

## Rewarded for deep sea fishing

Local deep sea fishermen display their catch during the 2016 Lamu County Deep Sea Fishing competition. The event was meant to encourage local fishermen to venture further into the ocean to boost their chances of bigger, more profitable catch.

[PHOTO: MAARUFU MOHAMED/STANDARD]



LAMU

## Protracted land dispute now goes to Ombudsman

By PATRICK BEJA

Villagers in Lamu have taken a long-standing land tussle to the office of the Ombudsman, citing delays in concluding the matter by other State agencies.

The Commission on Administrative Justice (Ombudsman) wrote to residents of Siyu Village in Pate, Lamu East sub-county, through Abubakar Dumila, a crusader and spokesman on land rights, on December 6 confirming receipt of their complaints.

For the last four years, Mr Dumila, Mohamed Shee and Swidiq Ali have been leading a campaign to have 1,283 title deeds for land measuring 2,520 hectares cancelled, claiming it mainly benefited influential people.

The crusaders have since taken the matter to the Lamu provincial administration, county government and the National Land Commission (NLC) but say there has been no clear direction as they were being taken round in circles.

"We are in the process of reviewing your complaint for admissibility and shall get in touch with you to update you on any developments," said the Ombudsman.

Dumila had petitioned the Ombudsman over the delayed response to complaints of irregular allocations of alleged ancestral land to powerful individuals and failure by Government agencies to act on recommendations by a parliamentary committee that visited the village in 2012.

The residents said they were ag-

"We had expected that the commission would cancel title deeds where residents have cited cases of fraudulent land allocations,"

-Abubakar Dumila, land rights crusader

grieved by the lack of action from NLC, which once promised to visit the village and settle the tussle.

According to Dumila, a meeting with NLC officials at KPA Hall in Lamu town on March 7 resolved that the commission would visit the disputed land on March 24, but it did not.

"We had expected that the commission would cancel title deeds at both the Siyu and Pate settlement schemes where residents have cited cases of fraudulent land allocations," Dumila argued.

He said Parliament's Committee on Land and Natural Resources chaired by Mbeere South MP Mutava Musyimi sat in Siyu on July 23, 2012, and filed a report in Parliament, with recommendations, in November 2012. But these are yet to acted on by relevant State agencies.

Dumila noted that the county's Department of Land at one time requested for a caveat to be placed on the disputed land pending determination of the matter but nothing happened.

## Family that died in fire buried in mass grave

KILIFI

By STANDARD CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of mourners yesterday attended the burial of a 58-year-old widow and her five grandchildren who died in a house fire.

The family from Challani village in Kaloleni constituency died after the house they were sleeping in was razed last week.

The bodies of Sidi Mweni, Baraka Kalume, 8, Furaha Tsofa, 6, one-and-a-half-year-old twins Pauline Charo and Nancy Charo and Ibra Mweni also aged one and half were buried in a mass grave.

Religious leaders accused the county government of abandoning widows. The county's pastors' fellowship co-ordinator Jembe Lewa asked the county government to create a department to look after the needs of widows.

Rev Lewa said the victim widow was staying in a non-conducive environment that may have led to the tragedy.

"The widow did not deserve to sleep in that house where she perished. Some things can be avoided if the community and government come together to look into the needs of widows. If this is not solved, we will always make the same mistake," said Lewa.

# Fishermen affected by SGR to be compensated

MOMBASA

By PHILIP MWAKIO

Fishermen ejected from their traditional fishing grounds to make way for the construction of the Standard Gauge Railway will be compensated this week.

Kenya Railways (KR) Managing Director Atanas Maina asked the more than 1,700 fishermen and their families, who were identified as Project Affected Persons (PAPs), to check their bank accounts this week after deposits were made last week.

Governor Hassan Joho has spearheaded calls for their compensation.

"We have finalised the payments and hopefully the money will be reflected in their accounts starting today," Mr Maina told The Standard.

Some Sh215 million will be paid to the fishermen as compensation.

"Direct compensation entails cash payments while indirect compensation entails support of modern fishing equipment and capacity-building training," he said.

The MD said Kenya Railways undertook a Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) on the development of SGR.

He said KR was putting up a railway terminal and marshalling yard at DK0 near the second KPA container

### AREAS AFFECTED

• Kenya Railways Managing Director Atanas Maina said more than 1,700 fishermen and their families were affected by the Standard Gauge Railway project

• The affected areas are Kitanga Juu, Ngare, Mkupe, Guya, Mwadumbo, Mwangala, Mtongwe, Likoni and Timbwani

• Some Sh215 million will be paid to the fishermen as compensation

• Governor Hassan Joho spearheaded calls for compensation

terminal that would necessitate the relocation of the fishing community and affect some fish breeding areas and disrupt fishing patterns.

"The fisherfolk include all persons who ordinarily derive their livelihood from fishing activities such as fishermen, boat owners, boat/fishing gear repairers, fish traders, food vendors, among others, and who are members of Beach Management Units

(BMUs) as defined by the Fisheries Act," Maina said.

A total of nine BMUs were identified to be affected; some totally while others slightly and marginally. The affected BMUs are Kitanga Juu, Ngare, Mkupe, Guya, Mwadumbo, Mwangala, Mtongwe, Likoni and Timbwani.

### RECOMMEND MEASURES

The Kitanga Juu BMU was totally affected and had to be relocated.

Maina said KR had put in place a joint technical committee to recommend measures that would have minimal or no impact on the fishing community.

Committee members were drawn from KR, the county government, Kenya Maritime Authority and the National Land Commission.

Speaking separately, County Fisheries Executive Anthony Njaramba said the compensation packages varied from individual to individual.

"The packages are not uniform. There are those who got higher amounts than others because a number of factors had to be considered," he said.

He said the county had partnered with the Kenya Commercial Bank Foundation to empower fishermen through acquisition of modern fishing gear.

## Mwakwere welcomed to ODM as race gathers pace

KWALE

By TOBIAS CHANJI

Politicians eyeing the gubernatorial seat on an ODM ticket have welcomed former assistant minister Chirau Mwakwere to the party.

Mr Mwakwere, who is Kenya's high commissioner to Tanzania, met ODM leader Raila Odinga and Mom-

basa Governor Hassan Joho in Nairobi early this month for discussions and returned to Dar es Salaam after presenting his campaign details to the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission.

The former Matuga MP was accompanied to the meeting by former Kinango MP Simon Mkalla who is his presumptive running mate as they seek to unseat Governor Salim Mvurya.

Reports indicate Mwakwere will resign from Government next month to begin his campaigns.

ODM has attracted six aspirants who include Issa Chipera, Kwale Speaker Sammy Ruwa, former Permanent Secretary Mohammed Mwachai, Nicholas Zani, Gereza Dena and Mwakwere. Speaking on behalf of the ODM gubernatorial aspirants at the Kinondo ODM office, Issa Chipera said there will be free and fair nominations and

asked Mwakwere to prepare for stiff competition.

"Those who lose should support the winner and campaign for him to ensure Jubilee does not clinch the seat," he said.

Chipera, who is the Plan International Country Manager in Uganda, was a close ally of governor Mvurya but parted ways after Mvurya ditched ODM.