



24<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

## **People's Shujaaz Awards - 2021**

### **#PeoplesShujaazAwards**

### **Introduction**

Every year on Jamhuri day (12<sup>th</sup> December), the Presidency awards national honours to Kenyans who have given exemplary service to the country. For the last five years, Mzalendo Trust has held a similar initiative, the annual People's Shujaaz Awards, that fetes outstanding Members of Parliament who have made exemplary legislative contributions that seek to champion public interests in either the Senate or the National Assembly.

Parliament is one of the institutions required to address these issues. In undertaking their function as the people's representatives, Parliamentarians work towards breathing life to the issues that people voted them for. The success or otherwise can be determined based on either the House as a whole or individual members.

In the recent past, Parliament has come under strong criticism due to the perception that it has failed in its mandate to represent the people's interests. This is especially after enacting laws that seem to be detrimental to 'Wanjiku.' As a result, there has been eroded public trust in the institution that is supposed to act on their behalf. There is a risk that members who are actually fulfilling their constitutional mandate are not given the adequate support to continue creating impact.

However, in 2020, Mzalendo Trust made the collective decision to forego the People's Shujaaz Awards owing to the Covid-19 pandemic that had disrupted Parliamentary operations forcing both Houses to restrict the numbers of members at any sitting. The preventive protocols being observed in Parliament have therefore meant that not all members have had equal opportunity to make contributions in plenary hence, tipping the scales in favour of some legislators.

### **Methodology & Criteria**

Various Parliamentary records will be analyzed, including Hansard records, Bill Trackers, Motions, Statement Trackers, Petition Trackers and Periodic Reports of Parliament. These offer actual data on what was discussed in the House and show whether pertinent issues within the period under review were addressed through legislation and/or Parliamentary business. Mzalendo will mine through these records to identify the legislators who stand out in the various categories.

The awards system and structure has always been based on fair analysis of all members' contributions that then helps Mzalendo identify Wanjiku's champions. Following the thorough

research of the Hansard, all Member's proposals are identified. Thereafter, the final nominees are narrowed down using the following criteria:

- i. The most relevant proposal, in terms of the people's needs;
- ii. A proposal addresses a wider scope, preferably national level;
- iii. A proposal that is innovative; or
- iv. A proposal that is new.

The winners are then determined by the public who get to decide which member per category had the most impactful proposal through an open and transparent voting process that is conducted online and via our SMS shortcode 21516.