

# KWS rangers on a go-slow over payment

*The service has been hit by a cash crunch for the past few months resulting in lack of basic allowances*

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Operations at all game parks may be crippled after Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) rangers yesterday started a go-slow protesting poor working conditions.

In particular, the rangers' fury seems to be targeted at Director General Kitili Mbathi who they accuse of being behind the deteriorating working conditions since he took over leadership of the service in February.

According to rangers who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals, the service has been hit by a cash crunch in the past few months which has resulted in lack of basic allowances and daily allowances whenever officers are on field assignments.

But when contacted, Kitili declined to comment insisting that the matter was being handled in-house.

"I have no comment and there is a meeting to tackle the matter. It is a small thing that will be handled in-house," he said on the phone.

The rangers accused the former banker of high-handedness and disinterest in their welfare.

They termed him an "outsider" in the service who has taken long to familiarise with the operations and out

## THE HIGHLIGHTS

KWS director general Kitili Mbathi is accused of being behind the deteriorating working conditions since he took over in February.

Rangers say the service has been hit by a cash crunch which has resulted in lack of basic allowances and daily allowances whenever officers are on field.

KWS top brass held a closed-door crisis meeting at the headquarters in Nairobi to find a solution to the matter.

to serve his "personal interest".

They added that release of money for basic operations such as servicing of their vehicles has to be done directly from the headquarters, under his directive as opposed to previously, when the money would be released from their parks.

They termed as ineffective and unsustainable and threatened the swift response and running and management of parks.

"The Director General is paid by both the government and some conservation organisations. We have never received a pay-rise for the past two years but he insists the pay rise should happen after three years," said the ranger.

Yesterday KWS top brass and high ranking rangers held a closed-door crisis meeting at the headquarters in Nairobi.

The mood from the junior officers at the headquarters was evidently foul, mainly conversing in low tones and gave the press a wide berth.

## NEWS BEAT UND-UP



### EBC commissioners questioned on polls

commissioners of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) are expected to appear before a select committee on electoral matters today. The commissioners have been summoned to defend themselves against allegations that they bungled the 2013 General Election. In addition, they are expected to tell the committee whether they are willing to step aside if they are not to be paid their dues in order to pave the way for the reconstitution of the electoral body. The commissioners are required to shed light on a letter by Gem MP Jakoyo Midiwo (pic) — MERCY MWAI

### Opposition drums up support for new Jubilee Party



Deputy President Uhuru Kenyatta's TNA, his URP party and other parties ahead of the 2017 elections. "I know that some are wondering why we did this. There's a reason why we decided to merge these parties," he said. According to him, the merger will end ethnic-based politics. He said the Jubilee Party, set to be launched next year, is the only political party with a national outlook adding that its main objective is to bring Kenyans together irrespective of tribe, race, or religion. He is currently residing over the ground-breaking ceremony for Bahati Technical College.

— NOAH CHEPLOEN