

Lafarge Eco Systems, Bamburi Partners with Pwani University

Lafarge Ecosystems, the environmental arm of Bamburi Cement, has signed an agreement with Pwani University that will see the two institutions partner on a array of environmental conservation initiatives.

The agreement is anchored on technical co-operation for building capacity in environmental related areas, with special focus on quarry rehabilitation, biodiversity management and environmental education.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will enrich sharing of information, collaborative research projects, enhanced training programs for environmental scientists and environmental education for the public.

Speaking during the signing in Mombasa, Lafarge Eco Systems Chief Operating Officer Mary Mueni said that the unit is continually evolving and seeking to execute even better on its mission to demonstrate world class environmental conservation, land and biodiversity management showcases.

"The partnership with Pwani University underpins our environmental agenda which seeks to practically demonstrate the sustainable rehabilitation of quarry wasteland into vibrant ecosystems such as Haller Park that can be used as both educational and recreational platforms," she said.

"We have been able to showcase the possibilities of restoration and conservation that others can learn from," Mary further added.

On his part, Pwani University

Vice chancellor, Prof Mohamed Rajab said, "With the signing of this partnership, we forge a closer working relationship with Lafarge Eco Systems that will play a big role in facilitating practical research and work experience opportunities for our students on areas of mutual interest.

"We look forward to learning more about ecosystem restoration, biodiversity management as well as sharing of best practices."

As part of the agreement, both institution will exchange scientific information and develop specific collaborative programs and projects.

Additionally, they will collaborate on research projects, share publications and other materials of common interests.

Set up in 1971 as Baobab Farm Limited, Lafarge Eco Systems



Pwani University Vice Chancellor Prof. Mohamed Rajab [second left] exchange the signed copy of MoU with Susan Maingi, Communications and Sustainable Development Director Lafarge Holcim. Looking on are Deputy Vice Chancellor- Research and Extension Pwani University Prof. Muniru Tsauno and Lafarge Eco Systems Chief Operating Officer Mary Mueni.

has made a name as the environmental and rehabilitation division of Bamburi Cement Limited.

Its work in managing and utilizing reserve land, rehabilitating exhausted quarries and converting them into self sustaining ecosystems such as

Haller Park, has earned it international recognition and accolades.

LES has also engaged the local communities through the "Shamba System", which is a form of

agroforestry that allows the local communities to produce food crops on Bamburi reserve land while taking care of the vegetation.

This is mainly in Vipingo.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF YOGA IN MOMBASA

International Day of Yoga Committee Mombasa celebrated the International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2016 on a grand scale on 19 June 2016 at the Oshwal Centre where just under 1,000 people from all walks of life and different ages participated and benefited from demonstrations held by various Mombasa based yoga teachers and led by Dr. Nilesh Mahajan, a yoga expert sent by the Government of India specially for the event, reports the IDY Committee Mombasa.

A free yoga mat and t-shirt was provided to all participants.

The event was organised by the Assistant High Commission



of India in collaboration with a number of other organisations such as Hindu Council of Kenya and Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh, among others and a committee was constituted from the various organisation to plan

the event. The Assistant High Commissioner for India, Shri Sanjeev Khanduri addressed the participants during the event and the message from the Prime Minister of India, Shri. Narendra Modi was also projected.

Special yoga demonstrations were held by various yoga teachers.

As a prelude to the International Day of Yoga the International Day of Yoga Committee Mombasa organised various demonstration session at different schools including Santokben Nanji Kalidas Mehta Nursery School, M. M. Shah and M. V. Shah Academy, Shree Swaminarayan Academy, The Coast Academy, Oshwal Academy, Tiny Tots Kindergarten and Mombasa Academy and a special session for 300 inmates at the Shimo La Tewa Prisons Bortsal to help spread the message and awareness of Yoga and how it is important in their daily lives.

The Yoga Committee of Mombasa wishes to thank all the sponsors who helped support this event.



MOMBASA HEAVY RAINS

MOMBASA (Xinhua)— Residents of Mombasa wade through a flooded road in Mombasa, June 19, 2016. Parts of the port city of Mombasa were rendered inaccessible in the aftermath of heavy rain witnessed in the area on Saturday. The floods have also affected movement of goods from the port to Uganda and Rwanda. XINHUA PHOTO: ALLAN MUTISO

Kieni Farmer Establishes Modern Canola Oil Seed Processing Firm

By Robert Manyara NYERI (Xinhua) — Establishing small scale industries for processing farm produce is an ambitious development Kenya seeks to achieve in order to stimulate growth of its rural economy.

Official figures show at least 75 percent of the Kenyan population live in rural areas, mainly relying on agriculture for their daily livelihood.

While many still sell raw produce, gradual steps are being made by farmers supported by public agencies to process the harvests on small scale in the rural regions thus promoting the government's agenda for creation of agricultural cottage industries or small scale firms.

David Kimondo is one of the farmer-turned-agricultural investors from the town of Mweiga in Nyeri county, central Kenya.

He extracts oil from canola seeds through his small scale processing firm—Kieni Canola Oil—enabling other farmers to enhance their incomes.

"Farmers in my home county (Nyeri) are getting into canola farming because I can offer them a ready market," Kimondo said in an interview with Xinhua on Monday.

"I have about 1,000 farmers spread in counties of Nyeri, Siaya, Narok and Trans Nzoia supplying me with the canola seeds.

"Most have grown in small scale but I have one white farmer growing the seeds in large scale and supplies me with 30 to 40 tonnes," he said.

He has also grown the crop in one acre of his own. He buys a kilogram of the seeds for 0.35 U.S. dollars, he says.

His venture has been recognized as a cottage industry by the Micro and Small Enterprise Authority and the Export Promotion Council (EPC) has come on board to assist him in selling his products in other African countries, he says.

He said the oil is among the 67 goods the Export Promotion Council has approved to be appropriate for sale in foreign countries.

He says he intends to sell the oil in countries within the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) region, which includes Swaziland, Burundi, Egypt, Mauritius, Rwanda and Zambia among others.

"EPC is currently helping me in redesigning the brand to meet the



Field of canola oil seed in flowers. Canola is a low-acid cultivar of rapeseed. As a term "canola" may refer to both an edible oil (also known as canola oil) produced from the seed of any of several varieties of the Brassicaceae family of plants. To be called canola, it must contain less than two per cent erucic acid and less than 30 micromoles glucosinolates. Consumption of the oil is common and is claimed not only to be completely safe for human and animal consumption, but also to be among the healthiest of plant-derived oils, having a relatively low amount of saturated fat and a high content of polyunsaturated fats. It is also used as a source of biodiesel. WIKIPEDIA PHOTO

COMESA marketing requirements and once they are done, I will be ready to export my product," said Kimondo, who started the firm in 2009 after abandoning his casual labourer job in a farm owned by a white man who would manually extract the oil from the seeds.

Canola oil serves as any liquid oil used for cooking any type of meal,

he says. He has an extraction machine which can process five tonnes of seeds a day and two filtration machines for purifying the oil, all of which he imported from China.

Currently, he has seven employees filling the gaps in his production-market chain.

He says canola is a rotational crop which also enriches the soil. Farmers can replenish their soils by growing it after harvesting crops especially maize and wheat.

At the current rates, he sells a litre of the oil for four dollars.

Half the liter goes for two dollars while 200ml is available at a price of one dollar.

According to him Kenyan farmers can break from poverty should they be assisted to establish cottage industries.

"Small scale industries can help farmers add value to their products and sell at a higher price and fetch good profits," he said.

Starting off was the greatest hurdle he had to overcome to become a resourceful farmer and an investor in the agricultural sector which contributes at least 24 percent to Kenya's Gross Domestic Product.

"I had to source for funding from Sacco's since I did not have the security to guarantee me 10,000 dollars I needed to take off," he said noting that access to credit is phenomenon challenge to farmers' involvement into small or large scale agribusiness.

According to Vincent Sagwe, agricultural specialist and head of agriculture department in Kisii county, cottage industries reduce post-harvest losses farmers incur while transporting their farm produce.

He said they can also help them reap good benefits from selling finished end products which can attract competitive prices in the local and international markets.

Kenya is among the countries in the COMESA bloc seeking for removal of non-tariff barriers such as quotas and levies to ease free flow of goods between the respective countries.

Exempting countries from strict regulations would encourage quick exchange of goods and services among the African countries in the Eastern and Southern region.

This in the long-term would promote establishment of the cottage industries in Kenya and further support their sustainable productivity.