

Karua and Gideon > Their parties are supporting President's re-election

Uhuru's campaign dilemma over allies

It remains to be seen how he balances campaign-ing for Jubilee candidates and those of pro-Jubilee parties

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President Uhuru Kenyatta will be walking a tight rope as he embarks on his re-election campaign in Baringo and Kirinyaga counties.

This is because Mr Kenyatta will be torn between campaigning for his Jubilee Party candidates or choosing to remain neutral in order not to antagonise the leaders of two parties which have openly endorsed his re-election.

In Kirinyaga, President Kenyatta will be torn between campaigning for the Jubilee candidate for the gubernatorial seat, former Devolution Cabinet Secretary Anne Wajungu or remaining neutral lest he antagonises Narc-Kenya leader Martha Karua who is seeking the same seat on her party's ticket.

The same dilemma awaits President Kenyatta in Baringo County where Kannu national chairman Gideon Moi is defending his Senate seat against political newcomer, Mr Shimon Chelugel, a close ally of Deputy President William Ruto. Kannu, like Narc-Kenya, has also endorsed President Kenyatta's re-election even though Mr Moi does not see eye to eye with DP Ruto.

In Kirinyaga, matters are further complicated for President Kenyatta given the new found rapport between the Mr Ruto and Ms Wajungu.

The dilemma is not with the President, it's with my opponent Gideon Moi. A man who says he supports the President but doesn't have time for the Deputy President" Mr Chelugel

Last Wednesday, Mr Ruto hosted Ms Wajungu and a delegation from the county at his offices in Karen, Nairobi, during which he declared that he would support her campaign in Kirinyaga where she is facing off with Ms Karua and the incumbent, Joseph Ntathi who ditched Jubilee Party to run as an Independent candidate.

During the Narc-Kenya National Delegates Conference in Nairobi, Mr Kenyatta pledged to have the party as part of the government if he is elected.

Unlike other counties in Central region where the choice is overwhelmingly for the Jubilee candidate, Mr Kenyatta may be compelled to state his stand in Kirinyaga.

But party strategists opined to *Sunday Nation* that the President may opt to only campaign for himself and ask the voters to make their own choice for other seats.

While campaigning in the county in 2013, Mr Kenyatta called on voters to reject all smaller parties and



JEFF ANGOYE / NATION
President Uhuru Kenyatta is received by Narc-Kenya leader Martha Karua on arrival for the Party's National Delegates Convention where they endorsed his re-election bid in Nairobi. Ms Karua is seeking Kirinyaga governor's seat.

vote for his The National Alliance (TNA) party. The message was clearly targeted at Ms Karua who was also running for the Presidency on a Narc-Kenya ticket.

This time the President has embraced several parties and the jury is out on how he will handle his campaign in regions where Jubilee-friendly parties have a foothold.

Ms Wajungu is not perturbed by Narc-Kenya's support for the President.

"Let's be clear. Various parties including Narc-Kenya endorsed Uhuru candidature for President. This should not be misconstrued to mean that the President has endorsed any other candidates other than those who are of his party where he himself is the chairman which is Jubilee Party," she said.

She however feels that in the end, the President will campaign for candidates of his party.

"The President is obligated by the principles that govern his party and those of democracy to drum up support for his party candidates. Anything short of this would weaken his ability to govern when elected as he needs foot-soldiers who subscribe to his manifesto both in the Legislature and at the county level. And the only foot soldiers guaranteed are those from his party," she said.

In Baringo, President Kenyatta might confront a similar dilemma.

Speaking at the Kannu National Delegates Conference that endorsed his re-election, President Kenyatta promised to incorporate the party in government if he wins on August 8.

Mr Chelugel himself does not see it that way.

"The dilemma is not with the President, it's with my opponent Gideon Moi. A man who says he supports the President but doesn't have time for the Deputy President. How can you vote for the President but not vote for Deputy President? It's not only a dilemma but one wonders which world he lives in," said Mr Chelugel.

He says Baringo being a Jubilee zone, residents expect the candidates to campaign for Jubilee candidates.

Kannu has no governor candidate in the county and has also fielded only 2 out of six candidates for parliamentary seats.

Aga Khan Academy graduates get Sh526m in scholarships



LABAN WALLOGA / NATION
Muslima Niyoznamadova of Aga Khan Academy in Mombasa is all smiles after she graduated.

BY WINNIE ATIENO
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There was joy at the Aga Khan Academy in Mombasa yesterday when 83 students were offered Sh526 million in financial aid and scholarships.

The students among them eight from Tajikistan graduated with International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma at the institution.

Parents, relatives, teachers and fellow students joined the graduates to celebrate the achievements.

Ms Holland said the IB Diploma prioritises skills that are essential for success in higher education and in the increasingly diverse workplace.

She added: "Critical and creative thinking, self-management skills, inter-cultural understanding and the ability to work under pressure are all developed through the programme."

Ms Zoya Mohsin who won the female Award of Excellence will be attending Cornell University.

The award is given to students with highest grades; involvement, leadership, community and service.

"I plan to contribute to environmental conservation efforts within the continent after gaining necessary knowledge and skills at university," she said during the ceremony.

According to University counsellors at the Academy, Adnan Wistran and Samantha Caras emphasis within the IB provided holistic learning experience, academics, sports, community service, personal development and engagement with the arts.

"It also develops our students into young leaders who think critically. They are both locally and internationally minded and seek to leave a positive impact on their communities," they said.

Court stops bank from demanding for Sh31m from former executive

BY BENSON WAMBUGU
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After 13 years fighting an acrimonious court battle to stop Co-operative Bank of Kenya from demanding a refund of Sh31 million in unpaid taxes, the former managing director Erastus Mureithi can now breathe a sign of relief.

He was let off the hook by three appellate judges Martha Kooome, Patrick Kiage and Sankale ole Kantai after they overturned a High Court ruling directing him to refund the lump sum allegedly paid on his behalf to Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA).

"Mr Mureithi did not owe any tax obligations to KRA by the time he left the bank," said the judges in a unanimous decision on May 12.

High Court judge Jonathan Havelock had in April 2013 ordered Mr Mureithi to pay Sh11.2 million together with accruing interest of 14 per cent per annum from 2003 when bank lodged the suit. Until last week, the payout stood at Sh31 million.

The bank alleged it paid the money to KRA on behalf of the former OI Kalou MP when he served as the bank's chief executive between 1998 and 2001. Aggrieved by the ruling, Mr Mureithi moved to the appellate



court and successfully argued that the amount demanded from him by the bank was not existent.

Mr Mureithi (above) argued that under the terms of employment, he was entitled to all his benefits at no cost to himself, including the taxes.

He argued that the bank, having admitted that it failed to carry out its statutory mandate to make the deductions, could not pass the responsibility to him.

Through his lawyer Mburthi Gathenji, Mr Mureithi maintained that the bank processed and paid his terminal dues without raising any issue or caution about any pending tax liability.

"The evidence tendered was suggestive of the payment having been part of a set-off against a larger tax credit that the bank was entitled to from KRA. But

this is not backed by any communication from the bank and the taxman," observed the judges.

The judges also noted the records as presented before them, had inconsistent totals and Sh11.2 million, which did not appear anywhere in the correspondence between the bank and KRA.

"In the absence of concrete evidence we think, the High Court judge had no proper or any basis upon which to accept the attempt to 'squeeze' something from Mr Mureithi," said the judges.

According to the bank, Mr Mureithi was required to pay tax from his monthly benefits and allowances, but he made the lender to meet the obligations by virtue of his position as chief executive.

The bank's former head of finance Mr Lawrence Karissa said in court that the lender would cater for all medical expenses for Mr Mureithi's wife and four children aged below 18 and pay for their education expenses.

Mr Karissa further testified the tax accrued at Sh2.9 million and Sh10 million insurance premiums with a Sh3.2 million tax. The tax payable on the education fees for his children from 1998 to 2000 was computed by KRA as Sh4.6 million.