

SMS Africa – Kenya – October 2015_1

National Police Service

It has been an eventful two weeks for the NPS. Even though its reputation for brutality and venality is no secret, a report by a local anti-torture NGO, Independent Medico-Legal Unit (IMLU) was nevertheless, sobering. The IMLU only tweeted a link to the report so it was up to others to break down their findings for the *Twitter* community:

Between 2009 and 2013, police were responsible for 1,254 out of 1,870 gun related deaths - Medico-Legal Unit Report (Moderncorps, 2015)

In 2015, 97 people have been killed by police out of which 85 have been summary executions - Medico-Legal Unit Report (Moderncorps, 2015)

In 2014, 199 people were killed by police out of which 181 were summarily executed - #Medical-Legal Unit Report (Moderncorps, 2015)

When asked by the mainstream media, Inspector General Boinett said he had no knowledge of these so-called ‘extra-judicial killings. Unlike illegal killings, IG Boinett does not dispute the kind of corruption that comes in the form of bribery. IG Joseph Boinett often tells us that police reform and ‘transformation’ is a main agenda and it seems that he is taken at his word.

NPS transformation is on course. This morning, (I) am meeting officers from KPS¹ and DCI² for a breakfast meeting under the transformation agenda (JBoinett, 2015)

@JBoinett Kenyans know a competent individual when they see one. Keep up the excellent work (ared_4_ever82, 2015)

Reform not an option, Boinnet tells officers
<http://www.capitalfm.co.ke/news/2015/10/reform-not-an-option-boinnet-tells-officers/> ... @JBoinnet (MrMuraya, 2015)

The results of the on-going police vetting exercise were announced on 15th October. The results were as follows:

Vetting results have shown that only a small percentage of police officers between 6-10% give the Service a bad name-NPSC Chair J. Kavuludi (NPSC_Kenya, 2015)

Out of 1364 officers vetted, 63 have been found unsuitable and 29 have had their cases pended. 1272 have been cleared (NPSC_Kenya, 2015)

¹ Kenya Police Service

² Directorate of Criminal Investigations (also/formerly known as CID)

Officers removed from the service: 28 SSPs, 32 SPs and 3 ASPs (NPSC_Kenya, 2015)

Next officers to be vetted will be from traffic department (NPSC_Kenya, 2015)

The final tweet might explain the finding that only 6 percent of the force was corrupt, as was noted by *Twitter* user, Mwirigipro2. By leaving the traffic department out of the definition of ‘police officer’, they had done themselves and their statistical analysis a favour.

@NPSC_KE Interesting but this is true only if 90% of traffic dept officers constitute less than 10% of the entire police force (Mwirigipro2, 2015)

Another even more cynical conclusion is that any internal investigation of the security forces is likely to uncover only the bad apples who make it into the news:

A prison warder based at Kodiaga G.K Prison was among the five suspects arrested in a botched robbery in Kisumu's Equity Bank branch (moderncorp, 2015)

I, for one, was surprised that there were only 1364 officers to vet, even if you do exclude traffic officers.

In an effort to demonstrate that their attempts at self-policing are not as ineffectual as their regular policing. One of the solutions proposed was the removal of all MPESA agents near police stations as this was one mechanism through which bribes were collected.

All Mpesa Agents near police station to be closed (Moderncorps, 2015)

An amused observer noted that it only meant a return to cash:

Itabidi sasa mrudi kulipa hongo ikiwa cash....Mpesa imeleta shida [Now, you have no option but to return to paying bribes in cash...Mpesa has become a problem] (GicheruGicheru, 2015)

Always full of CSO solutions, Boniface Mwangi had announced that:

Next week we shall open a mobile hotline, website and we shall map all the police stations-track illegal arrests and harassment. #TeamCourage (bonifacemwangi, 2015)

It was likely an outcome of his own experiences as he has frequent run-ins with the boys in blue or green³. At least it might be a good source of data.

Digs at the police service notwithstanding, the fact is that corruption in Kenya is systemic. Police are in the visible range of the spectrum but behind the scenes, the looting of

³ Administrative Police (APs) and the General Service Unit (GSU) wear green fatigues. They can arrest you and take you to a police station manned by the regular, blue uniformed police.

government coffers and general disregard for public welfare by those at this country's helm, means that members of the security forces are also victims of the problem. For starters, they chronically underpaid. The Modern Kenya Corps' *Twitter* account seems to be an avenue through which they feel they can air their grievances:

GSU⁴ officers attached to K company platoon 33 are now surviving without food after sergeant Mwita sold their ration in Mathare last night (Moderncorps, 2015)

GSU officers sending me an inbox informing me their ration has been sold. @JBoinnet & @NPSOfficial_KE take action (Moderncorps, 2015)

Recce⁵ officers who travelled to Israel for a Counter-Terror training are claiming that they haven't received all their travelling allowances (Moderncorps, 2015)

GSU officers who escort billions of cash from Delarue to CBK have threatened to Go Slow if the GSU commandant doesn't release their allowances (Moderncorps, 2015)

Senior police officers now claiming there is no money to run daily activities in the stations. Tangu budget isomwe hawajapewa pesa [Since the (national) budget was read, they have not received the allocation] (Moderncorps, 2015).

One cannot help but feel that despite clear evidence of their criminal activity, the police, particularly the ones identified through the vetting process, are scapegoats for an entrenched, endemic problem. The discussion around how corruption weakens the security apparatus has generally been confined to how bribery allows potential terrorists to live in Kenya e.g. the sale of national identity cards to non-Kenyans. Disappearing resources, the lack of adequate pay and poor morale are should also be included in the conversation.

Kenya-Somalia wall builders mull boycott over pay (RNagila, 2015)

The KDF is often regarded as immune to all these sorts of shenanigans thus it was a bit of a surprise when we heard that they had allegedly looted the mall after the Westgate tragedy and that they might also not be that well remunerated:

How do we expect to be secure when we pay KDF officers guarding Somalia allowance Ksh 20 daily allowance or Ksh 600 per month? #DogsOfWar (KahawaTungu, 2015)

⁴ General Service Unit

⁵ A specialised police unit, consisting of officers usually drawn from GSU ranks that has received military training. I suspect this may have to do with constitutional rules regarding KDF's activities in-country. Recce allows for military capacities without flouting jurisdictional legality. This issue of jurisdiction appears to have been contentious in the past and after the Westgate Mall attack, and word on the street is that it may have led to the 'retirement' of Boinett's predecessor, Inspector General, Kimaiyo and KDF Chief, Major General Karangi.

The Kenya Defence Forces

Continuing on the topic of the KDF, this section manages to effectively contrast their public perception with that of the police, while reporting on their activities. Kenyans observed KDF Day on October 14th. To be honest, I never would have known that such a day existed if it was not for *Twitter*.

Today is KDF Day. Thank you to all our soldiers (And their families) who risk their lives to keep us safe. #Respect (KResearcher, 2015)

Today is #KDFday. We celebrate the lives of the soldiers killed in Somalia (Moderncorp, 2015)

It seemed especially poignant as we had received news of the death of a KDF officer in Boni forest the previous day:

KDF soldier killed, others injured in Boni Forest accident (KTN Kenya, 2015)

Up until that point it appears that things had gone well.

#OperationLindaBoniUpdates: Our security forces have managed to destroy the Alshabaab militants' makeshift camps and taken over the areas (moderncorps, 2015)

Judy's Kidnap and Rescue

Elsewhere, away from Boni, Al Shabaab was making its presence felt. On October 12th, news of a kidnapping incident:

GetIT411: FEMALE aid worker kidnapped by suspected Al Shabaab militants in Dadaab earlier today, driver who was with her released (suemcphee, 2015)

Judy is Missing. She was kidnapped between dadaab-hagadera camps at around 1100hrs. #HelpFindJudy by Retweeting (moderncorps, 2015)

This news did not set *Twitter* ablaze, which I found surprising. In spite of the social media torpor, on October 16th reports of Judy's rescue:

Combined security efforts btwn KDF, NPS⁶, NIS⁷ & the Somalia national army carried out a stealth rescue operation in Dagah to rescue Judy (InteriorKE, 2015)

BREAKING: Judy who had been kidnapped in Dadaab has been found in Somalia. She's current in hospital for (a) check up (Moderncorps, 2015)

⁶ National Police Service

⁷ National Intelligence Service

Judy Mutua who was abducted at Dadaab has been rescued by our security personnel in (S)omalia. Her abductor(s) have been killed & another arrested (Moderncorp, 2015)

According to the time stamp on Modern Corps tweet, they reported this news hours earlier than more official sources, with much more detail, without any apparent consequence for what some might interpret as a leak. Thus, increasing my curiosity about Modern Corps identity. Moderncorps is definitely in or was in the armed forces, but seems indiscreet, which seems to suggest that they are no longer in the forces.

Crime watch confirmed the rescue and the arrest of one of the kidnappers at 3.11 AM

GetIT411: FEMALE aid worker kidnapped Monday by Shabaab in Dadaab rescued by KDF at Shaba-Difu⁸, in Somalia; one suspect arrested (suemc_phee, 2015)

Judy was welcomed back that same morning by the Cabinet Secretary and the Permanent Secretary of the Interior, Nkaiserry and Monica Juma, respectively.

CS #Nkaiserry and PS #AmbJuma receive Judy who was abducted by terrorist group alshabab at Wilson Airport

⁸ Perhaps Dagah and Shaba-Difu are the same place or are in close proximity

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