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STARTUPS NEWS

Central Bank of Kenya launches National Payments Strategy 2022 – 2025

DATA PROTECTION NEWS

Spread of misinformation across media platforms around the Russia-Ukraine war



Newsletter

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Africa LawTech Festival 2022 is here!



#AFRICALLAWTECH2022 #AFRICALLAWTECHFESTIVAL
Theme: Africa-Europe Artificial Intelligence Policy Dialogue

PHYSICAL VIRTUAL 5-18 JUNE

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After two successful editions — the first being held in 2020 physically in Nairobi and the second being held physically and virtually last year in Nairobi, Kenya & Accra, Ghana — We are incredibly proud to announce today that the Africa Law Tech Festival 2022 will take place this year in June. The 2022 Africa Law Tech Festival dubbed “Africa-Europe Artificial Intelligence Policy Dialogue” will be held across various cities in Africa and Europe making it the biggest Africa Law Tech Festival that we’ve ever hosted.

Africa Law Tech Festival 2022

The increasing enactment of data privacy laws across Africa since the enactment of the GDPR in 2018 demonstrates the Brussels Effect in Africa with an increased proliferation of GDPR-like Data Protection laws and authorities in Africa. This demonstrates the Brussels Effect on digital policy. Artificial Intelligence has seen in-

creased adoption across Africa, with Europe in discussions for an AI Act, the ripple effect will be seen in African policy and judicial systems in the months and years to come. As the Continent begins to form frameworks such as the Continental Data Policy Framework, the innovation policy framework, and the digital economy framework; there is

a need to have an audience with development agencies in Europe working together with continental bodies. There is also a need for policymakers, lawyers, and startups to understand the context within which Europe makes its laws, by seeing their enabling infrastructure, tech ecosystem, and policy processes to benchmark.



STARTUPS
NEWS

Central Bank of Kenya launches National Payments Strategy 2022 – 2025

■ The Central Bank of Kenya this week launched its National Payments Strategy 2022 – 2025. The Strategy is the outcome of a consultative process that brought together a wide range of stakeholders, including private sector players drawn from the payments industry, Government, other public institutions, and international organizations. The National Payments Strategy 2022 - 2025 builds on the existing systems while furthering CBK payments mandate of establishing, regulating, and supervising an efficient and effective payment, clearing, and settlement system.

The United Kingdom offers the first Bank of Nigeria a \$100million credit facility to support women entrepreneurs and SMEs

■ The United Kingdom finance arm, known to have channeled millions in other projects to support the development of Africa’s digital infrastructure, recently announced offering a \$100 million credit facility to the first bank of Nigeria. The funding is offered with the aim of supporting socio-economic growth and women empowerment in the region with a minimum of \$30 million of the sum set to go to the latter.



Increase in demand for African developers and VC funding to the region

■ Google’s recent Africa Developer Ecosystem Report, documents the increased demand of African developers and an estimate of over 2.5x growth in Venture Capital funding. Notably, Nigeria has played an important role in nurturing new developer talent in the region by contributing to about 5000 new developers. This is good news for Africa which now has a record of over 716,000 developers.

BLOCKCHAIN AND
DIGITAL CURRENCIES

South African Treasury announces plans to further regulate crypto assets

■ South Africa’s National Treasury has announced plans to further regulate crypto mining and crypto-assets. The regulator said it is exploring measures to regulate electricity intensive crypto mining, which is environmentally harmful. Further plans to publish a paper addressing the risks posed by stablecoins also came up in the country’s Budget Review published on Wednesday 23rd February.



ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE
NEWS

Congo becomes first African Country to establish an Artificial Intelligence Research Centre

■ During the 7th Session of the African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa together with other International partners reached an agreement with the Republic of Congo to establish Africa’s first Artificial Intelligence Research Centre in Brazzaville. Part of the Centre’s mission is to develop multidisciplinary research in the region through the utilization of Artificial Intelligence, all with the aim of advancing the digital infrastructure, economy, skills, and bridging the digital divide in the region. Further, the center is keen to explore the potential of AI in improving different sectors of life in Africa.



DATA PROTECTION NEWS



Ukraine momentarily forms an IT army in the wake of the war against Russia

Ukrainian residents continue to demonstrate a commitment to fight against the Russian invasion. Such commitment has led to a government volunteer-led IT army to counter Russia's cyber-attacks. The pervasiveness of cyber warfare is not shocking in this digital era. The IT army makes use of technology platforms such as Telegram, for its wide reach to issue tasks to volunteers and make announcements. Other secure messaging sites that are said to be used for high privacy risk communication have not been detailed. Volunteers make their applications online through Google forms and are required to mention referrals to ascertain the credibility of their skills. Though it's too soon to gauge the impact of the army, it is evident that they have been instrumental in complementing the Ukrainian Government's Cyber-defense and attacks on Russian banks, news, and government websites.

Spread of misinformation across media platforms around the Russia-Ukraine war

■ The world's largest social media platforms are once again on the spot to manage the spread of misinformation online around the Russia-Ukraine war. These platforms have contributed largely to a general falsehood online of what's actually taking place on the ground. For instance, unchecked Tik Tok videos of past wars, made with the reusable audio feature, are being watched by millions and blindly believed to be an account of real-time footage. Further, accounts with massive following across different social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook are spreading unverified false news claiming the Ukrainian government is conducting the genocide of its citizens. With the already existing pressure from political actors all over to curb misinformation on the COVID-19 pandemic and elections, social media platforms have had to tighten their sleeves to debunk and takedown false information on Russian invasion of Ukraine.



European Union proposes to pass a new Data Act to govern handling of non-personal data

■ The European Union has proposed a Data Act to regulate the handling of non-personal data. Closely associated with this new development is its framework for the protection of personal data. The new law would require Big Tech corporations to facilitate the sharing of commercial and industrial data among competitors to ease the monopoly over them. European Union Officials state that the new framework will allow consumers more choice between competing service providers when using connected products. Detractors of this proposed law have cited their critics including that the law will place a heavy compliance burden on companies.

PAIX data centres receives \$20 million from Africa 50 to further its expansion to new African data markets

■ PAIX data Centres is a Pan African organization that runs a growing platform of cloud and carrier-neutral data centres. The center is known for its exceptional work with various branches in Ghana and Kenya. The investment from Africa 50 will enable PAIX to penetrate new data markets in Africa facilitating connectivity and accessibility in the region.



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DATA PROTECTION TRAINING

Data Protection, Data Security
and Compliance

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MARCH 2022

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VIRTUAL

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The Lawyers Hub and the Africa Digital Policy Institute invite you to enroll and attend a training on Data Protection and Compliance. It is crucial for members of your organisation to be equipped with this knowledge and to be conversant with the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2019.

Email hello@lawyershub.ke or call +254784840228 to book your slot.