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JUNE 2024

KENYA

LIVE UPDATES: 'REJECT FINANCE BILL' PROTESTS ACROSS MAJOR TOWNS

People have come out in large numbers from different cities and towns to participate in the anti-Finance Bill protests.

IN SUMMARY

- A contingent of police officers has been deployed in various key government installations such as the State House.
- Police were also spotted in various streets of the Nairobi Central Business district and major towns across the country.

A section of Kenyans has taken to the streets of various towns in the country to protest against the Finance Bill 2024. A contingent of police officers has been deployed in various key government installations such as the State House. Police were also spotted in various streets of the Nairobi Central Business district and major towns across the country.

PROTECTED AREAS

PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Several key roads leading to Parliament buildings have been closed off by security officers. Parliament Road and City Hall Way, among others, have been shut down to vehicular traffic and pedestrian access as security measures intensify. Police water cannons and lorries have been used as barricades at key roundabouts leading to parliament. Access to the area has been fully restricted and only open to authorized personnel upon proper identification.

STATE HOUSE

Red-beret elite Reece squad of GSU with dozens of armoured police tankers were Tuesday morning parked outside State House, Nairobi main Gate A -ahead of the demos. A section of protesters hand hinted at marching to the State House.

MAJOR CITIES AND TOWNS WHERE DEMOS ARE TAKING PLACE:

- Nairobi
- Mombasa
- Nakuru
- Kisumu
- Eldoret
- Nyeri

- Kisii
- Taita Taveta
- Turkana
- Nyamira
- Narok
- Marsabit
- Migori
- Uasin Gishu
- Laikipia
- Homa Bay
- Nyandarua
- Kwale
- Bungoma
- Tana River
- Murang'a
- Makueni
- Trans Nzoia
- Thika

MAJOR TOWNS

NAIROBI

Running battles have ensued in Nairobi Central Business District after police dispersed anti-finance bill protesters. A crowd of protesters had gathered to demonstrate against the Finance Bill 2024 when chaos erupted.

Police hurled teargas canisters at the protesters who were armed with water and mobile phones to express their stand against the Bill. Crowds had gathered as early as 7 am around the Kenya National Archives. Most shops are closed as protests gain momentum.

ELDORET

Youths in Eldoret on Tuesday gathered in various areas ahead of the planned protests. Riot police have taken positions in Eldoret where youth have begun gathering for the Finance Bill protests.

Hundreds of police officers have been deployed on the streets ahead of the demos.

The Uasin Gishu county government headquarters is among the key installations where security has been beefed up.

MOMBASA

Thousands of young protesters have taken to the streets of Mombasa's central business district to demonstrate against the Finance Bill 2024.

Dressed mostly in black and carrying anti-government placards, the demonstrators came from all six sub-counties of Mombasa: Kisauni, Nyali, Chagamwe, Jomvu, Likoni, and Mvita.

Mobilization for the protest was organized over the weekend via social media platforms.

Protesters from Nyali and Kisauni gathered at Kengeleni along the Mombasa-Malindi highway, while those from Chagamwe and Jomvu met at Saba Saba along Jomo Kenyatta Avenue.

Demonstrators from Mvita and Likoni converged at Mapembeni along Moi Avenue before the protest began on Tuesday.

The demonstrations have disrupted traffic on major roads in Mombasa.

Despite the presence of a few police officers, the protests have continued without interference.

The youth have pledged to vote out President William Ruto and his Members of Parliament if the Finance Bill, currently in its third reading, is passed.

KISUMU

Anti-Finance Bill demonstrators in Kisumu thronged various streets of the City in support of the 'Reject Finance Bill' call. Peaceful protesters stormed the streets of the lakeside city with placards, songs, dances, and chanting anti-President William Ruto slogans.

The youths had gathered at Kondele grounds as early as 9 am where they started moving in groups and eventually began the protests. Businesses in town remained paralyzed, with shops including supermarkets that had been earlier opened hastily closing by 9 am.

Transportation was also severely affected,

MAJOR HAPPENINGS

THIKA ROAD BLOCKED AS ANTI-FINANCE BILL PROTESTS INTENSIFY

Thika Road one of Nairobi's major highways Tuesday was brought to a standstill around noon as thousands of protesters took to the streets to voice their opposition to the Finance Bill 2024.

POLICE FIRED TEAR GAS INTO BUS IN NAIROBI CBD

Police in Nairobi fired tear gas inside a public service vehicle during the protests. Some of the passengers were also seen camping for safety through the windows. Kenyans were

with few vehicles seen stranded on the roads. Police officers monitored the protestors along the streets.

NAKURU

Hundreds of youths have taken to the streets of Nakuru to Protest against the Finance Bill, 2024. The group first gathered at Nakuru Railways Station, the heart of the City, before they marched to the central business district to protest.

The groups were carrying placards and twigs which they waved as they thronged the Kenyatta Avenue chanting anti-Finance Bill protests,

Another group made a peaceful march from Stage 140 in Nakuru Town West in the same style and is set to join their colleagues in Nakuru Town East later in the day.

A contingent of armed police officers were deployed in strategic areas in the youngest city in Kenya and were keenly monitoring the protests.

also seen trying to help the passengers.

KERICHO RESIDENTS PULL DOWN UDA WHEELBARROW SYMBOL

Residents of Kericho have also joined the anti-Finance Bill protest. On Tuesday some of the residents could be seen protesting at a petrol station within the county where they pulled down a UDA wheelbarrow erected next to the petrol station.

They could be heard singing anti-government songs and calling for total rejection of the Finance Bill 2024.

SUPREME COURT STAFF AND LAWYERS HELPING DEMONSTRATORS WITH WATER.

Supreme Court staff and lawyers were seen assisting demonstrators with water as they approached the Parliament. They were seen throwing water bottles to Kenyans on the other side of the gate.

ALL MAJOR ROADS LEADING TO NAIROBI CBD BLOCKED

Police have blocked all major roads leading to the Nairobi Central Business District. No vehicle was allowed in and out of the Nairobi CBD by the time of going to press. Along Waiyaki Way, for instance, the road was closed at the Uthiru area and Uthiru cooperation.

NAIROBI PROTESTERS TAKE A RIDE ON POLICE WATER CANNON

Some Nairobi protesters were seen on top of a police water cannon during the ongoing protest against the Finance Bill 2024.

PROTESTERS APPROACH PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

A fierce clash ensued between protesters and the police after the former made an attempt to access the Parliament buildings. Some of the protesters tried to access parliament from Uhuru Highway but were met by police resistance who fired tear gas at them.

SEVERAL PROTESTERS REPORTEDLY SHOT OUTSIDE PARLIAMENT

The anti-Finance Bill protest took an ugly turn after several protesters were reportedly shot outside Parliament on Tuesday.

The incident happened as the protesters attempted to access the Parliament Buildings on Tuesday. At least three protesters were reportedly shot outside Parliament Buildings as a mob battled police.

POLICE LORRY GOES UP IN FLAMES OUTSIDE PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

A police lorry has gone up in flames outside Parliament Buildings. The incident occurred as demonstrators clashed with police. The demonstrators were protesting against the Finance Bill 2024.

PROTESTERS ENTER INSIDE PARLIAMENT

Anti-Finance Bill protesters in their hundreds finally has entered inside Parliament.

The protesters entered inside Parliament hours after police shot a number of demonstrators outside Parliament Buildings.

The protesters also burned a number of vehicles belonging to the Police as tension escalated outside the country's legislature.

A SECTION OF PARLIAMENT ON FIRE

Protesters have overpowered anti-riot police and entered Parliament buildings and set a section of it on fire.

MPS TAKE COVER AS PROTESTERS STORMED PARLIAMENT.

Anti-Finance Bill protesters in their hundreds on Tuesday afternoon entered inside Parliament.

The protesters entered inside Parliament hours after police shot a number of demonstrators outside Parliament Buildings.

The protesters also burned a number of vehicles belonging to the Police as tension escalated outside the country's legislature.

PROTESTERS VANDALISE, LOOT MP OSCAR SUDI'S ELDORET CLUB

Protestors in Eldoret stormed, vandalized

and looted a club in Eldoret associated with kapseret MP Oscar Sudi. The club known as Timber XO is located along the Eldoret, Nairobi road.

The club was officially opened a few weeks ago during a ceremony attended by Sudi and several other MPs.

HOLY FAMILY BASILICA TEARGASSED, RED CROSS WORKERS TAKE COVER

Police have fired teargas canisters inside the Holy Family Basilica where the Red Cross has pitched a tent to offer emergency treatment to the injured protesters.

Pleas by emergency workers for police not to shoot fell on deaf ears forcing the aid providers to take cover. "Don't shoot, don't shoot, this is Red Cross, please don't shoot," the aid workers shouted.

SECTION OF COUNTY COURT AND VEHICLES TORCHED IN ELDORET

The county court and enforcement offices in Eldoret were on Tuesday torched on Tuesday during the anti-Finance Bill protest.

KENYAN PRESIDENT RUTO WITHDRAWS CONTROVERSIAL FINANCE BILL FOLLOWING DEADLY PROTESTS

JUNE 26, 2024

Kenyan President William Ruto said Wednesday that he will not sign a controversial finance bill, backing down in the face of mass protests that swept the country and reportedly left at least 23 people dead. "Having reflected on the continuing conversation regarding the content of the finance bill 2024, and listening keenly to the people of Kenya who have said loudly that they want nothing to do with this Finance Bill 2024, I concede, and therefore I will not sign the 2024 finance bill," Ruto said during a television address Wednesday.

"The people have spoken," Ruto said. "Following the passage of the bill, the country experienced widespread expression of dissatisfaction with the bill as passed, regrettably resulting in the loss of life, the destruction of property and desecration of constitutional institutions."

Protesters in Kenya say they will go ahead with a "One Million People March" on Thursday despite Ruto accepting their key demand of scrapping the bill. A poster shared widely on

social media calls on all generations to return to the streets across the country on Thursday and block roads leading to the capital Nairobi.

Some protesters have also called for people to occupy the State House in Nairobi.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has spoken with Ruto since the clashes to urge restraint. According to a State Department readout of their call, Blinken "underscored the importance of security forces demonstrating restraint and refraining from violence and encouraged prompt investigations into allegations of human rights abuses."

Kenya, a nation often praised for its stability, had seen escalating protests over the bill, which the government introduced to rein in public debt.

Last week, the government scrapped some tax increases, including a proposed 16% value-added tax on bread along with taxes on

motor vehicles, vegetable oil and mobile money transfers. But the concessions were not enough to quell protests amid the rising cost of living.

On Tuesday they turned deadly when security forces fired teargas and live ammunition at protesters.

Dramatic scenes in the nation's capital Nairobi saw government buildings set on fire and a ceremonial mace stolen from the parliament in the melee. Kenyan lawmakers were evacuated from the parliament as police went up against protesters, CNN affiliate NTV Kenya reported. Ruto's remarks come a day after deadly protests in Kenya.

Source: Stephanie Busari, Lauren Kent, Nimi Princewill and Larry Madowo, CNN

AT LEAST 23 PEOPLE DIED IN THE VIOLENCE, ACCORDING TO KENYA'S POLICE REFORMS WORKING GROUP, (PRWG) A CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION.

The PRWG alleged in a statement published by Amnesty International Kenya that police targeted young, unarmed protesters outside the parliament, with the violence continuing into the night. They added that "reports show police shot several people in Githurai, Nairobi, one over 40 times – between 10 p.m. and 1 a.m., way after the protest ended."

This was in contrast to details given by Ruto, who said in his speech that six people died.

"I send my condolences to the families of those who lost their loved ones in this very unfortunate manner," Ruto added.

"There is need for us as a nation to pick up from here and go into the future," Ruto said, adding that he would hold an engagement with the young people at the forefront of the protests to hear their ideas and proposals.

The Law Society of Kenya is calling for the resignation of Kenya's inspector general of police and the Nairobi regional commander over officers allegedly shooting protesters.

"We saw plainclothes policemen shooting protesters as early as 11 a.m. There was a clear directive to kill protesters," Law Society of Kenya president Faith Odhiambo alleged in an interview with CNN on Wednesday evening. "There was no intent to let the protesters move around."

The Law Society also said the police "abducted" several prominent social media users connected to the protests, and six people remain missing.

"The reports from those who have been freed is that they were taken blindfolded and handcuffed, and they didn't know where they were," she told CNN, after the society secured the release of six people. "Even after they come out, most of them are quite shaken and afraid and want to go into hiding. Our message to the government is that if a country is built on fear, one day people will stop

fearing. And that's what we saw on Tuesday." Ruto's change of heart came as a surprise to some who observed his hardline stance just a day earlier.

During a nationwide address after the parliament was set alight, Ruto said the events on Tuesday were a grave threat to "national security" and that the conversation around the bill had been "hijacked by dangerous people."

Kenyan analyst Herman Manyora said withdrawing the bill much earlier could have saved the lives lost on Tuesday.

"His announcement should have come earlier. He has done today what he should have done two days ago to avoid what we went through yesterday. It pains me that we had to wait ... for us to do what we should have done on Monday ... and that's a general feeling among people," Manyora told CNN.

Source: Catherine Nicholls, CNN

UGANDA

MINISTER KABANDA URGES PARENTS TO ENROL THEIR CHILDREN TO PRESIDENT MUSEVENI'S FREE SKILLING INITIATIVE

THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2024

Mulago Skilling Centre located at UEB Village in Mulago Parish was yesterday a beehive of activity as a multitude of parents and well-wishers flocked the Community Hall to see for the first time the handwork of their children who have undergone a six-months skilling course in different disciplines.

The centre which is under the Presidential Initiative on Skilling the Girl and Boy Child (PISGBC) offers 11 disciplines are offered which include carpentry, welding, construction, plumbing, electrical installation, electronics, tailoring, embroidery, knitting, hairdressing, shoe making and the recycling of used tyres.

The Minister of Kampala City and Metropolitan Affairs, Hajjat Minsa Kabanda who was the Chief Guest thanked the Special Presidential Assistant on Education and Skilling and Head of PISGBC program, Dr. Faith Katana and her team for Skilling the youths under the support of the State House.

The Minister said she was extremely thrilled by products showcased, citing embroidery whose items are expensive in the open market as opposed to prices offered by the youths which are pocket friendly.

"I wish to recommend that everyone, especially politicians, should come and witness what is taking place here and at all the Skilling centres," she said.

Hajjat Kabanda urged parents to send their children for skilling to benefit from the free knowledge offered and eventually obtain a recognized certificate from the Directorate of Industrial Training.

The Minister also advised students to put into use the knowledge received and also to form SACCOs to enable them access startup capital.

She encouraged all Ugandans to embrace Government programs such as the Parish Development Model (PDM), Emyooga and others.

The State Minister for Housing, Hon. Persis Namuganza expressed her gratitude to see young girls and boys make beautiful products after only six months of Skilling.

She was particularly impressed by the quality of products from the construction department, welding and hairdressing.

"I am highly impressed, especially by the housing and design section. This is the Ministry I am serving. In fact, they design everything right from the washrooms, that is what I want, I feel that every Ugandan should have a home like that-very well organised," she observed.

The Minister thanked President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni for the project, adding that it is the way to go if the country is to unlock the potential of the youths.

Hon. Namuganza further commended students for being good learners and also pledged to lobby support for them.

The Kampala Resident City Commissioner (RCC), Ms. Aminah Lukanga advised beneficiaries to maintain discipline, practise what they have learnt and never to slide back to evil ways.

The Special Presidential Assistant on Education and Skilling and Head of the PISGBC program, Dr. Faith Katana described Mulago Skilling Centre as a special one as it has a large catchment area of Kalerwe, Katanga, Kamwokya, Bwaise, and Mulago that harboured the most notorious criminals in the city.

"You even feared looking into their eyes when they first came here. After counselling, they discovered their potential and are now transformed and they have become the best," she commented.

Dr. Katana further praised the counsellors and Instructors for the job well done.

She in a special way thanked God for being at the centre of the skilling project and also appreciated Fr. Angelo the Parish Priest of Mulago Catholic Church for the facility used for skilling the youth. The Administrator of Mulago Skilling Centre, Ms. Wanyama Juliet reported that out of the 790 children enrolled, 641 are to sit their final exams.

Mr. Godfrey Kayizzi who has been an LC1 leader since 1987 of UEB Village in Mulago 2 Parish expressed his appreciation to President Yoweri Museveni for the project affirming that peace is now prevailing in his area as cases of criminality have drastically reduced.

Another resident and a parent who was equally elated was Ms. Olivia Nantongo Nalongo. She was overjoyed to see the beautiful dresses and other items her daughter Nassanga Ida was making after only six months skilling in the tailoring classes.

Source: www.mediacentre.go.ug

RWANDA

RWANDA'S ECONOMY GREW 9.7% IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2024

THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 2024

Rwanda's economy grew by 9.7 per cent in the first quarter of 2024, largely buoyed by a strong rebound in strong performance of the agricultural sector.

The outlook is contained in the latest gross domestic product (GDP) update announced on Wednesday by the National Institute of Statistics (NISR), and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.

While Rwanda's services sector remains a key contributor to the country's [economic growth](#), increasing by 10 per cent in the first quarter alone, the agricultural performance has been on a downward trend in the previous two years. This is mainly attributed to effects such as climate change, and other factors related to geopolitical crises.

However, in the first quarter alone, the agricultural sector increased by 7 per cent contributing a total of 25 per cent to the overall GDP.

The Minister of Finance and Economic Planning Yusuf Murangwa addresses journalists as Ivan Murenzi, the Director General of National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda looks on during the presentation of a report

According to the latest report, in the first quarter of 2024, current market prices were estimated at Rwf4,486 billion, up from Rwf3,904 billion in the same period of 2023.

Yusuf Murangwa, the Minister of Finance maintained that Rwanda's economy is projected to continue its upward trend, with the projection of 6.6 per cent growth in 2024 following a growth of 8.2 per cent realised in 2023.

"This growth is expected to be driven by a strong performance in the service and industrial sectors, alongside the recovery of the agriculture sector," Murangwa told reporters.

"The overall performance of agriculture was 8 per cent. Within agriculture, Food crop production increased by 8 percent, mainly due to agriculture production season A of 2024," he said.

The export crop production saw no growth, remaining stagnant at 0 percent. Within export crops, the production of coffee decreased by 13 percent, and tea harvests increased by 21 percent.

MINING BOOSTS INDUSTRY PERFORMANCE

According to the latest figures, the overall growth of the industry was 10 percent.

The growth is attributed to good performance of mining and quarrying which increased by 22 percent, construction activities which increased by 16 percent, while manufacturing activities increased by 4 percent.

The growth in manufacturing was boosted by a 12 percent increase in the manufacturing of metal products, machinery, and equipment.

The Minister of Finance and Economic Planning Yusuf Murangwa addresses journalists during the presentation of a report on Wednesday

The manufacturing of wood and paper printing increased by 25 percent while the manufacturing of non-metallic minerals increased by 9 per cent.

"We continue to be optimistic about the growth in the economy, but there are also risks such as climate change and geopolitical crises that lead us to a conservatory approach," Murangwa said reacting to this year's projections.

Statistics indicate that private final consumption was 73 percent of GDP, while government consumption was 15 percent, and gross capital formation at 36 percent.

Also increased is the total final consumption expenditure by 23 percent, exports increased by 50 percent, imports increased by 123 percent, and gross capital formation increased by 77 percent.

Source: www.newtimesrwanda.com

DEADLY CRUSH AT RALLY AS RWANDA ELECTION CAMPAIGN STARTS

24 JUNE 2024

Mr Kagame lauched his campaign for a fourth term over the weekend

One person has died and dozens were injured during a crush at an election rally for Rwanda's President Paul Kagame, officials say.

Campaigning for July's general election began on Saturday, with Mr Kagame holding two rallies in northern Rwanda over the weekend.

The crush happened on Sunday in Rubavu district, where 37 people were injured, four of whom were hospitalised with serious injuries, a statement from the ministry of local government said.

It apologised to the deceased's family, adding that a medical team on site "did everything possible".

Mr Kagame is running for a fourth term. He has been the country's de facto leader since 1994, when his then rebel group, the Rwanda Patriotic Front, seized power at the end of the genocide directed at members of his Tutsi ethnic group.

He won the last presidential election in 2017 with nearly 99% of the vote.

The 66-year-old president has faced criticism from rights groups for cracking down on the opposition - but he has fiercely defended Rwanda's record on human rights, saying his country respects political freedoms.

After Sunday's stampede, the ministry of local government reminded "those participating in campaign activities... to follow the instructions given by those in charge to ensure the safety and tranquillity of those participating in campaign activities".

On Monday morning, Mr Kagame's RPF-Inkotanyi party said it was "deeply saddened" and sent its condolences to the deceased's family.

"The RPF-Inkotanyi organisation will continue to... closely monitor those injured in the crush," it said in a statement published on social media.

Earlier, the party posted a video on Facebook of Mr Kagame taking the stage at the rally. Crowds of supporters, decked out in party colours, can be seen dancing, cheering, and waving flags. Some 250,000 people were in attendance, the party said.

Mr Kagame will face two other politicians - Frank Habineza of the Democratic Green Party and independent Philippe Mpayimana - in the race to become president.

Diane Rwigara, an outspoken critic of Mr Kagame, was barred from standing in next month's presidential election.

The electoral commission said Ms Rwigara had failed to provide the correct documentation to show she had no criminal record and had not shown she had enough support nationwide to stand.

Ms Rwigara, who was also disqualified from the 2017 poll, dismissed these reasons, saying she had been "cheated" out of her "right to campaign".

Rwandans will head to the polls on 15 July to elect their next president and lawmakers.

Source: [www. BBC News](http://www.bbc.com/news)

TANZANIA

PARLIAMENT APPROVES GOVERNMENT BUDGET FOR THE 2024/25 FISCAL YEAR

JUNE 26, 2024,

THE PARLIAMENT OF TANZANIA HAS APPROVED THE GOVERNMENT BUDGET OF TZS 49.35 TRILLION FOR THE 2024/2025 FISCAL YEAR.

In concluding the budget discussion government responded to several queries which were raised by member of the public and parliamentarians. Among the issues discussed includes the proposed Sh. 382 levy on the compressed natural gas used on vehicles, traders' complaints, and local contractors' participation in government contracts, loans, and government spending.

Speaking about the Sh. 382 levies on gas, a proposal that many MPs complained would hinder the transition to the use of gas. The government committed that people's proposals on the matter would be taken into account. Government also committed to ensure more of its vehicles are using compressed natural gas.

The government also committed to undertake measures to cut expenditures, especially on purchasing new vehicles, and use the money on development projects including building gas stations in Dodoma and Morogoro.

Explaining how local contractors will benefit from this budget, the Minister of Construction, Innocent Bashungwa, said that in the 2024/2025 fiscal year, 120 kilometers of road have been allocated for local contractors, with 20 kilometers specifically set aside for women local contractors.

Bashungwa elaborated that local contractors have constructed 102 kilometers of roads over the past 11 years, from 2012 to 2023. It was also noted that cumulatively on all construction projects in the country, local contractors receive about 40 percent of the revenues in the sector while working on 96 percent of the project.

To curb some of these issues, in the financial year 2024/25 government has increased the threshold for projects that must go to local contractors from the initial 10 billion to now 50 billion.

The budget was passed with 362 votes out of 381 present in Parliament, there were no votes against it, and 18 abstained.

LHRC says 2024/25 budget fails to address citizen development

While the government states its priority is focusing on an inclusive economy, the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) has claimed that the 2024/25 budget does not address the needs of the citizens.

Speaking to the press, June 26, 2024, in Dar es Salaam, the Director of Advocacy and Reforms at LHRC, Lawyer Fulgence Massawe, said that the budget is heavily focused on regular government expenditures, which do not impact the ordinary citizen.

“Seventy percent of this budget is allocated for regular expenditures, which do not affect the common citizen. Only 30 percent is directed toward development projects. This indicates that we should not expect significant development or new projects, as our budget is primarily for regular expenditures, including salaries and debts,” he said.

He cited these regular expenditures as including luxury cars and the top officials of the country spending most of their time in Dar es Salaam rather than Dodoma, leading to double expenses for the government.

Additionally, the LHRC went further to point out that there is a need to reconsider the size of the government, citing the example of the Deputy Prime Minister’s position and ministries having a minister, deputy minister, permanent secretary, and deputy permanent secretary.

“There are many ministries, and having all these leaders increases costs. If we look at our budget, it often has a deficit that does not affect regular expenditures but rather development projects,” he said.

TANZANIA TRADERS’ STRIKE EXPANDS TO NINE REGIONS NOW

The trader’s strike that began on June 24, 2024, at the famous Kariakoo Market in Dar es Salaam, has now spread to nine other regions in the country, including Mbeya, Dodoma, Mwanza, Geita, Njombe, Mtwara, Songwe, Iringa, and Arusha.

The traders highlighted several complaints mostly related to the Tanzania tax system. This situation indicates that the meeting held on June 24, 2024, between the leaders of these traders and the government has not borne fruit, despite the government stating that it has addressed their demands and outlined six agreed-upon points.

Some of the agreements the government stated include that, starting July 1, 2024, the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) will review the new documentation system to ensure that traders receive accurate assessments regarding the receipt and invoice system.

It was also mentioned that the TRA will suspend its operations known as “kamata kamata” (crackdowns) until this procedure is completed to establish a better system for revenue collection, particularly concerning the availability of documentation.

The leaders of the business association had a meeting with the Prime Minister. Addressing some of the concerns raised by traders during the conclusion of the budget discussion, the Minister of

Finance, Mwigulu Nchemba said the government is with the traders and that there is no need to argue.

Nchemba explained that the government has already taken into consideration some of the trader's queries especially those related to operations. He explained on tax cut especially VAT its is not possible due to already set government planning and burden of ongoing projects.

Regulations for 10% loans to be completed by June 30

The government has announced that the preparations for the regulations on the provision of the 10% council loans for youth, women, and people with disabilities will be completed by June 30, 2024. By July 10, 2024, experts will visit each constituency to provide training and education on the issuance of these loans.

This was revealed by the Minister of State, President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government (TAMISEMI), Mohamed Mchengerwa, in Parliament in Dodoma, June 26, 2024, while responding to MPs' contributions regarding the government's 2024/2025 budget.

"I would like to inform this esteemed Parliament and Tanzanians that by June 30, 2024, the preparations for the loan issuance regulations will be completed, and by July 10, 2024, experts will visit each constituency to provide training and education on the issuance of these loans," he said.

Mchengerwa said that currently, the government has remaining funds of 307 billion Tanzanian Shillings for these loans, with an expected allocation of 101.5 billion Tanzanian Shillings for the fiscal year 2024/2025.

On April 13, 2023, concluding the budget debate for his office for the fiscal year 2023/24, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa announced the suspension of the 10% loans provided by councils until further notice.

This decision stemmed from a report by the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) in the 2021/2022 annual report, citing significant mismanagement in the issuance and repayment of these loans.

Source: www.chanzo.com

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