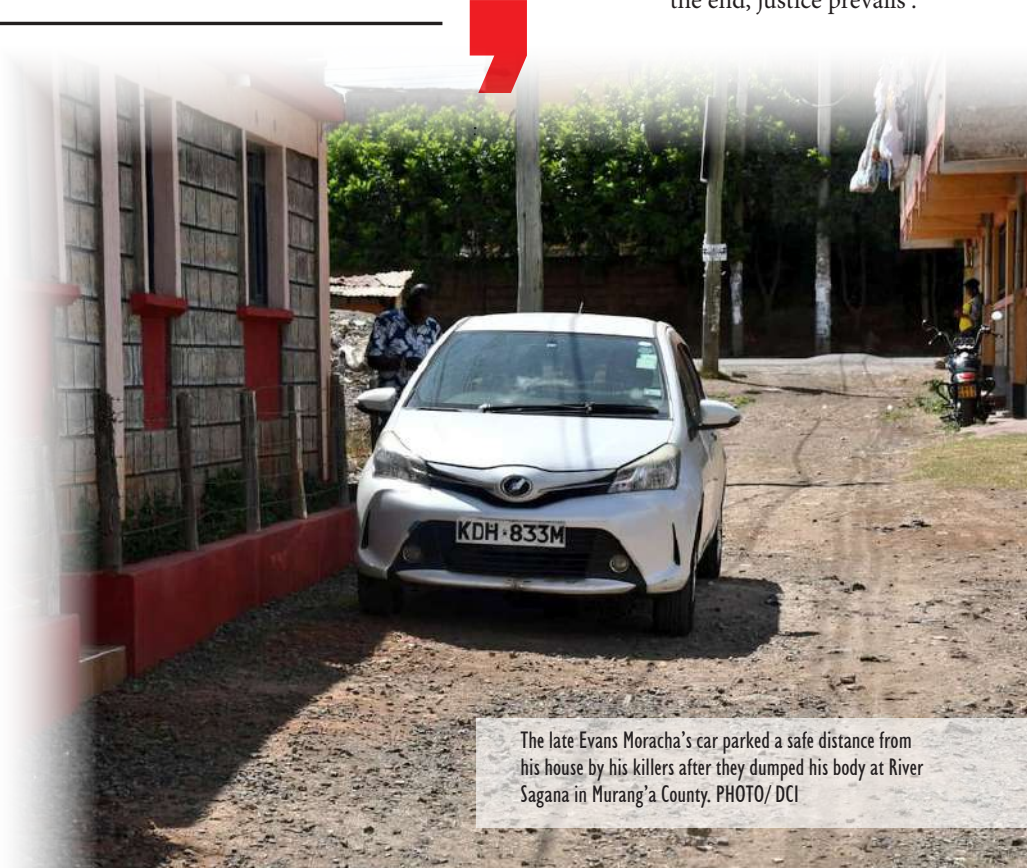
Further investigations revealed that a few days before his death, the couple had travelled to Kisii, where they disposed

of some parcels of land at Sh2.1 million. Moracha also had more properties within Nairobi and Kiambu counties, including a permanent house in Utawala. Therefore, money was the motive behind the gruesome murder.

After piecing up all the evidence, Kayole detectives arraigned the three before Judge Diana Kaveta of Kibera High Court. All three suspects pleaded not guilty to murder charges. Even so, the court dismissed their bond applications and committed them to prison remand. The case is ongoing, with Moracha's family hoping that soon justice will be served to the heinous killers of their kin.

The DCI has maintained that murderers will never have it easy on Kenyan soil. Indeed, the two incidents are just part of the latest homicide cases that the DCI has cracked and secured welcoming convictions. And every criminal must remember the simple message: "In the end, justice prevails".

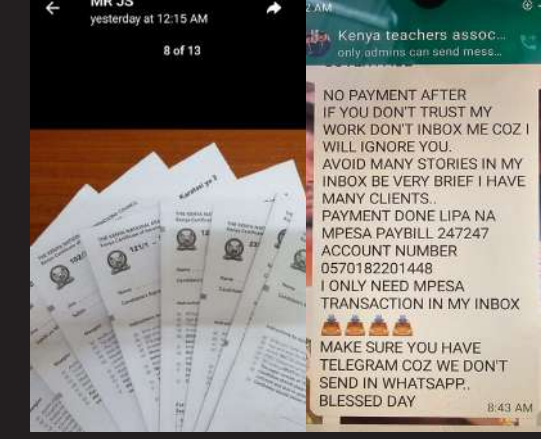
Forensic-led intelligence revealed a well-choreographed murder plot that challenged the mere disappearance and sudden death of the 47 year old Moracha



The late Evans Moracha's car parked a safe distance from his house by his killers after they dumped his body at River Sagana in Murang'a County. PHOTO/ DCI



AK47 and MP5 rifles alongside live rounds of ammunitions stolen from the police recovered after a shootout with armed gunmen: PHOTO/ DCI



Screenshots of examination papers and Telegram App account opened by Nichols Ngumbau Kalewa to reach more victims of his examination fraud: PHOTO / DCI



CRE teacher Nicholas Ngumbau Kalewa alias Mr Examiner, 23 who was arrested at a primary school in Kiambu for hawking fake examination papers to pupils and students: PHOTO / DCI

NO WHERE TO RUN For Gun-hardened Desperados

By Lillian Otieno

As pupils and students across all levels of primary and secondary schools prepared for their 2023 national examination, the underworld was up in arms ready to mark territories and reign within the sensitive period. From hoodwinkers opening telegram accounts through which they sold fake examination papers, all the way to bloodthirsty felons who targeted early birds distributing the highly guarded examination materials, law enforcers had a difficult time doing the one job they were hired to do: maintaining law and order.

The security services in the country would however not take the battle lying down, no matter how hard the tackle became. It has always been whispered in the streets that *"mkono mrefu wa serikali"* somehow prevails in every confrontation with the law. Indeed, this was not going to be any different as miscreants in their numbers were hunted down and ferried in police land cruisers to face the law.

Among the first victims of the sharp claws of the country's highest investigative agency was 23-year-old Nicholas Ngumbau Kalewa, a primary school teacher at a local institution in Kiambu. Kalewa, in his absolute sobriety as a decorated Christian Religious Education teacher, transgressed all the teachings of the Holy Book to run over ten WhatsApp and Telegram accounts through which he hawked examination papers at Sh1,500 to Sh2,000 in the name of 'Mr Examiner'.

His plans would however be nipped in the bud just before he could make a kill worth dying for, when sleuths infiltrated his followership of a staggering 900 guised as students who were ready to buy flying colours and dance their way to national headlines as top scorers.

By October 27, an embarrassed Kalewa had been ushered into the confines of police custody, with charges related to examination malpractices and fraud being preferred.

In the days that followed, more of his type including a notorious alias Prof. Martinez followed suit, in an operation that saw many fictitious accounts pulled down but not without any scars on the vulnerable victims.

But while all the Kenyan police wanted was to ensure a conducive environment for the youthful generation to shape their future aspirations, a gang of crooks broke from hell targeting police officers providing security services to examination officials.

From the devil's hour to the crack of dawn, they lay in wait waiting for the perfect time to strike, not for money or the papers, but for their lethal weapons. With these, they could henceforth stage robberies across counties and become even more powerful and dreadful.

In one such incident on November 20, callous assailants who were armed with daggers and machetes waylaid and

attacked two police officers on a security assignment to deliver KCSE examination papers at a school in Siaya County, killing one and leaving the other for the dead before beetling off with their rifles.

In the early morning fatal encounter, the two armed police officers and the examination centre manager had just alighted from a transport vehicle metres away from Mahero Secondary School, where they were to deliver the exam papers.

Unbeknownst to them, an unknown number of assailants waited at a nearby thicket, who immediately landed on them with stabs and life-threatening cuts, killing one and leaving the other hanging by the skin of his teeth. The centre manager escaped unhurt.

Having subdued the officers, the hoodlums disappeared with a loaded AK47 and a HK MP5 rifle. The news spread like wildfire on both the mainstream and social media platforms, with citizens calling upon the security services to rid the daredevil gang off the streets.

Hawkshaws believed that the attackers took advantage of the rainy season that made the path to the school gate impassable for vehicles, forcing the examination coordinating team to be dropped a distance away, and had to cover the rest of the distance on foot while carrying loads of the examination materials.

The pain of losing a fellow officer, a father, son and kin to many in the hands of heartless villains gashed the entire police service. This time around, the bee had stung where it hurt most. Security teams were deployed with clear instructions to hunt down the armed ruffians, recover the stolen firearms and bring them to book.

Led by the DCI Operations and Crime Research and Intelligence Bureau detectives, the deployment operating on a forensic trail pursued the criminals to Busia and Siaya counties, before catching up with them at a two-roomed house in Awinga area of Siaya. It was at this mud structure that robberies would be staged to the terror and outcry of peace-loving citizens.

A knock at the wooden door by the sleuths was answered by the rattling of sporadic gunshots that ripped through the mud house, forcing the officers into covers.

The pain of losing a fellow officer, a father, son and kin to many in the hands of heartless villains gashed the entire police service.

So heavy was the gunfire emanating from inside the rooms that the operation commander had no room to issue any orders for surrender. With every squeeze of the trigger, the gang made clear their choice: A fight to death, the strong to survive.

But they were just egoistic desperados who could not match the highly skilled marksmen deployed to make a statement to any criminals who thought they could just murder cops, rob their guns and roam with impunity terrorizing anyone on Kenyan soil. They were wrong. The DCI would never allow any guns on gangs.

From their covers, the police deployment retaliated tactfully and with precision. When the guns went silent, bodies of two youthful suspects lay soaked in blood, and beside each, a rifle and several spent cartridges.

A search conducted in the house saw the recovery of the two rifles, 44 live rounds, 16 spent cartridges, assorted mobile phones, crude weapons, daggers, machetes, military fatigues and several Islamic literature books.

During the melee, one suspect escaped. Detectives knew him by the alias name Abu Naiyah. He was gun-hardened, and believed to be the leader of the gang. Although the stolen police rifles were recovered, Abu Naiyah's escape was no good news to the police. With him on the loose, there was no guarantee that he would not be back with an even more deadly gang.

One person of interest was arrested and placed in custody to assist with further investigations regarding the whereabouts of the escapee.

It was, however, a great sigh of relief to members of the public, and some consolation to the family of the slain officer and the police fraternity. Police authorities acknowledged the contribution of the public in the operation, encouraging them to continue sharing credible information on the dangerous runagate.

Abu Naiyah's 40th day would come two months later, when police flushed him out of his hideout in Dandora, Nairobi on January 26, 2024. His real identity had since been established as Edward Wanyama Mukanga. The 34-year-old was also known by the name Ramadhan. Alongside others, police published his name on the media while appealing for information on their whereabouts.

Members of the public came through when he was spotted in Dandora, and the ever agile detectives wasted no chance in effecting his arrest.



Recovered Firearm and ammunition stolen from a police station in Meru when a riotous group stormed the station: PHOTO/DCI

However, a few of his associates including Edwin Omondi alias Rashid, Simon Ochieng Ouma alias Ali Baba, Salim Jackoyo and Hasting Omondi remain on police radar.

After Abu was arrested, a stern warning was issued to armed criminal gangs that it was just a matter of time before ultimate justice caught up with them, as the all-out war to rid the streets of illegal firearms was high on heels. Police advised them to surrender for the criminal justice system to take its course, otherwise no effort would be spared in hunting them down.

In a separate incidence, two known notorious gangsters that had been terrorizing locals in Kibra and its environs were on November 22nd 2023 hunted down like bad demons before being neutralized in a fire exchange with DCI detectives, in a stealth operation that also saw a Beretta pistol recovered.

The suspects, only known by their aliases Rundo and Mulinyo, were stealthily pursued by the undercover sleuths after anonymous reports by concerned members of the public to DCI pointed at their felonious dealings in the populated area.

Getting wind that a team of crime busters was hot on their heels, they abandoned their hideout but not in time to escape the officers' intelligence. As they bolted out, one of them brandished the pistol shooting

indiscriminately at the officers, a move that prompted the hawk-eyed sleuths to respond with finality, fatally injuring the duo.

Six rounds of 9mm ammunition, seven spent cartridges and four bullet heads were recovered alongside the firearm, as the bodies were moved to a city mortuary for full identification.

But this was not an isolated case on suspects that bet their lives on the power of the gun. Their ultimate encounter with justice which at times does not offer second chances was just one among the many criminals whose bodies end up ripped by the taste of the gunpowder.

Rundo and Mulinyo had either been too slow or proud to draw any lessons from the fate of their partners in crime, a three-man gang that had been gunned down earlier on September, 2023 in Kisii County.

In the night-time incident on September 13, an AK 47 rifle was also recovered from the slain suspects after hours of engaging a police operations group in running battles from Migori to Kisii where they had planned an attack.

Having got wind of the terror gang, Crime Research detectives had forensically analysed their modus operandi based on previously staged robberies across the region, before embarking on their painstaking trail. Every staged robbery had left behind a lost life, bloodshed, hopelessness on dependants and a permanent curse from those affected.

Each striking night, it was the false confidence in the armour of a loaded AK 47, Rambo swords and machetes that set the gang on a TVS motorcycle, which was believed to be their transport means to targeted spots and escape. But September 13 was not one of those nights. Fate had conspired with police forces to bring to an end the era of impunity and untold



Crucial exhibits seized at the house of two felled gunmen found in possession of stolen police rifles: PHOTO / DCI

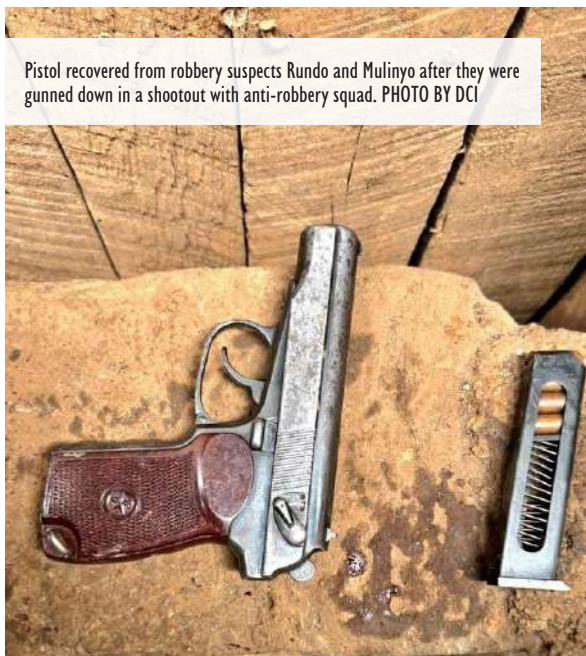
suffering unleashed on locals whose only crime was working hard and acquiring property that the gang would rather have, without a sweat.

They set out for the 'job' oblivious of the police who were hot on their heels. Before they could have it all figured out, their ferocious mission came to a loud fail courtesy of the operation team that trailed the trio for over 60km, catching up with them at Corner Mbaya area of Kisii.

They were gun-hardened and surrendering was a chapter they would rather not have in any of their books. Confronted by the daring defiance, the officers who had been deployed on a hell-bent mission to sanitize the streets of guns in the wrong hands opened fire, fatally injuring the three.

Sprawled beside pulseless bodies lay an AK47 rifle, a magazine loaded with 21 bullets, a Rambo dagger, a machete and a TVS motorcycle registration number KMGH 656X. One of the suspects was later identified as Joseph Mwita, 27, from Kuria in Migori. The other two suspects were in their early 30s.

While the public is called upon to always exercise caution and be wary of criminals lurking in the dark to strike at the slightest opportunity, the DCI reiterates that no efforts will ever be spared in dealing with armed gunmen who are out to terrorize Kenyans.



Pistol recovered from robbery suspects Rundo and Mulinyo after they were gunned down in a shootout with anti-robbery squad. PHOTO BY DCI

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The Enemy Within: A Meal with a Merchant of Death

By Claudy Otieno



The recovered motor cycle belonging to the late Francis detained at Kitengela Police Station. PHOTO/CLAUDY OTIENO

The African tales of literature presents a series of events in life when the sun rises but difficult to tell when the very sun will go down. One of the great novelist, whom I draw a title of his book 'A WALK IN THE NIGHT', Alex La Guma compiles his story under this title to cover events that surround the twelve hours of darkness.

15th July, 2023 evening is when Lucy Mukhesia last set her eyes on her husband, Francis Esadia. He was a bodaboda rider within Kitengela town in Kajiado County. As he left, Francis told his wife that he had an important client that needed his bodaboda services that late evening.

It was not the first time this was happening. Francis had a pool of customers who trusted him with their errands. He was reliable. He was just good and efficient at what he did. And above all, he was a family man who made it home before it clocked 10pm. But this particular night,

Lucy wasn't easy watching her man leave. She got worried the whole night. As time passed, she kept calling but there was no answer to his cellphone. She only prayed that he would be standing on the other side of the door by daybreak, and a knock on the door would be her best gift. That never happened.

The following morning, Lucy left for Kitengela Police Station where she expressed her fears regarding her husband who had not picked her calls since the previous night. Coincidentally, the report office personnel had just booked a report on a lifeless body that passers-by found sprawled by the roadside about five kilometers from the station. From the attire worn, the unidentified body was believed to be of a rider.

The officers called upon the Officer Commanding Station to attend to Lucy. They didn't know how to break the news

to her. From her narrative, it was clear that the recovered body was her husband's. Eventually, she identified it at a morgue.

Francis' body was found tossed beside Ngurunga Road. At the back of his head was a deep cut from which blood gushed out the whole night, soaking his jacket. His phone was still in his pocket but the motorcycle was missing. Police believed that whoever was behind the heinous murder was after the motorcycle, and was careful to cover his trail as he left the victim's phone behind.

As Lucy, her family and friends mourned their loved one and commenced burial arrangements, police in Kitengela geared up for a scrupulous manhunt for the perpetrators. Crime Scene Investigators who processed the scene obtained crucial leads to kick start the case. On the other hand, the lead investigator identified and brought on board the motor cycle dealers who had sold the bike to the deceased. The dealers' involvement in the case coupled with their unreserved support in the entire

exercise cracked a rather mysterious murder.

Preliminary investigations revealed that after stealing the motorcycle, the perpetrators disappeared towards Isinya in Kajiado County, where they disabled the tracker. Police believed that the suspects dismantled the tracker at that location to mislead the investigators, who would set base in the area for days as they (suspects) enjoyed the fruits of their crime elsewhere in or out of the country. Unbeknownst to them, another tracking device was perfectly fitted on the same machine and detectives were monitoring every movement from the scene of crime, to Isinya, Kangemi, Nakuru, all the way to Eldoret town of Uasin Gishu.

Launching a tactical operation in the town, police intercepted the motorcycle with its rider and a pillion passenger. The passenger scampered among a thronging mob who had got wind that the two were murder

suspects. The rider was, however, arrested and the bike impounded. Police sneaked him through the agitated mob who were baying for his blood. They booked him at Naiberi Police Station in Eldoret before transferring him to Kitengela when the streets cleared.

Meanwhile, an autopsy conducted revealed that a blunt object was used to hit the deceased on the head, causing excessive internal bleeding. An open cut at the contact spot soaked the jacket with more blood.

The family was hoping to get closure. Lucy knew no adversaries of her husband. She called the station occasionally to follow up on the progress of the investigations, until she got the news that a suspect was in custody. She wanted to see who it was, and when she did, her heart bled even more.

The suspect was a common face. She had served him dinner at their house several times in the three years Douglas Lijaguru (the suspect) and Felix had known each other. The two men became friends while working at a construction site in Kitengela. She could not hold back her tears of despondency. She had fed a thankless stray mongrel only for it to maul her. She walked away and hopes justice will take its course.



Kitengela Police Station. PHOTO/CLAUDY OTIENO

The investigating officer Police Constable Robert Kiprotich believes that he has a watertight case against the suspect, including forensic proof of his presence at the crime scene on the night in question. The hearing of the case continues on April 3, 2024 at the Kajiado Law Courts, where Douglas Lijaguru risks a death sentence if convicted for robbery with violence.

DCI haina shida na DEALS legit



WAR ON GANGS targeting motorists gains momentum as sleuths intensify crackdowns

By Benjamin Charo
and Diana Githaiga



At 3am on February 14, 2024, police manning the report office in Naivasha Police Station received a distressed woman from Mirera estate, who had narrowly escaped with her life after a night of untold terror in the hands of five violent robbers.

It was their 5th entry in the Occurrence Book, a rather bad way of ushering in a day when true love is celebrated world over, the Valentine's Day. Well, a good day beckons at daybreak, and this was not it.

Ms Nelly Cherop Kosgei, her two kids and a house help had been accosted by a five-man gang at her house and held hostage from 9pm to 2am that night.

To gain entry, the gang had attacked the security officer manning the homestead, thereafter ordering him to knock at Nelly's door informing her that he was unwell. Concerned about the guard's condition evidenced by his faint voice probably from the assault, Nelly, who had just taken her position at the dining table opened the door.

Five mean-looking men stood on the other side of the door, four of whom were dressed in jungle uniforms. They stormed the house armed with crude weapons.

After subduing the family with threats to kill if they raised alarm, they ransacked the house for valuables for a whole five hours, before disappearing with two TV sets, two laptops, a JBL sound bar and four mobile phones. The gang also stole some undisclosed amount of money from the woman, which she was ordered to withdraw via a mobile banking App.

Satisfied that they had turned the whole house upside down, the robbers then helped themselves with the sumptuous repast set on the dinner table before loading the valuables in Nelly's car, a Nissan Dualis registration number KDC 302V. Luckily, no one was physically harmed in the incident.

The robbery case was taken over by DCI Naivasha detectives, who fruitlessly searched for the perpetrators in their area of jurisdiction for a few days hence calling upon the Crime Research and Intelligence Bureau team based at DCI Headquarters to assist in the pursuit. The crime researchers hit the ground backed up by the Operation Action Team also domiciled at DCI headquarters under the Operations Directorate.

After days of relentless pursuit by forensically analysing all possible intelligence leads, the investigators launched a sting operation in Nakuru North where they laid an ambush at Kiamunyeke area, successfully cornering one suspect namely Joseph Ndong'u Waweru.

In his possession was a black Nissan Dualis fitted with registration number plates KDE 074Q. On verifying the chassis and engine numbers of the vehicle, it was discovered to have been registered under the names of Nelly Cherop Kosgei, and that the fitted plates belonged to a lorry.

Also recovered from the suspect were six sim cards, a pair of jungle green trousers, pliers, 14 steel tyre nuts, aerosol paint spray, a brown folded carton for carrying extra car registration plates and foreign currencies of different denominations including South African rand, Mauritius rupees and Uganda shillings.

After interrogation, detectives run a profiling on the arrested suspect, finding more leads to his accomplices. On the same night of February 24 at around 2.40am, the crime researchers backed up

help her by sharing.

Hello Sikika ROAD Safety my name is Nelly Kosgei a resident of Naivasha-Mirera area and this is my sad 🥺 story

I was attacked by 5 thugs in my home, dressed like police Men, they took my Car Nissan Dualis black in colour KDC 302V, stole 2 TVs, 2 laptops and Sound bar.

This is how it happened, I drove home from work, arrived at some mins to 9pm, parked the car, warmed food... Checked my daughter and wished her goodnight and when I started eating my caretaker called and told me to open the door he is not feeling well, kumbe they had tied him and instructed him to call me. On opening I was pushed by one of them and ordered to lie down.. another one went to bring my daughter from bedroom.

We were tormented from 9 pm to 2 Am They took the car and Electronics, made me take loans from mobile loans apps.

National Police Service and Directorate of Criminal Investigations - DCI kindly help this lady.



A screenshot of social media post highlighting Nelly Kosgei's frightful encounter with her home raiders. PHOTO/DCI

by DCI Nakuru laid another ambush on two suspects on board a Mitsubishi FH truck which was being driven towards Njoro town. Upon intercepting the vehicle reg. No. KCB 383Z, Evans Mwangi Njenga, 45 and Geoffrey Kamau Hinga, 53 were nabbed, where on searching the truck another pair of registration number plates (KCK 616G) were discovered. A verification of the discovered plates revealed that they belonged to a bus.

The two suspects were equally interrogated, where the detectives learnt that they were to meet with two other accomplices in Njoro town, where they were to change the truck's registration plates and escort it across the Kenya - Uganda border. Hence, a third ambush was laid at a hardware in Njoro town, and two more suspects, Peter Mahinyo Wanyoike, 45 and Julius Gichagu Wanguno aged 32 arrested when they came to join Mwangi and Kamau. This made five the total number of suspects rounded up in the scrupulous manhunt.

But before the detectives could call it an accomplished mission in the pursuit of justice for Nelly and her family, it emerged that they were dealing with a more ruthless gang than one could pick from their faces. In the developments, it was discovered that the FH lorry they had intercepted had been reported robbed from a victim at Elementaita Police Station in Gilgil, when the gang turned against the driver they had hired to offer transport services.



Lorry stolen from a victim after he was hired to transport goods to Nakuru. PHOTO/DCI



Registration plates found hidden in a stolen FH truck. PHOTO/DCI

The 38-year-old driver had been robbed, sexually molested and left tied up at Punda Milia section on February 23 by a 6-man gang, who then disabled the vehicle's tracker and disappeared with it.

With the driver's report indicating the involvement of a sixth suspect, the sleuths are hotly pursuing him with a view to neutralize the entire syndicate.

Recently, car theft incidences have rocked various counties including Nairobi, Nyeri, Nakuru, Bomet and Kericho. Of these, towns of Nairobi, Naivasha, Nyeri and Bomet have experienced an even higher surge, with many motorists either been abducted before their vehicles are stolen, or waking up in the morning to find empty parking slots, vehicles gone.

It is a worrying trend that has seen the DCI, through its communication team, issue several advisories to motorists warning them of highway robbers especially those targeting taxi drivers.

Criminal rings posing as cash-rich customers have devised ways of hoodwinking hardworking citizens who offer transport services, by luring them into long well-paying trips before turning against them along the way and robbing them off.

These they achieve by having one of their members identify a potential target who they deem vulnerable, and who will be having a car that suits their demands.

Often, this will be a Toyota Probox especially in the case of Kericho and Busia counties, Toyota Fielder in Nyeri and Nakuru, Toyota Axio, Vitz and Mazda Demio models.

The "customer" negotiates with the taxi driver on the charges for the trip, and while on the way communicates with one or more accomplices who will be conveniently waiting along the route. With promises of an extra inconvenience fee for the stop, the driver goes ahead to let on board new passengers. In some occasions, the accomplices lie in wait at the drop off points.

Usually, the route or destinations picked will have secluded areas, where the gang turns against the drivers, robs them off their vehicles and at times murder them in cold blood.

In one of the latest scenarios reported at Kikopey Police Post within Gilgil in Nakuru County on January 14, 2024, a 42-year-old male taxi operator in Nairobi CBD was hired by a customer to drive him to Nakuru using his motor vehicle make Toyota Fielder.

Once in Naivasha, the customer requested that they pick his two friends at Karagita area before setting off towards Nakuru.

A short moment into the final stretch of the journey, the passengers turned against the male driver, robbing him of his vehicle and dumped him at Diatomite area in Gilgil.



Suspects rounded up in scrupulous hunt for violent robbers in Nelly Kosgei's 5-hour home raid on February 14, 2024. PHOTO/DCI



Nelly's car fitted with fake registration plates when it was recovered in Kiamunyi area in Nakuru County. PHOTO/DCI

On receiving a report on the incident, a team of detectives from DCI Headquarters was deployed to hunt down the suspects, two of whom were traced to Bungoma County where the vehicle was also recovered.

Francis Ojerepata Omoindi, 39 and Jack Odhiambo Otieno, 38 were both arrested and handed over to investigators at DCI Gilgil for further processing. Found in their possession were seven sim cards, five national ID cards bearing different names and two driving licences. The two men were arraigned before the Chief Magistrate's Court in Naivasha charged with robbery with violence, as police continue searching for other known accomplices.

The successful pursuit of the hard core criminals with sheer greed for quick riches has shown a ray of hope to Kenyans, with most runagates hitting a cul de sac while evading justice. It is that hope that detectives have vowed to keep alive, with specialized units being deployed to pursue any cases of car thieveries reported countrywide.

Earlier on January 2024, a spike in motor vehicle thefts at residential and social parking yards within Nairobi region and neighbouring counties saw a team of crime researchers dispatched to tame the vice.

The detectives drawn from the Nairobi Region Crime Research and Intelligence Bureau, Operations Directorate and

DCI Kayole mounted an intelligence-led operation on January 26 that saw a notorious suspect, Timothy Ndegwa, arrested at his residence in Thika's Makongeni Estate.

A registration plate number KBR 957C was found in the suspect's house, who upon interrogation led the officers to Kenyatta Road in Juja where his accomplice George Kimani Wangechi was also arrested with a suspected stolen white Toyota Fielder fitted with a registration plate number KCC 458K.

On further interrogation, the suspects confessed to have earlier stolen a red Isuzu DMAX within the populated Kayole area, which they sold to a buyer in Nyeri through one of their accomplices by the name Stephen Kamau Maganjo.

The team packed for Narumoru area of Nyeri county where the said Isuzu DMAX was intercepted while being driven by Antony Wanjohi Theuri. He was also arrested and escorted to DCI offices in Nairobi.

After investigative interviewing of the suspects, a fourth accomplice, Boniface Gitemengo Gachanja, was cornered and arrested within Githurai. As the criminal web widened further, Gitemengo led the sleuths to Limuru's Flyover area where his partner in crime Josphat Ikua Mwangi was netted. Mwangi was in possession of a suspected stolen motor vehicle make Toyota NZE fitted with registration numbers KBA 163Y.

It was a day of traversing counties rounding up a notorious syndicate and recovering stolen vehicles whose owners had been left in despair. But the team would not debrief before a last suspect for the day was traced to Kariobangi and ushered in police cells. This was Alois Tabu Ojiambo, who would on the next day lead the investigators to his accomplices in Nakuru.

At cockcrow on February 27, the crime busters set off for Nakuru's 58 suburb area where a Toyota Vitz previously stolen from a Nairobi was intercepted and its driver, Michael Gichuhi Macharia arrested.

A second renowned suspect, Charles Kung'u Kamau, who was driving a numberless Toyota Probox was cornered in the same. But Kung'u, who had no few antics after occasional confrontations with the law managed to dart away leaving the vehicle. Search from the vehicle's chassis and engine numbers revealed it was a KBV 958J.

More sting operations have been carried out thereafter and dozens of stolen vehicles recovered. While at it, more suspects implicated in the deeply-rooted criminal venture have been arrested, and the fight continues.

The Directorate of Criminal Investigations has issued a very stern warning on the perpetrators that no effort shall be spared in hunting them down, reminding them that their mercy was only domiciled at the unforgiving arm of the law.

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Years of Agony for Land Buyers Defrauded in the Name of Religion

Joram Khisa

Owing to the emotive nature of land-related cases, the Directorate of Criminal Investigations has come up with an ambitious plan to end the persistent killings over land disputes in Kenya. Under the scheme, thousands of Kenyans have been given a new lease of life after the DCI brokered out-of-court mediations that ended long-standing disputes, leading to the issuance of title deeds. By so doing, the detectives averted bloody and lengthy court battles that have characterised land deals since independence from British colonial rule in 1963. In addition, DCI's Land Fraud Investigations Unit (LFIU) has broken up elaborate and deadly syndicates that forge documents and sell off land to unsuspecting buyers.

Dozens of land fraudsters are facing criminal charges in various courts. The DCI, working with the Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning, has brought smiles to the faces of Kenyans who had for years waited for their titles or lost hope of ever getting the documents. Tears and tales of despair amongst land buyers in Nairobi, Mombasa, Kiambu, Murang'a and Eldoret have been replaced by life-changing moments. The story is replicated in every other county.

War on land grabbers

Land has been Kenya's worst sore spot in the past 60 years. It has been the main source of persistent bloody conflicts and killings rocking siblings, families, friends, interest groups and communities. According to crime statistics from the National Police Service, 2,856 Kenyans were murdered in 2018 compared to 2,774 in 2017 and 2,751 in 2016. Crime experts say 75 per cent of the homicides were linked to land deals and disputes. Within the period, DCI Headquarters along Kiambu Road, Nairobi, documented 2,037 reports of

land fraud across the country. Out of the thousands, 411 cases were taken to court and 1,626 were still under investigations as at 2021. In the year 2022, the Land Fraud Investigation Unit received 997 reports on land disputes, and 371 cases in 2023. Of these, 150 cases in 2022 compared to 258 in 2023 were forwarded to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution.

Another big chunk of land disputes is often filed in court without being reported to the DCI. Consequently, Kenyan courts become overwhelmed by land cases, resulting in a huge backlog in the corridors of justice.

The DCI has itself been overstretched, investigating a string of complex killings linked to land cartels and deals gone sour. It's believed most land killings have gone unpunished and the true number of deaths is likely to be much higher as many go undocumented. Consequently, almost every village in Kenya is hurting from killings of their loved ones from conflicts linked to land.

Private and public land parcels have been targeted by ruthless fraudsters, who often work in cahoots with shrewd and corrupt officials from the Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning. The land cartels target gullible Kenyans driven by the desire to acquire land, which is often seen as a symbol of status and riches. The cartels have fleeced Kenyans of billions of shillings in what looked like lucrative land deals, leaving a trail of tears, blood, deaths and poverty-stricken victims.

Faced by this magnitude, the DCI came up with a pro-active strategy to stem bloody and tragic land disputes. The focus now is to resolve the land mess and disputes before they turn bloody.

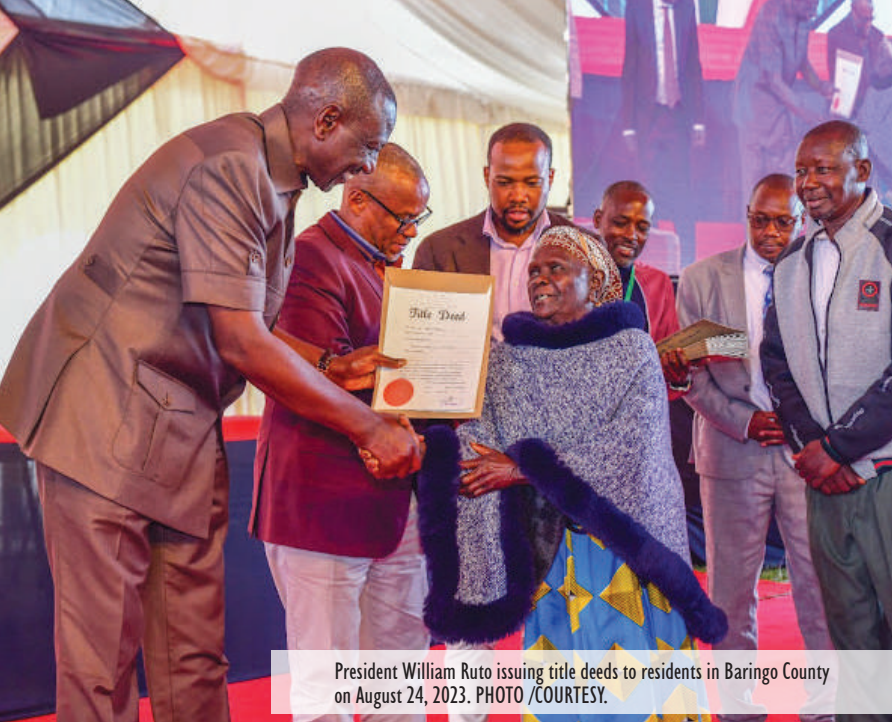
Organised killings have largely rocked land buying companies, the worst hit being Kihui Mwiri Farmers Company in

Gatanga, Murang'a County. The scheme has seen a string of high-profile murders targeting dozens of directors and members since the early 2000s. The killings captured media headlines and caught the attention of former President Uhuru Kenyatta, who visited the land-buying company on September 16, 2015, and issued 3,411 titles to shareholders. The President also froze the registration of land-buying companies as part of the new measures aimed at solving the woes bedeviling land companies.

Five years later on August 20, 2020, there was song and dance in Nairobi as the President once again issued more than 30,000 title deeds to residents of Embakasi Ranching Company, Tassia Estate, and the Korogocho and Mbagathi informal settlements in a historic event that brought to an end 45 years of court battles and bad blood. The project, part of the President's Nairobi Titling Programme, was launched in 2018 when he ordered the DCI to establish the genuine land owners so that they could be issued with titles.

When President William Ruto took power in 2022, his administration also identified hot spots where the land issue was cause for unending disputes among locals. In a bid to ensure that every Kenyan can secure their land rights and ownership, and save deserving locals from the ruthless hand of land-grabbing cartels, the President embarked on the titling program. On July 28, 2023, H.E Dr Ruto issued over 1,692 title deeds to residents from Kijipwa, Roka, Uyombo, Mjanaheri and Malindi township in Kilifi County.

The heart-warming exercise took place barely a week after he had issued another 5,000 title deeds to residents of Ruiru Rwarera in Meru County and another 1,000 titles at Etoro Ltungai in Ngaremara, Isiolo County.



President William Ruto issuing title deeds to residents in Baringo County on August 24, 2023. PHOTO /COURTESY.



President William Ruto hands a title deed to an elderly woman at Majani Mingi in Rongai, Nakuru County on August 24, 2023. PHOTO/ COURTESY.

A month later in August 24, another historic moment dawned for residents in Rongai, Nakuru County when President Ruto once again toured the area, issuing over 1,800 titles to land owners at Majani Mingi. In the event, the President's message was clear, that the exercise not only recognized the property rights of countless individuals, but also set a precedent for securing land tenure. The titling program continues as it is part of the President's vision which aligns economic progress with social harmony.

Ruiru land mess implicating men of the cloth

In August 2018, the DCI's Land Fraud Investigations Unit at Mazingira Complex undertook to help unlock a 10-year stalemate between thousands of disillusioned investors who bought land from a group of Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) clergymen in Ruiru, Kiambu County, but were denied titles.

In 2009, the clergymen, led by the Reverend Simon Mwaura, and the Rev Francis Njoroge, approached former Kiambaa MP Stanley Githunguri in a bid to acquire his 790-acres parcel of land situated four kilometres North West of Ruiru Township in Kiambu County. The two blocks of land, then registered under Tassia Coffee Estate Ltd and Taurus Coffee Estate Ltd, are situated along the Ruiru-Githunguri Road, and were previously coffee plantations. The prime land borders Tatu City, a 5,000-acre affluent mixed-use development with Special Economic Zone status.

The clergymen struck a Sh1.2 billion deal with Githunguri. Unable to raise a deposit on their own, the clergymen turned to their PCEA faithful to help accomplish their agenda. An initial public announcement on the land sale put out by Milele Ventures Limited, bearing the postal address and telephone numbers of PCEA headquarters in Nairobi's South 'C', assured buyers this was a Presbyterian Church project. A quarter-acre was originally selling at Sh600,000, half-an acre at Sh1.2 million and an acre for Sh2.2 million.

The advert promised buyers this was a controlled development project with murrum roads, water connection and electricity. Potential buyers were also promised social amenities such as schools and recreational centres. To date, these promises remain a pipe dream, except for a few murrum roads leading from one block to the next.

The buyers were never even shown any public utility plots, if, indeed, they were reserved during survey work. However, maps seen by buyers bearing LR numbers still lack these crucial amenities, as required by law and good land development practices.

To win the confidence of their faithful and speed up the mobilisation of funds to pay Githunguri, the clergymen behind the project recruited their own trusted colleagues and church elders as agents. The work of this group was to make announcements during Sunday services

in churches within Nairobi and Kiambu counties sourcing for land buyers. In addition to mobilising interested buyers, they were to act as signatories to one of the bank accounts for receiving payments and collect the payment slips for transmission to the directors of Milele Ventures Limited. The agents issued receipts in the company's name.

In their announcements, the agents assured the congregations that the land in Ruiru belonged to the PCEA. The plots sold like hot cakes and the prices were increased. Since Githunguri couldn't surrender the land and the mother titles without the agreed deposit, potential buyers were required to deposit cash instalments in either of the two bank accounts provided by the clergymen. After making payments, something happened. Contrary to what the buyers had been made to believe in 2009, the land did not belong to the PCEA. In reality, seven clergymen had teamed up to form Milele Ventures Ltd, a private company. They used the church to build trust and as a platform to lure unsuspecting buyers.

Vested interests

Trouble started when a lawyer stepped in to act for Githunguri, Milele Ventures Ltd and the new buyers. Cases of double allocations arose. Two women went to court after a 60-acre portion they had paid a deposit for was subdivided and sold to other buyers. The Court of Appeal awarded the women 40 acres, being an entire portion labelled as Block 15 of the



Junction off Ruiru - Githunguri Road leading to Agano Ridge Estate standing in the land formerly owned by Mr Githunguri. PHOTO /NELSON NGALA

expansive 790-acre land. Three judges ruled that they had only proved payment for the 40 acres. When the DCI took up the matter, the two women were still laying claim to another 20 acres and produced receipts as proof of payments. The issue is yet to be resolved.

During a visit to the site by The DCI in March, 2024, the writer found out that the women shared the awarded 40 acres in the ratio 1:7. The woman who owned 35 acres had after the allocation incurred fresh challenges as hired goons allegedly invaded the land bringing down the perimeter wall. The other who owned five acres had a smooth tour over the period, until recently when another disagreement arose over possession of the prime section that borders Ruiru-Githunguri-Uplands Road.

Seizing the opportunity, hired goons are said to have once again descended on the 5-acre piece, demolished the perimeter wall and carted the stones. Probing deeper, it is apparent that there exist multiple court cases revolving around the intricate disputes surrounding the true ownership of Block 15. This is because, despite the court order that awarded Block 15 to the two women, several plot owners who had fallen victims of double allocation declined to move to other portions reallocated to them.

The questionable boardroom dealings between Milele Ventures Limited and J.M. Theuri & Associates Advocates in respect to another 35-acre block within the 790-acre piece of land burst open in July 2013. This was after Githunguri went to court, threatening to take back the 35-acre of block Ventures Limited and J.M. Theuri

& over Sh21.75 million that wasn't paid to complete the sale of the entire 790 acres. The directors of Milele Ventures Limited and lawyer Juliet Theuri traded accusations as to who had failed to remit the money to the politician. As the row raged, Githunguri took back the mother title of the 35-acre block as security awaiting the settlement of his debt.

Already, Milele Ventures Limited and J.M. Theuri & Associates Advocates had subdivided the 35-acre block and sold plots to unsuspecting buyers. The buyers came to know of the feud after they had parted with their hard-earned money. A few had already built homes on the disputed 35 acres and moved in. A group of land owners on the 35-acre block pooled resources and bought two acres belonging to the clergymen to settle Githunguri's debt. They bought it at Sh.30 million.

At the time, Githunguri's lawyers were demanding Sh25 million due to accrued interest, which was paid to them and thereafter Githunguri surrendered the withheld title to lawyer Vincent Mukiri Mwangi of Mukiri Global Advocates. Subsequently, dispute at the said block was settled, and buyers continue to receive their title deeds from Milele Ventures Ltd and Juliet, the lawyer.

The Godsend

The out-of-court settlement was brokered by the DCI. By this move alone, the DCI had solved another bigger headache for the buyers in the vast 790 acres. After the buyers met all the required payments between 2009 and 2011, Milele Associates Advocates had changed the goalposts and required them to top up their payments by

Sh230,000 per plot. The land buyers refused to pay the amounts and the standoff cost them a fortune. They stayed without titles for years – until the DCI stepped in.

Intervention by land fraud investigators saved the land buyers close to Sh150 million, which the clergymen and their lawyer were demanding in illegal top-ups. This was after the buyers produced documents to prove they had paid the amount being demanded as per their original sale agreements. The agreements were drawn up by Milele Ventures Limited and J.M. Theuri & Associates Advocates.

The prime land had remained largely undeveloped since 2009. New posh homes started springing up after the DCI intervened. A majority of people had bought plots to build homes but failed to start their projects due to lack of titles. But with a ray of hope finally striking through the decade-long stand-off, the homeowners rebranded the new estate to Agano Ridge.

Chief Inspector Geoffrey Kinyua (then Land Fraud Investigations Unit boss) had since 2018 been chairing meetings at Mazingira Complex to resolve the Ruiru land mess. On October 27, 2020, he summoned directors of Milele Ventures Ltd, Juliet (lawyer) and representatives of the buyers for a fact-finding mission on the land. The Rev Njoroge, the chairman of Milele Ventures Ltd, the secretary of the company, the Rev Mwaura, and Juliet were present.

Kinyua directed the two clergymen and Juliet to speedily resolve the outstanding issues to ensure all buyers were issued with title deeds. Kinyua reminded them that the DCI was on a mission to help Kenyans resolve their land matters peacefully by averting bloody conflicts and endless court battles, which often left them poorer and hurting.

The painstaking pursuit of the matter sent the men of the cloth into a repentant mode. It was clear they had not foreseen the extent of emotional damage and financial crisis their clients would suffer for the lies they had spread from the onset. "We are praying for a speedy resolution of the issues to ensure everyone gets their titles," the Rev Njoroge had said in an interview with *The DCI* magazine.

But although the clergymen showed a lot of goodwill to resolve the land mess, the pace had been slow due to the stubbornness of their lawyer.

Not only had she refused to be drawn into the discussion on how to resolve the outstanding issues even when clarifications were sought from her, but also followed the team to every stop but stood at a distance disinterested in the deliberations. Her contribution to the meeting was zero.

New hope

The chairman of the Agano Ridge, Stephen Keru, said that a majority of people who bought land from the clergymen in 2009 to put up homes got disillusioned and settled elsewhere. “Due to demolition of houses in other parts of Kenya, many feared to put up homes here since they did not have titles or any document to prove ownership. A majority wanted to put up homes and raise children on their own land,” he said. Keru also said that Agano Ridge residents would forever be grateful to the DCI officers who intervened, thereby unlocking the deadlock with the sellers and their lawyer.

“Before the DCI stepped in, land buyers lived under the mercy of the clergymen and their lawyer. They had hatched a plot to blackmail every plot owner to top up by Sh230,000 the amount they had agreed upon and paid as per sale agreements,” an emotional Keru had added. The DCI, he said, vetoed the illegal amount. Residents started processing their titles, with more people putting up their new homes on the land. Keru further believed that jointly with other plot owners, they would develop the Agano Ridge estate to become the envy of all in Kiambu County. And true to his word, posh homes stand high and mighty in the area today, just three years after his “prophecy”.

The successful resolve of the land row followed a reformed Land Fraud Investigations Unit that had seen the DCI deploy to the unit 26 detectives with professional background in land survey, land economics and land physical planning and administration. This was meant to inject new blood and professionalise the unit. The squad, which has since been beefed up even further, had the requisite skills to boost investigations into land fraud. The reforms had been made ahead

of the rollout of the new lands digital migration programme in conformity with the Lands Registration Act, 2012.

In the past, the DCI has recommended the establishment of strong rooms in land registries to deal with the increasing cases of fraud through title deed theft and interference with land records. The agency also wants the law strengthened to provide for periodic vetting of land registration personnel across the country, who, it said, collude with fraudsters to tamper with land records. The recommendations were captured in a report of the National Assembly Administration and National Security committee tabled in Parliament.

Bull by the horns

It is such humane practice in settling land disputes that the Cabinet Secretary for Interior and National Administration Prof Kithure Kindiki has urged law enforcers to adopt, and at the same time called out rogue officials in the lands ministry for propagating the crime. In a directive which The DCI is privy to, the Minister urged police service commanders and County Intelligence Security Committees to always address cases of land rows with extra caution, bearing in mind that they were strongly emotive. They are thus required to remain fair, lawful and mindful of all parties concerned especially while handling eviction orders. However, criminal culpability as in the cases of forcible detainers were to be faced with the full force of the law. At the same time, Prof Kindiki warned politicians against inciting communities over land, promising to find lasting solutions for disturbed areas.

After many years of active practice in criminal investigations especially in the Rift Valley region where land rows have not missed in the list of most prevalent

crimes, the current DCI Chief Mr Mohamed Amin believes that land fraud must be dealt with to the core. Therefore, upon his appointment to the helm of the highest investigative seat on the land, he vowed to scrupulously root out rogues in the Ministry of Lands offices as a proactive measure of curtailing the fraud. This approach saw several employees in the Ministry flushed out of their lucrative offices and paraded in courts to face justice. In one classic case handled by the DCI on December 2023, the Assistant Deputy Land Administrator Mr Andrew Aseri Kirungu was arrested at Kandara in Murang'a County, and thereafter arraigned at Milimani Chief Magistrates' Court on December 21, 2023. He was charged with three counts of conspiracy to defraud, procuring registration of land by false pretence and abuse of office.

The Ministry of Lands officer was charged alongside former Provincial Commissioner Davis Nathan Chelgoi, after criminal investigations found them culpable of land fraud involving a Sh1.3 billion parcel of land located at Nairobi's Loresho area.

In the case that trudged on the corridors of justice since 2009 involving a 7.390 hectares parcel of land, several parties lay claim of the property Title Land Reference (LR) No.18485 I.R. No.64011/1 with Deed Plan No.176003 dated August 19, 1993.

In the same year (2009), Mr Ashok Ruphi Shah and Hitenkumar Amritlal Raja filed a complaint at the Chief Magistrate's Court in Nairobi against the late Mr Jacob Juma accusing him of forcefully occupying their land (the one in question) after obtaining forged documents from the Ministry of Lands. The case was investigated independently by the then Kenya Anti-



One of the upcoming homes built in Ruiru by property owners who recently obtained their title deeds.
PHOTO/ EDWIN KIPKORIR

Corruption Commission (KACC and currently EACC) and the DCI, before the Director of Public Prosecution entered a Nolle prosequi the same year.

Mr Jacob Juma filed a High Court Petition Judicial Review No. 652 of 2009 while the complainants filed a civil suit No. ELC 312 of 2009 against him (Juma), the then Commissioner of Lands and the Registrar of Titles.

Ultimately, in his judgement dated and delivered on 28th July 2022, Justice L. Komingoi declared that "...the plaintiffs are the legal owners of LR. No.18485 I.R. No.64011 Loresho, Nairobi, Kenya". The plaintiffs being Mr. Ashok Rupshi Shah and Hitenkumar Amritlal Raja versus Jacob Juma and two others in Milimani Environment and Land Court Case No. ELC 312 of 2009. Subsequently, the court issued a decree on the same.

The court's decision was upheld by the Chief Land Registrar through a three-member panel of land registrars who inspected the plaintiffs' documents.

The push, the pull and the truth

Meanwhile, Mr Davis Nathan Chelogoi laid claim of the land through a certificate of Title Land Reference No. 18485 issued to him on 4th June, 2021. Chelogoi went ahead to provide a Letter of Allotment dated 31st January, 1995 for unsurveyed land in Lower Kabete, which he alleged to have been allotted to him by the late former President Daniel Toroitich arap Moi while serving as the Deputy Provincial Commissioner in Rift Valley. However, investigations by DCI's Land Fraud Investigations Unit found his letter of acceptance for the alleged allotment to

have been dated 13th February, 1992 with the first name as 'David' and not Davis.

Further investigations of the correspondence file used by witnesses in the civil suit No. ELC 312 of 2009 held by the Ministry of Lands revealed that the file had either gone missing or destroyed, as stated by the Director Land Administration Mr Gordon Odeka Ochieng who was a witness in the case. Interrogation of the claims by Mr Davis Chelogoi established that the Assistant Deputy Land Administrator Mr Andrew Aseri Kirungu registered the Loresho land in favour of the former Provincial Commissioner, indicating that he had no knowledge of previous records that favoured Mr Ashok and Hitenkumar (the owners) through purchase and transfer on 23rd January, 2007 and 21st March, 2007 respectively from the previous owners Liney Company Limited.

However, detectives found that on April 30, 2021, Mr Aseri had influenced the Deed Plan Officer at Surveys of Kenya to certify the Deed Plan for the land dated August 19, 1993, and the In Charge Reference Index Mapping (RIM) to provide a copy of the Deed Plan.

Further anomalies that proved a well-orchestrated conspiracy to defraud the original owners of their land {bought from M/S. Liney Company Ltd (the vendor) at Sh33 million as supported by a January 23, 2007 Sale Agreement} included the production of a file card No. 323709 purportedly used to open in the name of Davis Nathan Chelogoi, but which upon search was found to belong to a parcel No. BLK5/74 registered in the names of Isaac Macharia and situated in Kitale and not Nairobi.

Confronted by the establishments and the DPP's decision and directive that the two be charged in a criminal court, Mr Chelogoi went into hiding and a warrant of his arrest was issued.

As fresh evidence against the two suspects continues to emerge further tightening their noose, it is the hope of the DCI that the painstaking investigation will hold waters in the corridors of justice, and a successful prosecution send a strong message that justice wins, eventually.

Challenges impeding expeditious investigations

In its 2023 annual report, the LFIU listed various challenges faced in the course of executing its mandate, including;

- The right to financial privacy by banks as well as the privilege of advocate - client
- Communication advanced by some advocates which impedes the unit's access to crucial crime-related documents (exhibits) in the custody of the advocates.
- Anticipatory bail/bond and prohibitory orders obtained by suspects involved seeking for orders against impending arrest thereby delaying prosecutions of cases.
- Frauds perpetrated with the "insider" involvement, making retrieval of some vital documents at the onset of investigations a challenge due to unwarranted delay or destruction of the said documents and related records by rogue custodians.



Cryptocurrency Fraud in Kenya: Money Pits Masquerading as Legitimate Investments Decapitating Kenyans Financially

By Joyce Ogema

Scam Alert!

Criminals using cryptocurrency investment platforms to scam Kenyans” read a caution by the Directorate of Criminal Investigations in a February 7, 2024 X (formerly Twitter) post warning members of the public of the prevalent trend. In the advisory, the DCI reported to be concerned by the alarming increase in reports of loss of hard earned money by Kenyans to scammers.

The social media communication triggered heated debates among netizens, after illustrating how scores were being lured to join online cryptocurrency investment platforms and ended up losing their investments. At the time, the Fraud Investigation Unit was handling a number of such cases where investors who fell for the scam were crying foul.

In the modern-day hoodwink that has swept the Kenyan market, short messages that read “Make Money Sitting at Home” are still being sent to random people, with a link to join the online investment platform. With promises of high margins of profit as returns on investment, unsuspecting victims venture into the schemes and before they realize it, they’ve lost huge sums of money to scammers.

Kenyans have since been advised to verify the authenticity of any online investment platforms with the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) and the Communication Authority (CA) before investing their toil and sweat anywhere.

But this was not the first time Kenyans were being warned against lucrative investment deals that were leaving them poorer, even pauperized. Earlier in 2023, DCI’s Serious Crimes Unit cautioned Kenyans over suspicious pyramid schemes that were defrauding them. Among them was NMK Capital Investment Limited that pooled thousands of gullible investors over time.

The suspicious company believed to have been registered in the country in 2021 had 7 directors, among them Ngugi Mucheru Keeru (NMK) who was also the sole director and signatory of a sister company, Bidsworth Autorents Capital Limited.

Prior to the caution, the Unit had received numerous complaints from victims who ventured into the scheme, laying claims that nothing had been left of their thousands and millions of investments, after the directors fell out and the key suspect (Ngugi Mucheru) holed up.

In the streetwise machinations, over 5,000 investors had been hoodwinked to enter into a 6-month contract with NMK with a minimum investment of Sh50,000. These, he said, would accrue a redeemable monthly interest of 15%, or a similar percentage of compounded interest redeemable at the end of the contract period.

The company went ahead to offer car hire services by leasing vehicles from unsuspecting members of the public, which it would then hire out to individuals and agencies. Car owners allegedly received 30% of the proceeds from the company. Other ventures included off plan properties.

At the end of it all, investors reported to have lost millions from the investment and payment made for off plan houses, while some of those who leased out their vehicles lost their track.

While investigations were still ongoing to determine the validity of the operational documents held by the companies and the scamming allegations laid, an institution situated along Mfangano Street in Nairobi was reported by its alumni who were also crying foul.

Branka International College was said to have obtained millions from its students by falsely pretending to hook them up with

organizations abroad that would offer them well-paying jobs.

Launching investigations, the Nairobi Area DCI team established that the college whose operations kicked off in 2021 was not registered as a training institution, and the proprietors only made several unsuccessful attempts to register it through online Technical and Vocational Education and Training Management Information System (TVET MIS) application portal a few days after getting wind that criminal investigations had been instigated.

Probe into the allegations revealed that the college was only registered as an unspecified business, the nature of it being institution/polytechnic/college as per the records held in the Business Registration Service (BRS) database.

Oblivious of the murkiness that lay ahead, numerous unsuspecting students had gone ahead to enrol for courses at the college, which guaranteed them of job placements in the United States of America, Europe and Australia.

The institution which charged school fees to a tune of Sh350,000 per student only run the courses for one week and upon completion, the students were subjected to a perpetual waiting mode while others were dropped with reasons of not meeting the minimum requirements. In the classic case of white-collar fraudulence, no refunds were made. An estimated sum of Sh70 million defrauded from victims was in question.

In a bid to intimidate victims who went demanding for refunds or the agreed upon jobs abroad, the proprietor of the institution and her accomplice, an advocate, would threaten them with legal suits.

And as these frauds were succeeding in setting the nation into a state of confusion



over where to put money without the fear of waking up to empty coffers, the mother of all (cryptocurrency fraud) was still holding ground, spreading like wild fire from the Kenyan cities and major towns to the countryside.

According to a 2022 policy brief by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Kenya is Africa's leading digital currency (cryptocurrency) shareholder and ranks fifth globally. However, Cryptocurrency trading is an uncharted territory the world over, and Kenya is no exception.

Consequently, over-eager Kenyans seeking to make quick cash lose millions of money to well-orchestrated cryptocurrency scams, which the masterminds tout as life-changing investment opportunities. Moreover, the masterminds behind these elaborate scams remain faceless, easily avoiding prosecution and sail into the sunset while leaving behind a wake of financial destruction.

So, is cryptocurrency trading legal in Kenya, and is there a regulatory framework to protect investors? Second, what challenges do law enforcement officers face in investigating such scams and, more so, arresting the perpetrators? Keep reading to explore the highlighted areas and acquire tips to help identify and steer clear of potential cryptocurrency scams.

Cryptocurrency

The bookish definition is that cryptocurrency is a digital or virtual currency or alternative form of payment that is decentralized and secured using cryptography or an encryption algorithm. And how then does the cryptocurrency ecosystem compare with fiat money (government-issued currency), and how does it work?

First, government-issued currencies have serial numbers to track the cash and prevent fraud. Similarly, cryptocurrencies are a series of numbers and alphabets. Essentially, each cryptocurrency coin or token is identifiable as a unique series of numbers and alphabets that make it trackable across the blockchain network.

A blockchain network best compares to the central bank. However, rather than a centralized government body overseeing bank transactions, it is a network of computers with equal access to the transactions conducted within the network. The equal access element explains why cryptocurrencies are decentralized. Being centralized regulators, central banks monitor every account in all banks under their mandate. Therefore, each time you deposit money in your account, they have a record highlighting that person X deposited

Y amount of money into account number 123 bearing account name Z.

However, blockchains have no know-your-customer (KYC) infrastructure, detaching personal identities from accounts/crypto wallets and transaction records. Also, unlike in a bank where the money deposited is under the bank's custody, the cryptocurrency coins or tokens in your digital wallet are directly under your custody.

Second, like fiat money is divisible into smaller denominations, each cryptocurrency coin or token is divisible into smaller units for manageable transactions. For example, Bitcoin is divisible into units called Satoshi; each coin is equivalent to 100 million Satoshi, while the Ethereum coin is divisible into Wei.

Third, the global economic system features multiple currencies, each with a unique value. Global reserve currencies like the US dollar, the Euro, and the Sterling pound have a higher value and are more readily acceptable forms of payment globally.

Fiat money currencies compare to the thousands of digital currencies (coins and tokens) across blockchain networks. However, the different digital currencies vary in value, and digital coins, like Bitcoin and Ethereum, correspond to global reserve currencies. In contrast, the rest (tokens) correspond to non-asset-backed fiat currencies. Cryptocurrency coins are digital currencies built from scratch using complex code over a significant duration, making them reliable.

Besides a robust network, another distinguishing factor between crypto coins and tokens is that coins are the digital currency computers in a blockchain network receive for processing digital transactions. The rewards computers receive for monitoring blockchain transactions are the returns from crypto mining.

Cryptocurrency tokens are much easier to create than crypto coins because tokens rely on an existing blockchain network. Therefore, they require significantly less effort to generate and are an easy avenue for scammers to fool potential investors.

While cryptocurrency transactions are traceable, they are irreversible. Moreover, some cryptocurrency platforms, like Monero, use privacy-enhancing blockchains to obscure transactions and prevent traceability.

So, digital criminal masterminds exploit the cryptocurrency ecosystem for two types of crimes:

- Money laundering, primarily via privacy-oriented blockchains
- Scams

Cryptocurrency Scams in Kenya

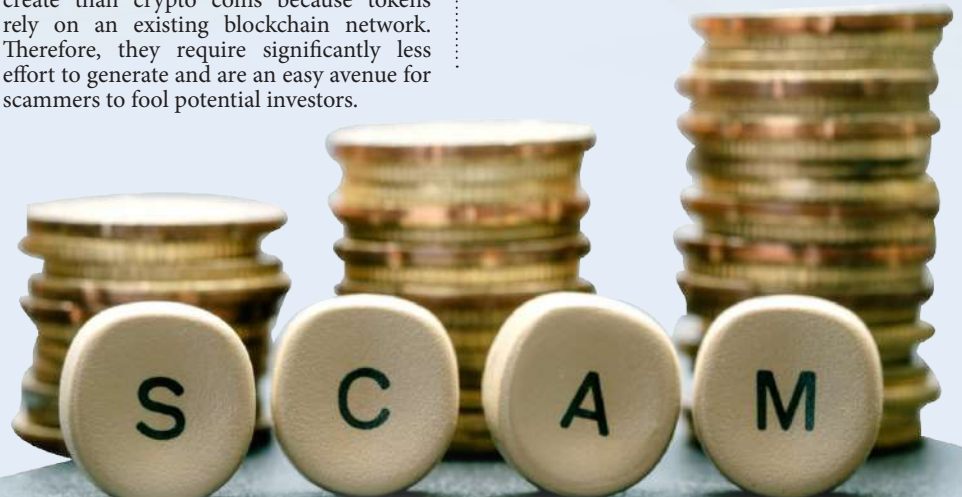
While laundering stolen money via cryptocurrency happens in Kenya, such cases are nowhere near as prevalent as cryptocurrency scams. Below is an overview of the crypto scams that rocked the nation within the last few years.

The Velox 10 Global Scam

The Velox 10 scam began at a pompous launch party at the Hilton hotel. The scam's perpetrator, a Brazilian national known as Ricardo Rocha, lured gullible Kenyans with prospects of generating unimaginable wealth.

Ricardo promised potential investors daily returns of up to 50%, translating to Sh400,000 daily in profits. Moreover, the scam targeted the middle class by setting a Sh10,000 membership fee and an additional Sh20,000 upgrade fee for a trading account.

Besides the sizeable fees, Rocha incentivized investors to increase their investments by dangling a fully sponsored networking trip to the UAE for the highest investor. Additionally, the scheme featured multi-level marketing with the promise of greater earnings for recruiting new members.



The Bitstream Circle was a massive scam where Kenyan “investors” allegedly lost an estimated \$10 million to fraudsters

Unfortunately for Velox 10 Global investors, their dreams of swimming in wealth and an early retirement turned into a nightmare of loss, literally overnight. Velox 10 Global pulled an exit scam, and the victims woke up to find the website taken down and its domain (website address) on auction.

According to a Daily Nation article, one victim filed a police report after losing Sh3.2 million while her friend, whom she introduced to the “investment scheme,” lost Sh550,000. Although the police arrested and charged one Global 10 agent with obtaining money by false pretences, he was acquitted. The Chief Magistrate’s court cited lack of evidence for the acquittal.

BitStream Circle

The Bitstream Circle was a massive scam where Kenyan “investors” allegedly lost an estimated \$10 million to fraudsters within four months. It lured unsuspecting Kenyans with promises of making a 5%-10% daily return on investment (ROI) by trading in Tether coin.

According to an investigative piece published by The Nation, BitStream Circle featured Chinese and Kenyan fraudsters with an elaborate plan. The piece established that BitStream Circle first appeared online in December 2021, barely a month after its registration in the United Kingdom. Besides its website, BitStream Circle utilized its Telegram page, dubbed “Bit Elite Team,” to recruit investors. They set a \$20 registration fee to gain admittance into the group.

The investigative piece above established that the Bit Elite Team page admitted up to 500 new investors daily and had 10,914 investors, predominantly Kenyans, when it went up in flames. Like the Velox 10 Scam, BitStream Circle promised investors higher

returns for recruiting new members through its nationwide recruitment drives.

Bitstream utilized mentors, who identified themselves via pseudonyms, to teach the “investors” how to convert Kenyan shillings to Tether coins, trade, and earn a profit. According to the trainers, BitStream Circle’s trading platform featured 5 trading cycles every 24 hours, and traders could make 1%-2% in profits per session. However, they could only withdraw their Tether coins once daily.

On March 13th, 2022, the investors experienced delays/ difficulties in withdrawing funds from the BitStream Circle platform. A Bit Elite Team page administrator posted a message highlighting a system upgrade as the cause of the technical glitches and that withdrawals would resume within five hours. Unfortunately for the investors, the only trace of Bitstream Circle left on the internet when they woke up on March 14th, 2022, was an insulting parting shot from the page’s administrator that read: “You are a bunch of brainless races, see you on our next plan. Bye, haha. I am living a luxurious life with your dollars. If you have invited friends, wait to be killed by your recommenders. Idiots. There will be a time to meet.”

BTCM Crypto Mining Scam

The BTCM crypto mining scam was ingenious because the masterminds behind the scam used the brand identity of a legitimate US-based crypto mining company. However, the company logos were slightly different.

BTCM lured “investors” to invest between Sh6000 to Sh266,000 by dangling an ROI of 188% to 350% within a few days. However, the catch on the pseudo-investment was that the platform had a daily withdrawal limit. Moreover, it took the inventors 72 hours to access funds after initiating the withdrawal protocol.

Phase two of the scam entailed shifting gears by convincing investors to switch to a one-time investment. The one-time investment entailed injecting Sh6,000 - Sh90,000 for a ROI range of 300% to 345% within 20 days. And in typical crypto scam fashion, BTCM went dead silent online after receiving the funds for the supposed one-time investment. Cryptocurrency Legal and Regulatory Framework in Kenya

As stated earlier, cryptocurrency’s decentralized nature limits its regulation by governments. However, elements of the blockchain system allow government regulatory authorities some degree of oversight over crypto-related activities.

- The Kenyan regulatory authorities with the mandate to monitor digital currency operations include:
- The Capital Markets Authority via the Capital Markets Act (CMA)
- The Central Bank of Kenya, via the National Payment Systems Act (NPSA) and money remittance regulations
- The Communications Authority of Kenya, through the Kenya Information and Communications Act (KICA)
- Insurance Regulatory Authority
- Sacco Societies Regulatory Authorities

Regulators’ Take On Cryptocurrency in Kenya

In 2015, the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) issued a public warning on cryptocurrencies primarily due to their highly speculative and volatile nature. Additionally, while the CMA’s mandate entails prescribing a financial instrument as security, it has yet to classify cryptocurrency as security under its regulation.

So, while there is no Kenyan law prohibiting cryptocurrency use in Kenya, a limited regulatory framework limits the legal recourse avenues for crypto scam victims. According to a publication by Freeman Law, Kenyan courts must apply the Howey test to determine whether crypto investments



qualify as security before ruling on the dispute surrounding the investment. Howey's test is a legal principle defining a security as involving a contract, a transaction or a scheme whereby individuals invest money in a common enterprise with the expectation of realizing reasonable profit solely from the entrepreneurial managerial efforts of others.

Therefore, any cryptocurrency scam case filed by the police or other investigative agencies in the country that fails to meet Howey's Test is out of the window before it even starts. Without the backing of clear legal frameworks governing blockchain activity in Kenya, the police go into the war against crypto scams blindfolded and with one arm tied behind their back. However, regulators are warming up to improving digital currency and blockchain regulation.

For starters, on December 16th, 2022, the Joint Financial Sector Regulation Forum (JFSRF) recommended forming a technical committee to advise the treasury on cryptocurrency regulation. According to a Business Daily publication, the technical committee is part of planned wide considerations and deliberations across the financial sector.

Second, another Business Daily publication highlighted that the CMA included blockchain companies in its regulatory sandbox program. One such company is Belrium Kenya Limited, offering a Know Your Client (KYC)-compliant blockchain solution.

Third, the Cabinet Secretary for Interior and National Administration issued a Gazette notice for a task force to develop regulations for the Computer Misuse and Cybercrime Act. The gazette notice proposes sector-based, self-regulation, and administrative guidelines for cyber security issues of common interest within the blockchain and digital assets sectors.

However, while progressive, the regulatory developments highlighted above are in their inception stages. Therefore, Kenyans have a responsibility to protect themselves from cryptocurrency scams.

How to Identify and Avoid Cryptocurrency Scams

1. Avoid Multi-Level Marketing (MLM)

Any cryptocurrency investment platforms that require recruiting other people to earn are scams. As stated under Howey's test above, security earns reasonable profit from the efforts of others and recruiting friends and family takes a lot of effort on your part. Essentially, the term "multi-level marketing" attempts to sanitize pyramid/ponzi schemes, yet it's the same thing.



While legitimate crypto sites may have affiliate marketing programs, such programs are an avenue to make additional revenue and have nothing to do with trading or mining tokens and coins. Legitimate crypto affiliate marketing programs are an option rather than a prerequisite to earning from the platform.

2. If It Seems Too Good to Be True.

It is back to Howey's test, a security asset should generate a reasonable profit. The ROIs that lure investors into crypto scams make zero sense even if you lack a financial background. Therefore, always invoke reason when evaluating cryptocurrency investments.

3. Evaluate Website Quality

While some bad actors in the cryptocurrency space go as far as impersonating legitimate, established industry players, you can identify scammy websites as follows:

- Poor content quality with grammatical errors and low-resolution graphics. However, while some may feature a friendly user interface, they likely have limited content.
- A URL beginning with "http" rather than "https" indicates an insecure website.
- Low domain authority: Raising a website's domain authority takes at least 9 months of dedicated SEO activities. Therefore, use domain authority checkers and avoid websites with a domain authority score below 20 because it means they are either new or have poor-quality content.

4. Conduct Due Diligence On Crypto Investment Companies

Unfortunately, most scam victims rely solely on information from the scammers who tell them whatever they want to hear. Any business will always position its brand as an industry leader, so conduct due diligence, which is very easy to do with the internet.

A quick search like "Is company X legit?" should get you star ratings, user experiences, and third-party reviews. Rely on such information to make an objective rather than emotional investment decision. Some scammers are bold enough to replicate the same scam, including brand name, across different continents because they know they can capitalize on ignorance.

5. Understand the Asset

Most Kenyans dive into crypto trading head-first without understanding the blockchain ecosystem. For example, anyone who understood the law of diminishing returns would not invest in Bitcoin crypto mining because, besides volatility, it gets less profitable with time. While this piece is not intended to offer financial advice, steer clear of investments where the asset and its income generation mechanism are obscure.

Bottom Line

While regulatory authorities do their bit to protect Kenyans from bad actors in the blockchain ecosystem, Kenyans have an individual responsibility to invest wisely. Crypto scams thrive on ignorance and greed, so educate yourself on investment opportunities and critically examine opportunities that seem too good to be true.

Resource Articles

https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/presspb2022d8_en.pdf

<https://nation.africa/kenya/business/kenya-losing-millions-legally-cryptocurrency-fraudsters-4314404>

<https://nation.africa/kenya/news/kenyans-lose-billions-to-crypto-frauds-3844990>

<https://freemanlaw.com/cryptocurrency/kenya/>

<https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd/economy/cbk-softens-stance-on-crypto-consider-regulation-4057520>

<https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd/markets/currencies/blockchain-crypto-applications-dominate-cma-incubation-unit-3965924>



Why Officers Must Constantly Learn

By Dr. Fredrick Okoth Otieno

Whether through trainings offered within the service or from other institutions of learning, law enforcement officers must constantly learn and acquire knowledge to be effective and efficient. A successful officer is one who never stops learning; one who believes that there is always room for improvement. Having got employed, one might consider hitting the pause button on their education and training. However, this is the point when moving further is the best choice. Acquiring further education or training greatly benefits the officer and the society they serve.

The world today is constantly evolving with new technological advancements, discoveries and knowledge. To survive or get promotion in today's workplace, skills and expertise are a prerequisite. In the service and beyond, there is a river of talents raising competition every other day. You can only stand out in this river by acquiring high level trainings.

There are so many benefits that an individual may reap as a result of acquiring skills and knowledge through constant training and education. More skills mean greater level of productivity, which benefits everyone in the workforce. Gaining skills that are relevant to your field of expertise helps you to handle tasks more effectively and increases your aptitude. In the long run, it increases your employability and chances of getting a promotion.

According to the National Centre for Education Statistics 2020, the employment rate for 25 to 34 year-olds drastically increased with higher levels of education and training. The employment rate was 86 percent for those with a degree, compared to 69 percent for those who had O-level of education.

Other than physical programs, one can also enroll for online programs especially

those in demanding units or sections. Research shows that those who have undergone further trainings or possess higher education certificates earn more than their counterparts. The huge wage gap between the two groups is only expected to increase with time. Individuals with higher education or training get better opportunities, allowing them to enjoy extra benefits like enhanced allowances, healthcare, retirement benefits, travel allowances among others.

Research has further revealed that one of the root causes of poverty is insufficient education or training. An increase in the number of highly educated or trained individuals is often related to the general economic growth of the country due to the presence of individuals whose specialized skills can contribute to growth of various sectors in the economy. The cycle of poverty in the family is thus easily broken.

To survive or get promotion in today's workplace, skills and expertise are a prerequisite

Training and higher education prepares an individual for specialized career. Specialized career paths require certain level of training as the foundation for entry. If your chosen field has specialized job training requirements, then getting training in relevant area is the first step. For those uncertain about the ultimate

career path they want to pursue, higher education or training can introduce them to the career options available practically and in a more detailed manner.

Networking is another important benefit. When pursuing training, you meet people from different backgrounds, ethnicities and races thus expanding your network. Whether face to face or through online platforms, you get to hang out and converse with people who have different experiences. You make friends, some with whom you can start a joint venture. Again, interacting with experts and mentors enables one to get a chance to build strong connections. The experts can introduce you to influential people or technologies. All these things help you later in your career. You make an important circle that lifts you while advising you and introduces you to opportunities.

Training also helps improve one's personality. Education enables you to think more, even critically. It opens your mind to concepts that were unknown to you. You do a lot of active learning which enhances your abilities. You also get to practice what you study and what you think. Working on group tasks, presentations and research also contribute in improving one's personality. You learn teamwork and how

to be patient with people; you learn to lead and become more confident, disciplined and productive.

Higher courses and trainings bring with them skills to communicate both verbally and in writing. You are able to interact with your coworkers clearly and learn how to communicate with your bosses effectively. If your job involves speaking, you become an excellent speaker. This greatly improves your self-confidence.

People with higher education may not indulge in crimes, although some end up venturing in white collar crimes. People with less or no education are most likely to be unemployed, and the temptation to get involved in crimes is higher. This puts the society in a vicious cycle. But higher training leads to equality and empowerment, which result in less gender discrimination. Education empowers everyone, irrespective of gender or ethnicity, to take charge of their own lives and make their own decisions.

Dr. Fredrick O. Otieno is the Deputy Director, Surveillance & Enforcement at the Energy & Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA) and a Criminal Justice & Security Management Adjunct Lecturer.



ENHANCING ONLINE SAFETY FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

The Communications Authority of Kenya (CA) manages Kenya's cyberspace to keep you and your children safe online, so you can learn, interact and thrive.

For more information visit www.ca.go.ke

The Role of Communications Authority of Kenya in Managing Cyber Security

The Communications Authority of Kenya is the regulatory agency for the ICT industry in Kenya. Established in 1999 by the Kenya Information and Communications Act, 1998, the Authority is responsible for facilitating the development of the information and communications sectors, including telecommunications, e-commerce, cyber security, broadcasting and postal/courier services. The CA is also responsible for managing the country's numbering and frequency spectrum resources, administering the Universal Service Fund (USF), and safeguarding the interest of users of ICT services.

Cybersecurity Mandate

The KICA mandates the Authority to develop a framework for facilitating the investigation and prosecution of cybercrime offences. It is in this regard, and in order to mitigate cyber threats and foster a safer Kenyan cyberspace, that the government established the National Kenya Computer Incident Response Team – Coordination Centre (National KE-CIRT/CC).

The National KE-CIRT/CC) is a multi-agency framework that coordinates response to cyber security matters at the national level in collaboration with relevant actors locally and internationally. The National KE-CIRT/CC, which is domiciled at the CA Centre, Nairobi, comprises of technical staff from the Authority and various law enforcement agencies such as the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI).

The Authority's 5th Strategic Plan (2023 - 2027) aims to build upon past achievements, tackle present challenges and opportunities in the evolving ICT landscape, and enhance the Authority's performance in ensuring digital access for all. This plan will guide the



Authority's activities and ensure its continued contribution to the growth and development of the ICT sector in Kenya.

Evolution of the Cyber Threat Landscape

The cyber threat landscape has evolved tremendously over the past few years, driven by rapid technological advancements and related technologies. As new cyber threats emerge, the threat landscape changes accordingly. The dynamism in the cyber threat landscape is attributed to various factors including; increasingly sophisticated tools and threat vectors, greater reliance on cloud services and related technologies. Others include, improved technical skills and finances to drive cyber-attacks, ongoing global conflicts and related actions by state actors, faster software releases with added functionality, new hardware development such as Internet of Things (IoT) devices, amongst others.

The National KE-CIRT/CC

The National KE-CIRT/CC detects, prevents and responds to various cyber threats targeted at the country on a 24/7 basis. It also acts as the interface between local and international ICT service providers whose platforms may be used to perpetrate cybercrimes, and the Judicial, Law and Order Sector which investigates and prosecutes cybercrimes.

In executing its function, the National KE-CIRT/CC collaborates with various stakeholders at national level, regional level and globally.

At the national level, the Authority collaborates with various stakeholders in

the management of cybercrime through the National KE-CIRT/CC Cybersecurity Committee (NKCC). These include law enforcement agencies, the ICT Authority as the government sector CIRT, the Technology Service Providers of Kenya (TESPOK) as the telecommunications and ISP sector CIRT, the Kenya Education Network Trust (KENET) as the academia sector CIRT, the Kenya Bankers Association (KBA) as the banking/financial sector and the Central Bank of Kenya as the regulatory authority, the energy sector, the health sector, amongst others.

At the regional level, the Authority collaborates with the other national CIRTs in East Africa under the auspices of the East African Communications Organization (EACO) Cybersecurity Working Group. The Authority is also member of the Forum for Incident Response and Security Teams (FIRST), an international confederation of trusted CIRTs who jointly handle computer security incidents and promote incident prevention programmes. Kenya has been a member of the FIRST since 2015.

The Authority also collaborates with other national CIRTs globally, including the US-CERT and the Japanese CERT (JP-CERT), amongst others. The National KE-CIRT/CC has partnerships with over 65 national CIRTs.

The Authority has established a Digital Forensics Lab (DFL) that is equipped with the necessary tools to conduct digital forensic investigations. The DFL is manned primarily by technical officers seconded from the DCI to assist in safeguarding the chain of custody, a critical component of digital investigations.

The chain of custody is important for the maintenance of the integrity, authenticity and admissibility of digital evidence for use in legal proceedings.

Every year, the DFL receives over 1000 requests for digital forensic investigations. The majority of these requests are attributed to online abuse and online fraud cases. Online abuse encompasses a range of malicious activities, including cyberbullying and online impersonation and harassment. Similarly, online fraud poses significant financial risks with cybercriminals leveraging diverse threat vectors such as phishing and identity theft to deceive victims and illicitly obtain money or sensitive information. The DFL has been instrumental in the successful prosecution of various cybercrimes and other technology-related offences.

Given that the human element remains the weakest link in cyber safety and security matters, there's need for concerted efforts by organisations in both public and private sectors, in creating awareness and building the capacity of consumers of ICT services.

The Authority, in collaboration with diverse stakeholders, continually conducts capacity building training programmes and workshops for technical officers within the critical information infrastructure (CII) sector. The CII sector refers to various systems, networks and assets that are essential for the functioning of Kenya's economy, security and public welfare such as energy, transportation, finance, healthcare, telecommunications and government services. Amongst the training programmes that the Authority has facilitated include:

- Cyber Threat Intelligence (CTI)
- Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)
- Certified Information Security Manager (CISM)
- Digital Forensic (EnCase Forensic, FTK, Cellebrite, etc.)

The Authority also conducts awareness creation programmes and mentorship on cyber safety and security through different platforms such as the October Cyber Security Awareness Month activities, the Annual National Public Key Infrastructure (NPKI) forum, the County ICT forums (Kikao Kikuu), amongst others.

The National Public Key Infrastructure

The National Public Key Infrastructure (NPKI) refers to a system for the creation,

storage and distribution of digital certificates. Digital certificates are used to verify that a particular online identity belongs to a certain entity or individual.

Kenya's NPKI comprises the Root Certification Authority (RCA), the Government Certification Authority (GCA) and privately-owned Certification Authorities (CAs) also known as Electronic Certification Service Providers (E-CSPs) for purposes of the legal and regulatory framework. Currently, the Authority has licensed and accredited four (4) E-CSPs to roll out digital certification services in Kenya.

The NPKI system is a critical element for securing Kenya's cyber space as it assures the safety and integrity of electronic transactions and online services such as e-government, e-commerce, e-health, e-tax, e-insurance, e-learning, amongst others.

The Computer Misuse and Cyber Crimes Act, 2018

The enactment of the Computer Misuse and Cyber Crimes Act (CMCA) of 2018 has further enhanced the multi-agency collaboration framework through the establishment of the National Computer and Cybercrimes Coordination Committee (NC4).

On 9th February 2024, the Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes (Critical Information Infrastructure and Cybercrime Management) Regulations came into effect, vide Gazette Notice Number 44. The Authority played a pivotal role in the development of these regulations, providing logistical support and technical expertise to ensure the formulation of a comprehensive regulatory framework.

The enactment of these regulations reinforces the Authority's critical role as a member of the NC4 and will go a long way in building the capacity of both public and private sector institutions, including the telecommunications, banking and finance, transportation and energy sectors. This will enhance the safeguarding of critical information infrastructure from cyber threats therefore improving national cybersecurity readiness and resilience.

The regulations effectively operationalize provisions of the Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act of 2018.

United Nation's Women in Cyber Fellowship

The United Nations Women in Cyber Fellowship is a ground-breaking initiative aimed at promoting gender diversity and inclusion in the cybersecurity field. Through this fellowship programme, women from around the world, especially from developing nations, are provided with unique opportunities for skill development, mentorship and career advancement in the rapidly growing field of cybersecurity. The Authority, through the National KE-CIRT/CC, is privileged to have representation in this esteemed programme.

By fostering the participation of women in cybersecurity roles, the fellowship not only addresses the gender gap in the industry but also harnesses diverse perspectives and talents to enhance cybersecurity resilience and innovation on a global scale.

Future Insights

The effective management of risks remains attainable even amidst the unpredictability of the evolving cyber threat landscape. While the cyber threat landscape continues to evolve, organisations can implement proactive risk management strategies to mitigate potential risks and enhance cybersecurity resilience. This can be summed up in three broad areas:

Firstly, gaining a comprehensive understanding of different cyber threat vectors improves the capacity of organisations to defend against cyber threats. Some of the common threats include malware including ransomware attacks, advanced persistent threats (APTs), social engineering scams such as phishing, exploitation of zero-day vulnerabilities, human error, amongst others.

Secondly, the most effective way of understanding the current risks affecting your organisation is by having visibility over them. A properly managed attack surface area enables the development of a better tailored cyber threat intelligence programme.

Lastly, implementing a robust information security policy that includes effective mitigation strategies is critical to minimising an organisation's cyber risk. Common strategies may include utilising multi-factor authentication, regular patching of software, deploying anti-virus software, amongst others.

WASH WASH BUSINESS

Where Millions Are Transacted Without Trace.

By Martin Mwangi

Kenya's strategic position as Eastern Africa's business hub and a peaceful nation with commendable infrastructure offers a huge opportunity for economic prosperity. However, the flip side of its strategic geopolitical status is that it puts the country at risk of an almost equal magnitude.

How so? Every so often, local and international criminal syndicates leverage the country's position along trade lines, porous borders, and infrastructure to undertake illicit activities. Such activities include the illicit gold trade (smuggling gold from the DRC) and a parallel gold scam syndicate.

However, money laundering, dubbed "Wash Wash," is the most prevalent and significant illicit activity in which foreigners and locals partake. The illicit trade has dented the country's good global standing and reputation to the extent that the Finance Action Task Force (FATF), a

global anti-money-laundering watchdog, grey-listed Kenya in February 2024. So, what does being grey-listed mean for Kenya? The grey list spotlights countries with deficiencies in combating money laundering and terrorism financing. Therefore, featuring in this list of shame presents the risk that international bodies and allies may subject Kenya to more stringent due diligence, putting the country at a disadvantage in global transactions.

Government Strategies to Tackle the "Wash Wash" Menace

Given that the country's reputation, status, and well-being are at stake, "Wash Wash" is a vice that must be dealt with decisively. According to the CS Finance, Professor Njuguna Ndung'u, Kenya has, in the recent past, made 17 amendments to the law in a bid to tighten the noose on money launderers.

The move is a significant milestone in the aspect of legal compliance. Moreover, it sets the foundation for the next phase, which is the implementation process; implementation strengthens the institutions tasked with fighting money laundering in Kenya. Besides implementation, Professor Ndung'u added that Kenya is banking on technical assistance from the European Union, the IMF, the World Bank, the UK, and the US in efforts to exit the FATF's infamous grey list.

The DCI Hits the Ground Running in "Wash Wash"

The Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) has had its boots firmly on the ground in curbing the "Wash Wash" menace. Its preparedness aligns with its mission to embrace a proactive and professional approach to investigating crimes, protecting life and property,



Mr Njeru
Nthigah, Nairobi
Regional Criminal
Investigations
officer.
PHOTO/NELSON
KIPRUTO

apprehending offenders, and supporting the prosecution process.

Mr Njeru Nthigah, the man at the helm of Criminal Investigations in Nairobi region, granted **The DCI** an interview and offered insights into his department's anti-Wash Wash campaign.

According to Mr Nthigah, Nairobi receives the highest number of Wash Wash-related cases in the country. The cases filed in his jurisdiction fall under obtaining by false pretenses. Acquisition under false pretense is the most dominant version of the "Wash Wash" activities and occurs when perpetrators lure members of the public into the sale and purchase of gold. Hence, gold scams are another criminal element that branches from "Wash Wash."

"Wash Wash" Perpetrator and Victim Profiles

Kenyan and non-Kenyans alike fall for the "Wash Wash" con. Interestingly, Kenya's gold reserves are in trace amounts. Consequently, the country's gold production is nowhere near the amounts

"Wash Wash" scammers create a sense of legitimacy around their facade by involving police officers, private security guards, and even government officials.

the conmen allege to have.

Ironically, the scammers lure victims by presenting themselves as gold dealers selling thousands of kilograms of the precious metal; this begs the question of due diligence. They pretend to have stashed the gold in posh areas, hotels, and, at times, warehouses.

Besides assuming the persona of affluent businessmen, "Wash Wash" scammers create a sense of legitimacy around their facade by involving police officers, private security guards, and even government officials. The involvement of politicians, senior civil servants, and other government officials is a testament to an intricate criminal network that preys on unsuspecting victims, defrauding them of thousands of US dollars.

Second some politicians, rogue government officials and well-connected individuals within the network wield significant influence. Consequently, victim and witness intimidation is a serious impediment to the DCI's investigative teams.

When victims and witnesses refuse to testify, the lack of testimonies to back the available evidence weakens an otherwise robust, well-investigated case. Consequently, presiding judges often have no option but to kick such cases out on a technicality or due to insufficient evidence. The impunity created by witness intimidation and tampering continues to worsen the situation.

Third as DCI detectives zero in and expose culprits, "Wash Wash" masterminds are shifting their focus to another area: government tenders. You may have noted an increase in the cases of fraudulent floating of non-existent tenders for the supply of goods and services to the Kenyan government. Kenyans and foreign nationals have

lost millions in the tender scams. Moreover, investigations reveal that specific individuals with a checkered past linked to the gold scams are emerging as culprits or persons of interest in the tender scams.

As the DCI cracks down on the "Wash Wash" menace, below is an overview of a recent case

the Nairobi Region Criminal Investigations office handled.

Japanese National Loses Sh 577,271,700 to Fake Gold Merchants

Nashimoto Masaaki, a Japanese national, is one of the victims reeling in loss after falling victim to gold scammers. According to the statement he recorded at the DCI Nairobi Region Headquarters, Masaaki's woes began with a man named Jackson Kasongo.

Masaaki met Kasongo, A Zambian national, via a friend. According to Masaaki, the supposed friend is a Portuguese national he had known for a decade. Following the initial introduction, Masaaki warmed up to Jackson Kasongo and continued to engage him as a newly-found friend; he even informed Kasongo of his plans to engage in gold business.

After the gold conversation, Kasongo contacted Masaaki, who was in Japan, and revealed that he knew an individual willing to sell him large quantities of pure gold. Several conversations later, Masaaki informed Kasongo that he would make an initial purchase of 250kgs of gold. Kasongo attempted to upsell him 1200kgs of gold, but he stuck to the initial 250kgs volume, preferring to purchase the rest of the gold in batches.

Therefore, Masaaki and Kasongo agreed that he, Masaaki, would purchase the first batch of gold, containing 250kgs of the precious metal, at US\$31,000. Additionally, the supposed gold seller would sell him the rest of the consignment (950kgs) in two batches of 475kgs each. Furthermore, Masaaki and Kasongo discussed and agreed that Masaaki would pay US\$712,500 as tax for the first 250kgs of gold; they also agreed on the mode of payment.



suspects arrested during a recent crackdown of fake gold rackets in Roasters, Nairobi on October 8, 2022. PHOTO/LAWRENCE SAFU

Kasongo arranged for a meeting where Masaaki and his business partner travelled to Kenya on December 10, 2018. The duo met Kasongo alongside two individuals who introduced themselves as Ronald and Joseph Kimo.

The four convened at Afri Solutions Limited's offices in Nairobi to meet the seller and confirm the availability of the said gold. During the meeting, Joseph Kimo announced his affiliation with Afri Solutions Limited and introduced Ronald as the gold owner.

Masaaki agreed to pay US\$136,560 for a private jet that would transport the gold from Nairobi to Hong Kong as a commitment to the business deal. Second, since Kasongo had the client's mandate to sell the gold, he would also fly with the cargo for security purposes and release the consignment upon payment of the agreed amount.

Upon realizing that the taxes were way higher than anticipated, Masaaki and his partner proposed that they first pay taxes for 25kg of the said gold. However, they were surprised when asked to pay US\$40,000, which was lower than the rates they had received earlier on.

Another inconsistency in the dealings occurred the next day when Masaaki and his partner were informed of some changes to the deal. The sellers returned to them US\$37,150 but retained US\$2,850 as tax for 1kg of gold. They also stated they would use part of the proceeds to test and authenticate the gold's purity.

Later, Kasongo took Masaaki and his partner to Afri Solutions Ltd's offices and showed them 1200kg of well-secured gold. He also picked some gold nuggets and took them as samples for testing at the Ministry of Mining; test results from the Ministry revealed that the sampled nuggets were pure gold.

The trio, Masaaki, his business partner, and Kasongo, went back to Afri Solutions Ltd's offices where another 1kg of gold was allegedly smelted and parked. They then boarded a private jet to Hong Kong as agreed upon earlier.

Upon arriving in Hong Kong, Masaaki stated that the gold was tested and ascertained to be genuine. Hence, he and his partner paid US\$38,900 to Afri Solutions's Equity Bank account, Lavington Supreme Centre account No. 1410275838004. Moreover, the two Japanese business partners catered for all the travel expenses, including accommodation and Kasongo's return ticket to Kenya.

Convinced that they were dealing with genuine gold dealers, the duo decided to buy 250kgs of gold. Therefore, they made a bank transfer of US\$712,500 to cover taxes and agent fees. They were issued with an invoice No.9703 for the said gold.

Additionally, they authorized another US\$136,560 bank transfer, which was to cater for the transport of the said gold via a private jet, and received another invoice No.9908. Lastly, they wired US\$389,500 to Afri Solutions' Equity account to pay for an ICGLR certificate and received another invoice No.1903.

Unaware that they had dug themselves into a US\$1,238,560 hole, Masaaki and his business partner travelled to Nairobi in January 2019, hoping to collect their gold. However, upon arrival, Masaaki alleges that his passport was taken and was used to apply for a KRA PIN certificate. The certificate supposedly cost US\$600, which he paid in cash.

Their visit to Kenya proved futile as they could not collect the gold they had paid for. Upon enquiring, they were informed that the ICGLR certificate was not ready. So, Masaaki's business partner opened a collateral guarantee with Afri Solution Ltd at Barclays Bank Queensway branch. As part of the agreement, 28kgs of gold were placed in a safe within the bank; the safe's account number was SCB 01/19.

Once again, Masaaki and his partner jetted to Hong Kong. They returned to Nairobi at the end of January 2019, only to be informed that the ICGLR certificate was still not ready. Consequently, they couldn't receive the 250kgs of gold as expected.

Nonetheless, Ronald informed them that the gold was safe at a warehouse at JKIA. Ronald took them to a company called GEOX at JKIA, where a manager based at the company offices told them they required an ICGLR certificate to see the gold. However, he assured them that all was well since GEOX had a gold exporting license.

Determined to lay their hands on the gold, Masaaki and his partner stayed in Nairobi. During this stay, Afri Solutions

Ltd asked Masaaki to open a joint account with Ronald. They justified this request by saying either party could come to Nairobi to pick up the gold once the ICGLR certificate was ready.

Tired of waiting, they left for Japan. While in Japan, they received a call informing them they should pay additional funds for the 950kgs of gold to get an ICGLR certificate. On demanding an explanation for the new development, they were informed that the gold in Congo was processed as a batch of 1,200kgs, yet they had only paid for 250kgs of gold.

On 12th April 2019, the two businessmen received a letter from Afri Solution Ltd instructing them to pay more for the ICGLR certificate. The letter also informed them that Ronald had borrowed US\$689,000 from Simico Securities SPRL in DRC. The letter, therefore, required them to pay US\$705,000 to facilitate the loan.

Additionally, they received a discharge dated 9th July 2019 instructing them to pay invoice No.309 to Master Consultancy. They wired the money to their Equity Bank Account No. 1410277800563, Lavington, Supreme Centre branch. The culprits shelled more and more money from the unsuspecting victims.

Upon payment, the businessmen were informed that the ICGLR certificate would be processed in Goma and Kinshasa and that the gold had to be transported from Nairobi to Goma in Congo for physical weighing. Masaaki enquired whether he could accompany the gold to Congo and was informed he would need a visa that would be ready in two months to process.

When Masaaki expressed his concerns to Afri Solutions Ltd, they advised him to give Jackson Kasongo power of attorney to represent him and his partner during the physical weighing in Congo. He granted Kasongo the power of attorney as advised.

A few days later, Kasongo called Masaaki, informing him that he was in Goma alongside Joseph, waiting for Ronald to join them. However, Ronald was a no-show. Although Masaaki found this disconcerting, Kasongo and Joseph assured him that Ronald was fine.

The next day, Kasongo and Joseph informed Masaaki that Ronald was in prison due to the loan he had taken to acquire the ICGLR certificate in Congo. Consequently, Joseph asked him to pay the ICGLR inspector US\$50,000 to release the document.

More bad news was on its way.

Kasongo informed Masaaki that Joseph and the inspection officers were arrested and detained in prison by an army general while inspecting the gold in Goma. Based on the alleged developments, Kasongo asked the two businessmen to send US\$130,000 to facilitate the release of Joseph and the gold inspectors. Masaaki refused, stating they did not have that kind of money and were not responsible for the gold inspectors.

After the impasse, Kasongo informed the businessmen that he had managed to raise US\$50,000 and asked them to raise the US\$80,000 balance because they had vested interests in Joseph's welfare. Masaaki and his partner caved to the manipulation, borrowed the money, and wired it to Afri Solutions Equity bank account No. 1410275838004 at Lavington's Supreme Centre.

Upon release from the said prison, Kasongo and Joseph informed the businessmen that they had fallen ill and had been hospitalized; therefore, they needed time for treatment. The duo called again, stating that they were in Goma with an army general who was asking for a US\$400,000 payment to help them secure an ICGLR certificate.

Kasongo and Joseph alleged that the certificate would enable them to transport the gold from Goma to Thailand. Later, Afri Solutions Ltd informed them that this money would be paid to a different Equity Bank account, Account No. 1410269238633. They wired the money in instalments to the account registered to PK and Associates Limited.

After confirming that the money had been wired to the bank account, the trio informed Masaaki and his partner that the army general had facilitated the acquisition of the ICGLR certificate. Kasongo sent Masaaki a copy of the said ICGLR certificate via WhatsApp.

The certificate allegedly facilitated the transfer of the said gold to Thailand. The Japanese businessmen were informed that the gold was already in MV Siam Limited's bonded warehouses.



The Director DCI Mr Mohamed Amin inspects recovered fake gold during a recent crackdown in Roasters, Nairobi on October 8, 2022. PHOTO/LAWRENCE SAFU



Recovered items from crackdown of fake gold rackets in Roasters, Nairobi on October 8, 2022. PHOTO/LAWRENCE SAFU



Aerial view of part of Nairobi City. PHOTO/COURTESY

They believed this because Thailand is accessible from Goma, Hong Kong, and China.

Masaaki and his business associate were asked to wire US\$35000, US\$70000, US\$42000, US\$13200, US\$47700, US\$78200, US\$52500, US\$121887, and US\$51879. The funds would allegedly facilitate the transportation of the gold from Thailand to Hong Kong. Besides the highlighted funds, which were transferred to PK and Associates' Equity Bank account, Masaaki was asked to pay another US\$50,000 to a United Overseas Bank account for MV Siam Limited's services.

All this while, Ronald was allegedly in detention. He was allegedly released alongside other petty offenders to curb COVID-19's spread in the detention center. Unknown to the Japanese businessmen, the purported release of Ronald from prison meant more trouble for them. Upon his alleged release, Ronald allegedly blocked transportation of the gold to Hong Kong, claiming he was unaware of all these processes. Moreover, he allegedly claimed that the export documents had already expired.

The Japanese businessmen were given two options: Pay taxes in Thailand amounting to 10-15% of the total value of the gold or have the whole gold consignment go back to Congo. Besides that, they were informed that they must pay US\$181800 as storage fees to PK and Associates Ltd.

Additionally, they were again asked to pay US\$132,200 as custom document extension fees to Afri Solutions' Diamond Trust Bank, Mombasa Road branch, Account No. 0301545004. They also paid another US\$552,600 for the renewal of the ICGLR certificate based on the agreement that Simico Securities SPRL of Congo would act as a guarantor. The last payment was also wired to Diamond Trust Bank, Mombasa Road branch, account No. 0301545004.

The endless demand for more money prompted Masaaki to visit Hong Kong's customs department. He wanted to establish why the export documents were said to have expired in Thailand, yet it was not the consignment's final destination. It was then that it dawned on him that he had fallen for a bogus deal. Masaaki travelled to Kenya seeking police assistance to recover his millions of dollars.

Investigations Commenced

Masaaki, on behalf of his business partner, reported the issue to the DCI Nairobi area, where detectives conducted investigations and obtained all relevant exhibits. Upon concluding the investigations, they arrested Andre Kongolo Tshikunga on 13th January, 2022.

The following day (14th January), Kongolo and others not present at the court were charged with obtaining money by false pretences contrary to section 313 of the Penal Code. The amount stated was US\$5,772,717.

Who is Andre Kongolo Tshikunga?

Upon his arrest, Andre Kongolo Tshikunga made a statement to DCI detectives. He introduced himself as a Nairobi-based businessman with both Congo and Kenyan citizenship. He further stated that he used to own a logistics company called Afri Solutions Limited but was then into farming.

Kongolo stated that in 2019, one Joseph Kimo Kabongo contacted him and introduced him to a Congolese man named Jeanpaul Bokwete. Joseph knew Kongolo as a player in the logistics business. Joseph allegedly told Kongolo that he needed his services to facilitate the sale of gold to a Japanese client. Additionally, Joseph Kabongo informed Kongolo that his client was uncomfortable sending money to Congo because he preferred Nairobi, and so he asked Kongolo to act through Afri Solution Limited.

Joseph accompanied the Japanese client to Afri Solutions Limited offices in Lavington for a meeting to discuss the sale of 1,200kg of gold. During the meeting, Joseph indicated that he was acting for Kilwa Mines in Congo. A discussion on a contract Maasaki and Joseph had already signed before the meeting also occurred. Before the conclusion of the meeting, Kongolo stated that the trio had a verbal agreement that Afri Solutions Limited would receive money for the sale of the gold on behalf of Kilwa Mines.



Further, Joseph agreed that he used to receive money from Masaaki through Afri Solution Ltd in the company account held at Equity Bank Lavington Branch. He informed the investigating officer that he used to forward the same to Kilwa Mines' preferred account upon receipt of the cash. As the cash flowed to Afri Solution accounts, Masaaki and Joseph were allegedly preparing to transport the gold from Congo but were facing logistical challenges and government-related issues in Congo.

Delayed delivery of the said Gold caused Kilwa Mines and Masaaki to get into loggerheads. In September 2021, Jackson, alias Kongolo, a Zambian national who alleged that he was acting on Masaaki's behalf, informed him that he was negotiating with Kilwa mines to supply Masaaki with gold equivalent to what they had been given. In December 2021, Kongolo received an email from Kilwa Mines indicating that they had agreed to send Masaaki his gold and that each party was to give Afri Solution Ltd 0.5% of the transaction upon concluding the deal.

At the end of his statement, Andre Kongolo averred that due to the harsh economic times caused by COVID-19, he could not pay office rent leading to the closure of his Lavington based offices.

Consequences for Complainant as he Fails to Appear in Court

After Kongolo's arraignment in January, Masaaki flew back to Japan. The Nairobi court required him to testify in person in June. He was, therefore, bonded via WhatsApp. Masaaki requested to testify via Zoom, but the prosecutor said the court does not allow this. Therefore, he was required to travel to Kenya and appear before the court in person lest the case be withdrawn.

In the summons dated September 29, 2022, Masaaki was again served via WhatsApp. He called the investigating officer, informing her that the accused persons were threatening him not to come to Kenya; hence, he felt safer testifying via Zoom.

He further indicated that on top of threats to his life, he did not have the finances to enable him to travel to Kenya to attend the court session because he had lost all his money to the scam.



The Director DCI Mr Mohamed Amin flanked by the Director Operations Mr Richard Mwaura inspect recovered items from an operation to arrest fake gold syndicates in Roasters, Nairobi on October 8, 2022. PHOTO/LAWRENCE SAFU

If that was not possible, he indicated that he would write to his embassy to request assistance on how to handle the matter best. After several adjournments due to Masaaki's non-appearance, the court advised the investigating officer to file a formal application, citing why the complainant could not attend court in person as demanded.

The Investigating officer filed an affidavit on December 13, 2023, as earlier instructed. However, in a ruling delivered on February 6, 2023, the trial magistrate dismissed the application. According to the magistrate, there were no filed documents to prove that the complainant was sick, in a bad financial state, or that he had received threats to his life.

Therefore, the court upheld the defense's argument that there was a need for the complainant to identify the accused person physically during the hearing. Also, the exhibit documents were in volumes and could only be identified and produced in an open court. The matter was fixed for hearing on May 25, 2023.

Case Dismissed

Upon being informed of the court's ruling, Masaaki still pleaded to be allowed to testify virtually. Unfortunately, the case was eventually dismissed after months of the complainant's application to testify via Zoom. The magistrate cited that section 202 of the Criminal Procedure Code informed the decision.

Engaging a Higher Gear

The Director DCI has issued a directive to fraud investigators calling for prioritization of money laundering offences through parallel financial investigations, which is expected to change the trajectory of investigations wherein fake gold scammers will be investigated for both fraud-related offences and money laundering.

Earlier, the DCI had made a request to the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP) for review of all previous files relating to gold scam offences. Agreeable to DCI's recommendations, the DPP directed that the accused persons be also charged with money laundering offences and welcomed parallel financial investigations.

The directive triggered the start of a recovery process of all properties acquired using monies obtained from victims of fake gold scams. Where the money obtained cannot be recovered in cash, properties of equivalent value (proceeds or not) are being pursued for forfeiture by the Asset Recovery Agency. This move is expected to be dissuasive and effective in taming fake gold scammers.

Other long-term measures being explored by the government include the pursuit of bilateral agreements with other countries that are considered high risk jurisdictions, with a view to establish collaborations in the pursuit of criminals and recovery of proceeds of crime and properties acquired thereto.



Corporal Henry Onyango, OGW. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR

I speak for the Deaf:

Corporal Jacob Onyango On Increasing Access to Justice for Nairobi's Deaf Community

By Edwin Kipkorir

What began as a typical busy day at Nairobi Central Business District would quickly change for a suspected mobile phone snatcher. Members of the public had unleashed considerable violence on him in the act-now-ask-questions-later fashion; not a soul stopped to consider that one is innocent until proven otherwise.

Luckily, law-abiding citizens intervened and escorted him to the Nairobi Central Police Station. They claimed he had refused to speak while being interrogated at the scene.

"It was only when I arrived at the station that we realized that the man was not only deaf but also a victim of mistaken identity," said Corporal Henry Onyango. "The man," he adds, "became a key witness who assisted in identifying the actual phone snatcher."

So, which superpower allowed Corporal Onyango to immediately perceive what others had failed? Henry Jacob Onyango, or Jake to his colleagues, is a police corporal based at Kamukunji Police Station. His presence in the station makes it stand out uniquely from the rest of the stations in Nairobi due to one unique skill: Corporal Onyango is a sign language interpreter who helps individuals with hearing impairment access police services. He acquired the skill which allows him to take the motto "Service To All" to a new level ten years ago.

According to a proficiency chart on American Sign Language (ASL), it takes eight years to become fluent in sign language. While ASL and KSL (Kenyan Sign Language) are not sister languages, saying that Corporal Onyango is fluent in ASL after ten years is a safe bet.

So, how did Corporal Onyango develop interest in KSL? Jacob Onyango is a man with a heart yearning to serve. Additionally, his spiritual mentor from over ten years ago, Fr. Joseph Martinez, who was based at the Holy Family Basilica, constantly challenged him to do more in terms of service.

So, when the first Inspector General of Police, Dr. David Kimaiyo, initiated a program to train police officers in sign language interpretation, Corporal Onyango saw this as an opportunity to serve. He applied for the program and was among the three police officers chosen to pursue training in KSL.

To fulfill the training, Corporal Onyango and his two fellow officers enrolled as full-time students at the University of Nairobi. The course took them 18 months to complete. Therefore, Jake is one of three officers conversant with KSL and sign language interpretation within the National Police Service.

Corporal Onyango's first posting after completing the course was at the Judiciary's Court of Appeal. His duty there entailed interpreting sign language during court proceedings.

Jake acts as the link between the magistrate and the deaf person; when the magistrate speaks, he signs, and when the person with hearing impairment signs, he voices. The sessions are normally around one hour or less due to their intensity.

However, according to Corporal Onyango, interpreting court proceedings is the most challenging aspect of his skill. The challenge arises because lives are at stake, and the slightest misinterpretation has dire legal consequences for the individual. Moreover, persons with hearing impairment often believe that the interpreter misrepresented them whenever the court rules against them.

Consequently, many sign language experts avoid legal interpretation, preferring to interpret on social platforms. Fortunately, the Kenyan Sign Language Interpreters Association can be invited to review the case in such an event. Also, Corporal Onyango's presence as a police officer in such a proceeding raises confidence because he is always under oath.

After his initial deployment to the Judiciary, Corporal Onyango was transferred to Dandora Police Station and later to Central Police Station (one of the busiest police stations in the city). While he is based at Kamukunji Police Station, he goes wherever his expertise is required.

Jake crosses station boundaries in the line of duty to attend to cases within the Nairobi Metropolitan area whenever he is called upon.



OCS Kamukunji Police Station Robert Mugo having a chat with Corporal Henry Onyango outside the station. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR

I handle at least five cases daily from across the Nairobi Metropolitan



Corporal Henry Onyango attending to a client in his office at Kamukunji Police Station on April 4, 2024. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR



All cases that involve individuals with hearing impairment are referred to him.

Corporal Onyango is instrumental in bridging the huge communication gap between the deaf community and law enforcement officers. According to him, the gap limits access to justice and other essential services for the hearing impaired.

Second, given the substantially low number of sign language interpreters in the Service, there is a high chance that people who are deaf or hard of hearing will be denied justice. The Police, being the first contact in the criminal justice system, play a significant role in shaping criminal processes.

“I handle at least five cases daily from across the Nairobi Metropolitan,” he says. In one case, Jake saved a group of deaf persons from Dandora from being swindled by a client they had hired to drive their vehicles. The man had decided to take advantage of the language barrier to shortchange them in what would have broken their initial agreement. In turn, they made a report at Central Police Station, where Jake handled the matter satisfactorily.

Besides falling victim to unscrupulous individuals, Jake confirms that the most prevalent crimes against the deaf are sexual offenses, mugging, and assault. “The deaf, mostly women, are often victims of rape because perpetrators take advantage of the fact that they cannot scream or raise their voice to draw attention,” he explains. Such targeted crimes are why Jake’s role as an interpreter remains critical in the National Police Service.

He handles his cases with great precision to ensure that the victims get justice. “I don’t do this to give preferential treatment to the hearing impaired but because everyone has a right to effective communication,” says Jake. However, he is keen to note that not all deaf people are victims; some are masterminds of criminal activities, while others are witnesses.

In keeping the city safe, he has also made friends with the deaf community, who have helped provide critical information to the police. Also, dealing with persons with hearing impairment has taught him patience, especially when communication barriers trigger frustration and cause misunderstanding.

Corporal Onyango’s selfless dedication to seeing people from the mostly marginalized deaf community receive dignified service and justice earned him the Order of the Grand Warrior (O.G.W) award. The award is the recognition presented by the Kenyan President to individuals in recognition of outstanding service rendered to their country in different capacities.



DIRECTORATE OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS



FICHUA KWA DCI

RIPOTI UHALIFU KWA KUPIGA NAMBARI:

0800722203

Usihofu, jina wala nambari yako haitafichuliwa



*Thank
You*

For Your Service, Officer!

By Mwiti Karau

The name Chief Inspector Zabed Mwangi invoked fear in the criminal world. He hunted down dangerous criminals with imperceptible precision luring them from the underworld. Rarely did he miss his target.

However, his service was cut short when his life was ended ungracefully on August 3, 2013 in Kitui. Moments before his fateful death, Zabed was leading a team of officers in a rescue operation of a 5-year-old girl who had been abducted in Ruai, Nairobi. The team came into contact with the abductors who had been cornered in Kitui. An exchange of fire ensued and Zabed was gunned down. He breathed his last while undergoing treatment.

Chief Inspector Zabed is among the many police officers who have paid the ultimate price for their country in the line of duty. His name is listed at the top among five others on the DCI's Roll of Honour plaque that was unveiled on December 1, 2023 by Director DCI Mr Mohamed Amin.

The Roll of Honour which stands tall outside the main reception at the DCI Headquarters commemorates six fallen detectives who

lost their lives in armed confrontations with dangerous criminals. During its unveiling, the six were acknowledged with utmost admiration in an occasion that was also graced by close family members.

On the auspicious day, in his blue ceremonial dress, Mr Amin led the detectives in a full commemoration drill procedure that was the first of its kind in the Directorate. The close family members had an opportunity to lay wreath in remembrance of their loved ones.

Fashioned by his comforting words, Mr Amin celebrated the boldness of the slain officers, whose only fault was putting their lives on the line for the safety of fellow Kenyans.





The Director DCI Mr Mohamed Amin unveils the DCI Roll of Honour at the DCI Headquarters on December 3, 2023. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR

With much admiration of the six heroes, the DCI Chief called upon every officer to draw inspiration and lessons from them.

“To the police officers here today and those far off serving our great nation, I remember with a heavy heart the loss of our gallant officers killed in the line of duty, and at the same time admire their unwavering allegiance and courage in the face of death. They gave their all without seeking commendation, recognition or appreciation. They did so because it was their duty. They did so because they were bound by the oath of office they took,” he said.

While praying that their memories would live on, Mr Amin encouraged the families to find peace in the reconciliation that their fallen kin were gallant servicemen whose

death only motivated those behind them to be courageous and selfless in service. The late Mohamed Ibrahim Khamisi's name aligns just adjacent to that of Zabed. He was a spymaster who surveyed and analyzed intelligence in the bad lands of vicious narcotic kingdoms. He preyed on his targets with bravery, a value that was celebrated when his name was unveiled.

While pursuing a case that involved seizure of about 377kg of heroin in Mombasa, detective Khamisi was accosted by two men on March 3, 2015 who shot him and left him for the dead. He did not survive the injuries inflicted on him. His untimely death captured the attention of the media who lauded him for incorruptibility.

In the same brazen show of selflessness, the late Constable Enock Irungu Mukoshi

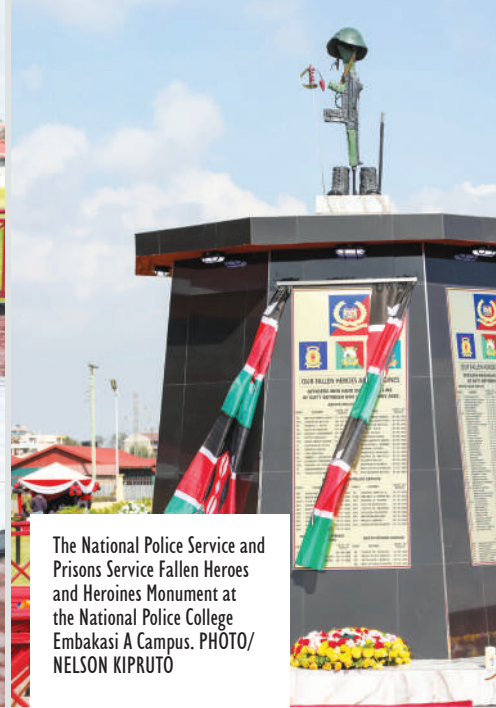
marched out one morning to quell criminal activities, never to go back home. His death went down as one of the many premature deaths in the Service. At only 30 years, Irungu's career as a law enforcer had just began to take shape and his dreams were drawing closer.

On the fateful day, May 5, 2021, Irungu and his colleagues were hot on the trails of the Al Shabaab terrorist group in the thick Boni Forest. Unaware that the extremist group had laid an ambush, Irungu and his squad marched on, tactfully evading open grounds and isolated covers to avoid detection.

They were not so lucky though. They suddenly encountered contact as heavy gunfire rattled from every surrounding quarter. Irungu and his team fought back with all they got. But when the guns went



CS Interior Prof. Kithure Kindiki lays wreath on the Fallen Heroes and Heroines Monument at the National Police College Embakasi A Campus on December 15, 2022. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR



The National Police Service and Prisons Service Fallen Heroes and Heroines Monument at the National Police College Embakasi A Campus. PHOTO/NELSON KIPRUTO



Families of departed officers lay wreath in memory of their loved ones during the unveiling of the DCI Roll of Honour at DCI Headquarters on December 3, 2023. PHOTO/HASSAN CHAKA



National Police bugler sounds the last post to honour fallen officers during the unveiling of the DCI Roll of Honour at the DCI Headquarters on December 3, 2023. PHOTO/NELSON KIPRUTO

silent, the National Police Service had lost a gallant officer in Irungu. Though he suffered fatal shots, his being in the front line of defense shielded his fellow officers and saved their lives. His gun also felled several assailants who will no longer interfere with the peace of the nation.

His bravery shall be remembered in the days to come as his name shines on the Roll of Honour, just like those of Chief Inspector Johnson Kemue Onchieku, Constable Isaac Cheng'ori Naibei and Constable Andrew Nyakundi who died doing what they vowed to do: serving the nation.

The Inspector General of the National Police Service Mr Japhet Koome reminds us that we are indebted of our peace

because of such sacrifices. "We owe the peace and tranquility that we enjoy as a country to the sacrifice and bravery of the fallen gallant officers" stated his remarks which were delivered by the Police Spokesperson, Dr. Resila Onyango.

The six line up among several hundreds who have lost their precious lives in the National Police Service over the years with the biggest tragedy being the Baragoi massacre which took away the lives of 42 police officers in a single encounter with armed criminals on November 10, 2012, hiding in the cover of cattle rustling. Many were young officers in their mid-20's, full of hope and ambitions. They died trying to make their motherland a safer place for the current and future generations.

The officers drawn from General Service Unit, Administration Police Service and the Kenya Police Service were on a scrupulous mission to hunt down bandits and recover stolen livestock. The mission botched in a bloody massacre that prematurely cut the lives of the young men. They walked into an ambush and were unfortunately dropped down one after another.

It is now more than a decade since the deadly massacre at Suguta Valley of Baragoi. A monument was constructed to commemorate the 42 souls at Baragoi Peace Resort.

The National Police Service and Prisons Service also erected a monument in honour of fallen heroes and heroines



CS Interior Prof. Kithure Kindiki and Inspector General Mr Japhet Koome honour Fallen Heroes and Heroines at the National Police College Embakasi A Campus on December 15, 2022. PHOTO/ EDWIN KIPKORIR



The National Police Service and Prisons Service Fallen Heroes and Heroines Monument at the National Police College Embakasi A Campus. PHOTO/NELSON KIPRUTO



The Director DCI Mr Mohamed Amin Unveils the DCI Roll of Honour at the DCI Headquarters on December 3, 2023. PHOTO/ EDWIN KIPKORIR

which bears the names of all officers who lost their lives in the line of duty. The monument stands at the National Police College, Embakasi A Campus. Additionally, an annual joint commemoration service is usually held at the Campus to honour the departed officers.

Led by the Cabinet Secretary for Interior and National Administration, Prof Kithure Kindiki, the National Police Service held the most recent commemoration service on December 14, 2023 for 37 officers who had died in 2023.

While honouring them for their dedicated service, the Interior Cabinet Secretary announced that the government would be minimizing the officer's risk of exposure by upscaling the Equipment Modernization Programme, to ensure that police acquired protective gear and sophisticated equipment to respond to modern-day security threats.

He further underscored the significance of honouring our departed colleagues, noting that it was through such an elaborate ceremony that their selfless actions would be celebrated and their service to the nation recognized, a lasting reminder that their sacrifices were not in vain.







BENCHMARKING AGAINST SELF; Finding comfort in contentment and breaking free from the Joneses

By Nyang'ori Alitsi

Global information age, with its innumerable positives, where smart environments, automated livelihoods, and effortless ability to make instantaneous connections that defy time zones and geographic barriers is a hallmark of today's reality, in the shadows of these advancements lies a darker side. Whilst the advancements have positively impacted defence, security, healthcare, industries, commerce and the general experience of life, rarely highlighted have been the noticeable debilitating attributes that lie in the shadows of this progress.

Rarely are the negative social effects of our networked life given similar prominence to say political, legal, climate or physical security problems. The social media ecosystem with its viral subculture carved off the fear of missing out (FOMO), is driving an addiction to the relentless pursuit of unattainable lifestyles that lead to social disruption and impact mental wellbeing.

Like any other addiction, the constant stream of experiences, milestones and material accumulations shared online can be dizzying and often create unhealthy competition and comparison. This frenzied cycle of online posting with a craving for social approval, imitation and consumerism can metaphorically be likened to striving to "keep up with the Joneses."

A twisted understanding of prosperity, success or progress can be the culprit to this

unhealthy chase for material accumulation and comparison. Once one has been yanked into this unhealthy juggernaut of cosmetic glamour, it becomes tough to extricate and regain footing against the impossible standards of society.

Understandably, the Inspector General of Police recently raised concern on this trend using the allegory of the 'Subaru' craze, symbolizing the destructive impact of unhealthy consumerism and competition on impressionable officers, leaving in its wake a trail of penury and mental health challenges. The IG cautioned officers on the perils of peer pressure and counselled them to recalibrate their priorities, including adopting frugal lifestyles that align with their available means.

In a highly fluid economic environment made worse by a constant flow of curated lifestyles on social media that can easily lead many observers to question their priorities, financial sobriety and virtue of contentment become paramount to escape this trap of unhealthy competition.

In this age of the Instagram diet, the age-old adage "Rome was not built in a day" becomes a relevant reminder to discipline and shield ourselves from the clutter and distraction that social media can fling at us.

Planning becomes a crucial aspect of breaking free from the Joneses. Rather than running someone else's race, take time to create the BIG picture. What

is the desirable outlook that defines accomplishment in upwards of twenty years from now? After visualising this picture, can it be broken down into medium terms that span five to 10 years which if cumulatively added will deliver a grand vision?

To get medium-term goals rolling of course is the need for annual plans, and these annual goals granulate further into quarterly and monthly objectives down to daily efforts and habits.

These plans will call for utmost discipline and sacrifice, consultation, discussions, revisions, and flexibility as some steps may have to be dropped along the way and others added. Still, with focus, overall attainment cannot be farfetched.

Settling on a personal benchmark and an achievement path suited to your practical means and ways is an important shield against external influences, most of which are curated for likes, and social approval and don't necessarily imply fulfilment. Being able to find contentment can be a transformative way of breaking free from the Joneses and focussing on your plans with a unique and tailored execution matrix.

C.I Nyang'ori Alitsi is a Lawyer, Social Scientist and enthusiast on the subject of technology and its behavioural impact on society.

DIRECTORATE OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS HEADQUARTERS

GOODBYE, GOOD LUCK, GODSPEED!

Matundu North is the home of Karimenu dam that has a storage capacity of over 20 billion litres of water. The generosity of this constituency in Kiambu County goes beyond keeping the taps flowing to producing one of the longest serving accountants in the police service.

Born in the year 1964, Mr George Kamau grew up as a normal child to parents who are now retired teachers. They were strict disciplinarians and staunch Catholics, meaning that they instilled the same values to their children. The values appear to have been the cornerstone of Mr Kamau's career life having worked his way from a junior accountant to being the Deputy Accountant General in the Directorate of Criminal Investigations.

Perhaps the teachers who taught him at Gatubaini Primary School in the seventies, and those he found at Murang'a and Nyandarua High Schools in the eighties can tell how they moulded him into the person he became: a man of few words, calm and composed. Indeed, his pursuit of a course in accounting in 1983 at the Kenya Polytechnic could as well have been the icing on the cake, preceding his employment in the civil service in 1985.

Kamau was posted to the Kenya Police Headquarters at Vigilance House as a clerk, and after three years, he was promoted to

an accounts assistant. He then left Vigilance House for the Office of the President, which is today the Ministry of Interior and National Administration. It was within the 10 years that he served at the Ministry that he got promoted to Accountant II.

In 1998, he was transferred to the Provincial Commissioner's (PC) office in Nairobi as the Deputy Provincial Accountant. After two years, his tour of duty at the PC's office ended, and was deployed to the Criminal Investigations Department headquarters in Milimani, Nairobi.

The Head of CID then was Dr. Francis K. Sang. Working under him, Kamau not only streamlined the existing financial issues that had engulfed the accounts department, but also fueled the completion of Mazingira Complex that houses DCI Headquarters today.

In 2004 when CID headquarters was relocated to Mazingira Complex along Kiambu Road, Kamau became the Head of Accounts Section and was promoted to Accounts Assistant General.

In his 38 years of service (23 of which he served at the DCI), Mr Kamau served under seven DCI directors including Dr.

Francis K. Sang, Mr Daniel Ndung'u, Mr Joseph Kamau, Mr Karanja Gatiba, Mr Ndegwa Muhoro, Mr George Kinoti and Mr Mohamed I. Amin. By the time he hanged his boots in 2024, he was a Deputy Accountant General.

Kamau told *The DCI* that he never sought to work outside the police service. "I don't know how or why, but I somehow found a family that supported me very well in the police fraternity", he pointed out. Looking back, Kamau says that he couldn't have wished for a better experience.

From the interview bench, Kamau had an advice for serving officers: always be resilient in the midst of organizational challenges. He also believes that officers must embrace integrity and honesty so as to command respect from one and all. These virtues must be coupled with excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate effectively, which play a significant role in times of crisis management.

Mr Kamau chuckles on the question about his future plans. He notes that after so many years, his alarm can now go off and allow him good time to rest. He says that his focus going forward is on spending as much time as possible with his family, who have been his most valuable support system in his entire career. When he will not have his grandchildren all over his laps and personal space, Mr Kamau hopes to be enjoying his most preferred hobby: Farming.

Kamau goes home a happy and energetic man. He is proud of what he was able to achieve, and has faith in those coming after him that they will pick up from where he left. It is particularly fulfilling to him that under his leadership, auditing by the Office of the Auditor General - Records and Systems, the DCI has had the least audit queries among all NPS services. Most times, there were no audit queries at all. This, he noted, created confidence in both internal and external publics.



Retired Deputy Accountant General Mr George Kamau in an interview with Inspector Martin Mwangi at DCI Mazingira Complex. PHOTO/LAWRENCE SAFU

MEET Mr Peter Njeru Nthigah

The Nairobi Region Chief Detective

By Lawrence Safu



Growing up, Peter Njeru Nthigah dreamt of becoming a pharmacist. He performed well in his A levels, another great step towards his dream. He therefore took a combination of Physics, Chemistry and Biology at Kangundo High School in readiness for a degree course at the university.

As fate would have it, he missed the public university entry point. His alternative of joining the university on a self-sponsored program also aborted when the fee structure almost gave his parents a heart attack. After years of doing menial jobs, he decided to try his luck in the police force during a recruitment drive in Embu. He was successful, but he had his wishes. Nthigah wanted to be enrolled as a Cadet Inspector (which is a reserve for degree holders) and not as a police constable, the cadre his academic level was squarely placing him. Frustrated, he went back home and kept to himself.

Six months later when more police officers were being recruited, he was first on the line. He didn't mind about the terms anymore. Life outside formal employment had humbled him. This time around, he took the job without a murmur. And many years later, the aspiring pharmacist heads criminal investigations at Kenya's capital, hunting down dangerous miscreants and maintaining law and order.

The DCI sought to know what man he is made of, and paid him a visit at his Nairobi region offices.

What was your childhood like?

I was born and brought up in Embu District, Ngandure Location in a village called Githiga. My parents were teachers who brought us up in the Christian faith. My father was a strict disciplinarian who saw to it that each of his kids accounted for their daily activities especially over the holidays. Punishment for a day not well spent meant no dinner. It was on this back drop that we ensured that, even when no task was assigned, one had to find a meaningful chore to undertake just to be sure that super was guaranteed.

Briefly share with us your schooling experience.

I attended Gicerori Primary School from the year 1972 -1979. After attaining my Certificate of Primary Education (CPE), I joined Kamama High School in Embu. But even before I could warm the desk, my father transferred me to Isiolo Secondary School to separate me from my cousin whose company he believed would spoil his little Nthigah.

Isiolo was miles away from home. To get to school, I'd use the Nyeri – Nanyuki route or the infamous Mate road. In 1983 when I sat for my KCE exam, I attained a division two of 30 points, which earned me a spot in Kangundo High School in Machakos.

At Kangundo I took a combination of Physics, Chemistry and Biology and sat for my KACE exam in 1985. I missed the public university entry points, crippling my dreams of ever becoming a pharmacist. A drive to set foot in Daystar University as a self-sponsored student botched the moment my parent's eyes landed on the entry fee.

How then did you end up joining the police service?

Initially, I wanted to join the Kenya Defense Forces as a cadet. When that flopped, I decided to try my luck with the Kenya Police Force, as a cadet. But without a tertiary level degree, I could only get an opening as a constable. After turning down the offer once, I swallowed the bitter pill and took the only option I got. My mother vehemently opposed the move, but I had my mind made up. For six months, I trained at the then Kenya Police College – Kiganjo from 22nd August, 1987.

Kindly take us through your career journey as a police officer

After completing the Initial Police Training, I was deployed at Hola Police Station in Tana River as a general duty officer. I worked there from March 1988 to July 1989. Thereafter, I joined the Criminal Investigations Department (CID). I was attached to the Anti-Narcotics Unit (ANU) at the Provincial CID office, Mombasa.

While at this workstation, I attended the Special Subordinate Officer to Inspectorate Course at the Kenya Police College – Kiganjo. After some time, I was promoted to the rank of Inspector of Police and deployed to Busia as the in charge of ANU at Sio Port from January to December, 1991.

In subsequent years, I headed ANU operations in various areas including Moi International Airport, Mombasa, CID headquarters, Voi and Kisumu. In between, I also had the opportunity to serve as the Division Criminal Investigations Officer (DCIO) in Murang'a, deputy DCIO in Mandera, Tana River and In-Charge of Flying Squad in Karuri in Kiambu. All this time, I rose through the ranks to a Superintendent of Police. I was thereafter deployed to the complaints department at CID headquarters.

After a four-month stint at CID headquarters, I was deployed to Turkana North where I worked as the Deputy Officer Commanding Police Division (OCPD) from 2007. In 2010, I left Turkana North for Police Headquarters in Vigilance House - Operations Department where I was the liaison officer for a year. Within the period, I was promoted to the rank of Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) and served at the Military Western Command in Embakasi, Nairobi. My job description entailed liaison duties on behalf of the Commissioner of Police.

I left Vigilance House for Njoro as the OCPD till 2013, only to make a U-turn to Vigilance in months following the controversial case of police impostor Joshua Waiganjo. I was implicated in the case and interdicted on allegations of

abuse of office. But after investigations, I was absolved of culpability and reinstated to the service.

After reinstatement, I was deployed as the OCPD Mbooni East for a period of four years and was the In-Charge of Mbooni West, Kilungu and Mukaa sub-counties for a period of one year, after which substantive OCPDs were deployed. In December 2017 while at Mbooni, I was promoted to the rank of Commissioner of Police.

In the year 2018, I proceeded to the National Police Service Senior Staff College in Loresho for a one-year Strategic Leadership and Command Course and upon completion, I was deployed to Nyanza region as the Deputy Regional Police Commander for two years. It is while working in Nyanza that I was deployed back to the Directorate of Criminal Investigations in November, 2022, and deployed to head criminal investigations in Nairobi region where I am still serving.

What are your experiences in criminal investigations during the analogue and digital eras?



Working as a general duty officer and later in the DCI has exposed me to a wide set of skills that have proven crucial when conducting investigations. During the analogue era, human intelligence was the backbone of intelligence gathering. We also had vast areas of coverage despite having meager resources at our disposal. However, we were able to traverse all these areas and arrest criminals.

Policing in the digital era has its fair share of challenges. However, I implore on officers to rise beyond over reliance on digital/mobile data technology and combine it with human intelligence for speedy and more effective investigations.

What are the overall crime trends in Nairobi?

Crime patterns and trends in Nairobi keep on changing from time to time. However, the exponential growth of the Nairobi metropolis has resulted two challenges that I would classify into;

Mobile phone theft cases – There is an ever bulging appetite for stolen phones in the city. The situation is aggravated by availability of a ready market for the said mobile phones, both locally and regionally.

Unfortunately, while stealing the phones, the merchants of this vice also commit other crimes that include murder, robbery with violence, muggings, pick pocketing among others. We are working tirelessly to break the supply chain. Locally, we have heightened intelligence collection where we are able to identify shops and repair stores that are believed to engage in receiving and reselling of stolen mobile phones. We also make impromptu security checks in electronic shops where the proprietors are made to account for every mobile phone found at their stores. Legislation wise, we would wish to see the East African Community agree on general tariffs in relation to sale of mobile phones. This will not only help kill the cross-border market for stolen mobile phones but also stabilize pricing regimes within member states.

The infamous wash wash business – This is slang for

obtaining by false pretenses. The most dominant version of wash wash revolves around gold. Different unsuspecting gold merchants who fall prey give unique accounts of their ordeals. Most victims are foreigners who are clueless about the existing laws of the land. I can only detail the various scenarios separately.

Desperate demand for travel passports, Modern-day slavery and human trafficking – Recently, the Cabinet Secretary for Interior and National Administration Prof. Kindiki Kithure declared Nyayo House an active crime scene. Our investigations reveal that most applicants are the youth, and close to 90% of them were lured by rogue travel agents to nonexistent job openings in foreign countries. The resultant effect is a backlog in passport processing that ends up depriving the immigration department the ability to serve Kenyans as expected.

Other Crimes – Nairobi region has reported an increase in cases of theft from locked motor vehicles. Painstaking investigations reveal collusion between the criminals, banking officials and security guards. There are unfortunate instances where rogue tellers help criminals identify individuals withdrawing colossal sums of money. Whereas we have arrested and arraigned many suspects, my advice to Kenyans is that they should go cashless where possible. This will in return deny the criminals the much needed impetus to engage in such crimes.

How is the working relationship between the DCI and other players in the security sector?

We have the Regional Criminal Intelligence Committee that concert efforts to ensure the safety and security of citizens and their property. This is a departure from a past practice where there was no synergy. With teamwork now in place where each player brings their contribution to the table, we now have a pool of expertise and resources that benefit Nairobi and by extension all Kenyans.

Which has been your most challenging deployment this far?

Must be Nairobi. Despite having a devolved system of government, Nairobi is Kenya and Kenya is Nairobi. Here is where close to 75% of Kenya's economy is. When criminals want to experiment on whether a crime will pay, they use Nairobi as their launch pad and the spillover effect is felt in other parts of the country. We have therefore to be always on high alert to ensure that the criminal plans are nipped at the bud.

Nairobi also hosts various Country offices, regional offices and other United Nation entities. It also hosts Jomo Kenyatta International Airport and other strategic installations that must be secured all through.

These among other reasons make Nairobi rewarding in terms of experience as we are continuously seeking to get solutions to various security challenges that keep on emerging.

What is your favorite leadership style?

Policing requires one to be versatile in the way he approaches management of employees. It calls one to embrace various leadership styles to ensure that whatever works best in a particular situation is the one at play. However, I lead by inspiring my juniors to be better. Even though we are in a disciplined service set up, I maintain an open door policy where officers have unfettered access to me. I enjoy empowering junior officers to deliver by themselves. I embrace transformational leadership where I leave every place better than I found it.

Does your family have a role in the success you have attained throughout your career?

The best one can expect while working is the support of his family. Absence of such support means that one has a bigger burden to shoulder before even facing work related challenges. Raising a family that does not understand how a day at work looks like is already a red flag. Therefore, having a family that understands the nature of my work and that supports me towards achieving success at the work place has played a very big role towards making me the leader I am. A comfortable



head at home, a comfortable head at the work place.

What are your future aspirations?

I just aspire to retire a happy person and to a peaceful environment.

What is your advice to young police officers?

I implore on junior officers to embrace discipline as it is the backbone of serving in the police service. I also encourage them to work hard, remain resilient and embrace continuous training whenever opportunities arise. Knowledge attained during trainings is not only vital for career growth but also for personal development. Needless to say, it is a brilliant move to save a portion of one's earnings and to invest wisely. And finally, remember that when all is said and done, you have a family to go to. Take care of that family now, and it will take care of you in future.



MOBILE PHONE THEFT MENACE

By Judy Wambaire, MPRSK

For many people in the contemporary landscape, the loss of a mobile phone is akin to losing one's mobility. This sentiment largely stems from the presumed role of a mobile phone as the primary instrument for rapid communication by myriad business professionals, in most households and within educational as well as corporate establishments.

In the recent past, considerable number of Kenyans have fallen prey to thieves and muggers employing various methods to deprive them of the possession of this vital instrument of communication. This vice is normally executed by the criminals along the busy streets, amidst the cramped spaces of public matatus, under the deceptive cover of the night in bustling clubs, or even from safe confines of parked private cars.

Unfortunately for the victims of the unbecoming trend and law enforcers

seeking to catch up with thieves, advanced technologies enable offenders to bypass tracking systems by changing the security features unique for every gadget.

An ingeniously engineered software is employed to append an alphanumeric character to the International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI), utterly obfuscating the phone's traceability even as it operates under various Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) cards. It's disheartening to hear that stolen mobile devices are being sold in the country to unsuspecting citizens in the guise of ex-UK mobile phones.

With distressing regularity, those aggrieved by theft make their way to Telkom, Safaricom and Airtel centers, forming lines in pursuit of SIM replacement and the necessary purchase of new phones, all in an effort to restore some semblance of normalcy.

Light at The End of the Tunnel

But detectives from the Directorate of Criminal Investigations are relentlessly working round the clock to curb this menace. Just as the saying goes, "You can run but never hide", there is great hope that their efforts will greatly curtail the vice. Sadly, few are times when the actual perpetrators of thievery are caught, leaving handlers found in possession in the hands of law enforcers to suffer the consequences of the unforgiving law.

Cybercrime detectives based at the DCI National Forensic Laboratory are in the process of acquiring the much needed technological software that is able to reverse to default altered IMEI numbers, thereby putting away phone thieves and saving victims from recurrent expenditures incurred when purchasing new phones whenever they are affected.

Equally, the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO), African Union Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL) and INTERPOL are developing Stolen Electronic Devices (RSED) database that will enable the capture of any blacklisted mobile phone and its location whether in Kenya or across the border.

In the strategies already in place, the NCB (National Criminal Bureau) housed within the Mazingira Complex has come up with a "Mobile Electronic Devices Theft Modus Operandi" which involves Telcos across the region sharing data on blacklisted stolen phones, utilization of INTERPOL Policing Capabilities in alerting and requesting for information from fellow law enforcers about the rise in phone theft and enhanced information-sharing regarding phone thefts. In the arrangement, each member country is required to maintain a database and share information on reported stolen electronic devices.

As a result, DCI's Crime Research & Intelligence Bureau (CRIB) detectives based at the Nairobi Regional Command have cast their nets wider for suspects in what is believed to be an elaborate syndicate sneaking stolen mobile phones to neighboring countries.



A residential house at Kingston slums in Lunga Lunga Nairobi with sixty six cartons of mobile phones

The success of the strategies in place is already evident as Kenyans in the recent past have been frequently greeted by headlines on various mainstream and social media platforms about the successful recovery of mobile phones by the authorities.

In many scenarios, most stolen phones end up in the hands of accomplices posing as phone repairers, who seek market for stolen phones or use them as spare parts. These ready market encourage phone snatchers to advance their criminal undertakings, but the consequences are dire for those who unluckily slide in the hook.

The increasing outcry by members of the public to have this menace addressed once and for all have triggered an all-out operation across Nairobi region, with stealth crackdowns being conducted on various phone repair shops. The recent measures have seen hundreds of stolen phones recovered and dozens of culprits apprehended. The wake has also seen several genuine operators affected as they are put to task to account for every item seized from their shops. The process, though long and frustrating, is necessary until the bad potatoes are ejected from the good sacks.

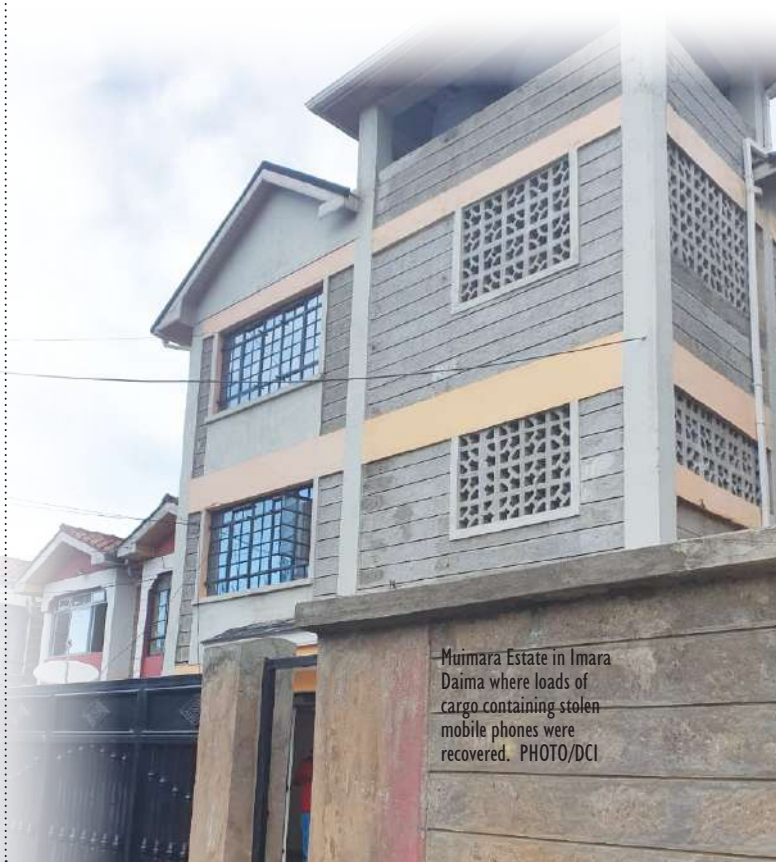
Several areas where successful crackdowns have been conducted include Nyeri where a 32-year-old man was in November, 2023 ambushed with over 417 suspected stolen phones believed to be stolen from shoppers in Gatitu, Nyeri. The incident followed closely another in Eldoret where detectives through well-coordinated effort successfully raided several electronic shops resulting in the

recovery of 56 mobile phones, 45 TV sets and 41 laptops from a shop located at Petresha Building.

In Nairobi, dozens of phone repair shops and electronics retail stalls have been searched and numerous recoveries made. Suspects arrested in the crackdowns include both Kenyans and non-citizens, an indication of just how elaborate the criminal ring is. In one instance, two Ugandan nationals were intercepted in Nairobi CBD with 13 secondhand smartphones while boarding for Uganda at the Simba Coach bus station. In April 2020, over Sh120 million worth of mobile phones were confiscated at African Cargo within the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) while on transit to Rolling Cargo Ltd warehouse in Eastleigh. Four suspects believed to be dealing with the suspicious cargo were arrested.

Take Home for the Public

The DCI calls for heightened vigilance amongst the Kenyan populace regarding communal protection measures. Kenyans are advised to avoid purchasing mobile phones from unauthorized dealers. It is crucial to obtain a receipt after any purchase, in order to protect oneself from any potential criminal liability. As for the perpetrators, their only option is to renounce their life of crime or suffer the immediate consequences of their actions. Otherwise, the frequent security operations targeting mobile phone thieves coupled with the state-of-the-art technology being deployed by the Kenyan cybercrime detectives at the DCI National Forensic Laboratory are a sure match for the felonious rings.



Muimara Estate in Imara Daima where loads of cargo containing stolen mobile phones were recovered. PHOTO/DCI

QUEST FOR GLORY:

DCI Volleyball Queens Aim for the Podium

By Edwin Kipkorir



DCI Volleyball queens psyching up before their playoff games at the Kasarani Indoor Arena on October 4, 2023. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR

In their 6th year in the Kenya Volleyball Federation Women National League, the DCI volleyball women team is aiming for nothing but the podium.

For four consecutive years, the team finished 4th in the national rankings after brave battles during playoffs with the country's top teams. They will be looking to break the curse this season with their eyes on the ultimate prize.

During the most recent playoffs staged at Kasarani Indoor Arena in October 2023, the girls bagged a painful 4th position missing the podium by a whisker. Consequently, for the first time, four players were selected into the National Women's Team, Malkia Strikers.

The four earned their rightful spots into the team after a spectacular display of their

talent that captured the attention of the volleyball world. The four; Mercy Iminza, Jemimah Siang'u, Caroline Sirengo and Sarah Namisi joined the rest of the team to fly the Kenyan flag in the concluded African Volleyball Confederation (CAVB) Continental Cup and the CAVB Africa Women's Nation's Cup.

Nation's Cup: Eyes on the Price

Hard-hitter Jemmimah Siang'u

Famously known by her alias "Magereza", Jemmimah Siangu hails from the outskirts of Trans Nzoia County. Born in October 1998, Magereza developed her love for the sport during her high school days at Soweto High School after joining form 1 in 2014.

Just like her role model, the dazzling Brazilian Gabriela Braga or Gabi, Magereza is happy as an outside hitter, a position she is mesmerizing to watch. On bad days, she struggles with her defense but rectifies almost immediately when she attacks from the back court.

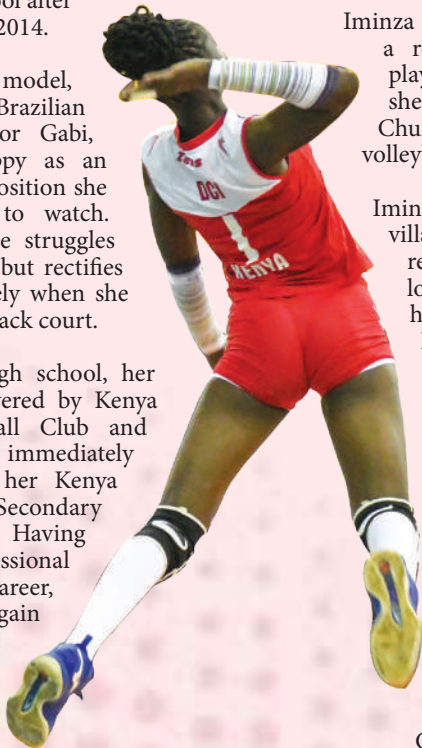
While still in high school, her talent was discovered by Kenya Pipeline Volleyball Club and she was recruited immediately after sitting for her Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination. Having ignited her professional volleyball career, Magereza was again spotted by Kenya Commercial Bank where she joined in 2019 and later recruited into the DCI team in 2022.

The 25-year-old celebrated her maiden call up into the national team in 2018 and has since secured the same position rocking her favourite jersey number #18.

Despite looking forward to bagging several medals, Magereza explains that her love for the sport is what keeps her going. "It keeps me healthy," she says with a smile.

By just being a volleyball enthusiast, Magereza has represented the country in Cameroon, Morocco, France, Brazil and Egypt.

"My goal is to play in the Paris 2024 Olympics" she voices. "But despite that, I want to be a role model to other young girls who love the game of volleyball" she adds.



Youngster Mercy Iminza

Many who know Mercy Iminza would agree that she loves to keep for herself. For the first time in her volleyball career, Mercy Iminza was called up to the National Team in 2023. This was a deserved call following the growth in her volleyball journey since she began playing in 2014 at Khaweli Primary School within Bungoma County when she was in Class 8.

Iminza acknowledges Melissa Vargas, a renowned Turkish volleyball player as her role model. Equally, she admires the skills of Sharon Chumba, a prominent Kenyan volleyball player.

Iminza was born in 2002 in a small village in Bungoma County. She recalls how she developed her love for volleyball, taking after her dad's footsteps. Shaban Likhayo, the dad, is a former volleyball player whom she used to accompany to local open tournaments within the area.

Having learnt the basics, the Kenyan opposite hitter joined Lugulu Girls High School where she was called to represent Kenya in the Under-16 team at the 2018 Africa Cup of Nations tournament in Uganda and at Africa Under-20 Championship held in Kenya.

In December 2023, Iminza featured in the CAVB Continental Cup Qualifiers Beach Volleyball where Kenya bagged the 2nd place behind Egypt.

"My desire is to play in the International Stage of Club Championship" expresses Iminza. "I wish to continue with what my dad started and achieve more than he expected."

Best attacker Sarah Namisi

At only 21 years old, Sarah Namisi was named the league's best attacker for the 2022 season after her heroic showdown during the playoffs at Kasarani Indoor Arena. She has since been on the watch list of the National Team and in 2023, she earned the highly coveted call to represent the country.

Namisi's love for volleyball began in 2016 while at Kesogon Secondary School. The Bungoma County native began her professional career with the Kenya Commercial Bank in 2021 but left the bankers to join DCI in 2022.

Despite shining in the 2022 and 2023 volleyball league, she still believes she has a lot to learn. "I need to concentrate more on my reception and my attacking accuracy," says Namisi.

As she aims to feature even more in the international stage for Kenya, Namisi believes age is in her favour to achieve her goals in the game.

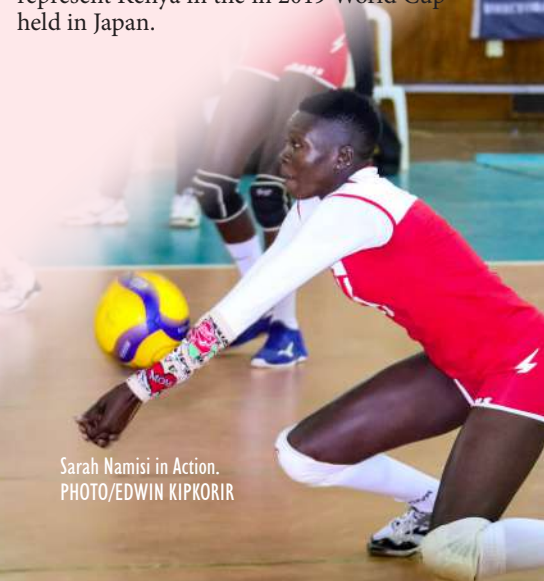
"I look forward to gaining more exposure working under Coach Daniel Bor and achieving trophies with the help of my teammates."

Namisi has received high praise from Coach Bor. "She is still a young player and with raw talent. She is one of the best attackers in the country and she can only get better."

Sensational Caroline Sirengo

In 2017, Caroline Sirengo received her major call up into the National Team. Her devotion into the game has ensured multiple other call ups since then. Her first feature in the national team was in the Under-19 Africa Championship in Egypt which was subsequently followed by Under-23 World Championship in Slovenia.

Having impressed the coaches, Sirengo then carried the Kenyan flag in 2019 at the All Africa Games in Morocco. Her major highlight was rounded up by a call to represent Kenya in the 2019 World Cup held in Japan.



Sarah Namisi in Action.
PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR



Sirengo thanks her high school coach who first introduced her into the sport in 2013 at Mautuma High School, shaping her into who she is now.

The 6 inch middle blocker rates highly KCB's Edith Wiswa drawing her inspiration from her.

"Being called into the National Team was a dream come true for me. Although I have other volleyball goals, the most burning one is winning the title with DCI," she says

They would later meet the defending champions KCB in what was a total showdown of resilience. The sleuths left everything on the pitch but fell short to the bankers in a four set thriller.

The second leg saw the sleuths being granted a three set walkover against Vihiga County when the opponents failed to turn up. A match against Kenya Army was also rescheduled to a later date.

Dubbed the "Serikali Derby", the DCI Queens will face Kenya Defense Forces and the Nairobi Prisons in their third leg after which only 8 teams will proceed to the next round of the National League.

The Team Manager Inspector Neddy Kilimo affirms that the team has been focusing on its weaknesses and looks forward to putting an unrelenting fight for this year's championship.

2024 League

With the four talents backing up Coach Bor's charge for the title, the DCI Queens look promising. The quest which began in January 2024 has seen DCI clinching two wins and losing to the defending champions KCB.

In the first leg of the regular season in Mosoriot, Coach Bor's girls began their campaign against Maranatha with a commanding win. The girls stamped their presence by securing three quick sets scoring 25-10, 25-9 and 25-15.



Coach Bor believes that it is time to rise from the comfort of being 4th position.

"We have been in the league for a substantial time now and we have gained the much needed experience. Our desire to clinch the title has now multiplied and we are hopeful that we will rise to the occasion," ascertains Coach Daniel Bor.

From left; DCI's National Team players Mercy Iminza, Caroline Sirengo, Jemmimah Siang'u and Sarah Namisi. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR

Tribute to Coach Daniel Bor

The Directorate of Criminal Investigations is mourning the death of the DCI's volleyball head coach Daniel Bor who lost his life on March 30, 2024 while undergoing promotional course at Magadi Field Campus.

Bor was a hardworking and self-driven officer who performed his duties outstandingly and got along well with colleagues from across all cadres. His dedication as the coach led the DCI Volleyball team to winning 4 consecutive Mwalimu Julius Nyerere titles earning him the best coach in each one of them.

He also led the team into 4th position in the Kenya Volleyball Federation National League for four consecutive seasons. His dream of winning the Kenyan title was cut short by the cruelty of death.

With much gratitude, his legacy of decorating the DCI Trophy Cabinet will live on for the days to come. Coach Bor will be remembered for his humility on and off the field.

The cruel hand of death has robbed the Directorate a dedicated and gifted officer whose services will be greatly missed especially by the DCI volleyball family and his colleagues.





DCI Athletes Shine at the 2024 National Police Service Cross Country Championships

By Edwin Kipkorir

Robert Kiprop and Virginia Nyambura led the medal harvest for the DCI athletics team raising the Directorate's flag high in the 2024 National Police Service Cross Country Championship.

The event which was staged at the city's famous Ngong Race Course would witness some of the world's biggest names in athletics clash under the scorching sun of Kenya's capital.

14 teams across the National Police Service assembled their best athletes in a bid to challenge for the top spot. DCI's head coach, Chief Inspector Esther Maina, a veteran in the discipline and

with over a decade of experience, led the team to what would be a statement performance by the detectives.

In their signature grey tracksuits, the detectives matched to the rhythm of the police band during a colourful opening ceremony that was presided over by the Deputy Inspector General-Kenya Police Service, Mr Douglas Kanja. Flanking him and leading the DCI delegation was the Deputy Director DCI Mr John Onyango, SAIG.

With ideal temperatures for a cross-country battle, the athletes were let loose to hunt for medals. Every team looked promising. The women's 10km cross-

country was first on line. The event saw 84 participants across all the teams, 6 of whom represented the directorate in a battle of the greats.

World Cross Country Champion Beatrice Chebet representing the Eastern Region athletics team displayed her prowess proving her unmatched stamina and resilience by taking the highly coveted first position.

The Doha 2015 IAAF Steeplechase champion Virginia Nyambura crossed the finish line in 5th position after threatening the highest podium for most part of the race.



National Police Service athletes in action during the Men's 10 km Cross-Country Championship event held at Ngong Race Course on January 19, 2024. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR

The Rio 2016 Olympic champion and 4-time world champion in both 5000m and the 10000m Vivian Cheruiyot made her much awaited comeback after a long injury absence by finishing 8th to ensure two top ten slots for the detectives.

The other team members finished in the 16th, 18th, 41st and 47th positions respectively cementing a magnificent second place behind the Eastern Region team in the event.

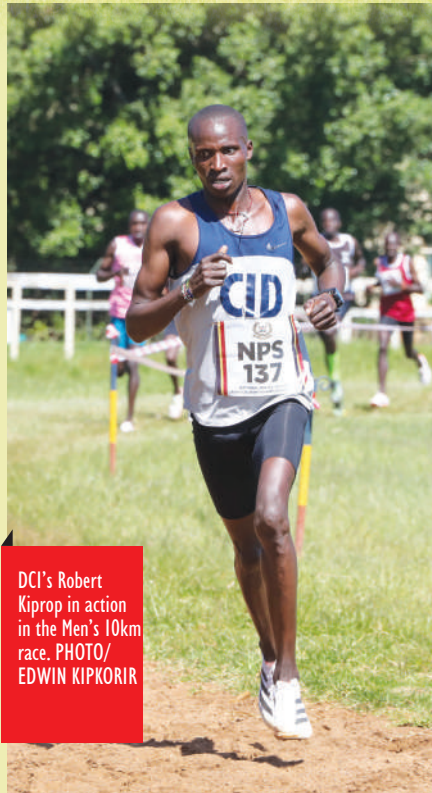
In the Men's 10km event, DCI bagged the third spot behind Rift Valley Region and the General Service Unit who dominated the race to take the 1st and 2nd position.

World Silver Medalist in the 10,000m Daniel Simiu Ebenyo stamped his authority in the most fashioned way when he stormed the race right from the start to the finish clocking 29 minutes and 48 seconds.

The 2019 African Games Gold medalist Robert Kiprop scooped a brave bronze medal for DCI behind Edwin Kiplagat of the Administration Police. Just like in the women's 10km event, his counterpart Lenkai Olenkanai left everything on the field when he sprinted to the finish line to earn a narrow 8th position ensuring two top-ten finishes.

The event which featured 96 participants saw the other athletes flagging the DCI colours finishing in 14th, 16th, 27th, and 47th positions respectively.

To culminate the day was an entertaining 4 by 2km mixed relay. Fan favourites 800m World Champion Mary Moraa and the 3000m Steeplechase World Record holder Beatrice Chepkoech featured in this spectacular relay.



DCI's Robert Kiprop in action in the Men's 10km race. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR



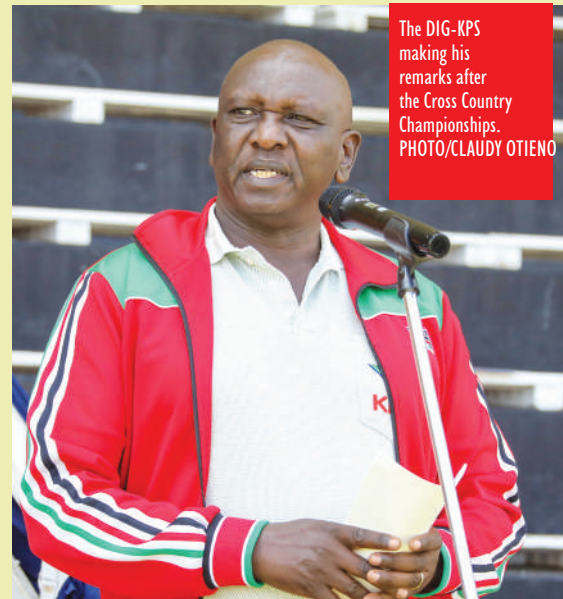
The Deputy Director DCI Mr. John Onyango awards DCI's Robert Kiprop who finished 3rd in the Men's 10km event. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR



NPS athletes battling for top positions. PHOTO/CLAUDY OTIENO

CI Maina assembled a strong team that battled out to a hard earned 4th place missing the podium narrowly.

Consequently, the team managed to feature four athletes in the overall pick to represent the National Police Service at the National and International level. The four, Virginia Nyambura, Vivian Cheruiyot, Robert Kiprop and Lenkai Olenkanai will fly the DCI flag after managing to secure the highly coveted calling into the NPS line up. Additionally, CI Esther Maina was also selected to the technical staff of the formed up team.



The DIG-KPS making his remarks after the Cross Country Championships. PHOTO/CLAUDY OTIENO



Start of the women's 10km race. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR



Virginia Nyambura(043) battling with the leading batch in the women's 10km race. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR



Virginia Nyambura is awarded for attaining the 5th position. PHOTO/ELIJAH GAKUYA



Vivian Cheruiyot sprinting to the finish line to secure 8th position. PHOTO/ELIJAH GAKUYA



The Nyahururu based trainer Virginia Nyambura expressed her joy having earned the calling saying that this will motivate her to train much harder as the 2024 season begins to unfold.

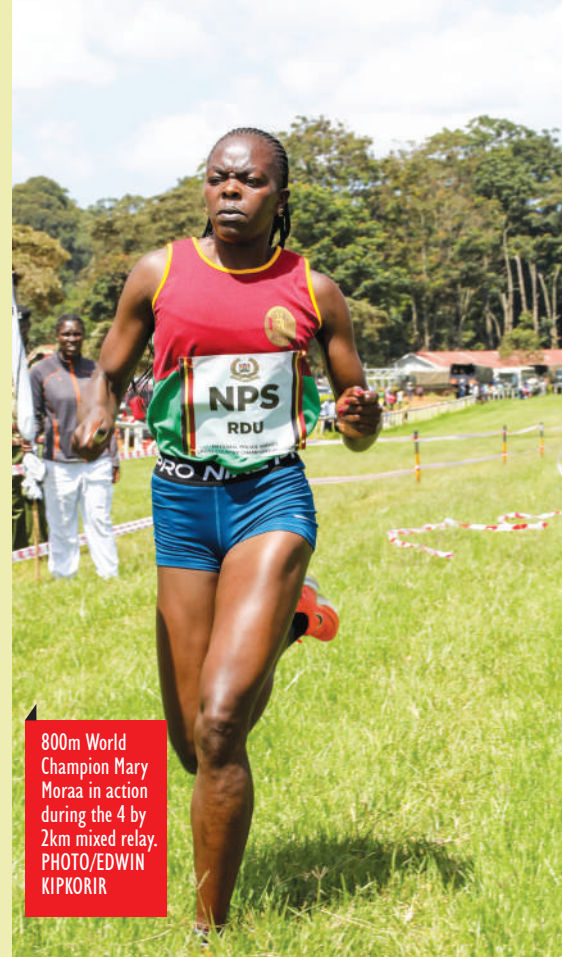
"I am happy with the results. I have been training hard for this and certainly I understand where I need to improve on. My finish was not that strong and I know I can do better," she expressed.

While watching the actions unfold, the crowds were treated to an incredible "zangalewa dance" by the famous National Police Service sport enthusiast "Maina". His unique dances and comedy

would crack a smile on your face if not dropping you down on the floor with laughter.

Witnessing the action at the Ngong Racecourse, the Director Personnel-DCI Mr Francis Ndiema urged the team to gear up for a promising season of athletics saying that this was just but the first of many wins to come.

As they embark on training, it is clear that the detectives are a team to watch come NPS track and field Championship to be held on the 11th & 12th of May 2024 at Nyayo Stadium.



800m World Champion Mary Moraa in action during the 4 by 2km mixed relay. PHOTO/EDWIN KIPKORIR



DIRECTORATE OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

PUBLIC ADVISORY

As the leading investigative agency in the country, the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) strives to ensure that world class services are offered to victims of crime and injustices.

That's why proactive approaches to crime prevention are our go for, with determination to quell all manner of crime and uncover the shady deals of the underworld.

We do not stop at the unlikely point where our clients (Victims) feel dissatisfied with the service offered by any of our detectives or other members of the National Police Service. The DCI headquarters is home to the Directorate of Public Complaints, which ensures that any concern regarding mishandling, unprofessional conduct and police inaction is escalated by any member of the public for further assistance and administrative action against those found culpable.

Formed in the year 2001, the Directorate is charged with the following mandate:

- ▶ To receive and record all complaints made at DCI Headquarters and advice on the appropriate action to be taken
- ▶ Receive and investigate complaints against police made at DCI Headquarters as directed by the DCI
- ▶ Liaising with the office of the Inspector General of Police, Internal Affairs Unit, Office of the Director of Public Prosecution, Independent Policing Oversight Authority, Ombudsman, Regional Counties, Counties and other police units on matters of complaints against police
- ▶ Perusing files and advising the DCI through the Legal Directorate on all files forwarded to DCI Headquarters on issues concerning complaints against police
- ▶ Writing referral letters of complaints to respective Regional Criminal Investigations Officers, counties, sub-counties and other sections within DCI Headquarters for action
- ▶ Dealing with all complaints and conflicts of interests reported against police officers
- ▶ Give feedback to members of the public on the progress of investigation of complaints and the outcome once investigations are completed, among others.

The Directorate of Public Complaints has continued to stamp its visibility in the security space by fast-tracking cases reported from all fronts, to ensure that the human face of the DCI does not wrinkle. Do not get frustrated while pursuing your genuine case. There is always another door to knock for help. Knock at ours and experience a free and fair service that is subject to the confines of the law.

To report your complaint

1. Address your letter to Director DCI, P.O. BOX 30036-00100 Nairobi and send it via courier services or drop by hand at the DCI security registry, Block A 1st Floor,
2. Send an email via complaints@cid.go.ke
3. Or call the Fichua kwa DCI hotline 0800 722 203 for guidance.

CONTACT US



dcieditor@cid.go.ke



@DCI_Kenya



Directorate of Criminal
Investigations - DCI



HOTLINE
0800722203



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