Resurgent Mungiki targeted in fresh crackdown

Posted by BERNARD MOMANYI on May 23, 2012

NAIROBI, Kenya, May 23 – Police have renewed their war against the outlawed Mungiki sect following intelligence reports that the gang is re-launching itself and its activities countrywide.

A confidential memo seen by Capital FM News indicates that Police Commissioner Mathew Iteere has issued express orders to all provincial commanders with firm instructions to crack down on the sect members and their regional commanders.

In the confidential memo, Iteere identifies Maina Njenga as the national commander of the gang.

“Mungiki sect leader Maina Njenga has disclosed plans to revamp the sect’s disciplinary and hit squad, christened Chapa Squad,” the memo dated May 15 and marked as ‘Secret’ states.
Iteere wants the members dealt with firmly in line with the law because some of them have been identified as extremely dangerous and armed.

Other sect leaders in the top command chain include two individuals from Nakuru and Nairobi who are named in the document.

“The sect has been tasked to revolve its roles and collect information that will assist in the operations of the sect,’ the document states.

Eight other individuals are named as regional commanders of the once vicious group, which Vigilance House is convinced is regrouping itself.

“It is apparent that the Mungiki is putting a lot of efforts with a view to re-energize itself,” Iteere wrote in his memo to the provincial commanders.

“Continued crackdown on the sect’s activities is therefore necessary in order to curb its activities. In this regard, vigilance is called for in order to ensure law and order is maintained,” the police chief directed.

He wants the provincial police commanders to adhere with the rule of law in dealing with the emerging threat of the Mungiki gang.

“Ensure that any person breaking the law is dealt with in accordance with the law and efforts must be made to arrest members engaged in criminal activities,” he adds in the strongly-worded memo.

Police Spokesman Eric Kiraithe when contacted to confirm if there was a renewed crackdown on the sect members, said the war on all criminal groups is ongoing.

“There is nothing like a re-launch of a war on a criminal gang, the war on criminal gangs has always been ongoing,” Kiraithe told Capital FM News on telephone.

Police headquarters sees the resurgence of the group as a recipe for chaos in the country, with reports the gang has intentions of disrupting rallies organised by a presidential aspirant from Central Kenya.

Mungiki remains a banned sect in the country and its activities have faded lately since its former chairman Njenga publicly denounced it.

Police are however, convinced that the sect is firmly regrouping.
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There are substantive grounds to believe that the violence in the Tana Delta is not as a result of scramble for land or other resources. On many occasions, it has been suggested that the motive is a desire to completely displace one of the communities for political reasons. This could also explain why the violence has escalated as we approach the general elections and the terror needlessly visited on women and children.

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