

Environmental tribunal planned

Complaints' centre to hear disputes, gauge public views, says Ngala

By CHEGE wa GACHAMBA and ELIZABETH GITONGA

A tribunal to hear disputes on environmental degradation will be set up. A 'complaints' centre has also been established to enable the government to gauge public feelings about the environment, said Environment Minister Noah Ngala yesterday. This will enable the government to implement the Environmental Management and Co-ordination Act enacted years ago, he said. The centre, chaired by university don Prof. J. M. Njiru, has already invited

members of the public with complaints to forward them for investigation.

The minister made the announcement when he presided over the launch of a UN report on the 1999/2000 drought which is critical of the government's decision to excise forests.

The launch came only days after the government formalised the excision of nearly 170,000 acres of forest land for private use.

At the same time, the World Food Programme (WFP) launched an international appeal for cash donations to buy 60,000 tonnes of food for drought-stricken people.

The organisation said the food will be bought in Kenya to help boost local maize prices. "There is a lot of maize in Kenya but the price is below average," he said.

At a meeting with donors in Nairobi, WFP country director Tesema Negash said 3.1 million people were affected by drought in the country.

The UN report follows a comprehensive study by government and United Nations Environmental Programme (Unep) experts at the request of the State.

The two-year drought affected all sectors and caused untold human misery,



Mr Ngala

animal and vegetation devastation.

It closely follows the El Nino phenomenon and was declared a national disaster. International Monetary Fund estimates that Sh38 billion is needed to restore damage caused.

Devastating Drought in Kenya: Environmental Impacts and Responses was released at Unep headquarters, Nairobi. It recommends the strengthening of forest management practices.

New supermarket opened



Photo/Correspondent

A customer selects an item at the New Nakumatt Nyali, Mombasa, early this week. The supermarket chain opened the branch on Friday.

Pastor's wife says how she lost Sh1m

By NATION Correspondent

A television evangelist's wife yesterday recounted how senior police officer allegedly threatened her family, making them part with Sh1 million to win their freedom.

Evangelist Pius Muiru's wife --Lucy-- told a Nairobi court that they were arrested by a police reservist and a constable who told them that Mr Muiru was wanted by Interpol for some crime he had allegedly committed.

Mrs Muiru was testifying before Kibera Senior Principal Magistrate Wanjiru Karanja in a case in which the Kilima police chief, Chief Inspector Gilbert Otieno, police reservist Dan Ochieng Were, police constable Gideon Kareiti Mukaria and four others are charged with obtaining Sh2 million from her by trickery.

The prosecution is led by Chief Inspector William Kijombi, while the accused are represented by Mr James Orengo and Mr Cecil Miller. The hearing continues.

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