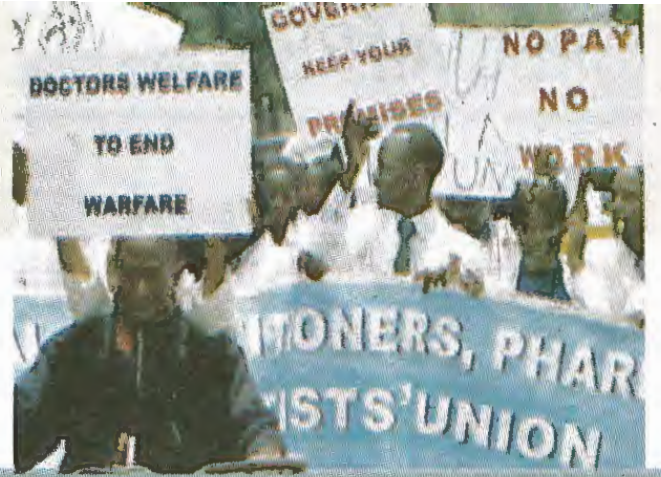


Daily Monitor

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Striking Kenya medics ordered to resume duty. President Uhuru Kenyatta on Tuesday ordered the striking Kenya medics to resume duty immediately or face dire consequences. President Kenyatta said the government had lost patience with the slow pace of talks to end the doctors' strike. A visibly irritated president Kenyatta took a short break from the ongoing devolution conference in Naivasha (about 90km west of Nairobi) to address the job boycott that was in its 94th day. [Africa Review]



Burundi MPs to face disciplinary action for snubbing EALA in Kigali

Differences. Five of Burundi's nine Eala MPs in January said they would skip the plenary in the Rwandan capital due to political differences between the two neighbours.

BY ZEPHANIA UBWANI
Monitor Correspondent

RWANDA. Burundi's fall out with Rwanda has escalated to the regional legislative assembly with Burundian MPs boycotting sittings in Kigali over "safety concerns".

Five of Burundi's nine representatives in the Assembly had in January said they would skip the plenary in the Rwandan capital due to political differences between the two neighbours.

But while staying clear of discussing the sour relations with Bujumbura, president Paul Kagame said his country's political will for regional integration was "stronger than ever before".

He was speaking during the opening session of Eala on Monday which started amid conspicuous absence of the Burundian legislators, all of whom are members of the ruling party.

Eala Speaker Daniel Kidega, speaking for the first time on the matter, told reporters in Kigali that he was "not aware if the said MPs are on their way to Kigali or not".

"... If the Burundi MPs do not show up at all, the Assembly may consider measures to take for what he said would be considered as absenteeism."

DANIEL KIDEGA, EALA SPEAKER

He said that although his office was aware of the security concerns raised



In charge. East African Legislative Assembly speaker Daniel Kidega. FILE PHOTO

by the legislators, the regional Parliament would strictly adhere to the laid down procedures in conducting its business which includes the issue on quorum.

"The current session is fully constituted because we have a minimum of three members from each partner state to continue with the business," he said, adding that if the Burundi MPs do not show up at all, the Assembly may consider measures to

take for what he said would be considered as absenteeism.

Protest boycott

The five Burundi legislators are Ms Emerence Bucumi, Ms Isabelle Ndahayo, Mr Jean Marie Muhirwa, Emmanuel Nengo and Leonce Ndarubagiye.

The Eala 5th Plenary Session is taking place in Kigali from March 5-17.

ISSUES AT HAND

Political differences. Five of Burundi's nine representatives in the Assembly had in January said they would skip the plenary in the Rwandan capital due to political differences between the two neighbours.

Unaware. Eala Speaker Daniel Kidega, speaking for the first time on the matter, told reporters in Kigali that he was "not aware if the said MPs are on their way to Kigali or not".

Accusation. Burundi accuses Rwanda of backing groups keen on overthrowing president Pierre Nkurunziza. Rwanda has repeatedly denied the claims.

Last month, three of the five MPs accused the EAC of sidelining Burundi, with the Secretariat, its institutions and organs not holding activities in Bujumbura since the start of the political turmoil in April 2015. They then said that they would boycott Eala sittings in Kigali in protest.

However, analysts say the move to skip the Assembly was catalysed by the deteriorating relationship between Bujumbura and Kigali. Burundi accuses Rwanda of backing groups keen on overthrowing president Pierre Nkurunziza. Rwanda has repeatedly denied the claims.

Sources at Eala say the five Burundi MPs had wanted the sessions, currently ongoing in Kigali, be relocated to Arusha, the EAC headquarters.

But a Tanzanian Eala lawmaker, Charles Makongoro Nyerere, said a special committee that had been set up to investigate the claims by the Burundians that their lives could be threatened in Kigali found no evidence to support the assertions.

Uhuru Kenyatta, Trump discuss trade, terrorism

BY AFRICA REVIEW

KENYA. President Donald Trump spoke on Tuesday with president Uhuru Kenyatta, with the White House saying that the US leader sought to "reaffirm the strong bilateral relationship between our two countries."

The telephone conversation also focused on "economic partnership and mutual dedication to overcoming terrorism and other regional security challenges through close cooperation," a statement from White House added.

"President Trump expressed appreciation for Kenya's significant contributions to the African Union Mission in Somalia and recognized Kenyan troops' sacrifices in the fight against Al-Shabaab," the statement said.

Mr Trump spoke last month with the presidents of Nigeria and South Africa.

Those choices as the US president's first direct contact with sub-Saharan leaders caused a well-placed source in Washington to suggest at the time that "a failure of Kenyan diplomacy" accounted for Mr Trump's omission of Mr Kenyatta from his initial Africa call list.

"Nigeria and South Africa have been working this for some time," said the source who is knowledgeable about the Trump administration's efforts to formulate Africa policy. "They've been in contact."



Discussed. President Uhuru Kenyatta

briefly

Stolen money to be returned

KENYA. More than \$3.7 million that was stashed abroad would be returned to Kenya in a deal signed by the government and the UK. The two countries signed an agreement on March 3 paving the way for the return of the money. The agreement is the latest step taken by both governments to secure the return of the funds, which were confiscated by the Royal Court of Jersey in February 2016. This is after defendant company Windward Trading Limited, associated with former Kenya Power boss Samuel Gichuru, pleaded guilty to four counts of laundering the proceeds of corruption. [The East African]

S. Sudan general forms rebel group, vows to topple Kiir

BY DENIS DUMO
Monitor Correspondent

SOUTH SUDAN. A disaffected South Sudanese army general who quit his position last month announced on Monday that he had formed a new anti-government rebel group, underscoring mounting resistance to the rule of incumbent President Salva Kiir.

Lieutenant General Thomas Cirilo Swaka, formerly deputy head of logistics, resigned after he accused Kiir of turning the country's military into a "tribal army."

The military, police and other security branches, he said, heavily recruited from among the Dinka, Kiir's tribe.

Swaka was one of the three top military officials who quit in February amid accusations of tribalism, nepotism, corruption and other abuses levelled against Kiir's government.

In a statement on Monday, Swaka said his new rebel group, The National Salvation Front (NSF) "is convinced that to restore sanity and normalcy in our country, Kiir must go; he must vacate office."

NSF would "fight to eradicate the malady that has badly tarnished the image of South Sudan," he said.

Oil producing South Sudan, Africa's youngest nation, was plunged

into its first war in 2013 after Kiir sacked his then deputy and political rival, Riek Machar.

An ensuing two-year conflict was ended by a peace pact in 2015 and Machar, who had left the capital Juba at the start of the war, returned in April last year and was handed the same position.

Festering tensions between the two men, who hail from rival tribes, exploded into military confrontation again in Juba in July, kicking off the latest wave of fighting that has spread to several parts of the country since.

Gen Swaka

Swaka was one of the three top military officials who quit in February amid accusations of tribalism, nepotism, corruption and other abuses levelled against president Kiir's government.