



Mathira MP Eric Wamumbi Visits Murang'a County MP Betty Maina's Family To Ask For A Hand In Marriage
 Mathira constituency Member of Parliament Eric Wamumbi on Saturday officially declared his intention to marry Murang'a County Women Representative Betty Maina. Page 16

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The President said as the government rolls out the affordable housing program, there must be a solid plan aimed at addressing the financing of low-income earners to consume the units.



Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi and President William Ruto at dedication of Friends Quakers Church Donholm in Nairobi

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Family Lives In Trauma After Hospital Detains Body Over Sh1 Million Bill

By: Rodgers Wagura
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- Although he had an NHIF card, the bill accumulated much with time. The community conducted two fund drive which only raised Kshs. 550,000. This money went directly to clearing the bill before he succumbed to injuries.
- The family, the local churches and the community have now reached a dead end with no funds at disposal and the body still accumulating debts of Kshs. 1,000 daily at the morgue.



Kimondo's mother and his wife during the interview.



Family, relatives and friends at the late Kimondo's home.

A family in Gitiye village, Iria-ini ward, Mathira East, Nyeri County has been mourning for over a month after a local private hospital declined to release the body for burial over KSh1 Million bill.

The family is now living in pain, trauma, sorrow, anguish and desperation after they failed to raise the amount needed in order to release the body of a 28-year-old David Kimondo who died at Mathari Mission Hospital on 15th March, 2023.

It all started on 27th December last year, when Kimondo, who is a boda boda operator, was involved in a road accident in the area. He was rushed to Karatina Sub County Hospital but later transferred to Mathari Hospital where he was admitted at ICU before being transferred to HDU where he passed on.

Although he had an NHIF card, the

bill accumulated much with time. The community conducted two fund drive which only raised Kshs. 550,000. This money went directly to clearing the bill before he succumbed to injuries.

The family, the local churches and the community have now reached a dead end with no funds at disposal and the body still accumulating debts of Kshs. 1,000 daily at the morgue.

"Kimondo was the bread winner here. He left behind three young children who are aged between 9 months and four years. We have reached the end of resources. Infact most of the times we sleep hungry crying. I wish to call upon the well-wishers and even our government to come to our aid," Said the wailing widow Susan Wanjira.

Her mother Nancy Wacheke who could not hold back her tears said the

family sold the only cow and leased out the farm in order to raise funds only for her son to die in hospital and leave a huge bill.

A local priest Rev. James Kanyua noted that the family members have been in and out of hospital since last year due to stress, depression and hypertension.

He urged the hospital to release the body on humanitarian ground before another family member dies of trauma related diseases.

The church also threatened to conduct a mock burial in order to try and forget the matter and also abandon the body in the morgue forever.

The family can be reached through the deceased's brother **Julius Mwangi on 0799178628.**



David Kimondo.



Editor's Desk




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Let Us Unreservedly Support The Government To Deliver - Mudavadi

By: Michael Kimengtich

@themtkenyatimes



Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi and President William Ruto at dedication of Friends Quakers Church Donholm in Nairobi.

Worth Noting:

- Mudavadi noted that the agenda for Kenya Kwanza as envisioned in its PLAN and manifesto should not be distracted by political side shows, saying time is of essence if Kenyans want to match the pace of other growing economies globally.
- “Nobody should distract the agenda of the President. He has a job cut out for him to deliver on what he promised Kenyans. Our support as leaders will immensely help him to deliver. We are not going to implement somebody else agenda. We are going to implement our agenda as the government that is in place” said Mudavadi.
- Mudavadi lauded the Church for its pivotal role in fostering unity in the country both before and after elections. He urged quakers and Kenyans at large to support the president’s cause of nation building.

Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi has urged Kenyans to stay focused and unreservedly support President William Ruto to deliver on the mandate bestowed upon him by the Citizens.

Speaking when he joined the President for the official opening and dedication of Friends Quakers Church Donholm in Nairobi’s Eastlands area, Mudavadi said it is time Kenyans rally behind the Kenya Kwanza administration and support its course in turning around the economy.

“The president has got a mammoth task to turn around the economy. This can only be achieved through prayer, sacrifice, consistency and commitment. It calls for all of us as a people to be united towards achieving a common goal,” said Mudavadi. “Kenyans should understand and be wary of the fact that turning around the economy takes time. It is not going to be like instant coffee. We need to brace ourselves for tougher times, but there is hope. It is going to be tough before it gets better,” added Mudavadi.

The Prime Cabinet Secretary further called on Kenyans to be patient

and pull together as a people, citing that time for politics is long gone, focus should be on how to turn the fortunes of this country for all to benefit as a people.

Mudavadi noted that the agenda for Kenya Kwanza as envisioned in its PLAN and manifesto should not be distracted by political side shows, saying time is of essence if Kenyans want to match the pace of other growing economies globally.

“Nobody should distract the agenda of the President. He has a job cut out for him to deliver on what he promised Kenyans. Our support as leaders will immensely help him to deliver. We are not going to implement somebody else agenda. We are going to implement our agenda as the government that is in place” said Mudavadi.

Mudavadi lauded the Church for its pivotal role in fostering unity in the country both before and after elections. He urged quakers and Kenyans at large to support the president’s cause of nation building.

“Being a quaker and part of you I want to tell you that let us unreservedly support President William Ruto

leadership in whichever way, be it individually or collectively,” said Mudavadi to the congregation adding that he came up with the Earthquake move of 23rd January 2022 after an intensive soul searching and listening to the voices of reason.

“I listened to the people who told me that they were tired staying in the opposition. I chose to work with President Ruto since I was convinced that we were going to deliver for Kenyans. That is why I am calling on all Kenyans to embrace this government. Give us time and we are going to work for you.” added Mudavadi in his remarks.

Mudavadi said he looked around and saw the direction of the nation and it required a paradigm shift.

The Prime Cabinet Secretary alluded the biblical story of Jesus and Lazarus citing how Jesus stuck to his mission and managed his time well with a focus on what he wanted to achieve at the long run.

“Biblically, Jesus had gone for a mission and he remained focused in fulfilling the mission. He heard the story of Lazarus but made sure that he accomplished the first mission

before attending to Lazarus. This is a lesson to all of us, and the President has a job to do, let him focus and do his job by his government and in the process, he will be able to manage other issues once he is done with what he has to do for Kenyans.” said Mudavadi.

“As Kenyans, let nobody try to disrupt the presidents’ focus. Let him work on resussitating the economy,” added Mudavadi.

In the run-up to the 2022 general election Mudavadi led the Kenya Kwanza brigade in galvanizing the Western Kenya vote which delivered a sizable chunk of votes towards President William Ruto’s win.

The region had largely been perceived as pro-opposition for long.

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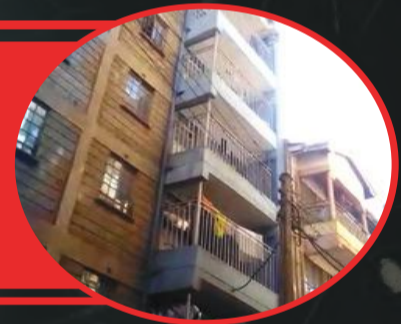
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Women Urged To Embrace Affirmative Action Funds

By: Antony Mwangi

@themkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

Noting:

- On her part, Laikipia women's Representative Jane Kagiri who was also present said that she would wish the government to continue supporting Laikipia women's groups saying that the region for long has been neglected and especially on matters of women since many communities around Laikipia are patriarchal.
- She promised to continue supporting the women's group and give all women's groups money from National Affirmative Action Funds (NGAAF).

Women from the pastoral communities have been urged to embrace women empowerment funds offered by the government in a bid to improve their economic status.

Speaking in Rumuruti stadium in Laikipia County, Prime Cabinet Secretary's spouse, Tessie Musalia asked women to take advantage of the already existing affirmative action funds like Uwezo fund and Women Enterprise Fund to borrow and invest in income-earning activities. She donated sewing machines, beadwork equipment, computers, and beauty and salon equipment to the Baraka women's group.

Ms Musalia added that it is important for the communities to equally empower young men in equal measures like women.

She regretted that many young men have gone into alcoholism and drug abuse.

On her part, Laikipia women's Representative Jane Kagiri who was also present said that she would wish the government to continue supporting Laikipia women's groups saying that the region for long has been neglected and especially on matters of women since many communities around Laikipia are patriarchal.

She promised to continue supporting the women's group and give all women's groups money from National Affirmative Action Funds (NGAAF).

Principal Secretary for Gender Madam Veronica Nduva whose speech was read by John Ndonji, the



Prime Cabinet Secretary's wife Tessie trying her hand with a sewing machine as other leaders look on..

Assistant Director for Gender said that she was happy to see that women from marginalized groups have partnered and started economic empowering projects.

She asked women to maximize their participation in key sectors of the economy.

"The government is committed to empowering women by giving 50 percent of hustler funds to women, NGAAF funds, women enterprise funds and 30 percent access to government procurement," read part of her speech.

Being a board member of Ushan-

ga Kenya Initiative, Ndonji urged the members to work with Ushanga Kenya Initiative and patent their ushanga brands.

Spouse to Laikipia Governor Grace Irungu appreciated the role of women in the society and encouraged more women to indulge in economically empowering ventures.

She also lobbied for more relief food to be given to the region while at the same time calling on the government to allow the shamba system to be adopted to encourage more food production in the region.

Baraka Women Centre was cele-

brating 10 years. They have trained women on dressmaking, beadwork, beauty, and computer classes among others to enable women get skills to be entrepreneurs.

The group has also partnered with a drug rehabilitation center that has saved over 3000 youths from drug addiction.

Tessie Musalia donated foodstuff which had been given by well-wishers including the Ahadi Kenya Trust CEO Stanley Kamau.

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Gov't Launches Curriculum On Preventing Violent Extremism Among Children

By: Our Reporter

@themtkenyatimes



Worth Noting:

“The launch of the new curriculum will not only equip the children officers with knowledge on identifying, preventing, responding and rehabilitating children involved in violent extremism but it will also provide officers with recommended measures and solutions for self-care and mental health wellness as they deal with such cases,” said the CS. She said that her ministry and other stakeholders in the juvenile justice system will ensure that all officers are trained on the standards of dealing with child offenders as provided for in the children act, the care and after care procedures in order to equip them with the necessary skills required in their work.



CS Florence Bore

The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection has launched a training curriculum and manual on preventing and countering violent extremism for children officers.

Cabinet Secretary at the ministry Florence Bore said that this launch will go a long way in building the capacity of children officers to identify, prevent, respond and counter violent extremism among children.

Speaking in Nairobi during the launch, Bore said that the project encompasses preventing violent extremism through rehabilitation, vocational training and social integration for children in conflict with the law.

“I would like to commend The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for their support in the statutory children institutions by providing equipment for vocational training, scholarships, the automation of services in the institutions, counselling and reintegration, family empowerment and positive parenting programs, provision of micro business start-up kits among others,” said Bore.

The CS noted that a sizeable num-

ber of children are involved in conflict with the law explaining that the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) in 2021 documented that about 4,500 children were in conflict with the law with offences such as immorality, drug trafficking, robbery with violence, house break-ins among others.

Bore said that this is a threat to the success of the country since the success of a country is dependent on its young generation insisting that it is the duty of everyone to reduce the chances of these children transitioning into adult criminals.

“The launch of the new curriculum will not only equip the children officers with knowledge on identifying, preventing, responding and rehabilitating children involved in violent extremism but it will also provide officers with recommended measures and solutions for self-care and mental health wellness as they deal with such cases,” said the CS.

She said that her ministry and other stakeholders in the juvenile justice system will ensure that all officers are trained on the standards of dealing with child offenders as provided

for in the children act, the care and after care procedures in order to equip them with the necessary skills required in their work.

“My ministry will also collaborate with the ministry of education to ensure that learning and other educational programmes are introduced in the remand homes and this will enable continuous education to the children as they await to have their cases processed through the justice system,” said Bore.

The CS highlighted that Kenya enacted the Children Act, 2022 which contains considerable modification to enhance the betterment of our children who are in conflict with the law.

“Section 19 of the Children Act provides elaborate measures to protect all children from being recruited or subjected to armed conflict while Section 144 identifies a child who is recruited or is at risk of being recruited into or exposed to unlawful or in imminent danger. It obligates the State to provide necessary mechanisms to safeguard the child’s rights and or rehabilitate appropriately,” explained the CS.

She said that this is an important milestone in the enhancement of Kenya’s Child Justice System as she called upon all stakeholders to give priority to the implementation of the Children Act, 2022 in order for the country to realize the aspirations of the Act.

State department of social protection and senior citizen affairs Principal Secretary (PS) Joseph Motari said that six rehabilitation schools have been equipped with state of the art vocational training equipment on tailoring and dressmaking, masonry, electrical and wiring, mechanical and automotive, confectionary among others.

The PS said that a total of 85 children have undergone vocational training over the last two years with some getting tool kits to establish their own businesses once they were released.

“We have also been engaged in the economic empowerment of parents since we realised that for a good number of children who get into the wrong side of the law, their parents were not economically empowered,” said Motari.

President Ruto: Housing Fund Will Help Hustlers Own Homes

By: PCS



President William Ruto spoke during church service and the official opening of Friends Church (Quakers) Donholm, Nairobi County. ..

Worth Noting:

- Present were Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi, his spouse Tessie, Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Affirmative Action and Gender Aisha Jumwa, Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja, and several MPs.
- The President said civil servants will also benefit from the program.
- President Ruto said the government's plan of increasing members' contributions to the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) has helped the country increase its savings.
- He said the move will help the country to manage its foreign debt by borrowing locally.

President William Ruto has said the government will further strengthen the Housing Fund to help more Kenyans purchase affordable housing units.

The President said as the government rolls out the affordable housing program, there must be a solid plan aimed at addressing the financing of low-income earners to consume the units.

The President said Kenyans will now be contributing 3pc of their income and kick start their journey of owning a house.

"Every employee who contributes 3pc, the law will compel their employer to also contribute 3pc to the Housing kitty," he added.

He spoke during church service and the official opening of Friends Church (Quakers) Donholm, Nairobi County.

Present were Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi, his spouse Tessie, Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Affirmative Action and Gender Aisha Jumwa, Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja, and several MPs.

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President Ruto said the government's plan of increasing members' contributions to the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) has helped the country increase its savings.

He said the move will help the country to manage its foreign debt by borrowing locally.

"In just two months, we have doubled the amount of money that we are saving as a country," he said.

The President said the government is also working with the county government of Nairobi to clean and

make the city green.

"We are not only going to clean the city of Nairobi, but we are also going to generate electricity out of the refuse of the city," he said.

The Head of State assured Nairobi residents that the government will increase the number of affordable housing units to ensure they live in decent houses.

Mr. Mudavadi urged Kenyans to be patient as the government works on restoring the economy.

"It takes time, consistency, commitment, and sacrifices so that we can get there," he said.

Mr. Sakaja said the government's digitization initiative will transform service delivery.

He added that the digitalized system will also increase the county's revenue collections and hence improve service delivery.

At the same time, President Ruto asked the opposition to take advantage of the bipartisan committee to address issues of concern.

The President said violent protests have not achieved anything but disrupt and destroy the livelihoods of Kenyans.

"There is no need to destroy people's property in protests. Opposition leaders should present their grievances to Parliament," he said.

It Is Time To Make Mental Health A Priority, Urges Psychiatrists

By: Anita Omwenga

[@themkenyatimes](#)

A section of Medical practitioners in Murang'a County are calling on members of the community to make mental health and wellness a priority.

Murang'a Director for Health Dr James Mburu observed that issues surrounding mental health and wellness have been ignored for a long time saying it is time mental health is given the much-needed attention considering its negative impact to the society.

Dr Mburu, a psychiatrist, who was speaking during a walk to create awareness on mental health at Murang'a County referral hospital said that a lot of sensitization is needed to help the community have a better understanding on issues surrounding the matter to curb increasing cases of mental illnesses.

"The aim of the walk is to sensitize the community on mental health, mental disorders and drug and sub-

stance abuse," he said adding that mental illnesses are affecting all groups of people in the society indiscriminately, regardless of gender or socioeconomic status.

Dr. Mburu noted that it's paramount that people look out for signs and symptoms of mental illness and seek treatment early at the nearest health facility.

"Symptoms to look out for include extreme mood changes, major changes in sleep patterns, loss of appetite or overeating, social withdrawal, lack of sleep, poor hygiene, hallucination, feeling of sadness and despair," he said adding that the symptoms vary depending on the type of mental disorder.

The psychiatrist noted that family members and the society in general should offer the necessary social and psychological support in addition to helping victims get professional help.

"Awareness of mental health issues allows for early detection of mental illnesses thus early intervention measures," he averred.

On his part, psychiatrist nurse at Murang'a referral hospital John



Wagoki Mbutia said that drugs and substance abuse was the leading cause of mental illnesses especially in the county.

"People addicted to alcoholism and those who abuse other forms of drugs like marijuana are said to exhibit symptoms of mental illness," he said, divulging that the county has

a serious challenge of alcoholism.

He further said that mental illness affects daily living and functioning of an individual and in extreme cases may lead to suicide and or homicide, repeated psychiatric admission, poor relationships and inability to take care of oneself leading to dependency.

Mbutia revealed that about 10 percent of mental cases lead to suicide stressing: "Patients who are mentally ill are at a high risk of committing suicide and therefore, should be urgently attended to."

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Address The Emotive Land Question Soberly And With Caution



By: Joseph Mutua Ndonga
mutuandonga@yahoo.com



Land

Worth Noting:

- The Mau Mau freedom fighters also suffered the same fate. This is despite the fact the fight to reclaim the land forcibly occupied by the British Colonial rule was at the core of the bloody struggles.
- The large swathes of the fertile land in Kenya were in the hands of the colonial settlers. They were using them for big plantations and used Kenyans as slaves to provide cheap labor in the farms.
- The mau mau who were led by Field Marshal the late Dedan Kimathi eventually won this war. The fighters were using bushes as their hideouts as they waged the war against mighty British colonialists.
- Back to the deliberations at the public rallies, barazas and indoor forums organized by the NCEC, the participants always passed a resolution that stated.

I was one of the key players during the clamor for the new people-driven constitutional reforms.

Being a founder and active member of the National Convention Executive Committee (NCEC) and National Convention Assembly (NCA), I sat as a member of a core team involved in conceiving, organizing and undertaking all the activities organized by the pro-reform lobby.

In most of the forums we held across the country, the emotive land question always popped up and dominated the deliberations.

The delegates, particularly those who hailed from region where majority of the people lived as squatters, always pointed an accusing finger at the government of the founding President Mzee Jomo Kenyatta.

This government crafted and implemented a skewed policy that discriminated the poor in land distribution and acquisition programme.

The Mau Mau freedom fighters also suffered the same fate.

This is despite the fact the fight to reclaim the land forcibly occupied by the British Colonial rule was at the core of the bloody struggles.

The large swathes of the fertile land in Kenya were in the hands of the colonial settlers.

They were using them for big plantations and used Kenyans as slaves to provide cheap labor in the farms.

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Back to the deliberations at the public rallies, barazas and indoor forums organized by the NCEC, the participants always passed a resolution that stated.

The land question in Kenya is very emotive issue.

The land disputes were the root cause of the killings of thousands of Kenyans including members of the same families.

Some had been permanently maimed and confined to life of squallor.

Cases of families resorting to witchcraft had also been documented.

We, therefore, urge those in authorities to handle the land question Soberly and with utmost caution.

It is a time bomb. So, this issue should be addressed strictly in accordance with law.

Many delegates blamed the independent constitution. The colonial authorities played a key role in its

enactment.

Remember they are ones who organized and hosted the Lancaster conferences in London where it was drafted and adopted.

The British colony catered for the cost of flights, food and accommodation of the Kenyan delegation. Besides, the colony paid them hefty out-of-pocket allowances.

As we know, they had interest on land matter. Some of the settlers want to stay on and continue occupying the crown land.

So, this constitution was not meant to address the land question perse.

The elite in Kenyatta government took advantage of this to dish out huge chunks of land to themselves.

Putting this aside, allow me to say this. Allowing hordes of goons to take the law into their hands could trigger an explosion and it will be hard to put off the fire by the time we realize the situation has gone out of control.

I have opted to revisit the issue of land because of the disturbing incidences we have seen happening here in Kenya in recent past.

Cases of the invasions of expansive private land and properties have been documented.

Some days later, we are now seeing

this trickling down to those who own small parcels of land.

A few days ago, the media reported an ugly incident that happened in Nakuru county.

A former MP and now Chief Administrative Secretary (CAS) from the area reportedly took the law into his own hand. He confronted a woman and members of her family claiming they had encroached on his quarter piece of land.

The woman was overheard wailing while insisting the piece belonged to her. The CAS is using his influence to steal my land. I will not allow this to happen.

In ensuing altercation, the former MP allegedly shot a member of that family in the hand.

My wish is to see the government of President William Ruto succeeding. My articles/opinion pieces and verbal commentaries can attest to this.

It is however my considered view that HE administration has learnt big lessons from the incidents witnessed so far.

I recall the land question was at the core of president Ruto during the campaigns.

Since he assumed power, he has been assuring Kenyans he is committed to fulfill his pledges.

He has however been reiterating that he will do this while strictly being guided by the law and constitution.

As I conclude, allow me to say this. Enactment of the law setting a ceiling on acreage of land that an individual can own always stood out as one of the key resolutions during NCEC/NCA led talks.

I recall President William Ruto attended one of our forums at Serena Hotel in Nairobi. He made a great presentation. Then he was a Member of Parliament for Eldoret North.

Joseph Mutua Ndonga is a writer and political analyst based in Nairobi

When A Dog Barks At You Ask Who The Owner Is

By: N. George

[@themtkenyatimes](#)



Barking dog

Worth Noting:

- Whatever they hated among their teachers they are likely to avoid it at all costs to ensure that those they love would not feel uncomfortable the way they did under their instructor.
- There are people who are generally considered to be proud which is an expression of certain weakness that make one to feel as if he is superior to the rest of people. If one realizes that his mannerisms are supported by a class of people who are close to him then he will tend to overdo so as to appeal to his friends at expense of the other people who he is interacting with.

A boy sent by his father to steal does not go stealthily but breaks the door with his feet.....Chinua Achebe.

In a class especially at basic education level the teacher teaches all kind of students some who will later on become renowned businessmen, medics, engineers, lawyers, agriculturalists, administrators, security officers and teachers.

Interestingly enough those who will join teaching fraternity are usually inspired by some of their teachers even they will try to imitate them in their teaching methodologies and mannerisms only that they will try to perfect the game.

Majority of these future teachers will argue that they are what they are due to the way they were brought up with credit going to their teachers.

Any behaviour in them can be traced to experiences they have had as they grew up especially if they appreciated a certain habit. They will be ready to imitate it and entrench it

in the systems under their control.

Whatever they hated among their teachers they are likely to avoid it at all costs to ensure that those they love would not feel uncomfortable the way they did under their instructor.

There are people who are generally considered to be proud which is an expression of certain weakness that make one to feel as if he is superior to the rest of people. If one realizes that his mannerisms are supported by a class of people who are close to him then he will tend to overdo so as to appeal to his friends at expense of the other people who he is interacting with.

In a family setup when either of the spouses is proud to general public and the other spouse supports that behaviour then the misbehaving couple will exaggerate it so as to appear special to public while at the same time gaining more appeal from the spouse.

When inspected by their commander in chief the soldiers march systematically to show him that they are well trained and coordinated even the slow learner does his level best not to look odd one out.

Sports personalities while playing at home ground in front of their fans tries their level best to become victors due to fear of the shame associated with losing while being watched to those whom they live with and who supports them due to their prowess in the game.

Parents when overwhelmed with emotions try to contain themselves especially during stressful incidences as they try to avoid appearing weak in the presence of their children who know them as their pillar of strength. Issues like crying can only happen when totally unable to contain the situation.

A budding contractor will tend to do great work whenever his trainer is inspecting him. This will signal to

his trainer that he fully internalized the processes taught. He will go a step further and try to outshine his master having learnt his trainer's best techniques then incorporated innovative ideas.

Pioneers struggle to have their way accepted by those around them but those who follow the same path after them are eager to show the magic in flawlessly following that path.

Tertiary Institution Students From Manyatta Constituency Receive Bursaries

By: Samuel Waititu
@themtkenyatimes

Some 1, 894 needy students in Universities, Colleges and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) from Manyatta Constituency, Embu county, have received bursaries amounting to Sh14 million under the National Government-Constituency Development Fund (NG-CDF).

Under the program dubbed “Masomo Bila Stress” total orphans received Sh10, 000 each, partial orphans Sh8,000, single parents’ students Sh7,000, students from very needy families Sh6,000 while those from needy families Sh. 4,000.

While issuing the cheques that will be sent directly to the beneficiaries’ institutions at Embu University grounds, area MP Gitonga Mukunji said the program was aimed at ensuring needy students realize their career goals.



Tertiary Institution Students From Manyatta Constituency Receive Bursaries.

“We want to ensure that learners from needy families are able to pursue their education to the highest level possible without worrying

about fees,” the MP said.

He at the same time decried marginalization of Mt. Kenya Region in sharing of Government resources,

saying the current formula of allocating constituencies same amount was discriminative to areas with high population.

“Some MPs from sparsely populated constituencies are able to offer full scholarship to learners whereas like here I am struggling to give a student Sh10, 000,” he said.

He said the onus was on the 13th parliament to ensure fairness in distribution of government resources as he pushed for “One Man One Shilling” formula. “

“The number of people should determine the amount of money that a constituency or county gets because it is the people that need and use the money,” Mukunji said.

Gov’t To Borrow Depending On Repayment Ability Under New Finance Law Proposals

By: Roselyne Kavoo
@themtkenyatimes

The government intends to change the Finance Law to allow the country to borrow money depending on its capacity to pay debt.

Chair of the National Taskforce of the Public Finance Management Act (PFM) 2012 amendments and Head of Resource Mobilisation Department at the National Treasury Michael Kahiti said the changes seek to peg the public debt in relation to the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Currently the government’s debt ceiling is set at Sh10 trillion by the parliament and according to Kahiti, the limit does not reflect on the country’s ability to repay.

“The limit is Sh10 trillion but the ceiling may not say much because it’s not anchored on the country’s ability to pay, the changes propose

a rate of debt that the economy can sustain,” he said.

The chairperson of the taskforce who was speaking in Machakos during the public participation for the proposed amendments said under the proposals the Cabinet Secretary for National Treasury will be required to appear before the parliament in case the threshold for the borrowing exceeds and table a report on the causes and the measures put in place to remedy the situation and the timelines.

Kahiti also noted that the changes will enable transparency and accountability in the public finance management besides cushioning the economy from shocks.

“We are currently reeling from the effects of drought but under the new proposals the country will slow on borrowing during such situations and the national treasury will be required by the law to explain to the public the debt carrying capital of the country,” added the chair person.



Chair of the National Taskforce of the Public Finance Management Act (PFM) 2012 amendments and Head of Resource Mobilisation Department at the National Treasury Michael Kahiti .

State Hints At Enforcing Strict Regulations On Places Of Worship

By: Muraya Kamunde

Cabinet Secretary for Interior Kithure Kindiki has hinted on enforcing strict regulations on places of worship.

Kindiki broke the silence after detectives from the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) continue to unearth unmarked graves believed to be adherents of a cult in Shakahola in Kilifi County.

The Interior CS spoke on Sunday after the discovery 18 more bodies by forensics bringing the number of bodies retrieved in the unmarked graves in Shakahola to 46.

“The unfolding Shakahola Forest Massacre is the clearest abuse of the constitutionally enshrined human right to freedom of worship. Prima facie, large-scale crimes under Kenyan law as well as international law have been committed,” he said in a statement on Sunday.

“While the State remains respectful of religious freedom, this horrendous blight on our conscience must lead not only to the most severe punishment of the perpetrator(s) of the atrocity on so many innocent souls, but tighter regulation (including self-regulation) of every church, mosque, temple or synagogue going forward.”

Kindiki directed the Regional Commissioner for Coast Region together with the Regional Security Team to reinforce the team in Malindi to assist with the ongoing investigation ahead of his visit on Tuesday.

“Enough security officers have been deployed and the entire 800 acre forest is sealed off and declared a scene of crime,” he said.



Interior Cabinet Secretary Kithure Kindiki .

The Mt. Kenya Times



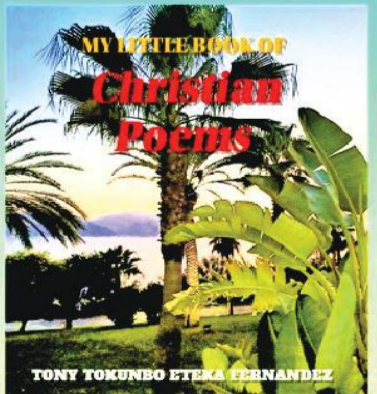
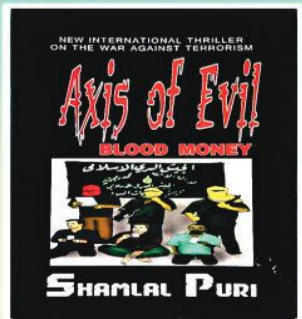
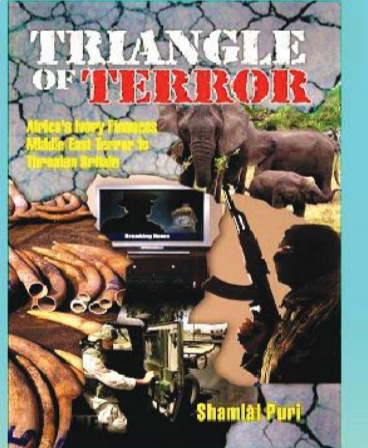
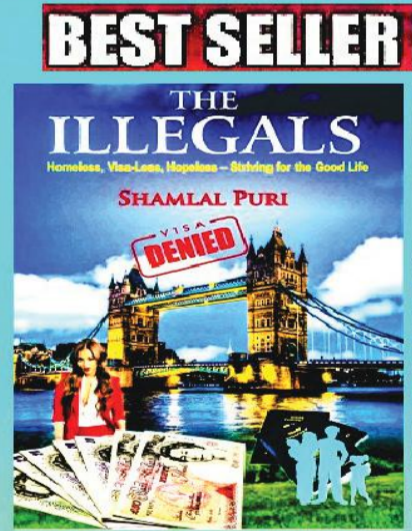
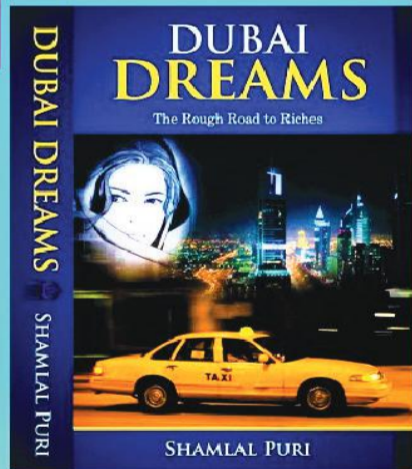
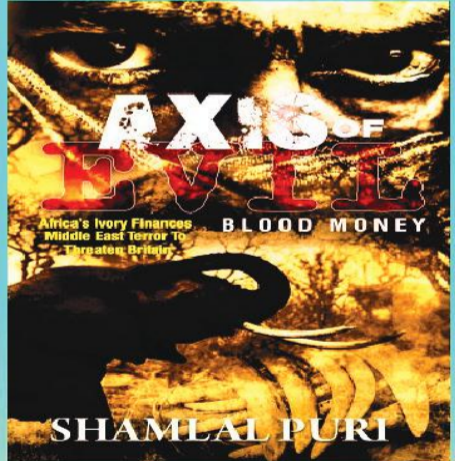
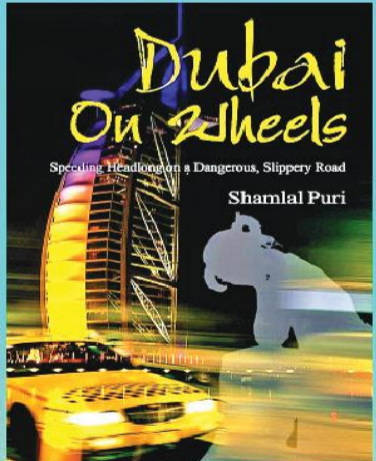
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LOVE IN THE HOUSE

Mathira MP Eric Wamumbi Visits Murang'a County MP Betty Maina's Family To Ask For A Hand In Marriage

By: Our Correspondent
@themtkenyatimes

Mathira constituency Member of Parliament Eric Wamumbi on Saturday officially declared his intention to marry Murang'a County Women Representative Betty Maina.

Together with his family and friends, he paid the first visit to the parents of Betty in Murang'a for a ceremony known in Gikũyũ community as 'kũhanda Ithĩgĩ' which means that the girl is now officially booked. Elders from both sides initiated the process with the first steps being completed during the weekend visit. This will be followed by a dowry commonly referred to as the 'Rũracio' ceremony at a later date. Dozens of leaders and businesses people accompanied the youthful legislator.



Mathira constituency Member of Parliament Eric Wamumbi on Saturday officially declared his intention to marry Murang'a County Women Representative Betty Maina..



Water CS Alice Wahome, Murang'a County Women Representative Betty Maina and Maragura Mary Wa Maua..





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Gov't To Equip Students In TVET Institutions With Skills To Meet Socio-Economic Goals

By: Patrick Nyakundi

@themkenyatimes



TVET.

Worth Noting:

- At the same time, she said that there was a need to train a critical mass of technologists, technicians and artisans to participate in meeting the socio-economic goals as a way of actualising the government's development agenda.
- "We are looking for governments and institutions with whom we can sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for dual training and dual certification. We have initiated an MOU with the Chinese government, we are looking forward to having a conversation whereby we shall be training our students and once they have completed their courses here, they will go upscale and benefit from this initiative," she observed.

The government plans to establish linkages and collaborations between Technical Education, Vocational and Training (TVET) institutions with the industry and other state agencies to ensure holistic training of trainees.

State Department for TVET Principal Secretary Esther Muoria said that through the arrangement, the trainees will undergo 70 percent in experiential learning in industry and 30 percent in course work at the training institutions.

Dr Muoria emphasised the need for the TVET institutions to design demand driven programmes to bridge the identified skill gaps in the dynamic industry in the country.

"Through this initiative, the trainees will be exposed to a working environment where they will acquire more knowledge and skills in their training during the industrial linkages and collaborations," said Dr Muoria in a speech she read during the graduation ceremony at Wote Technical Training Institute.

The PS also disclosed that the government was exploring options for TVET institutions to collaborate with other international TVET institutions to concurrently train, assess and Grant certification to successful trainees to enable them compete for jobs internationally.

At the same time, she said that there was a need to train a critical mass of technologists, technicians and artisans to participate in meeting the

socio-economic goals as a way of actualising the government's development agenda.

"We are looking for governments and institutions with whom we can sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for dual training and dual certification. We have initiated an MOU with the Chinese government, we are looking forward to having a conversation whereby we shall be training our students and once they have completed their courses here, they will go upscale and benefit from this initiative," she observed.

"You will be trained here in Wote and depending on the area of your skill you have trained in you can go to other institutions elsewhere and get dual training and dual certificate. What that will fulfill is that you will be recognised internationally and can work and live anywhere in the world," said Dr Muoria.

In this regard, she encouraged the students to at least learn a foreign language that will give them an opportunity to integrate easily in the country that one may desire to work in.

On technology, the PS said that the government has identified that TVET institutions are vital channels through which the youth can acquire innovative skills for adaptation and innovations that will make them self-employed.

Consequently, Muoria challenged the youth to venture into the digital

hub and secure available opportunities in the job market where they can acquire the requisite skills and competencies.

"There is also the Jitume Kazi programme which is a work hub/centre designed to provide an environment to access digitally enabled jobs sourced locally and internationally through identified partners in a bid to address the unemployment rate in the country," Dr Muoria said.

During the ceremony, over 1,700 students graduated. 594 were awarded diplomas, 780 graduated in crafts certificates and 334 graduated in artisan programmes.

In another development, Dr Muoria directed all TVET institutions to start tree nurseries to help the government's agenda in increasing forest cover over the next five years by planting 5 million trees.

"I have already presided over two tree growing nurseries in Nyeri and Eldoret national polytechnics in support of this initiative. I direct all TVET institutions to start tree nurseries in their respective areas in readiness to plant tree seedlings during this rain season," she directed.

On his part, the chairperson of the Board Lwanga Mutiso discouraged the graduates against getting into betting saying it was addictive and could waste their time.

He challenged them to instead use their acquired knowledge and skills to serve humanity besides eking a

living for themselves hence become self-reliant.

"Avoid betting that is broadcast in radios, television and print media. It is addictive and can kill," warned Mutiso.

Addressing the same event, the Wote Technical Training Institute Principal Joshua Munywoki, appealed to the government to give them more land to enable them expand in a bid to meet the emerging needs of more infrastructure due to the increase of the number of students.

He added that more land was needed to construct new lecture rooms, workshops and laboratories to mention a few.

In another development, Munywoki lauded the government for donating 100 desk top computers through Konza City under the Jitume Lab initiative.

He urged the youth to come out and utilise the computers to acquire knowledge and skills that will enable them to be self-reliant.

The training institute has a population of 3,000 students and offers 72 courses.

Present at the ceremony included Makeni County TVET Director John Wamae among other national and county government officials, TVET principals among others.

Conservation Of River Chania Riparian Land Underway

By: Hellen Lunalo



Worth Noting:

- “We have experienced serious drought in the area and water levels in the river have gone down in a very alarming manner. Therefore, our main objective was to plant more trees to replace the ones that had been cut down so as to conserve the riparian land.
- “So far, we have planted 500 indigenous trees, each of a different species and we also involved the community in the exercise to give them a sense of ownership and responsibility for the project. No one wants to cut down what they have planted. There are also farmers around here who are planting napier grass as an economic activity along the river banks and we educated them on the importance of soil conservation” explained Macharia.

Thika residents planting trees

Thika residents conducted a tree planting exercise along the banks of River Chania in an effort to regulate the flow of the river and create habitat for wildlife.

The exercise that was spearheaded by local administration officers in partnership with stakeholders including Kenya Power, Kenya Forest service and Kenya Defense Forces sought to educate the area residents on the importance of tree cover in relation to rainfall and water supply in the area.

According to Bahati Location Chief Irungu Macharia, the river bank had previously been a haven for illegal changaa brewers who cut down trees for fuel and polluted the river with toxic chemicals that affected the water table.

“We have experienced serious drought in the area and water levels in the river have gone down in a very alarming manner. Therefore, our main objective was to plant more trees to replace the ones that had been cut down so as to conserve the riparian land.

“So far, we have planted 500 indige-

nous trees, each of a different species and we also involved the community in the exercise to give them a sense of ownership and responsibility for the project. No one wants to cut down what they have planted. There are also farmers around here who are planting napier grass as an economic activity along the river banks and we educated them on the importance of soil conservation” explained Macharia.

Speaking to journalists, Kenya Power customer experience manager Mary Njiraini said they had planted the trees along a stretch of 1Km and they intended to extend their efforts further down the river bank in the future.

“We generate power using the water so we need to make sure that the catchment area is taken care of. We also use wooden poles in our line of work so we spend a lot of time cutting down trees, and we wanted to give back to the community to make sure that we have wood for the future, while conserving the environment. We will come back regularly to bring manure and check on the

welfare of the trees and we urge the community to assist us in this noble effort,” she said.

Nyumba Kumi Majengo Sub-Location Chairman David Musa applauded the exercise and thanked the local administration together with the stakeholders for the initiative.

“The trees in the area had either been cut down or severely damaged which was a source of great concern for us as residents of the area. We are now hopeful that in the coming months the trees we have planted will grow and prosper and that the area will look like it used to before,” said Musa.

Kenyan Environment laws define riparian land as being a minimum of six meters and a maximum of 30 meters on either side of a river bank from the highest water mark.



Losing My Father; Finding Strength In God...

By: Njonjo Mue



Worth Noting:

- We spoke for a few more minutes as she tried to explain what had happened but I cannot really remember what the rest of our brief conversation was about. I did tell her that I would be flying home as soon as possible.
- My father had suffered a stroke earlier in the year and after some time in the hospital, he had moved in with my sister in Umoja Estate for a period of convalescence.
- I had last seen him in October just as I was leaving for a conference in Accra after spending a few days attending another conference that ARTICLE 19 had organised in Nairobi for judges from East and Southern Africa.

The week starting 14 November 1999 was a highly anticipated one at the Rhema Bible Church in the Randburg suburb of Johannesburg, where I was a member during the four and a half years that I lived in South Africa.

Towards the end of that week, the church was due to host two acclaimed American gospel singers who would minister to us on two consecutive evenings of worship.

Alvin Slaughter was due to share his gift of song on Thursday evening while Don Moen would lead the church in a worship concert on Friday evening.

At the same time, I had been invited to speak at a conference in Mbabane, Swaziland, on Saturday morning.

This conference was part of the fire-fighting that ARTICLE 19 was doing in partnership with the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) to strategise on how to push back against draconian media laws that the government had proposed.

These laws, if allowed to pass, would seriously curtail the right to freedom of expression and of the press.

I had planned to drive to Swaziland with my friend Ann on Friday so as to attend the conference all day Saturday and return home to Johannesburg on Sunday.

Ann and I planned to attend the Alvin Slaughter concert on Thursday evening and then leave Johannesburg on Friday for the four-hour road trip to Mbabane.

Ann had first to attend some meetings at work on that Friday morning. We therefore planned to leave Johannesburg just after lunch.

However, our nicely laid out plans were about to be disrupted in a way that we could not have expected.

On Friday morning, as I was preparing for the trip to Swaziland, I received a call from Nairobi. It was my sister Rosemary.

“Hi Njonjo, how are you doing?” she asked. I was not used to receiving phone calls from home and I could tell from the sound of her voice that something was wrong. “I am sorry to inform you that dad passed away early this morning.”

We spoke for a few more minutes as she tried to explain what had happened but I cannot really remember what the rest of our brief conversation was about. I did tell her that I would be flying home as soon as possible.

My father had suffered a stroke earlier in the year and after some time in the hospital, he had moved in with my sister in Umoja Estate for a period of convalescence.

I had last seen him in October just as I was leaving for a conference in Accra after spending a few days attending another conference that ARTICLE 19 had organised in Nairobi for judges from East and Southern Africa.

My father had lost his speech function and so my conversation with him at that time had been brief and one-sided, ending with me praying with him petitioning God for his speedy and complete recovery. Little did I know that it was the last time I would see him alive.

As soon as I finished speaking to my sister, I called my friend Ann to inform her of the news I had just received and the consequent change of plans.

My immediate reaction upon being informed of my father’s death was to cancel my planned appearance at the Swaziland meeting and get myself on the next flight to Nairobi.

“Do you want me to come over now?” Ann asked as soon as I told her of my dad’s death.

I knew from our conversation the day before just how busy her morning was and so I declined her thoughtful offer but I was touched by her genuine compassion and readiness to drop everything and come to condole with me.

Instead, I suggested that although our planned trip to Swaziland was now off the table, she could come over after she was done with the meetings just to hang out.

As I was preparing to call my travel agent to book myself on the first flight the following day to Nairobi, I found myself wondering what my father would have had me do. I did not think that he would approve of me cancelling my appearance at a meeting where I was expected to deliver the keynote address on his account. This was especially the case because, even if I was to travel to Nairobi the following day, it would still take at least ten days for the funeral to be held since we would have to wait for my sisters to travel home from the United States.

I, therefore, decided that I would still honour the invitation to the conference in Swaziland, after which I would make plans to travel to Nairobi for my dad’s funeral.

As is often the case when one loses a loved one, especially one’s parent, as soon as I received the news of my dad’s passing, memories of the kind of man he was and the relationship we had came flooding into my mind in no particular order.

I thought about how he had modelled love for us by the close relationship he had with my mother

from my earliest childhood until she passed on in 1981. They talked all the time in conversations that were often seasoned with jokes and laughter.

My parents worked in the same factory and they would often be seen walking together on their way to work, to church or to the market.

This was during a time when men were rarely seen walking together with their wives or, if they did, the man tended to be so far ahead that a stranger would not recognise them as a couple.

I also found myself reminiscing about my father’s relationship with us, his children. He was the typical old-school father who hardly, if ever, told us that he loved us, but who let his actions speak for him in such a way that we never doubted his love for us.

He worked hard to provide for his family as a forklift operator at the Kenya Cannery factory and, later, as a long-distance truck driver until his early retirement a few years before his death at the age of sixty.

Despite the many children that he and my mother had, they somehow managed to develop and maintain a unique relationship with each one of us.

I remembered how, when I was a young boy, even before I started school, my father would often come home from work and would take me to the nearby woods with both of us armed with catapults for a bird-hunting expedition.

He was as great a shot as I was a hopeless one and, thanks to his skill, we would often return home at dusk carrying two or three pigeons, which would become a great addition of protein to my evening meal.

Even though he had little formal education, my father’s curiosity and love for news and current affairs rubbed off on me.

We did not own a TV but he never missed the local daily news on the Voice of Kenya (later Kenya Broadcasting Corporation) radio Kiswahili Service after which he would quickly turn the dial and locate either BBC World News or Radio West Germany, which broadcast reliable news that was not subject to the censorship that the government often imposed on local news.

Every night at 9.30 p.m. when Parliament was in session, VoK would broadcast a half-hour programme in Kiswahili titled ‘Leo Katika Bunge’ (Today in Parliament) which summarised the day’s parliamentary proceedings and which my father never missed.

Listening in on such programmes

was the beginning of my own interest in politics and current affairs that abides to this day.

When my father left Kenya Cannery Limited to take up a new job as a truck driver ferrying goods from Nairobi to Nakuru, I often accompanied him on the picturesque old Nairobi – Nakuru highway through Mai Mahiu which has a great view of the Great Rift Valley, Mount Longonot, Lakes Naivasha, Elmentaita and Nakuru which in those days had pretty pink shores as a result of the thousands of flamingos that made the lake their home most of the year. My trips to Nakuru with my dad during the school holidays are some of the most memorable times of my childhood. He would take the time to answer my endless questions as we drove along the escarpment.

My father never paid any bribes that were solicited by the policemen at any of the police checkpoints along the highway. He always made sure that his lorry was compliant with all the requirements whether licencing or insurance documents, or ensuring the roadworthiness of the truck.

But this did not stop the police from hinting, suggesting or outright demanding a bribe, or as it was euphemistically called, some chai (tea).

My father would not entertain such a conversation, demanding that the law should take its course if the officers had found anything wrong with the vehicle.

Observing his numerous altercations with the police and his adamant refusal to pay the bribes, made me develop similar confidence when dealing with authority figures and inherit a similar disdain for corruption.

As I grew older and acquired the habit of topping my class in end-of-term exams, my dad became my biggest cheerleader.

He would look proudly at my report card at the end of the term and say just two words in Kiswahili, “Ume-fua dafu.” (You have excelled!). His smile told the rest of the story and I lived for those moments when I made him so proud.

By the time I was getting ready to sit for my final Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) exams in 1980 and it came to choosing the high schools we would seek to be admitted to, my dad had no hesitation in counselling that my first choice must be the Alliance High School in Kikuyu.

Alliance was arguably the best and

Losing My Father; Finding Strength In God...

By: Njonjo Mue

Contd from Page 20.

most famous public school.

Founded in 1926 by the Alliance of Protestant Missions comprising the Anglicans, the Methodists, the Presbyterians, and the Africa Inland Mission as the first high school for African children, it accepted only the top students nationally and my own teachers at General Kago Primary School doubted the wisdom of choosing Alliance, thinking that the entry bar was too high even for me.

My dad had to intervene and tell them in no uncertain terms that Alliance would be my first choice, and Alliance it was!

When the results of our CPE exams came out, I had scored the required straight A's and easily secured my place in Alliance much to the delight of my family.

My dad and I agreed on most things but as I prepared to go to university, he advised me to ensure that I never got involved in any student politics or demonstrations.

His logic was that as a child from a poor family, my singular focus should be to keep my head down, spend most of my time in the library and earn my degree.

According to him, only rich kids who would have other options if expelled from the university, had the luxury of engaging in student politics or participating in demonstrations.

I assured him that I would be careful but I could not guarantee him that I would not get involved in student politics since that would have to depend on the importance of the matter at hand.

After I graduated and began my career in human rights, my father would often warn me against taking part in demonstrations that took place throughout the 1990s to demand political reforms.

"Njonjo, you have a very good gift of writing," he would say, "Why not use that gift to write about the struggle and let others go to the streets?"

He meant well since no parent enjoys seeing his son or daughter being tear-gassed or their skull being cracked by the police rungs, but I could not agree with his proposed division of labour. I quoted to him Franz Fanon's famous challenge:

"Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission,

fulfill it or betray it."

I politely reminded him that the primary mission of his generation had been to fight for independence and that it was now the turn of my generation to discover and fulfill our mission, and I had no intention of sitting out that important quest and thereby contributing to the betrayal of our mission.

Throughout my life, my father had been a gentle pillar of strength to our family and to the community where we lived.

He was not rich in material things, but he had a wealth of wisdom, knowledge, experience and dignity, and through sheer hard work by him and my mother, they managed to bring up and educate all their eleven children.

My dad outlived his dear wife by eighteen years and on the one occasion when we asked him whether he had ever considered remarrying, he quipped that our mother was the only love of his life and she was irreplaceable.

In April 1999, he unexpectedly suffered a stroke. When I flew to Nairobi at that time to see him, I found him in a hospital in Thika where he had been admitted.

Lying on a bed and looking at me with a frustrated gaze since he had been robbed of his speech, he was a pale shadow of his usual robust self.

As I returned to Johannesburg at following that visit, I was reminded of the poem titled 'Ulysses' by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, that ends with the memorable verse:

'Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'

We are not now that strength which in old days

Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are;

One equal temper of heroic hearts, Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will

To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.'

When I had last seen my father in late October before I departed for Accra, I had left hoping very much that, though he had been made weak by time and fate, he would remain strong in will and would recover to continue striving, seeking, finding and not yielding.

But alas this was not to be.

My sister's teary voice on the other end of the telephone call that I had received earlier that Friday morning confirmed that he had finished his race and it was now my turn to pick up the baton and keep running my

own while at the same time doing my best to safeguard his rich legacy.

My friend Ann arrived at my house shortly after one o'clock in the afternoon. She hugged me in a warm embrace and whispered words of comfort in my ear that I could not quite process, given how overwhelmed I was with my loss and her kindness.

She brought some food for us to share and, although I did not have much of an appetite, she prevailed upon me to try and have some.

After we shared the lunch, I suggested to Ann, "How about we don't cancel Swaziland altogether, but instead plan to leave early tomorrow morning so as to arrive in time for my speech?"

She accepted the plan, noting only that we would have to leave very early in the morning in order to make the four-hour journey to Mbabane and still arrive there by 9 a.m., the time scheduled for my keynote address.

Our Friday evening having suddenly opened up, we drove to Rhema Church for the concert by Don Moen.

It had not been in our plan but God had arranged it such that on the evening before I received the news of my dad's passing the following day, Alvin Slaughter had led us in an evening of extravagant praise where we had danced in joyful abandon to his hit songs including 'God Can', 'Shouts of Joy', and 'More Than Enough'.

God knew that I would be receiving really sad news the following morning, and this joyful concert seemed to be His advance gift to me to ensure that I would not give in to the temptation to sink into depression and to question God's love and faithfulness at the news of my dad's passing when it came the following morning.

Then came Friday evening and, in his inimitable way, Don Moen bathed us with the most beautiful songs of worship including 'God Will Make a Way', 'Be Magnified', 'Shout to the Lord', and one of my all-time favourites, 'God is the Strength of my Heart':

"Whom have I in heaven but You?" the singer asks.

"There is nothing on earth I desire beside You," comes the reply.

"My heart and my strength many times they fail

But there is one truth that always will prevail...

"God is the strength of my heart

God is the strength of my heart
God is the strength of my heart
And my portion forever

There was no phone network on the road in those days and so we could not call our hosts to inform them that



Lawyer Njonjo Mue .

Forever..."

I am one of those men who don't cry easily, having been brought up in an era when we were told that boys did not cry.

However, listening to Don Moen's music in the wake of such great loss so deeply moved me that I had no control over the tears that flowed freely down my cheeks and ended up in a small pool on the floor between my feet.

Suddenly my legs felt weak and I slowly sank to my seat, buried my face in my hands, and freely wept.

The warm tears that flowed were both of sorrow to mourn my father but also of relief at the assurance that I was not alone in coming to terms with this transition, for 'God is the strength of my heart'.

My friend Ann quietly took her seat beside me, placed her arm around my shoulders, and gently pulled me towards her until my head rested on her shoulder, quickly wetting her jacket with my tears.

We remained in this position and I lost all track of time. I also became oblivious to the other worshippers all around us as I sobbed away, aware only of the warm embrace of a kind friend and enveloped by the worship music that filled the sanctuary led by the angelic voice of Don Moen.

The following day at 5 a.m., I picked Ann up from her house and we drove along the deserted Carolina highway to the Swazi Capital, Mbabane, where the conference was taking place.

we were on our way.

We arrived at the entrance of the conference hall at the Ezulwini Sun Hotel just in time to hear the conference Chair announcing that unfortunately the keynote speaker had not made it to the conference and they did not have any information as to the reason for my absence.

"I'm here," I shouted, waving at her as I made my way to the podium.

The Chair was as surprised as she was relieved to see me. The conference participants welcomed me with a clap as they laughed at my unceremonious self-introduction.

I went ahead to deliver my speech after first apologising for my tardiness and explaining that the reason I had been unable to travel on Friday was that I had received the sad news of my father's passing, and my decision to nonetheless ensure that I did not let the organisers and participants of such an important conference down.

We returned to Johannesburg on Sunday afternoon. On Monday, I traveled to Nairobi to participate in the planning of my father's final farewell.

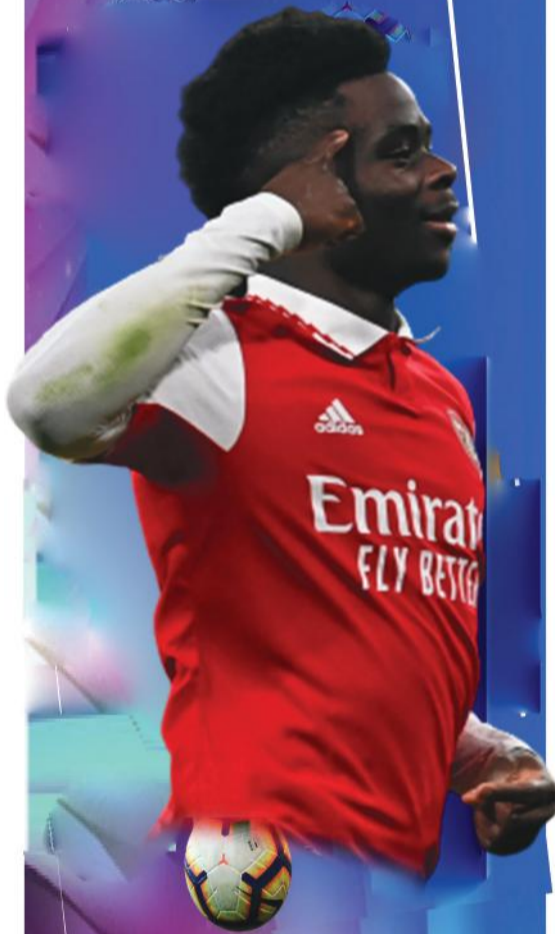
We laid him to rest on 1st December 1999 at Langata Cemetery.

The heavy rain that fell on that Wednesday afternoon was accompanied by thunder and lightning, a sign that though a great tree had fallen, his legacy would continue to illuminate our collective path.

(To be continued.../)

SPORTS NEWS

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Sports >> *Newly-crowned London Marathon champion Kelvin Kiptum says it is going to take a while before he comes to terms with his new status as the king of one of the most prestigious road races in the world.

‘Man Of The Moment’ Kiptum Still In ‘Dreamland’ After Historic Feat In London Marathon



Kelvin Kiptum crosses the finish line to win the London Marathon. PHOTO/COURTESY.

Newly-crowned London Marathon champion Kelvin Kiptum says it is going to take a while before he comes to terms with his new status as the king of one of the most prestigious road races in the world.

Kiptum followed in the footsteps of the likes of marathon greats who have won the London Marathon in the past – such as Eliud Kipchoge and Kenenisa Bekele – when he clocked a course record of 2:01:25 to beat the tape on Sunday morning.

Former world half marathon re-

cord holder Geoffrey Kamworor finished second in 2:04:23 as Ethiopian Tamirat Tola clocked 2:04:59 in third.

Afterwards, the 23-year-old admitted that the manner in which he collected his win was beyond his wildest dreams, pre-race.

“Breaking the world record was not something I had in mind when I came here although I expected to perform well. However, I don’t know really exactly how everything unfolded to this moment...honestly, I am still trying to take it all in,” he said.

In only his second road race in his young athletics career, Kiptum also set the second fastest time in the men’s marathon, breaking his own record he set on his marathon debut at the Valencia Marathon in December last year when he clocked 2:01:53 on his way to victory.

The 2021 Lens Half Marathon champion could not hide his joy at his latest accomplishment.

“I am so excited...it’s not something that I take lightly... this is the second time I have set a course record,” he said.

Kiptum added: “I was hoping to get a bottle of water to hydrate myself (at the 30km mark) but then I again I couldn’t find any and thought to myself to try and get to the next 5km and get water to hydrate myself. I guess this was the push that I needed to get closer to victory.”

Capital Sport

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *Olympic champion Peres Jepchirchir of Kenya finished third at the London Marathon on Sunday, as debutant Sifan Hassan clinched victory on her first ever marathon, making use of her track experience with a sprint finish.

Olympic Champion Peres Finishes Third In London As Sifan Wins On Marathon Debut



Peres Jepchirchir competes at the London Marathon.

Olympic champion Peres Jepchirchir of Kenya finished third at the London Marathon on Sunday, as debutant Sifan Hassan clinched victory on her first ever marathon, making use of her track experience with a sprint finish.

Peres had been shoulder to shoulder with Sifan and Ethiopian Alemu Mergetu towards the final 300m, but Hassan, whose race seemed over after just 20km as she struggled with injury, put up a superb sprint that has seen her win Olympic and world titles over the 5,000m and 10,000m, to clinch a surprising victory.

She timed 2:18:33 to win the race with Mergetu second in 2:18:37 and Peres third in

2:18:38. Sheila Chepkirui was fourth after failing to keep up with the leading three and timed 2:18:51 while Judith Korir was the other Kenyan in the top 10, finishing sixth in 2:20:41.

Two-time champion and World Record holder Brigid Kosgei limped out of the race after just three minutes after struggling with injury. She had previously insinuated that she wasn't sure of her fitness, having battled a hamstring strain before the race.

Sifan, who has been training in Ethiopia ahead of her marathon debut had seemed done at 20km. She struggled to keep the pace with the leading group and dropped off as she kept clutching on her glute muscles and even

temporarily stopped to stretch.

But, she managed to catch up with the leading group at the 35km mark, where they had thinned to a group of four athletes.

They had started off with a steady pace and went through the first 5km in 16:13 and then doing 10km in 32:37, slightly slower.

They were off 20km in 4:58 with Peres starting to throw down the gauntlet and pulling away. It is at this point that Sifan dropped. But with an hour and a half of running chalked off, the Dutch lady began to crawl back to the leading pack.

At the 35km mark, the lead had whittled down to four; Peres, Hassan, defending champion Ye-

hualaw Yalemzerf and Megertu, with Sheila dropping off pace.

It was now down to three in the final one kilometre with Sifan, Peres and Megertu shoulder to shoulder.

Sifan had a little blip going to the last drinks table and she almost collided with the Live broadcast motorcycle but she showed remarkable tempo to remain with the other two.

With a good finishing kick under her legs, it was always dangerous to go toe to toe with Sifan in the final 300m, and she showed her worth with a good sprint to win the race.

Capital Sport

SPORTS NEWS



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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



A Zimbabwean Poetess Published Her First Poetry Book: Africa Hear My Cry



By: Mulamuleli Tshitangano

@themtkenyatimes



Prosperity Melinda Mpfu .

Worth Noting:

- Apart from being an author, she is also a performing poetess, LLB student and a brand owner of Rise African Child clothing wear.
- As a youth who had always wished to be a published author and a recognized poetess since childhood, she has fulfilled half of her dreams when she became a published poet in 2022. "I want to inspire, I want to motivate, I want to lead. I want recognition. Once all that is fulfilled then my dream would be complete," she added.
- One of her biggest wish is to work hand in hand with fellow African authors and Poets across Africa.

Prosperity Melinda Mpfu (23) is a Zimbabwean multi-award winner author, poetess and entrepreneur based in the Republic of South Africa. She is an African who fits in every puzzle of Africa. Growing up Melinda always had passion for writing. "I would always write about myself whenever I heard stories about certain people. I have always felt like people must know about Prosperity, her mother's child and pride," she explains. However, not only did Melinda have passion for writing, but reciting as well which later inspired her to start penning down her own poems. "From the age of 11 to 14, I used to recite what was written by other authors and even act in school dramas. At the age of 15 I felt like I could also write and I started writing and recite my own poems," she further explained.

Throughout her literary career, the ambitious Melinda had always been motivated by her late primary school teacher back in Zimbabwe who always encouraged them to recite poems and also use it as a way of boosting their confidence in public speaking.

"Mr Moyo really believed in me even when I doubted myself. I felt like I was not enough. I even felt like good things were not meant for the orphans or the poor. However Mr Moyo's confidence towards me made me believe in myself," she said.

Melinda never abandoned her culture nor ethics when she migrated to South Africa. As a way of honoring her late teacher, she always carried the poems with her and recites them for crowds to see.

Apart from being an author, she is also a performing poetess, LLB student and a brand owner of Rise African Child clothing wear.

As a youth who had always wished to be a published author and a recognized poetess since childhood, she has fulfilled half of her dreams when she became a published poet in 2022. "I want to inspire, I want to motivate, I want to lead. I want recognition. Once all that is fulfilled then my dream would be complete," she added.

One of her biggest wish is to work hand in hand with fellow African authors and Poets across Africa.

"I wish to meet and recite a special poem for Professor Patrick L.O. Lumumba, a vicar of truth and parity, and as a young entrepreneur who has a clothing brand, I would like to collaborate with Lawy Afrik of Amos Onyango (A very dedicated and talented humble brother) . A brand originally from Kenya," Melinda says.

Like each and every industry that has its own pros and cons, Prosperity never had it easy in a silver platter. According to Prosperity, she had always been discouraged by negative comments from people around her which caused her to have low self-esteem. She also tried to reach to other great artists to mentor her with no luck, as well as as lack of funds to develop and improve her craft. Those has been some of great challenges she faced as a young artist.

"I had to remind myself of a dream of an orphan, a dream of an African Child that has to come to reality. I had to remember that there is a Creator who created me for a purpose. I had to keep on keeping on for the

people that atleast believed that I had a potential and I was talented. I had to eradicate all the negativity and keep being optimistic. Life is not a bed of roses after all. **NO PAIN NO GAIN NO HARD WORK, NO PROSPERITY!**," she concluded.

A BOOK THE BOOK: AFRICA HEAR MY CRY

The Book **AFRICA HEAR MY CRY** is an anthology of 30 poems, all written by Prosperity Melinda MPOFU.

The book is dedicated to every African. It questions Africans as PEOPLE about their identity. It questions about the hate, discrimination and division amongst the people of the same distinct. The book additionally encourages and inspires love and unity amongst fellow Africans. In some poems, I praise the beauty of our rich and natural Africa because as much as Africa has her differences, she is still divinely blessed

The book is for the young and old.