



REPUBLIC OF KENYA



KENYA LAW
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**Karumbi v Republic (Criminal Revision E037 of 2025)
[2025] KEHC 17357 (KLR) (20 November 2025) (Ruling)**

Neutral citation: [2025] KEHC 17357 (KLR)

**REPUBLIC OF KENYA
IN THE HIGH COURT AT THIKA
CRIMINAL REVISION E037 OF 2025
FN MUCHEMI, J
NOVEMBER 20, 2025**

BETWEEN

JOHN MWIRIGI KARUMBI APPLICANT

AND

REPUBLIC RESPONDENT

RULING

1. In this undated application the applicant seeks for review of sentence under Section 333(2) of the Criminal Procedure Code.
2. The applicant states that he was convicted by Thika Chief Magistrate in Criminal (S.O.) Case No. 7001 of 2015 with the offence of incest contrary to Section 20(1) of the *Sexual Offences Act* No. 3 of 2006 and was sentenced to serve ten (10) years imprisonment on 20th May 2020. The applicant states that he does not have a pending appeal before the instant court or any other High Court..
3. The applicant urges the court to invoke section 333(2) of the Criminal Procedure Code by considering the period he served in remand pending the hearing and disposal of his case. The applicant states that he was arrested on 5th May 2020 and the trial magistrate failed to consider the time he spent in remand. The applicant further states that he is remorseful, a first offender and he has been in good conduct while serving his term in prison.
4. The respondent concedes to the instant application and states that the time spent in custody was not considered.

The Law

5. This court is empowered by Article 165(6) of *the Constitution* of Kenya to review a decision by a subordinate court. Article 165(6) provides:-



The High Court has supervisory jurisdiction over the subordinate courts and over any person, body or authority exercising a judicial or quasi-judicial function, but not over a superior court.

6. The applicant herein was convicted in Chief Magistrate Court in Thika in Criminal (SO) Case No. 7001 of 2015 with the offence of incest contrary to Section 20(1) of the [Sexual Offences Act](#) No. 3 of 2006. The applicant was sentenced to ten years imprisonment.
7. Article 50 of [the Constitution](#) prohibits review where a convict has gone through an appeal process. It provides:-
 - (2) Every accused person has the right to a fair trial, which includes the right:-
 - (q) If convicted, to appeal to, or apply for review by a higher court as prescribed by law.
8. In the instant matter the applicant has not appealed the decision of the trial court and thus the application for review is proper before the court.
9. Section 333(2) of the Criminal Procedure Code provides:-

“Subject to the provisions of Section 38 of the Penal Code, every sentence shall be deemed to commence from and to include the whole of the day of, the date on which it was pronounced, except where otherwise provided in this Code.

Provided that where the person sentenced under sub section (1) has prior, to such sentence shall take account of the period spent in custody.”
10. It is clear from the above proviso that the law requires trial courts to take into account the period the convict spent in custody during the pendency of the trial.
11. The provisions of section 333(2) of the Criminal Procedure Code was the subject of the decision in *Ahamad Abolfathi Mohammed & Another vs Republic* [2018]eKLR where the Court of Appeal held that:-

“The second is the failure by the court to take into account in a meaningful way, the period that the appellants had spent in custody as required by section 333(2) of the Criminal Procedure Code. By dint of section 333(2) of the Criminal Procedure Code, the court was obliged to take into account the period that they had spent in custody before they were sentenced. Although the learned judge stated that he had taken into account the period the appellants had been in custody, he ordered that their sentence shall take effect from the date of their conviction by the trial court. With respect, there is no evidence that the court took into account the period already spent by the appellants in custody. “Taking into account” the period spent in custody must mean considering that period so that the imposed sentence is reduced proportionately by the period already spent in custody. It is not enough for the court to merely state that it has taken into account the period already spent in custody and still order the sentence to run from the date of the conviction because that amounts to ignoring altogether the period already spent in custody. It must be remembered that the proviso to section 333(2) of the Criminal Procedure Code was introduced in 2007 to give the court power to include the period already spent in custody in the sentence that it metes out to the accused person. We find that the first appellate court misdirected itself in that respect and should have directed the appellants’ sentence of imprisonment to run from the date of their arrest on 19th June 2012.”



12. The same court in *Bethwel Wilson Kibor vs Republic* [2009]eKLR expressed itself as follows:-

“By proviso to section 333(2) of the Criminal Procedure Code where a person sentenced has been held in custody prior to such sentence, the sentence shall take into account of the period spent in custody. Ombija J, who sentenced the appellant did not specifically state that he had taken into account the 9 years period that the appellant had been in custody. The appellant told us that as at 22nd September 2009 he had been in custody for 10 years and one month. We think that all these incidents ought to have been taken into account in assessing sentence. In view of the foregoing, we are satisfied that the appellant has been sufficiently punished. We therefore allow this appeal and reduce the sentence to the period that the appellant has already served. He is accordingly to be set free forthwith unless otherwise lawfully held.”

13. According to The Judiciary Sentencing Policy Guidelines:

“The proviso to section 333(2) of the Criminal Procedure Code obligates the court to take into account the time already served in custody if the convicted person had been in custody during the trial. Failure to do so impacts on the overall period of detention which may result in an excessive punishment that is not proportional to the offence committed. In determining the period of imprisonment that should be served by an offender, the court must take into account the period in which the offender was held in custody during the trial.”

14. The applicant was arrested on 5th December 2015 and arraigned in court on 8/12/2015. He took plea, the trial court granted him bond of Kshs. 200,000/- with one surety of similar amount but was not able to raise a surety. On 9th March 2017, the applicant requested the trial court to review his bond which was reviewed downwards to Kshs. 100,000/- with one surety. There is no evidence that the applicant was ever released on bond in the trial court. The trial court delivered its judgment on 10th March 2020 and sentenced the applicant on 5th May 2020.

15. From the date of arrest of 5th December 2015 the court record is clear that the applicant spent four (4) years and five (5) months in custody. By virtue of Section 333(2) of the Criminal Procedure Code, this duration ought to have been considered during sentencing.

16. I have perused the court record and noted that during sentencing, the trial court took into account the mitigation by the applicant, the pre-sentencing report and the duration the applicant spent in custody. The trial court further considered the relevant provisions of law and the gravity of the offence and then sentenced the applicant to ten (10) years imprisonment. Section 20(1) of the *Sexual Offences Act* provides for a sentence of not less than ten (10) years imprisonment.

17. In the circumstances, the applicant has a right to have the time he spent in custody during trial taken into account which was not done by the trial court.

18. Consequently, I find this application merited and is hereby allowed in the following terms:-

That the applicant shall serve ten (10) years imprisonment to commence from the date of arrest, 5th December 2015.

19. It is hereby so ordered.

RULING DELIVERED VIRTUALLY, DATED AND SIGNED AT THIKA THIS 20TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2025.



F. MUCHEMI
JUDGE

