

COUNTY ASSEMBLY

HANSARD REPORT

Wednesday, 1st March 2023

The House met at 2.30PM

*[The Speaker,
(Hon. (Mr.) Edin Wario) in the Chair]*

PRAYERS

(Quorum bell is rung)

(Honourable Members steady walking into the Chamber)

QUESTION AND STATEMENT

QUESTION BY HON IBRAHIM ISACK, MCA MOYALE TOWNSHIP WARD

Hon Josephine Leado: Hon. Speaker, as we are all aware, access for timely and efficient Emergency medical services is critical in saving lives, especially in Emergencies such as accidents and sudden illness.

To begin with, it is important for this Assembly to note that health is a devolved function and therefore, the County Government has the responsibility to ensure health facilities are adequately equipped and staffed, to provide quality health services to the residents of the County.

The Department of Health, in line with the budget allocated for should cater for ambulance services which included fuelling of the vehicle, ambulance maintenance, and payment of medical staff and drivers accompanying the patient.

However, it has come my attention that most of the residents in our County are being charged exorbitant fees for ambulance services and charges for medical staff accompanying the sick, which should be catered for by the County Government as indicated in the budget estimates approved by this Assembly.

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I wish to enquire the following from the chairperson of Health committee to provide the details on the following issues -

How was Kenya shilling thirty million (30,000,000) allocated to the department for Emergency services utilised? Kindly give the breakdown of the funds as per the past four years.

Give proof of payments, with vouchers paid to the staff for the entire period of four years.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you Hon. Joseph for the Statement on behalf of Hon. Ibrahim Issack.

Hon. Members, the Statement is before you and I am giving you some few minutes if you could make some inputs so that we can proceed. Honourable Tura!

Hon Tura Ruru Elema: Mr Speaker, it is good for us to know how these thirty million shillings was used. My only concern is question two, seeking the proof of payments with vouchers paid to the staff for the entire period of four years.

My worry is, I don't know how long the committee will peruse through these vouchers...voluminous vouchers which will be brought here...perusing through is my concern which will take another year.

(Hon Halkano Konso stood in his place)

(Two members stood in their places)

Hon Bernard Leakono (Majority Leader): Mr Speaker, it's true that it's a constitutional right to get health. I don't know the number of ambulances which are working now. We need to investigate to establish the number of ambulances working. I am certain of Laisamis as sub-county which has only one ambulance which is serviced and fuelled by world vision. All the rest are not working. Therefore, there is no ambulance run by Marsabit County which is working in Laisamis Sub County.

In addition to the questions asked by the Honourable Ibrahim Isaac in his Statement, I also want to inquire from the department, the Insurance for these ambulances because it has come to my attention that most ambulances have just stickers printed and glued on the ambulances.

It means somebody is eating the insurance funds and using the stickers on the ambulances. So those capturing should also include number of ambulances of each sub -county and those working in Marsabit County.

On the issue of vouchers, Members have the right to peruse, if they want it. The Member for North-Horr, therefore, should not be concerned, but instead wait for the answer from the department. Unfortunately, many Members today are working as Executives and giving answers. I don't know whether they are paid to come and do this but this is unfortunate! Thank you.

Hon. Tura Ruru Elema: The other question is, is it sustainable to provide free ambulances? That is a question that needs to be asked. Free things are dangerous and very expensive and that is why people are so concerned about this.

(Several members stood in their places)

Mr. Speaker protect me! The other thing is that we are not auditors in this Assembly. We are doing oversight and not Auditing...

(Hon. Halkano Konso interjects)

(Hon. Tura interjects)

Hon Tura Ruru Elema: Mr. Speaker, please protect me!

The Speaker (Hon. Edin Dida): Order Hon. Tura!

Hon Halkano Konso Ali: Let me finish my Statement Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker...

(Hon. Leakono interjects)

Hon. Bernard Leakono (Majority Leader): Mr. Speaker it is very sad and unparliamentary for a Member who served here as a Majority Leader to say that we are sharing the Chamber with wrong people. He needs to apologize and withdraw that statement.

Hon Halkano Konso Ali: Mr. Speaker to apologize is not a criminal offence. I regret and apologize.

(Applause)

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Secondly, according to my understanding, it is very unfortunate that someone just stands up and claims that we are not auditors! We are doing an oversight role which is fully supported by the Constitution of Kenya. So, interrogating and even investigating this involves Auditing. I am a forensic Auditor by profession Mr. Speaker. May be he does not know that. I have over fifteen years of experience in the line of Finance and as Head of Procurement Mr. Speaker.

In 2013, during the appraisal of procurement process in the Country, I became number one and was taken from Mandera to Nyeri which was the home yard of the President. For the purpose of record I can produce the certificate here for the members to confirm.

Having said this let no one mistake us for doing our role as per the constitution. Thank you very much Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Josephine Leado: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Besides utilization of the thirty million allocated for Health, my question is why charging exorbitant fee to the poor families in Marsabit County? Who has given the Authority that they be highly charged? If there is an officer who is responsible for ordering an ambulance of ferrying a poor sick child to Nairobi should be charged! Then we have to know.

Thank you.

Hon. Jacob Elisha Godana: Mr. Speaker the challenge of Health Department in Marsabit County is known. This question came at the right time. Besides the question that has been raised, last week we had a lot of problem together with honorable Amos because there was a patient who was referred to Meru. This issue has really frustrated the residents of Marsabit Central Ward. This is the Ward that I represent.

We need these people to come and tell us about what is happening with the ambulances because we are always told that there are ambulances but when you need them, they are asking for fourteen thousand shillings. The last time we had a meeting here with the Public Service Board and the Finance team, we were promised that the CEC will come and has not yet appeared here.

Whenever such questions are raised here, the CECs should come and tell us about what is happening. Thank you.

Hon. Halkano Konso Ali: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also support the Statement. For the purpose of record, there is a statement that has been made about ambulances and the health sector. What the committee has discovered is that we do not have ambulances. We have cars. An ambulance is not just a vehicle. It should have oxygen and many other types of equipment. It is unfortunate that a person in ICU cannot be taken for referral using these ambulances that we have.

We are in 21st century and technology has advanced. The machines that are used today are advanced Mr. Speaker. In Marsabit, it is as if we live in 14th century. This is so unfortunate. It is the prerogative of this House and if I were asked, the money that we are always channeling towards relief should have been used to purchase ambulances that have everything installed according to the standards set up, or equipped the old ones so that we save the lives of our people.

Having said this, we also have another report. I believe that the report that was done by the former committee for health is voluminous, comprehensive, and all-inclusive and I would like to appeal to the Committee for Health through the Chair Hon. Adhi who is here. I am absolutely happy that we have the right technical person and a technocrat for that matter heading the department. I congratulate her. I see the initiatives that she is undertaking every day.

Health is very important. That is why we give out huge amounts of money and precisely 2.8billion KShs every financial year. We want to improve the lives and the livelihoods of our people. It is the prerogative of this House to ensure that the lives of our people are taken into consideration so that they target the best service delivery. I support the statement and would like to call upon the members to look at the issue of that health sector keenly with a lot of concern and interest so that our locals will get the best service.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you.

Thank you. Hon. Tura!

Hon. Tura Ruru Elema: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am happy that for the first time, the former Majority Leader who is serving for the second term has apologized. I have never heard him apologizing.

Secondly, while I don't want to make it a debate, I think they are looking for vouchers so that they can be given to the auditors to audit...

(Applause)

Hon. Speaker: Hon. Members, I request the Committee for Health to bring a comprehensive report to this House within a span of two weeks, thank you.

Next Order!

STATEMENT AND QUESTIONS

STATEMENT AND QUESTION BY HON. HALKANO KONSO ALI, MCA URAN WARD ON MARSABIT COUNTY SCHOLARSHIP FUND BILL

Hon. Halkano Konso Ali: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Marsabit County Assembly Legislated and passed the Marsabit County Scholarship Fund Bill to ease the burden of poor parents at the time their children are admitted to form one. The essence of the Act was to ensure fees payments for bright but poor students who attain the cut point are done through this Act.

Many parents' lives and livelihood will be changed for the better as their children benefit from the scholarship fund, where students are enrolled and excel in their academic career lives.

To this end, I wish to request for a response from the Chairperson Education, Skills Development Youth and Sport Committee on;

The list of beneficiaries of the Marsabit Scholarship as per Ward with the lists of schools the beneficiaries are admitted to and the marks attained by each beneficiary, and further attach the schools the beneficiary sat their K.C.P.E for that year;

What are the criteria used to compile the list of the beneficiaries?;

Why were the children of the well-off families given opportunity over the children of peasant farmers?

Provide the list of the students who benefited but did not attain the cut point, and give reasons as to why such cases were given considerations?

Having said this, we enacted this Act in the year 2018 after it was moved by the former Member for Sagante/Jaldesa Ward. This Scholarship has helped our people and it is paramount for us to utilize these funds as per the Act. It is shameful for the House that enacted the law and is in breach of the same law!

We will be on record, history will judge as harshly, if the son of a well known person is awarded a scholarship at the expense of a poor peasant, a son of an orphan, single mothers, it is so inhumane! I want to call upon this House particularly the Committee on Education to investigate and report to this House without biasness, and any form of political witch hunt and ensure service delivery to *Wananchi* thank you.

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Hon. Bernard Leakono (Majority Leader): Thank you Mr. Speaker. It is true there is scholarship awarded to those who completed Class 8 and attained the required marks as put in the Act. It is very unfortunate that-the Act states very clearly; that students who do well and from poor background. I would like to add the following;

The department should provide list of applicants per Ward;

There are Committees at the Ward and County level- Who approves these Committees and the List of beneficiaries from private schools, because the Act states clearly that beneficiary students must be from public schools. Thank you.

Hon. Adhi Bino: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I support the Statement by Hon. Halkano, the point of concern apart from giving us the beneficiaries list, at the moment the 300 is the cut-off points for the girls and 320 for the boys, as we all know Marsabit County poverty index is highly compounded by the recent drought. This Bill should be amended instead of putting the cut-off points at 300/320 it should put it at 250. At the Ward level the Ward Administrators do not give the correct list. In future this Bill should be amended. Thank you.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Members for your contributions to the Statement by Hon. Halkano. I refer the Statement to the Chairperson, Education, Skills Development, Youth and Sports Committee, Hon. Josephine Leado; we need a comprehensive report in two weeks time so that we understand the issue on scholarship fund. Next Order!

Thank you, having no any other business the House stands adjourned until Thursday 2.30pm.

(The Assembly rose at 3:15PM)