

### *In the News: Issue 9*

*In the News 9* highlights a selection of social accountability news articles posted to the ANSA-Africa website during the period 30 July - 12 August 2010. This issue covers articles on the themes of governance; anti-corruption; service delivery and extractive industries.

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## 1. Governance

### Why weak MPs must be kicked out

*Daily Monitor*

Kampala: For the past three years, the African Leadership Institute has torched a bright light on the functioning of Parliament. They have rate individual Members of Parliament through [a scorecard](#) uniquely designed to gauge their performance. MPs are assessed on their performance on the floor in plenary, in committee and back home in their constituency.

### Sugar or fine speeches?

*The Independent*

Kampala: While officiating at the launch of the Parliamentary Scorecard 2008-2009 on July 28, Prime Minister Apolo Nsibambi amused attendees. He narrated how a group of wailing people approached him during the Constituent Assembly and asked him for money to transport the body of a relative who had just passed on at Mulago Referral Hospital. "No sooner had I given them the money than the wailing stopped," the PM concluded.

### Nigeria: Legislative irresponsibility

*Next*

Lagos: On Thursday 29th July, the Senate President dissolved the Committee on Communications chaired by Sylvester Anyanwu for telling a lie and bringing the Senate to ridicule. The committee had claimed that they had studiously screened the chair, executive chair and commissioners of the Nigerian Communications Commission and it turned out that they did no such thing. Rather than carry out their legislative functions, they were fabricating stories about their work.

### **Obasanjo slams National Assembly members over allowances**

*This Day*

Lagos: Former president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo slammed members of the National Assembly, saying they constituted a heavy drain on the nation's lean purse. Obasanjo argued that the amount expended in maintaining the lawmakers is a serious burden on the nation's coffers and must be looked into urgently.

### **MPs ask for Shs70m constituency fund**

*Daily Monitor*

Kampala: MPs want to raise their annual constituency package from Shs10 million to at least Shs70 million despite many of them failing to account for what they previously received. The proposed increment appears to have united the MPs in the ruling NRM and the opposition parties. The move came to the limelight yesterday when the Parliamentary Service Commission appeared before the Public Accounts Committee.

### **How MPs plan to avoid taxes after August 27**

*Business Daily Africa*

Nairobi: Kenyans on Tuesday appeared headed for a cocky start to life under the new Constitution following the emergence of deep differences over provisions on the thorny subject of taxation. Ordinary citizens, who have long fought to have their representatives' allowances taxed and had banked on the new laws to realise that goal, may be in for a shock on August 27. People familiar with the ongoings in the government's legal machinery said Attorney General Amos Wako has offered President Kibaki a legal opinion that extends the MPs' enjoyment of tax free allowances beyond the life of the current Constitution.

### **Youth Power: how young newcomers are turning the political tide**

*The Citizen*

Dar es Salaam: A new crop of young leaders gunning for parliamentary seats in this year's general election have revealed how they turned the table on the old guard and have talked about their desire to launch a generational change in politics. Barely in their late 30s, the newcomers surprised many by beating well established and outspoken politicians in the nomination race to inch closer to represent respective political parties in the October 31 elections.

### **Vote for change, Ribadu urges youths**

*Leadership*

Abuja: As the Independent National Electoral Commission plans to review the nation's voters register, Former Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, Mallam Nuhu Ribadu has called on Nigerian youths to fully participate in the exercise and vote against bad leaders in the coming general elections.

### **NRM is a meal ticket, that's why it's at war with itself**

*Daily Monitor*

Kampala: Uganda has just witnessed the election of district leaders for the National Resistance Movement. Boy, was it drama or was it; violence, vote stealing, bribery, name it. The more interesting question to an analyst is why are NRM internal elections getting so mean? One reason is that ideology is no longer a driving force. The NRM has become a meal ticket. It has become a meal ticket because of two types of corruption.

### **Wither Nepad and South Africa?**

*The Witness*

Pietermaritzburg: Few people paid attention to the [African Union \(AU\) summit](#) held in Kampala, Uganda. This is partly because AU summits have lost a lot of the spark they once had in the 2000s. There was a time between 1999 and 2004 when there seemed to be a lot at stake in these annual gatherings of 53 AU member states. The African governance and development machinery seems to have lost the momentum it once had.

### **APRM gets new leadership, Mauritius reviewed, but reporting slackens**

*SAIIA*

Johannesburg: While conflicts in Somalia and Sudan dominated the headlines, governance in Africa also came under discussion on the sidelines of the 15th African Union Summit, held on the shimmering shores of Lake Victoria at the luxurious Munyonyo Resort outside Kampala, Uganda. The African Peer Review Mechanism - Africa's premier home-grown governance and accountability tool - held its thirteenth Summit of the Forum of Participating Heads of State and Government (the APR Forum) on 24 July 2010, just before the Summit proper kicked off.

### **When will Zambia be peer reviewed under the APRM?**

*JCTR*

Lusaka: "Despite the fact that Zambia acceded to the African Peer Review Mechanism in January 2006, we seem to be far from completing the first review (base review). Even when early this year we were assured by the National Governing Council that Zambia will be peer-reviewed in June 2010, June and July have passed without being reviewed.

### **MPs might subpoena Sisulu over report**

*Business Day*

Cape Town: A legal battle between Parliament and Defence Minister Lindiwe Sisulu over two interim reports on morale and service conditions in the South African National Defence Force will reach a decisive moment next week when a decision is made on whether to subpoena Ms Sisulu. At issue is a request from the parliamentary defence committee for Ms Sisulu to supply two interim reports from the Interim National Defence Force Service Commission, which describe military service conditions as a "ticking time bomb" and a potential risk to national security.

## **Civil society statement on Protection of Information Bill**

*SANGONeT*

Cape Town: A responsive and accountable democracy that can meet the basic needs of our people is built upon transparency and the free flow of information. The gains of South Africans' struggle for freedom are threatened by the Protection of Information Bill (the Secrecy Bill) currently before Parliament. We accept the need to replace apartheid-era secrecy legislation. However, this Bill extends the veil of secrecy in a manner reminiscent of that same apartheid past. This Bill fundamentally undermines the struggle for whistleblower protection and access to information.

## **Ominous insight into a wounded ruling party**

*Business Day*

Johannesburg: The [discussion documents](#) the African National Congress has released in advance of next month's national general council offer a window onto the tormented souls of the movement's leadership. The discussion papers are not all bad.

## **Cut number of provinces, keep provincial governments - paper**

*Business Day*

Johannesburg: A strong case exists for reducing the number of provinces in SA, rather than eliminating the provincial government structure altogether, an African National Congress discussion paper says. Titled "[Legislature and Governance - Building a Developmental State](#)", the paper, among seven to be presented to the party's national general council meeting next month, says its findings did not point to a strong argument for abolishing provincial government.

## **Climate change activists want action**

*New Era*

Uganda: The Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance, a network of 210 civil society organisations, has called on African leaders to adopt a resolution to strengthen the continent's science-based approach to the challenge of climate change. The group made the call recently at the 15th African Union Summit in Kampala, Uganda.

## **New police watchdog "still toothless"**

*Business Day*

Johannesburg: Despite claims that new legislation will increase the effectiveness of independent scrutiny of police abuses, a parliamentary researcher has warned that the new investigative directorate will retain the status quo because police will not be compelled to implement its recommendations.

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## 2. Anti-corruption

### **Angola to look into graft allegations**

*Reuters*

Luanda: Angola's ruling party will meet this week to examine a private report accusing members of the president's inner circle of corruption, a spokesman said on Monday. The report, "[The Angolan Presidency - The Epicentre of Corruption](#)", describes how people close to President Jose Eduardo dos Santos have taken control of the economy by securing stakes in firms in sectors ranging from oil to banking.

### **Public procurement law to facilitate probity - MP**

*Angola Press*

Luanda: The new Public Procurement Law, approved in Parliament on Tuesday, will facilitate the implementation of legislation on public probity in the State procurement sector, according to Parliament's opinion report presented by Salomão Xirimambi. The unanimously approved law is also intended to improve the use of public resources and is a contribution to the upgrade of public administration.

### **MPs want Anti-Corruption Commission disbanded**

*The Times of Swaziland*

Lobamba: Members of Parliament yesterday called for the disbandment of the Anti Corruption Commission based on non performance. Hhukwini MP Mkhululi Dlamini said it was clear that the people working at the ACC were on a joyride.

### **Why the anti-graft team must not be disbanded**

*The Times of Swaziland*

Mbabane: The Anti-Corruption Commission has justified its two year stay in office and maintains that it's doing a good job in reducing corruption. The commission's Public Relations Officer, Jabu Phakathi, said as a commission they had already referred four cases to the Director of Public Prosecution's office to be prosecuted and three corruption cases are already in court. She added that the commission's work is solely investigative.

### **Anti-graft agency can investigate state finances, court rules**

*This Day*

Lagos: A major constitutional question was resolved yesterday when Justice Mohammed Idris of the Federal High Court re-affirmed the power of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission to investigate the finances of states with the intent to prosecute corrupt officials.

### **ICPC to probe legislators**

*Next*

Lagos: The Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission is to commence an investigation of National Assembly members over the alleged unapproved allowances they receive, the chairman of the commission, Emmanuel Ayoola, said yesterday at the "Chairman's Guest Forum" held at the commission's auditorium in Abuja.

### **Zuma throws book at cops**

*Times Live*

Johannesburg: President Jacob Zuma has ordered corruption-buster Willie Hofmeyr to investigate fraud or corruption going back five years in the South African Police Service at national and provincial levels. The investigation will cover procurement of equipment and services, "including leased accommodation".

### **Taxpayers urged to fight graft**

*Times Live*

Pietermaritzburg: Corruption and fraud in government was a disease spreading fast, Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan said yesterday. "Fraud and corruption is a serious disease, one that we can't treat with medicines at the moment, regrettably," he told the KwaZulu-Natal legislature. "It is a disease that is spreading quite significantly in South Africa, and one which requires a very strong vaccine, antidote - call it what you will - in order to rectify a very serious issue."

### **We will fight corruption - Yengeni**

*IOL*

Johannesburg: ANC leader Tony Yengeni says the party will be tough on corruption and is emulating the Chinese anti-corruption model used by the Communist Party to clamp down on tender graft.

### **SA inking transparency treaties with tax havens**

*Business Report*

Johannesburg: South Africa is negotiating pacts with six nations viewed as tax havens that will oblige them to share information on offshore investments, MPs heard on Wednesday. Once the treaties are in place, Guernsey, the Cayman Islands, Jersey, Bermuda, the Bahamas and the landlocked enclave of San Marino will have to co-operate with requests from the SA Revenue Service for information on assets held by its nationals.

### **Cabinet to grill GIPF Trustees**

*New Era*

Windhoek: Trustees and management of the Government Institutions Pension Fund are set to appear before Cabinet to explain how N\$600 million, disbursed as loans through the fund's infamous Development Capital Portfolio, was written off as bad loans. New Era has reliably learnt that the powers that be at the GIPF are set to appear before Cabinet for cross-examinations, as pressure piles up on Government to act on what is arguably Namibia's biggest financial scandal to date.

### **Namibia: ACC "spectator" on GIPF**

*New Era*

Windhoek: Anti-Corruption Commission Director, Paulus Noa, has sought legal opinion on investigating the Government Institutions Pension Fund, but was discouraged after the Attorney-General said the ACC would have no legal leg to stand on because the plunder occurred before the agency came into being.

### **PCCB pledges on corruption in politics**

*The Citizen*

Dar es Salaam: The Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau has pledged to curb corruption in politics. This was said yesterday by the organizations' director general, Dr Edward Hoseah, when he was presenting his paper at a forum titled 'challenges facing audit of public authorities and other bodies' held in the city.

### **Okigbo report still missing, says FG**

*This Day*

Lagos: The fate of the late Dr Pius Okigbo-led panel report on the \$12 billion Gulf Oil windfall still remains a mystery. The Federal Government has again stated that the report, which allegedly indicted the regime of former military president, General Ibrahim Babangida, for mismanaging the funds, remains missing.

### **Corruption is a calamity for Cameroon's agriculture and food security - activist**

*AlertNet*

Cameroonians could face serious problems producing and accessing enough food to feed themselves unless the government and its citizens take on corrupt agricultural officials, a prominent campaigner says. Bernard Njonga, the head of a non-governmental organisation that filed a lawsuit last year against a group of agriculture ministry officials for misappropriating funds, said bad governance had stalled initiatives to boost local agricultural production.

### **Burundi must learn that no corrupt government is an island**

*Daily Nation*

Nairobi: The Kenya chapter of Transparency International, the Berlin-based anti-corruption watchdog, has released its annual East African Bribery Index and, to some people's surprise, Burundi has emerged as East Africa's most corrupt country. Burundi most definitely deserves the corruption trophy because it has done something that Uganda, the next most corrupt, and Kenya, which placed third (both countries with a longer history of stealing from the public) have never done - kill a leading anti-corruption crusader.

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## **3. Service delivery**

### **India: Absenteeism rampant in Tonk PHCs**

*The Hindu*

Jaipur: On an average more than one third of the health services personnel was observed missing during duty hours in primary health centres in Tonk district of Rajasthan according to a [study](#). Absenteeism was as high as 36% among doctors while in five categories of health service providers it was found to be 27% on an average.

### **MPs get tough on baby deaths**

*Times Live*

Cape Town: Eastern Cape health officials, who yesterday failed to go to parliament to explain the high rate of baby deaths in the province, have been ordered to present themselves - even if they travel by taxi and stay with relatives.

### **Nigeria: Involving citizens in budget monitoring**

*Daily Sun*

Lagos: As a result of poor monitoring and implementation of budgets across the three tiers of governance in the country, the United Nations Development Programme has mapped out a strategy for citizens' participation in budget monitoring.

### **Kenya: Major assault on Treasury's powers**

*Daily Nation*

Nairobi: The new constitution has been described as the herald of the end of Kenya's all powerful and imperial presidency. But, in terms of management of the country's finances, the new constitution marks the end of the imperial Treasury. The new charter has completely dispersed the powers of the Treasury which was regarded as one of the main pillars of the centralised state and dealt a major blow on the stranglehold it has held on matters of finance.

### **Donors trim Uganda budget aid over graft concerns**

*Reuters AlertNet*

Kampala: International donors said they would trim at least 10% of their \$360 million contribution to Uganda's budget in the year to June 2011 because of concerns over corruption. "Total budget support disbursements will be at least 10% lower than intended, owing to weak progress in a number of sectors and a failure to address high-level corruption," the Joint Budget Support Development partners said in a statement late on Monday.

### **Malawi will cut spending if donors reduce aid: Minister**

*Reuters*

Lilongwe: Malawi is ready to cut its spending in order to sustain growth if foreign donors reduce crucial aid, Finance Minister Ken Kandodo said on Monday. Britain's Department for International Development said last week it was adjusting its programme in Malawi as part of a global review of bilateral aid.

### **The impact of the global financial crisis on the budgets of low-income countries**

*The Guardian*

London: Sometimes the things we don't know about what is happening in the world take your breath away. A global economic crisis strikes just a few years before the world's 2015 deadline for achieving the improvements in health, education and poverty reduction required by the UN's Millennium Development Goals. How has that crisis affected poor countries' spending on schools, hospitals or growth?

### **Government asked to spend more on child rights promotion**

*Ghana News Agency*

Bolgatanga: Participants at a regional consultation stakeholders workshop held in Bolgatanga, Upper East Region has called on Government to increase the budget allocation for the protection and promotion of children's rights.

### **Government debt delays treatment**

*PlusNews*

Johannesburg: Drugs to treat HIV and tuberculosis are not reaching patients in South Africa's Eastern Cape Province because the local health department has not paid its suppliers, according to a [civil society watchdog](#).

### **New municipal Bill seeks to separate power**

*Daily Dispatch*

East London: Senior managers in municipalities could soon have their political rights limited if a Bill barring them from holding leadership positions in political parties becomes law. The Municipal Systems Amendment Bill, which seeks to limit political involvement of senior municipal employees, is up for public comment.

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## **4. Extractive industries**

### **Stopping flow of conflict minerals from Congo to your cell phone**

*CNN*

At a time when partisan politics are bitter, midterm election races are tight and almost every legislative effort is stalled, who would you expect to take the boldest step in years to address the deadliest war in the world, in the heart of Central Africa? Congress, of course.

### **Ghana oil sector: IPS to build capacity of traditional leaders**

*Ghana Web*

Accra: The School of Research and Graduate Studies of the Institute of Professional Studies is to conduct an 18 month research project focused on providing a managerial framework for traditional leaders in a bid to maximize the benefits from natural resources specifically land in the oil and gas region of Ghana.

### **ZELA: Mining revenue and payments in Zimbabwe**

*ZELA*

Harare: The Minister of Finance presented the Mid-Term Fiscal Policy Review Statement to Parliament on the 13th of July 2010. In his statement, the Minister raised a number of important issues related to transparency and accountability in the mining sector around revenue generation, management and distribution.

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## 5. General

### **Motlanthe: Business ethics should be at the forefront**

*Business Day*

Johannesburg: In considering the challenges of forging ethical leadership in the private and public sectors, the words of Martin Luther King are pertinent. "Cowardice asks the question 'Is it safe?' Expediency asks the question 'Is it politic?' But conscience asks the question 'Is it right?'" Since business is socially based, it follows that it operates within a sociopolitical environment. Unavoidably, the character of the social environment affects the policies and vision of business.

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**ANSA-Africa news feed**

Organisations involved in social accountability work are encouraged to **submit their reports to ANSA-Africa** for posting on our website - thereby reaching a much wider audience in Africa and internationally.

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