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THISDAY
:: The voice of transparency ::

Business Laws amendment Bill 2011 sails through

Rodgers Luhwago

The Parliament yesterday endorsed the Business Laws (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill, 2011.

The amended laws are Business Names (Registration) Act (Cap213), the Companies Act (Cap 212), the Tanzania Trade Development Authority Act (Cap155) and the Merchandise Marks Act (Cap 58).

Under the amendments tabled by Industries and Trade Minister Dr Cyril Chami, a single person can now register a company (Limited Liability Single Shareholder). In the amendments to Cap 212, a section provides for Kiswahili language to be used in transactions, instead of English Language.

The amendments to Cap 155, introduces a definition of the term 'Trade Centre' and charging the centre with the roles of promoting, coordinating, collecting and disseminating trade and investment information to potential investors.

Under the amendments, the name of the Board of External Trade (BET) has been changed into Tanzania Trade Development Authority (TTDA).

Debating the Bill before it was endorsed, Members of Parliament said called heavy penalties on individuals trading on counterfeit and pirated products. However, they said the amendments would help in improving the climate of doing business in the country.

"There are complaints that our country's climate of doing business is deteriorating and this is not a lie because the World Bank report on the subject issued recently shows Tanzania has slipped from the 125th position out of over 180 countries surveyed to 127th position," said Kabwe Zitto (Chadema - Kigoma North).

Zitto appealed to the government to strengthen the Copyright and Neighboring Right Act, the Trade and Services Marks Act, the Patent Act and the Merchandise Marks Act (Cap 58) to ensure local artistes benefited much from their works.

Martha Mlata (CCM - Special Seats) also raised a similar concern, saying it was sad news today in the country for an artiste to receive 150/- per each compact disc (CD) sold, while distributors sold each CD at between 5,000/- and 10,000/-.

Joseph Mbilinyi (Chadema - Mbeya Urban) said the late Steven Kanumba, a movie star who died last week, would have died richer had the country's laws and other organs charged with the task of protecting the works of artistes been stronger enough.

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