

The Nyali school bus scandal – what happened? where are we now?

Dear Mombasa Parents members:

The Nyali School situated along the Links road in the county of Mombasa, is a school owned by Mombasa Parents club members and run by the Board of Management (BoM).

For long, the school has been a model institution admired by many parents in Mombasa. The Nyali School parents have been very quiet and always trusting that the club/school affairs are being run smoothly. In any way, almost all of them are very respectful busy persons who hardly have time to scrutinize the work of the BoM. Even in the Annual General Meetings (AGM) very few attend where big decisions are made including shady elections done without the involvement of majority of the parents.

This situation went on till end of July 2019 when a storm of the Nyali School bus scandal hit the headlines on social media where the rot that had dominated the school was exposed. This got many parents in shock and disbelief. Allegations over allegations came into public domain, all indicating massive corruption and abuse of office by the BoM and the Principal who had acquired Super Powers.

Some of the Allegations included the following: The Nyali school bus scandal and school fund's mismanagement; Allegations of child's defilement at Nyali School and efforts to cover up the incident; Unauthorized payments of several single capital projects by the BoM in recent past; Allegation of teachers possessing fake documents; Nepotism in School; Review of the Club's Constitution without members input; Procuring system dominated by companies belonging to the principal or members of the BoM; Briberies when needing to join the club, inflation of all procurements, demand for kickbacks, Rotten system of Staff Recruitment and poor staff Welfare; The Principal running a parallel school (Paramount Educational Centre) – a clear case of conflict of interest..... and the list goes on.

The following are the chronological of events of how they unfolded:

- **July 30, 2019** – a WhatsApp text circulates in many parent's WhatsApp groups indicating a scandal involving the purchase of a bus wherein an attempt to defraud the Nyali School Kshs. 600K is exposed. An insider was mentioned to be a whistleblower.
- **July 31, 2019** –In the Chairman's report, parents are assured that all is well in school and that procurement of the two new buses and disposal of the two old buses has been halted. Nothing is mentioned of the attempt to defraud the school KSh. 600K as claimed in the school bus scandal expose.
- **August 1, 2019** – in an open letter circulated through social media platform – disgruntled Mombasa parents demand for the Stepping down of the Club's chairperson, treasurer and the principal to allow an **INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION** into the bus scandal.

- **August 5, 2019** – Kahawatungu exposes a 13M School Bus Scandal on its blog <https://www.kahawatungu.com/2019/08/05/ksh13-million-school-bus-scandal-nyali-school/>
- **August 6, 2019** – Blogger Cyprian Nyakundi also exposes the scandal in his social media platforms with a headline, “The Looting Principal: Nyali School Bus Scandal” <https://www.cnyakundi.com/the-looting-principal-nyali-school-bus-scandal/>
- **Between August 6 – September 2, 2019** – More scandals involving misappropriation of funds and running of the Nyali school are exposed through WhatsApp platform. Parents voices increase demanding for an independent investigation on the allegations or convening of a Special General Meeting (SGM) to discuss the matters arising. Parents even go ahead to collect signatures demanding for an SGM.
- **2nd September 2019**, A notice of a Special General Meeting is released by the Club secretary inviting them for an SGM on the 28th September 2019 with only one (1) main agenda – The report of the BoM on the procurement of the two new school buses and the disposal of the two (2) old buses.
- **9th September 2019**, disgruntled Mombasa Parents members write to the secretary in Pursuant to Article 41 of the club Constitution to include in the agenda the following: Review of Club Constitution in relation to club’s election and tenure of the principal; Review of Internal and External audit systems, procurement procedures, staff recruitment and welfare; Declaration of conflict of interests of key office holders and Adherence to Government directives. No response is obtained from the Secretary of the Club.
- **10th September 2019**, a withdrawal notice of the SGM is released by the secretary citing a letter from the County Director of Education indicating that the SGM will be in contravention of the directive Cabinet Secretary on ban of all social activities during the third term.
- **13th September 2019**, Kahawatungu runs an article on its blog, “ The Nyali School Principal Accused Of Turning To Witchcraft To Cover Up School Bus Scandal” <https://www.kahawatungu.com/2019/09/13/nyali-school-principal-witchcraft-school-bus-scandal/>
- **16th September 2019**, the BoM reports a parent to the Department of Criminal Investigation (DCI) over false allegations. His mistake was, he was spearheading a call for transparency, accountability and good school management. The parent honored the DCI summon where he was cleared for any wrong doing.
- **18th September 2019**, blogger Cyprian Nyakundi runs an article on his social media platform titled, “Nyali School Bus Scandal – Corruption Is Still the Order of the Day.” <https://www.cnyakundi.com/nyali-school-bus-scandal-corruption-is-still-the-order-of-the-day/>
- **19th September 2019**, the Executive side of the BoM sends the whistleblower for a 45 days’ compulsory leave and have his phones confiscated and taken to the DCI for cybercrime analysis. The Whistleblower had received enough intimidation from the BoM since he broke the news of an attempt to defraud the club KShs. 600K.

- **23rd September 2019**, Kahawatungu runs an article on its social media platform title, "Management Sacks Nyali School Accountant Suspected of Being a Whistleblower". <https://www.kahawatungu.com/2019/09/23/nyali-school-bus-scandal-accountant-sacked/>
- **23rd September 2019**, Disgruntled Mombasa Parents members meet the County Director of Education seeking explanation on his letter banning the SGM. The County Director of Education admits to have been misled on the reason of the meeting and gave an approval for the SGM to go on.
- **24th September 2019**, Disgruntled Mombasa Parents write to the Secretary following approval by the County Director of Education to immediately convene an SGM on the 5th October 2019.
- **25th September 2019**, the County Director of Education issues an official letter giving approval for Mombasa Parents to convene an SGM to discuss arising matters. He proposes the meeting be done on a weekend.
- **2nd October 2019**, Disgruntled Mombasa Parents members write to the Secretary of the Club giving him a Seven (7) days' notice to convene an SGM or else the parents will convene their own meeting to discuss matters arising.
- **11th October 2019**, the Club Chairperson & the Club secretary issues a circular on the update of the SGM. In the circular, the BoM claims to have received a request for an SGM from only fourteen (14) members against a constitutional requirement of fifty (50) members. The circular reiterates that there will be No SGM as it was against the interest of the club and the class Eight (8) candidates.
- **11th October 2019**, the disgruntled Mombasa Parents members in pursuant to Chapter four, Article 37 of the Kenyan Constitution gives notice of a special meeting to be convened on the 19th October 2019 at 9am in the School premises. Eight agenda were planned with County Director of Education and the trustees invited.
- **14th October, 2019**, OCPD of Nyali Police station is notified of the parents special meeting and gives approval for the meeting to go on.
- **15th October 2019**, Coast Regional County Director of Education, Director – Muslims for Human Rights and Club chairperson are notified of the special meeting by the parents.
- **16th October 2019**, a circular signed by the Chairperson & Secretary of the club denounces the meeting.
- **16th October 2019**, the OCS – Nyali division issues a letter stopping the parents' meeting scheduled for the 19th October 2019 citing interference with peaceful learning environment and the Class Eight KCPE exams.
- **18th October 2019**, Disgruntled Mombasa parent's members issues a reminder that the meeting on the 19th October 2019 is still ON.
- **19th October 2019**, Parents assemble at the Nyali School but finds the gates closed with heavily armed police and security guards with dogs inside the school premises. Parents are barred from accessing their own school and were later dispersed. For the bigger part

of the day, parents engaged police in running battles. In the end, seven (7) persons were arrested and booked at Nyali police. Unfortunately, all of them were School staff who had reported to duty including a senior teacher. Parents assembled at the Nyali school and gave a press conference. Later the parents met at a secret place and made liberations.

- All the school staff would later in the evening released on a Cash bail of KSh. 5000 with one given a KShs. 10,000. Disgruntled parents raise the money and have all the staff released.
- **19th October 2019**, disgruntled Mombasa parents regrouped and formed a WhatsApp group called ' "Nyali Parents integrity". Over 200 members are in the group. The purpose of the group was to push for accountability, transparency and good school management.
- In all these events, disgruntled parents engaged the trustees to assist them in calling for good school management. At one Point, the BoM were contemplating removing the Trustees on the claims that their period had ended.
- **24th October 2019**, after intervention by the Club Trustees and the unfortunate events of 19th October 2019, the Secretary of the club gives notice of an SGM to be convened on the 23rd November 2019 with one main agenda - The report of the BoM on the procurement of the two new school buses and the disposal of the two (2) old buses.
- **25th October 2019**, Disgruntled Mombasa Parents members write to the Secretary to convene the SGM on the 9th November 2019 and put "Club affairs" as the agenda. The parents also demanded that the meeting be chaired by the club trustees and that the principal doesn't not attend the meeting but be on stand by for a call up only when needed.
- **31st October 2019**, the Club secretary replies to the letter by disgruntled parents and agrees to include all the agenda requested by the parents in the SGM. However, he refuses to change the dates claiming that members needed time to plan for the meeting. He remains silent on the request by members to have the Principal stay away and be on stand for a call up only when needed.
- **6th November 2019**, the whistleblower is **SACKED** by the BoM (Summary dismissal) and barred from accessing the School.

Dear honorable members, the battle is still **ON** and it's not a political one. Additionally, it's not aimed at a particular individual or people. It is also not spearheaded by people having secret motives as claimed by the BoM and the Principal. It's a fight between those calling for an accountability, transparency and good school management against the looters who for long time have been fleecing the school funds for their own selfish gains and who are fighting to maintain the Status Quo.

Our demand still remains the same: **STEPPING DOWN** of the Board of Management and **SUSPENSION** of the Principal to allow an independent investigation on all the allegations. We urge all honorable parents to come in numbers for the SGM on the **23rd November 2019**.

Dear honorable parents, please do not be sweet talked or deceived by the same people who have looted our school funds for long to enrich themselves. The looting-team are justifying the looting of School funds based on the good performance of the school in National Exams. Our concern is not only on the performance of our kids but also a Good management of our funds.

We are not relenting this time.

Disgruntled Mombasa Parents.