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Gov't To Continue Spending 5% Of GDP On Equalization Fund

By: Abduba Mamo
@themtkenyatimes



Ben Muasya

Worth Noting:

- The CRA commissioner said that 60 sub locations in Isiolo County and 1,780 sub locations found in the 14 counties were to benefit from the equalization fund according to the constitution.
- Speaking during a meeting with Burat Ward equalisation committee in Isiolo while on tour of the area, Mr. Muasya noted that drought which had drastically affected the area and the recurrent insecurity cases complicated completion of projects in time.

The Government will continue to spend 5 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on 14 counties that were affected by marginalisation and insecurity during the previous administrations.

A commissioner of the Commission on Revenue Allocation Ben Muasya said that Isiolo County received Sh760 million and Sh 256 million in first and second phases respectively for improvement of roads, education, health, water and electricity.

Mr Muasya revealed that only Sh 13 billion of the government's allocation of Sh54 billion countrywide was utilised by the counties while Sh41 billion was still lying idle in

government coffers because of poor funds uptake and implementation of development projects targeted.

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Speaking during a meeting with Burat Ward equalisation committee in Isiolo while on tour of the area, Mr. Muasya noted that drought which had drastically affected the area and the recurrent insecurity cases complicated completion of projects in time.

The commissioner urged wanan-

chi to prioritise the projects of their choice especially now that Junior Secondary Schools had come in with a lot of requirements like the additional classes and new administration blocks.

He challenged them to redirect their projects to education by establishing new secondary schools to reduce distance travelled by learners as well as uplift health, water, electricity and roads standards.

Mr Muasya urged the County Government to allocate funds to sectors that will effortlessly reduce marginalisation among the communities instead of fully depending on the national government.

The CRA commissioner said that if every Governor from the 14 counties allocated funds to 10 sub locations annually, the number of completed projects would have been many hence bringing down the poverty ratios among the local people.

The equalisation fund was established under Article 204(1) of the constitution to facilitate the provision of basic services including water, roads, health and electricity to the marginalised areas to the extent necessary to bring the quality of those services in those areas to the level generally enjoyed by the rest of the nation.

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Nyeri Leaders During The County's 9th Annual Prayer Breakfast Session

By: Our Correspondent

[@themtkenyatimes](#)

Nyerians of all walks of life yesterday converged at Nyeri Golf Club for the now traditional annual Prayer Breakfast meeting. They were joined by the Second Lady Pastor Dorcas Rigathi during the meeting organized by the Nyeri Ecumenical Bishops Council.

This initiative was started by the Nyeri Ecumenical Bishops Council nine years ago, with an aim of forging togetherness in prayer and presenting the problems in the region to God.

Some of the leaders present included Nyeri Governor Mutahi Kahiga and his Deputy David Kinaniri. Local national legislators who attended included Njoroge Wainaina (Kiini) Geoffrey Wandeto (Tetu), Dunn Maina (Nyeri Town), Eric Wamumbi (Mathira), Nyeri Woman Rep Rahab Mukami. Nyeri Speaker Gichuhi Mwangi and a host of MCAs led by Majority Leader James Kanyugo were also present.

Also present were Parastatal heads led by Tana Water Works Development Agency Chairman Wanyaga Gathaka.



Second Lady Pastor Dorcas Rigathi ..



Nyeri Leaders During The County's 9th Annual Prayer Breakfast Session.



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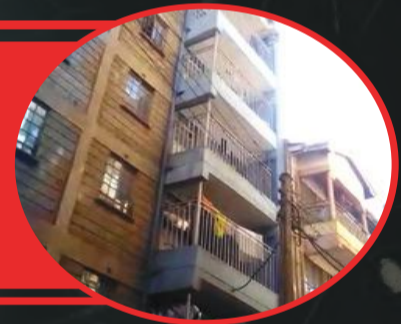
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Farmers Set To Benefit From Affordable Home Biogas Systems

By: Justus Anzaya

@themkenyatimes



Farmers Set To Benefit From Affordable Home Biogas Systems

Worth Noting:

- Mully added that the biogas system produces two products; methane gas which is used for cooking at least five hours a day and 100 biogas slurry litres liquid substance per day which is rich in nutrients that farmers can apply on their crops, cow fodders and farms to improve harvest and soil fertility.
- Over the last two and half years, the renewable energy company that the investor from Israel leads has so far managed to install 1,500 biogas systems in four counties; Kiambu, Meru, Nyeri and Murang'a and plans to extend to other counties across Kenya.
- The Senior Vice President said that before the launch of Embu biogas, it had already registered 100 biogas systems in the county.

At least 30,000 dairy and pig farmers in Embu County are set to benefit from affordable home biogas systems from a foreign investor in a move to reduce deforestation in the county.

This is after the investor who has been operating in four counties; Kiambu, Meru, Nyeri and Murang'a extended his operation to Embu County.

"If 1,000 families are moving to home biogas and stop using charcoal and firewood as a source of cooking it will save 14,000 trees every year," said Mully Lahav Senior Vice President (SVP) New Markets Home Biogas Global.

During the launch of the Embu hub,

the Senior Vice President said that for a farmer to have the biogas system installed in their homes, it will require them to have at least 2-10 cows or pigs.

He said that the biogas system is best designed for small scale farmers and that it can treat up to 2-3 buckets of cow dung per day.

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The Senior Vice President said that before the launch of Embu biogas, it had already registered 100 biogas systems in the county.

He added that the renewable energy company whose directors come from Israel will introduce and leverage the agriculture knowledge which comes from Israel to improve farming agriculture in Kenya.

Embu County Chief Officer for Livestock and Blue Economy Hel-

len Wanja expressed confidence that welcoming the use of biogas, will be a huge boost to help the county to conserve trees and forest cover.

She said Embu County will support the Israel investor by increasing the livestock production in the lower side of Mbeere and the upper side of Embu.

New Markets Home Biogas Global head of Commerce Daniel Mungai said that they are targeting more than 80 per cent of farmers in the county who are using firewood to change to biogas and ensure clean cooking.

George Kivuti a resident of Kirigi Ngandori ward Embu and one of the beneficiaries of the biogas system said that home biogas has helped him save a lot because it is cost effective compared to cooking with firewood.

He added that he diverted the money he has been using to buy firewood to buying the biogas system and that he does not regret having shifted to using renewable energy.

"Using firewood has a lot of smoke but this biogas system has no smoke," said Kivuti.

He further said that he has been using the biogas slurry produced by the biogas system on his coffee and maize farm leading to increased soil fertility and bumper harvest.

Farmers are required to pay Sh 86,000 as a whole to the renewable energy company to have the biogas installed in their homes or pay it in installments.

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Minimum Wage Narrative is Obsolete

By: Bro. Isaac GM Andabwa
(OGW)



Bro. Isaac GM Andabwa (OGW), National General Secretary ~ KNPSWU

Worth Noting:

- The minimum wage hypothesis has failed; it has not kept pace with the rising cost of living, causing many Kenyans to live below the poverty levels. There is a need to adopt a research based living or minimum wage, that commensurate practically with the actual cost of living among the various cadres of the workforce.
- For instance, most of the private security providers operate below standards and are in gross violation of the employment and labor relations provisions.
- They pay their employees far below the government minimum wage requirements, with no remittances of PAYE, NSSF and NHIF which are statutory mandatory obligations and a right for an employee; they subject their employees to uncondusive working conditions, whilst minting millions of cash from clients and making profits at the expense of the dedicated workers and evading tax.

Labour Day, also known as International Workers' Day, is a civic holiday to celebrate the achievement of workers. Several nations vary the actual date of their celebrations making the holiday occur on a Monday close to 1 May.

This year's Labour Day anniversary is distinctive, coming at a time when the country is experiencing intense levels of political polarization, insecurity, high cost of living, inflation, hunger, drought and religious radicalization.

As we mark this historic day, it is imperative to note, a healthy nation is a wealthy nation, and its stability is in the palms of its citizens. For the past three years, the nation has undergone a myriad of socio-economic and political constraints.

We have experienced adversity and moments that have seen forth the loss of loved ones, statesmen and ladies, massive job redundancies, closure of businesses, immense pressure on health systems, travel bans, lockdowns, political and ethnic profiling.

The shopping baskets for most Kenyans have become significantly

smaller. Families are on the verge of starvation and malnutrition, with many facing the impossible choice between food, rent, transport, school fees, water, and medicine, daily. Prospects of rapid economic recovery for Kenya and a better quality of life in the short-run, appear grim. Mental and psychological pressures either at family unit levels or the workplace, with cases of suicides, femicides, homicides and cultism are on the rise as a result of the inability by the majority to meet common basic demands.

The public resentment over skyrocketing food prices and the high cost of living needs empirical intervention measures by the government of the day. The government needs to step in authoritatively and double its efforts in cushioning Kenyans against the spiralling food, farm inputs and fuel prices.

The minimum wage hypothesis has failed; it has not kept pace with the rising cost of living, causing many Kenyans to live below the poverty levels. There is a need to adopt a research based living or minimum wage, that commensurate practically

with the actual cost of living among the various cadres of the workforce.

For instance, most of the private security providers operate below standards and are in gross violation of the employment and labor relations provisions.

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Instances of unfair, non-competitive tendering processes and corruption are bedeviling the industry, hitting hard on a few of the private service providers and firms operating fairly above basic labour relations guidelines. Reputable private security firms are in contemplation of either winding-up, merging or relocating elsewhere.

The country's security and policing cannot thrive without involving and working with the people and in

particular private security officers and nyumba kumi. There is a need to abandon regime policing and embrace a democratic policing model that engages the community with accountability measures in place.

Private security officers' terms of service and welfare regarding remuneration, overtime, allowance, training, career progression and empowerment should be scrutinized and reviewed, just like what is being considered for the police and prison officers. The bare minimum rent in most of the slums in Nairobi is ksh 6000 for an iron-sheet modelled house, a salary increment of ksh 2000 during Labour Day celebrations is far below cushioning a private security guard. If not addressed, the pressure is a time bomb in waiting. There is a need to empower guards through the establishment of a giant sector Sacco.

The government's borrowing spree has added an additional load on Kenyans. Unfortunately, much of the government revenue raised to service debts is lost to corruption, making the cost of doing business and living very high. The stakeholders in the sector such as COTU, FKE and Consumer associations should focus on making Kenyans' lives a little easier by putting in place policies and intervention measures to cushion the population against insecurity, scale the war against corruption, inflation, high cost of living, drought, ignorance and poverty, advocate for a united and cohesive nation devoid hate-speech, incitement, divisive politics and violence.

The Private Security Regulation Act and the associated laws should be strengthened and enforced. There is a need to fully operationalize the Private Security Regulatory Authority (PSRA) and professionalize the industry through establishment of a private security academy that will foster modern training and equipping, ranking and accreditation as well as progressive career growth. Professionalizing the sector, can yield labour export and boost diaspora remittances as a source of income to the government.

Bro. Isaac GM Andabwa (OGW)
National General Secretary- Kenya National Private Security Workers Union
Board Member- COTU (K)
Steering Committee Member- UNI PROP-ERTIES SERVICE, UNI GLOBAL UNION.

The writer is the National General Secretary, Kenya National Private Security Workers Union (KNPSWU)
Bro. Isaac GM Andabwa (OGW)

Ruto Appoints Francis Ogolla As Chief Of Defence Forces

By: Maureen Njeri

President William Ruto on Friday, April 28, promoted Lieutenant General Francis Omondi Ogolla to General and serve as the Chief of the Defence Forces.

Ogolla takes over the position from Robert Kibochi who retires after 44 years.

His Excellency Dr. William Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya, and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces, pursuant to Section 9 (2). (a) of the Kenya Defence Forces Act, has today promoted Lieutenant General Francis Omondi Ogolla to the rank of General and appointed him Chief of the Defence Forces (CDF).

“General Francis Omondi Ogolla replaces General Robert Kariuki Kibochi whose term of service has honorably come to an end after 44 years of an illustrious military career,” read the statement in part.

Ogolla will be deputised by Lieutenant General Jonah Mwangi who assumed the role of Vice Chief of the Defence Forces (VCDF) previously held by Ogolla.

Ruto also promoted Major General Said Farah to take over Mwangi’s job as the Vice Chancellor of the National Defence University, Kenya.

The changes were made by the President on the advice of the Defence Council chaired by Aden Duale, the Cabinet Secretary for Defence.



General Francis Omondi Ogolla ..

Worth Noting:

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Other Promotions & Appointments

Major General David Kimaiyo Tarus was named the deputy Commander Kenya Army while Major General William Karisa Shume will serve as the General Officer of Border Security Command (GOC BSC).

Brigadier David Kipkemboi Keter was promoted to Major General and appointed Assistant Chief of the Defence Forces Personnel and Logistics (ACDF P&L) while Brigadier Stephen James Mutuku was promoted to Major General and appointed Senior Directing Staff (Army) National Defence College.

Brigadier John Maison Nkoimo, on the other hand, rose to the position of Major General and was appointed Commandant of the Joint Command Staff College (JCSC) while Brigadier Abdulkadier Mohammed Buhe was promoted to Major General and appointed Director of Military Intelligence (DMI).

Ruto promoted Brigadier Paul Owoor Otieno to Major General and appointed him Managing Director Kenya Shipyards Limited and Colonel Anthony Rotich was promoted to



President William Ruto and KDF bosses at State House Nairobi in February 2023. PCS.

Brigadier and appointed Commander of the Military Intelligence Corps. Finally, Colonel Alfred Mwihuri Gitonga was promoted to Brigadier and appointed Director National Military Coordination Center.

Ogolla is a trained fighter pilot and

an instructor pilot with the United States Airforce (USAF).

He holds a diploma in International Studies and Military Science from Egerton University, a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, Armed Conflict and Peace Studies (First

Class Honors), and a Master of Arts in International Studies from the University of Nairobi.

PS Asks Kenyan To Purchase Furniture From Prisons

By: Roselyne Kavoo
@themkenyatimes

State Department for Correctional Services Principal Secretary Mary Muthoni has called on Kenyans to purchase furniture products made by inmates as a way of supporting the rehabilitation programme run by prisons.

Ms Muthoni said prisons operate one of the robust carpentry industry in the country which produce high end furniture and asked members of the public to visit any correctional facility and procure the items.

“The industry is open to ordinary Kenyans. It has been very instrumental in furnishing the National Assembly, Statehouse, County Assemblies among other government agencies,” she said.

Speaking when she concluded a two day visit of prisons in Machakos, Nairobi and Kitui counties at

the Machakos main prisons, Ms Muthoni said the money raised will be ploughed back to buy raw materials for training of the inmates.

The PS noted that the training that also includes masonry will enhance reintegration of the offenders in the society through acquisition of skills for gainful employment.

“The skills will help the inmates gain income and coexist peacefully with the community,” added Ms. Muthoni.

She also called for Alternative Dispute Resolutions (ADR) as a way of settling disputes and said the state department will collaborate with the national government administrators for ADR to succeed.

“During the tour which in which we visited Nairobi Medium Prisons, Yatta Prisons, Kitui Main Prisons and Women Prisons and Machakos Main and Women Prisons we also met with the county security committee members because we cannot do this alone,” added the PS.

On tree planting the PS disclosed



PS Mary Muthoni during one of her visit to Prison in Ukambani region

that the state department has already planted 1 million trees as part of the government’s ambitious initiative to plant 15 billion trees by 2032.

“We are also setting aside 20 percent of the main farms in all prisons for forest cover. All offenders given non-custodial sentences will be re-

quired to plant trees in public institutions and take care of them until they finish the sentences,” added Ms Muthoni.

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Gov't Should Borrow A Leaf From 'Devil Worship Report' In Regulating Churches



By: Joseph Mutua Ndonga
mutuandonga@yahoo.com



Devil Worship

Worth Noting:

- After completion of its work, the inquiry which was led by Nyeri Catholic Bishop Nicodemus Kirima submitted its report to then Minister of Internal Security Julius Sunkuli in 1999.
- A few days and as the law required, Sunkuli tabled this to parliament. This is the last time Kenyans would hear about this report.
- It was never implemented. Just like other reports that seemed to rub some members of the ruling elites and political class the wrong way, this one was also put in a government's shelf to gather dust.
- During the respective tenures, President Mwai Kibaki and President Uhuru Kenyatta turned deaf to Bishop Kirima report.

In late 90s, then President Daniel Arap Moi formed a commission of Inquiry to probe increasing cases of devil worshipping particularly in Secondary Schools and colleges.

This came in the wake of students unrest that saw many schools razed down and a number of students perishing in these infernos and others died under unclear circumstances.

Besides, there were incidences of pupils passing out after allegedly getting possessed by powers of satan and it took the interventions of religious leaders to exorcised the demons, restore order and sanity.

Incidences of violent attacks among members of the public and sibling rivalry were also on the rise.

In most cases, this would result in deaths, maiming and life-threatening injuries to people who had initially enjoyed peaceful coexistence.

Notably, this coincided with sprouting of hundreds of the evangelical churches. A number of them had been registered by individuals who had fallen out with the mainstream churches and some had been excommunicated.

Those running them would give themselves the titles of apostles.

Consequently, they earned the tag of briefcase churches. Up to date, most of them passes out as family outfits.

They would run by three mem-

bers-the apostle, his wife and his sons/daughters.

The latter two would be in charge of crucial dockets of finances and administration.

Shockingly, most of the people involved in macabre crimes happened to be their members.

The Moi government at the time appeared overwhelmed by the speed in which these cult-like churches were established.

The provisions of law were also weak and not clear on how to regulate them.

Many believed this is what had informed President Moi to set up the commission of inquiry.

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During the respective tenures, President Mwai Kibaki and President

Uhuru Kenyatta turned deaf to Bishop Kirima report.

For now, this problem of religious radicalization and extreme teachings has returned to haunt the current administration of President William.

As I write this, Kenyans are yet to come to terms with mass deaths of gullible followers who had been lured to join cults started and run by two renowned and flamboyant pastors Paul Mackenzie and Ezekiel Otero.

More than 110 bodies have been exhumed from the scene of Shakahola cult massacre in Kilifi.

Reports indicate most of the victims died as a starvation.

The doctrine of Pastor Mackenzie, who runs this cult, was rooted in preaching to them to starve to death so that they can meet Jesus. This happened as himself eat and drink in their presence. Mackenzie was reportedly mercilessly with those, who had joined the cult, who failed to his call and wanted to quit. They were allegedly immediately eliminated and also buried in shallow graves.

Some of the victims were buried in the same graves. In one of grave, a woman and three children believed to be hers were exhumed. They had been piled on each other.

In another one, seven bodies were retrieved.

After Mackenzie was arrested, it did not take long before Pastor Ezekiel Otero was apprehended.

Preliminary investigations showed that the two were birds of the same feathers.

Whenever Mackenzie fell in trouble with the authorities, Ezekiel always stepped in to help a fellow cult leader.

He had been arraigned three times and was always set free under unclear circumstances.

At one point, the court concurred with Kenya Film Board and ordered closure of his (Mackenzie) Television station.

This is because it was airing misleading content that contradicted the Biblical teachings.

There was buyer on standby. Ezekiel bought the TV station plus a fleet of his vehicles.

According to the media reports, pastor Ezekiel at one point stated that he had built a mortuary and cemetery.

But as it turned out, he had brainwashed his gullible followers to an extent that they did not understand the message he was sending across.

The detectives believe that he had been taking the bodies of his victims to this Morgue and later buried them. No record relating to their deaths would be available.

I totally concur with President William Ruto who called out and likened these pastors to terrorists. He said their place is in jail.

What we are seeing today is the danger of ignoring and postponing a problem.

In my considered view, these deaths could have been avoided if 'Devil Worship Report' was implemented to the letter and spirit.

This is the time to regulate the churches.

Let us not lose sight of that report.

It offers good lessons on how the problem of religious radicalization can be nipped in the bud.

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

Be Wary Of Those Who Repeat Wrongs Intentionally

By: N. George

@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- Several attempts with the same intention will serve as an indicator of the jealousy in these people hence the need to be wary of them. Take their actions not as mistakes rather well calculated plans to undermine your work.
- No one has perfect knowledge on everything that he does. In the ordinary course of your business you take decisions. There is a category of people who like to revenge whenever they think you have wronged them. You will see them taking actions against you even without seeking to know the intention of your actions which could not have gone well with them.



When you repeat a mistake, it is not a mistake anymore. It is a decision..... Paulo Coelho.

What you cannot dare to do knowingly for the fear of risks associated with it there are people who can do as many times as possible not because that they never know it is wrong but for fame purpose or to look unique.

As adage goes never argue with a fool as it will be hard for an external party to differentiate who is a fool and who is wise. If someone dares to destroy your project but you luckily escape only for him to dare you again never take it lightly as a loss concentration for a little while he will have damaged your project leaving you to count losses.

There are people who rely on the competitive plane of life. They see everything you do in comparison to what they can do so you realise that

any project that is beyond what they can afford they will try to destroy it for you not to succeed. Several attempts with the same intention will serve as an indicator of the jealousy in these people hence the need to be wary of them. Take their actions not as mistakes rather well calculated plans to undermine your work.

No one has perfect knowledge on everything that he does. In the ordinary course of your business you take decisions. There is a category of people who like to revenge whenever they think you have wronged them. You will see them taking actions against you even without seeking to know the intention of your actions which could not have gone well with them.

To them you have always to consider them in everything you do for example if people pay visit to your home without prior notice and per-

haps you discuss and seal a certain deal capable of generating huge inflows in near future some of your close friends may claim that you intentionally kept them of the deal and start killing any deals you have been doing with them arguing that when you find a lucrative deal you keep them off despite the fact that you are not the one who sought for the deal.

When you come across another deal with the same nature that is as you go along your business someone gives you an offer of just a single slot perhaps do to your good network or ability to be a bank guarantor the same friend who blamed you for excluding him in a deal in the past come to notice of your new venture again he will feel that you are untruthful friend hence start sabotaging any deal you have been doing with him arguing that you spare lucrative deals for other people yet you want

to benefit from his initiatives.

Always bear in mind that thinking pattern among various people differ. Not everyone is willing to improve his life as well as those of others so some do what is wrong to sabotage any progress so that they can keep lamenting that prevailing conditions are the ones hindering their progress. They keep repeating these errors year in year out and crying out for support or just blaming others.

County Roots For Climate-Smart Agriculture To Boost Potato Production

By: Esther Mwangi

@themkenyatimes

More than 20,000 small-holder potato farmers in Nakuru County will benefit from several programmes aligned to climate-smart innovations and technologies to help them increase potatoes production both for domestic consumption and for export.

Governor Susan Kihika said her administration was working to equip agricultural extension officers working with small holder farmers to train the farmers on modern farming practices that will mitigate against risks like drought, floods, climate-induced pests and diseases.

The governor regretted that lack of certified seeds and poor marketing strategies have continued to hamper the lucrative potato trade in Nakuru County adding that scarcity of certified potato seeds in Kenya had stagnated production of the crop at seven tons per hectare against a potential of 40 tons.

While observing that Kenya's potato seed demand was at 30,000 tons annually, the county boss lamented that Nakuru which is the second largest producer of the crop in Kenya after Nyandarua County, was now producing a mere 6,700 tons, with most farmers recycling crops from the previous season to use as seed, a move she blamed for the shortage that the country faces.

In Nakuru, there are about 20,000 farmers growing potatoes on more than 38,000 acres of land with a total production of 160,000 tonnes of assorted varieties being grown.

Speaking when she toured SimpliFine potato processing facility in the County, Ms Kihika urged farmers to buy the right seeds if they hope to have a competitive edge in the market.

"The quality of potato seeds is critical because bad seeds will give you

poor yields and this will not fetch you good money in the market. As second in production of potatoes in the country, Nakuru County is deliberate in getting farmers to plant the right varieties for the market," said the Governor

The governor who was flanked by SimpliFine's Chief Executive Officer Steve Carlyon who indicated that her administration was forging public-private partnerships aimed at supporting farmers to access new markets, both domestically and internationally, which can provide them with better prices and more stable incomes.

She added that the county government will continue to focus on the development of agriculture and the creation of new opportunities for local farmers adding that under her leadership the devolved unit was supporting activities aligned to climate-smart innovations to ensure that farmers adopt climate-smart agriculture practices and technologies which are geared towards cushioning them against the challenges they are facing.

She said they were using various forums, including farmers' field days, to disseminate information to farmers to address climate change challenges with an ultimate goal of translating the information, knowledge and new technologies into increased incomes for smallholder farmers and alleviate poverty.

Ms Kihika observed that many potato farmers who had adopted climate-smart agriculture have been experiencing challenges like access to certified seeds, pests and diseases and soil-borne diseases and said the County was collaborating with research institutions in coming up with solutions that supports potato smallholder farmers to be able to



Governor Susan Kihika (left) when she toured SimpliFine potato processing facility in Nakuru County.

Worth Noting:

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Finance CS Prof. Njuguna Ndung'u.

tackle the risks that they face like pests, a decline of soil fertility, and diseases which are very rampant in the lucrative sector.

She went on: "We are promoting adoption of practices and technologies that will be able to support farmers to conduct potato farming in a climate-smart way by focusing on environmental conservation."

The governor commended the efforts made by SimpliFine potato processing facility to help the farmers and traders in the region noting that Potato was one of the leading crops in the County and that they were committed to ensuring farmers earn more through enforcing stringent measures on packaging and provision of certified seeds to the farmers.

Initiatives by the County government to improve potato farming, she stated, were addressing the entire chain from soil testing, soil management, quality seeds, best husbandry, to marketing in addition to improved value addition including starch and animal feed production.

Ms Kihika said the drive to bolster the potato sub sector includes making farming attractive to the youth through embracing modern farming technologies, as well as addressing post-harvest losses.

"We are working with various partners in both the public and private sectors to offer expert services in the potato value chain among other initiatives focused towards addressing food security by using the potato," she said.

In Kenya, potatoes are the second

most consumed staple food after maize. However, it is laden with a myriad of challenges such as lack of certified seed, lack of training in good agricultural practices for optimal potato production, access to modern technology, access to markets, and poor uptake solutions geared towards reducing the potential impact the sector has towards climate change.

Potatoes is also Kenya's second most produced crop after maize. On average, 1.35 million tonnes of potatoes are produced in Kenya annually. Potato production involves over 790,000 smallholder farmers. The crop is grown on about 123,000 hectares of land.

Potato is grown by about 800,000 farmers spread across several counties which including, Bomet, Bungoma, Elgeyo Marakwet, Kericho, Kiambu, Kirinyaga, Meru, Muranga, Nakuru, Narok, Nyandarua, Nyeri, Trans Nzoia, Uasin Gishu and West Pokot.

A report by the Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI) reveals that over the years, potato yields have been declining. In the last 10 years, the yield has hit a low of 12.4 tonnes per hectare, which is far below the global average of 21 tonnes per hectare.

"This has been attributed to several problems with the most important being the high incidence of pests and diseases, some of which are seed- and soil-borne," states the report.

Gov't Receives Evacuees Of International Organisations Fleeing Sudan

By: Bernadette Khaduli

@themtkenyatimes

The government through the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs on Wednesday night facilitated the evacuation of at least 342 evacuees who were trapped in the Sudan conflict to Nairobi.

Those evacuated included nationals and personnel of United Nations, Agencies, the Diplomatic Corps and International and Regional Organisations accredited to Nairobi.

The government had coordinated the departure of the team from Khartoum through the port of Sudan by ferry to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia where they were flown in by two aircrafts.

The group was received at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi by the Ministry of Co-operatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Cabinet Secretary Simon Chelugui and the Principal Secretary for Diaspora Affairs Roselyn Njogu.

While welcoming the group, Mr Chelugui reiterated Kenya's commitment to ensuring the safe return of all Kenyans and other nationals that wish to return from Sudan to Kenya.

The government has formed a special multi-agency team to help affected staff members and their dependents enter, exit, travel through, and move across the country.



Evacuees being received at JKIA.

President Ruto: New Roads Will Expand Economic Opportunities

By: Our Reporter

@themtkenyatimes

Increased government investment in road construction will expand access to economic opportunities, President William Ruto has said.

The president said roads will accelerate the country's growth.

He was speaking on Friday during the launch of the construction of a 65-Kilometre road network in Ongata Rongai.

Once completed, he said, the road will ease traffic and give the town a city outlook.

"Rongai has what it takes to be a city on its own. We will deliver the infrastructure and services that are required to make it happen."

The road network includes Rongai-Gataka- Embulbul, Karen Cooperative- Matasia- Nkoroi, Ongata Rongai, Nazarene University- Rimpa, and JN (C58)-Lewisa Academy-Kahara Market.

The President said the Government

will also fix sewerage lines to sustainably cater for the growing population of Ongata Rongai.

At the Merigi Trading Centre in Bomet County, he relaunched the construction of a 75-kilometre road network.

It includes Silibwet – Merigi – Kaparuso – Tegat – Chemaner – Kimuchul- Matecha, Longisa – Kembu – Chemaner, and Mulot – Kapkimolwa – Kembu – Kaparuso, Matecha – Mugoiywet Roads.

The President said the roads will ease the movement of agricultural products to the market and boost agribusiness in the region.

"We have also removed taxes on tea packaging so that farmers can earn more money from farming," he explained.

He was accompanied by Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi, Energy Cabinet Secretary Davis Chirchir, Kajiado Governor Joseph Ole Lenku, a host of MPs and MCAs.



President William Ruto said increased government investment in road construction will expand access to economic opportunities

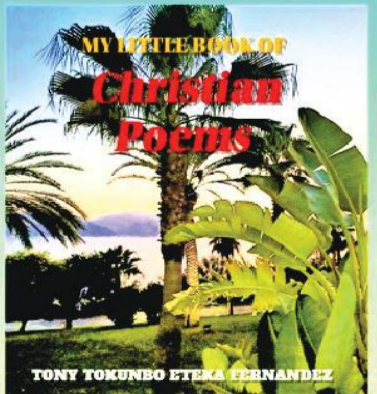
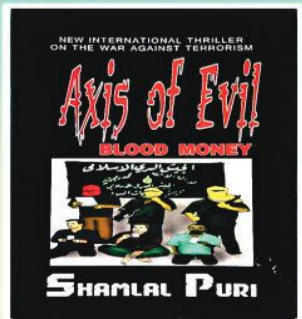
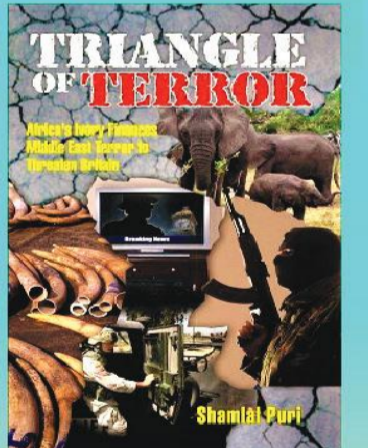
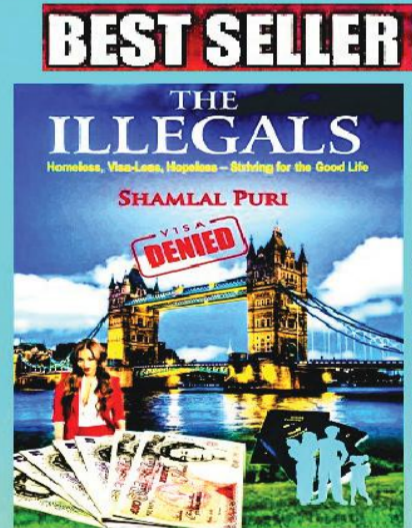
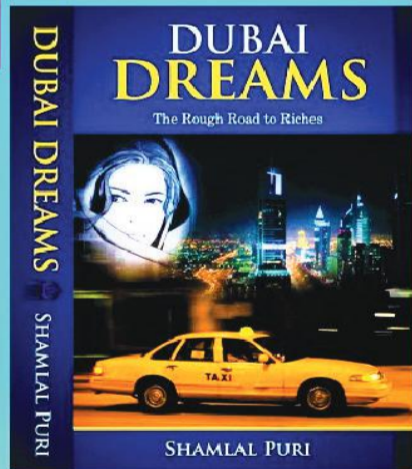
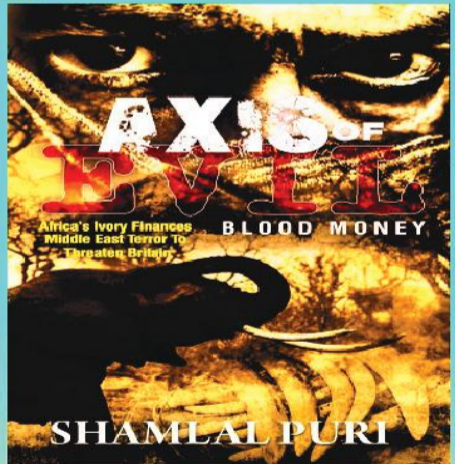
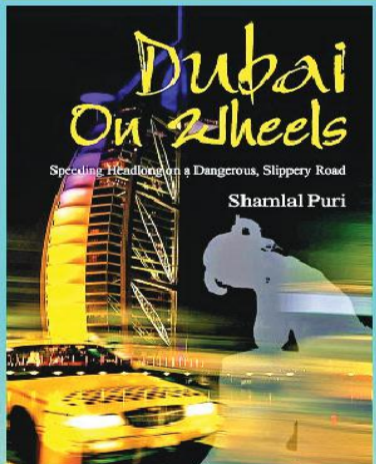
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BUSINESS

Government Implored To Facilitate Local Manufacturers

By: John Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes

Local manufacturers in the country are making an appeal to the government to facilitate them with incentives in a bid to enable them enhance their production and consequently contribute to bottom up economic growth.

Catherine Kathure is the Managing Director of Homelink Mabati Factory which is the Market leader in the production and delivery of all your roofing solutions.

‘We have lipa pole pole plan for all our clients because we are Cognizant of the hard economic times and therefore we try to ease their construction hustle. We have also created direct employment to many others, therefore we hereby asking for support and incentives that support local manufacturers. Taxation is usually a challenge and our prayer is favorable taxation that speaks to the

day to day realities of our businesses. The rising cost of electricity and foreign exchange has also contributed to increased costs of production.

The Managing Director expressed optimism with the administration of His Excellency The President Dr William Ruto for the elaborate plans he has put in line to boost local manufacturers. The push for affordable housing as a government agenda will also go a long way in enhancing the sustainability of Smes in the construction sector.

‘‘What gives me the greatest satisfaction is to see over fifty employees under my care earning a decent livelihood and supporting families behind them through the employment we have provided,’’ she added.



Catherine Kathure, Managing Director Homelink Mabati Factory.

Dedan Kimathi Foundation Plants 100,000 Trees In Mariakani Together With KDF And KFS

By: John Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes

As the president continues to push the tree growing restoration campaign, Government Agencies have been assigned tree growing targets to meet each year. Kenya Defence Forces are required to plant not less than 845 million trees by 2032.

Towards actualization of their new mission, Dedan Kimathi Foundation joined Kenya Navy Base Mtongwe and Mariakani Barracks 77 Artillery Battalion in a mass tree planting exercise in Mariakani area that sits on Kilifi County. The Foundation donated 55,000 tree seedlings raised in the Coastal region nurseries partnering with the Foundation as Kenya Forest Service donated another fraction of the remainder.

KFS Coastal Region Deputy Regional Forest Conservator Mr. Wesaonga pleads with the soldiers to



Dedan Kimathi Foundation C.E.O, Ms. Evelyn Wanjugu Kimathi and Kenya Navy Base Mtongwe Commanding Officer Lt. Colonel Onyancha

sustain the number of trees planted by offering them proper aftercare. He further stated that KFS triumphs

very much with tree growing success reports that bring about the desired change.

Dedan Kimathi Foundation C.E.O,

Ms. Evelyn Wanjugu Kimathi, called upon the Environmental Soldier Program to be thirsty for 100%

survival rate of the trees planted stating that as a great way of creating positive environmental impact. ‘‘We are also ready to continue supporting tree growing within Kenya to ensure that we do not lose the country our freedom fathers fought for to Climate Change negative effects,’’ emphasized Ms. Evelyn.

Kenya Navy Base Mtongwe Commanding Officer Lt. Colonel Onyancha assured the Foundation and KFS representatives that the Environmental Soldier Program was well prepared to grow the trees. He stated that the Forces are establishing water holding areas in the site and looks forward to availing water bowsers for watering the trees before the rains subside.

Dedan Kimathi Foundation continues to urge citizens to support the president in growing trees towards achieving 30% tree cover by the end of 2032.



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Security Boost In Thika Town As MKU-Funded Police Post, Traffic Office, Open

By: James Wakahiu
@themtkenyatimes



MKU-Funded Police Post

Worth Noting:

- Mr Kioi said taking police officers closer to the people enhances community policing, as police officers will engage with residents in non-emergency situations, such as community events or educational programmes. "This will foster positive relationships and mutual respect between law enforcement and the community," he noted.
- The facility will also develop a greater sense of trust and confidence in the police, leading to better communication and cooperation. "Furthermore, bringing police closer to the people means that the community will experience quick response to crime and emergencies. This is crucial in saving life and property," added the regional police boss.

Public-Private Partnership between university, county government, local leaders and ministry of Interior collaborate to boost safety of residents and students

A partnership between the National Government, the County Government of Kiambu and Mount Kenya University (MKU) has built a community policing facility in Thika town. Also newly constructed is a traffic police office at the Thika Police Station in a move that has been lauded as a positive development by local leaders.

MKU Vice-Chancellor, Prof Deogratius Jaganyi, says both initiatives have been implemented under a public-private partnership involving the three parties. "Bringing police officers closer to the people will enhance safe communities as police officers will engage with residents with ease. This will develop a greater sense of trust and confidence in the police, leading to better communication and cooperation," he says.

Thika Town MP Alice Ng'ang'a on Friday officially commissioned the community policing facility, located on General Kago Road, next to the university's main campus in Thika's Industrial Area. "There has been unprecedented growth of the existing colleges within this constituency as well as establishment of new ones, both public and many others are privately supported," she noted.

Although Thika town is generally peaceful, Ms Alice Ng'ang'a, the

area Member of Parliament (MP), who was chief guest, said more can be done to improve security in the town and eliminate stubborn illicit activities that also affect students. She thanked security agencies for the peace and security enjoyed in the town and all residents as security is always shared concern. "When you witness a crime and fail to report, you are failing yourself and the community. So let us all embrace this new initiative as our programme for the good of all of us who are here today, tomorrow and in the future," said the MP.

Lauding MKU for providing a surveillance vehicle for night police patrols, Ms. Ng'ang'a asked residents to contribute towards making the town safer. "We are happy there will be more night patrols around the hostels where students from the university and other colleges live, since they are targets for muggers," said the MP.

Kiambu County Police Commander, Perminus Kioi, said the newly built Thika Industrial Area Police facility will significantly improve security in the area. "It will help in reducing crime in that section of Thika Town, particularly around MKU," she said.

Mr Kioi said taking police officers closer to the people enhances community policing, as police officers will engage with residents in non-emergency situations, such as community events or educational programmes. "This will foster posi-

tive relationships and mutual respect between law enforcement and the community," he noted.

The facility will also develop a greater sense of trust and confidence in the police, leading to better communication and cooperation. "Furthermore, bringing police closer to the people means that the community will experience quick response to crime and emergencies. This is crucial in saving life and property," added the regional police boss.

Mr Kioi said Thika Town is host to some of the largest informal settlements in Kenya (such as Kiandutu) and a big population of youths who attend colleges and universities in the area. "Common security problems in the town range from petty crime to complex criminal activities committed online. Major security issues within the town include theft and the snatching of mobile phones and personal items by criminals riding motorbikes. Students in Thika town have also been victims of violent robberies, physical assault in the streets, drugs and substance abuse, online fraud and conning," said Kioi.

He said having a community policing facility in the neighbourhood will also contribute to the overall well-being of the community. "We are witnessing a shift towards criminal activities committed online such as online money fraud, where unsuspecting people are duped to pay for fake services or are tricked to share their MPesa or bank details," the county police boss said.

Prof Jaganyi pledged that MKU will continue to forge synergetic partnerships with security organs in safeguarding peace and security in the community. "We will also facilitate the students and faculty to participate in security interventions, especially in the emerging security threats, such as cybercrime," he promised.

The VC said MKU is fully committed towards promoting peace, justice and strong institutions within the country and across national borders to international horizons. "This is achieved through capacity development in criminology and security studies programs, conducting of relevant research as well as engagement in community-based partnerships," he said.

The facility is the 4th PPP initiative within the neighbourhood. The other three initiatives include the MKU-Thika Level 5 Hospital PPP project; the MKU-Thika High School PPP project on development of the Sports Complex next to us just here; the MKU-Kenya National Library Services PPP also next to us, and a relationship is already being established with the Thika Women Prison along our shared General Kago Street.

MKU's funding of the construction of the Industrial Area community policing facility and traffic police office in Thika is a community outreach project expected to enhance the safety and security of residents, including students. The university, in close consultation with the police, provided all the building materials and labour that was used to set up the facility.

While initially the facility was intended to be a patrol base, the need for devolving more services to the community led to its expansion to what it is now. The political leaders - county government, area MP, and MCA, were instrumental in the whole process.

Prof Jaganyi said the university expects the community to enjoy improved security due to regular patrols, rapid response from the police in case of an emergency and reduction of crime since members of the community are able to provide information quickly regarding suspicious activities.

Other academic institutions and businesses within the neighbourhood

Security Boost In Thika Town As MKU-Funded Police Post, Traffic Office, Open

Contd from Page 18

also stand to benefit due to the proximity of the police. The university neighbours General Kago Primary School, Thika High School, Thika Level-5 Hospital, several colleges, Bidco Africa, and other industries.

MKU made a request last year to the Interior ministry to beef up security around the university and the neighbourhood. The ministry approved the establishment of a community policing facility near the university's main campus in Thika town.

"The success of this initiative will depend on the full involvement by all of us as the local stakeholders and local peace-builders to support this people-centred strategy of community policing. Everyone's support is required in volunteering information or offering security intelligence as well as in the formation and support of Nyumba Kumi groups or residen-

tial security zones," Prof Jaganyi noted.

The VC said students and members of the surrounding communities have been falling prey to incidents of crime. MKU, says the don, is cognizant of its responsibility to impact the welfare of the communities that surround it. "Our stakeholders and the community have been contending with is the issue of rising insecurity. This was the motivation that informed the university management to mobilise resources from our Board of Directors to establish a community policing facility that will bring security services closer to the people," says Prof Jaganyi.

According to MKU Dean of Students, Emmanuel Owuor, the Industrial Area community policing facility "will solve some of the problems of security around the university on General Kago Road. The presence of the facility, he points out, will be a deterrent to potential criminals.

Mr Owuor urged students to support policing efforts by giving infor-

mation to police; forming residential security zones; and coordinating with their leaders whenever there is a security issue.

Ms Ng'ang'a called for better control of street families that live within the central business district, for example. "The town centre is full of street children and street families who are a big challenge to motorists. Some sections of parking spaces in Thika Town CBD have been taken over by street families who man them and force vehicle owners to pay unnecessary levies," she said.

The MP requested the OCPD to kindly join hands with her in solving the menace. "If the children come from Thika Town, their parents need to be supported and educated to keep their children away from the streets for this exposes them to a lot of danger. Where some are orphans, we call upon the local agencies that offer such interventions to step in.

She also called for support for the Children and Gender-Based Desk at the local Police Stations in the

town. "I welcome the Private sector players including MKU and others within the constituency to come on board and work with the Area OCPD to offer support to the Children and Gender-Based Desk at our Police Stations for the good work they continue to do," she said.

The MP lauded MKU's initiative to support the building of a permanent block at the Thika Police Station. This is in addition to the community policing facility that the university has also funded, and is ready for commissioning. The new community policing facility is located near Thika High School.

MKU has also previously financed the construction of various facilities at the Makongeni Police Station. For the most recent projects – the community policing infrastructure and traffic police office – MKU constituted a planning committee that coordinated the construction.

Ms Ng'ang'a called for the retention of the committee, which she says should co-opt more members

of the Thika community so that they can be meeting regularly to advise the police on general areas that need attention from time to time. "Thika Police Station officers are seeking support with two new desktops to ease recording and analysis of gender cases," she added.

The Member of County Assembly for Hospital Ward, John Njiru Njue, appreciates the public-private partnership supported by MKU on the security and safety of residents. "I strongly recommend that other local institutions engage in similar strategic partnerships that will go a long way in fostering national socio-economic development," he says.

Njue challenged institutions of higher education to promote a culture of peace, security and social wellness among communities surrounding them.

Governor Kihika Directs Settlement of Pending Bills to Revive Economy, Support Contractors

By: Suleiman Mbatiah

@themkenyaintimes

In a decisive and commendable move, Nakuru governor Susan Kihika has issued a directive to the County Treasury to settle all valid outstanding bills incurred by the defunct Municipal Council of Nakuru and the first and second county administrations.

A pending contractual bill refers to an invoice or bill that has been submitted to a client, in this case, the County Government of Nakuru, but remains unpaid due to various reasons.

This announcement brings much-needed relief to suppliers and contractors who have been waiting for payment of their bills for an extended period, with some having suffered the consequences of financial

renderers.

In a statement, the Governor acknowledged the cash crunch being experienced throughout the country and expects her administration to clear a minimum of Sh1.5 Billion.

"I am well aware that many of you are facing tough times, and therefore, the settlement of your certified bills will significantly aid in alleviating some of your long-pending financial obligations," noted the governor.

The Governor revealed that she inherited over Sh3.5 billion in unpaid bills, and her administration would do everything necessary to clear all valid bills as soon as possible.

She implored suppliers and contractors to exhibit patience and cooperation as her government remains steadfast in supporting them through the current economic hardships.

"I urge those who have been awarded various contracts to expedite their completion," she added, reaffirming



her commitment to the fulfilment of her development manifesto.

The Governor's directive is a significant stride towards reviving the economy, ensuring that suppliers and contractors receive their rightful payment for work done, and actualizing her manifesto.

This move will undoubtedly bolster

the confidence of suppliers and contractors and enable them to continue providing their services to the county, even in cash crunch times.

It is worth noting that, in 2017, when former Governor Lee Kinyanjui assumed office, the county had unpaid bills worth Sh3 billion, but only Sh1 billion was eligible for

payment after verification.

Mr David Njuguna, a local contractor, welcomed Governor Kihika's directive adding that it is testament to her commitment to delivering her mandate while ensuring the well-being of contractors.

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GTC Launches Nairobi Photo Exhibition Campaign

By: Bernadette Khaduli

@themtkenyatimes



General Manager Avic International Mr. Gong Yuxian and Nairobi Nairobi County Governor Johnson Sakaja during the launch of 'My Great Nairobi Photo Exhibition' campaign held at Global Trade Center offices in Westlands, Nairobi.

Worth Noting:

- According to GTC, the exhibition project also aims at preserving the rich history of Nairobi, educate the general public, commemorate the upgraded and the new phase of the city to serve as a source of inspiration to the limitless possibilities of the world, as well as celebrate the talent and creativity of photographers who have poured their hearts and souls to capture the evolving city.

- Speaking during the launch held at GTC offices in Westlands, Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja lauded the initiative, noting that it has come at a time when Kenyans need to be reminded of the beauty and heritage of their country, the resilience of its people, diversity and growth of the city through the years.

Nairobi's new skyline Global Trade Center (GTC) has launched a campaign 'dubbed 'My Great Nairobi Photo Exhibition' to celebrate the rich history of the capital city as the country commemorates 60 years of independence.

The commemoration will involve the evolution and development of Nairobi since independence, showcase Nairobi's skyline, its people, architecture, landmarks, road networks and infrastructure and the rich culture among others.

The campaign will culminate with the setup of a photo gallery, which will display the evolution of Nairobi from a small dusty town to the bustling cosmopolitan and modern city it is today. The gallery will also showcase the history of Nairobi from the late 1800s to the present day.

According to GTC, the exhibition project also aims at preserving the rich history of Nairobi, educate the general public, commemorate the upgraded and the new phase of the city to serve as a source of inspira-

tion to the limitless possibilities of the world, as well as celebrate the talent and creativity of photographers who have poured their hearts and souls to capture the evolving city.

Speaking during the launch held at GTC offices in Westlands, Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja lauded the initiative, noting that it has come at a time when Kenyans need to be reminded of the beauty and heritage of their country, the resilience of its people, diversity and growth of the city through the years.

"GTC is calling on everyone to take part in this unique opportunity to be a part of Nairobi's history and contribute to the creation of a lasting tribute to the city," said Sakaja.

"MY Great Nairobi Photo Exhibition" campaign is not just a one-way exhibition, but one that will involve public participation by asking Kenyans to share their memories, memoirs and stories of Nairobi through mygreatnairobi.co.ke the official website of the exhibition,' he stated.

The General Manager Avic International Gong Yuxian said the 41-storey GTC office tower, the-largest occupiable space in the region that boasts of a helipad, an ultimate premium city complex in East Africa has positioned Kenya as a regional commercial hub, providing a one-stop-shop for investors to live, work and play.

Our goal is to provide an opportunity for the public to learn more about the city's history while also introducing Nairobi Global Trade Center – GTC, a HOPSCA project," noted Mr Yuxian.

"Once the gallery is up and running, we encourage everyone to come and explore the gallery, view the apartments, explore the mall, and experience the lifestyle at GTC," said the Deputy General Manager Mr. Frank Wang.

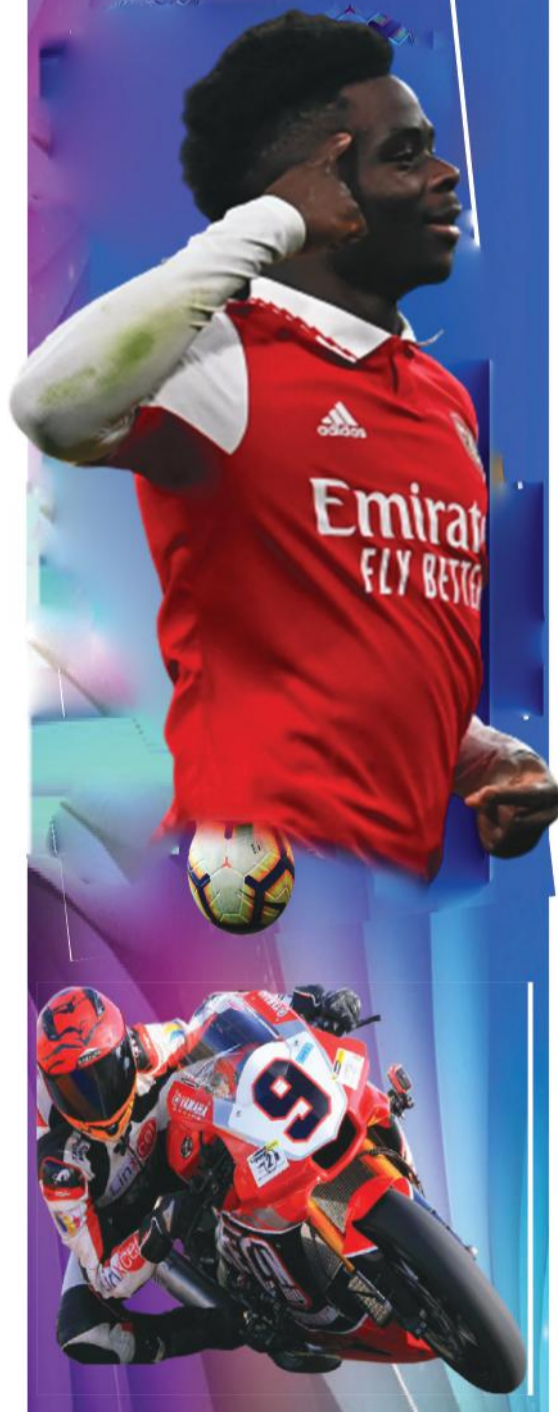
Wang said he believes the campaign will highlight all that is special and exceptional about Nairobi and inspire more people to come and visit, noting that the gallery is in line with

the flagship project of Kenya's Vision 2030 program.

The campaign will also include a photographer's challenge to showcase photos of Nairobi's architecture, road networks, Infrastructure and skyline, Culture and sports with modern day photography.

Photographers with the best images will be recognized with awards and honored at the official opening event of the Nairobi Photo Exhibition Gallery.

Partners for the campaign include the Nairobi County, Kenya National Archives, National Museums of Kenya, Nairobi Gallery and the Mo Amin Foundation.

SPORTS
NEWSPHOTOS
SCORES
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BREAKING NEWS

Sports >> *Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda have launched a joint bid for the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations, which would bring the continental showpiece to East Africa for the first time.

Kenya In Joint Bid With Tanzania, Uganda For Africa Cup Of Nation 2027



Youth Affairs Sports and Arts Cs Ababu Namwamba with Fifa Members Association Africa Gelson Fernandes and Caf Legal Counsel Nadim Magdy. Photo/ RAYMOND MAKHAYA.

Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda have launched a joint bid for the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations, which would bring the continental showpiece to East Africa for the first time.

The African Football Confederation (CAF) on Thursday acknowledged having received a declaration of interest from the three countries along with bids from Algeria, Botswana and Egypt.

The Kenyan government in December approved a cabinet proposal to back a bid for the biennial tournament, alongside two of its neighbours.

The government said a successful bid would help the national football team, Harambee Stars, achieve their target of qualifying for the World Cup for the first time in 2030.

On Wednesday, Kenyan Sports Minister Ababu Namwamba said he had held discussions with his Ugandan and Tanzanian counterparts, adding they plan to set up a joint bidding and organising committee for the event.

“Our joint bid with Uganda and Tanzania for the AFCON 2027 is a strong one. It is about time the Africa Cup of Nations

comes to East Africa,” Namwamba told reporters.

Poor stadium infrastructure has been a problem for most East African nations, with national teams forced to play continental matches away from home.

Kenya has twice won the rights to stage continental tournament finals, the Africa Cup of Nations in 1996 and the African Nations Championships (CHAN) in 2018, but both times was stripped of hosting rights due to the lack of internationally-approved stadiums.

Namwamba said Kenya would construct new high-class stadi-

ums or renovate existing ones to meet international standards.

CAF will name the winning bid in September, along with the new venue for the 2025 tournament after original hosts Guinea were stripped of the right to hold the event last October.

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Sports >> *Reigning champions Manchester City will go top of the Premier League table this weekend with victory over Fulham, building on their midweek demolition of title rivals Arsenal.

Title Destiny In Man City's Hands As Villa Make European Push



Reigning champions Manchester City will go top of the Premier League table this weekend with victory over Fulham, building on their midweek demolition of title rivals Arsenal.

Manchester United are six points clear of Tottenham in the quest for a place in next season's Champions League, following the clubs' midweek draw, but Aston Villa could yet force their way into a place among Europe's elite.

At the bottom of the table, Southampton look increasingly doomed.

AFP Sport looks at some of the key talking points ahead of the action:

Man City eye top spot

After seizing control of the title race with their crucial 4-1 rout of leaders Arsenal, red-hot Manchester City can move into top spot if they win at Fulham on Sunday.

Pep Guardiola's side made it seven successive league victories as they crushed the Gunners at the Etihad Stadium on Wednesday, with Erling Haaland rounding off an emphatic win with his 33rd Premier League goal of the season, a rate of 1.14 per match. Second-placed City are now

only two points behind Arsenal, with their two games in hand making them favourites to be crowned champions for a fifth time in six seasons.

Having played catch-up for much of the season, City finally have the momentum and a victory at Craven Cottage would move them above Arsenal into pole position.

While Arsenal's young side have choked during four successive games without a win, battle-hardened City's 17-match unbeaten run in all competitions has underlined why they were champions for the last two years. "Absolutely I prefer my position because now it's in our hands," Guardiola said.

"They're still top, I know it sounds naive what I'm saying but we are still behind.

"I would love that these two games are six points but you have to win them, but I prefer it because it depends on us."

Villa aim to extend unbeaten run Aston Villa will look to make it 11 successive games without defeat in the Premier League when they travel to Manchester United on Sunday.

Having finished a modest 14th in the table last season, the Birmingham club have made signif-

icant progress since Unai Emery replaced Steven Gerrard just five months ago.

They are now level on points with fifth-placed Spurs but six adrift of United, having played two more games, with Villa likely needing a win at Old Trafford to maintain their hopes of a top-four finish.

It is more than a decade since Villa, the 1982 European Cup winners, last featured in continental competition.

"I think the dreams, they are here — OK, it is good I think for everybody, and we can share with our supporters," said Emery.

Liverpool, the beaten Champions League finalists last season, will also try to maintain their late charge to qualify for that competition by making it four wins in a row when they face Spurs on Sunday.

Daunting trip for Southampton Southampton, four points adrift at the bottom of the table with five games to play, are away to in-form Newcastle on Sunday.

Few will give much for their chances following Newcastle's 4-1 win over Everton, one of the Saints' fellow relegation candidates.

Thursday's 1-0 loss to south

coast rivals Bournemouth left Southampton firmly at the foot of the standings.

"I know it's only five games to play," said Saints boss Ruben Selles. "But we are professionals and we will fight until the very last point."

Leicester and Everton, also in the bottom three, meet in a 'six-pointer' at Goodison Park on Monday.

Fixtures (1400 GMT unless stated)

Saturday
Crystal Palace v West Ham (1130 GMT), Brentford v Nottingham Forest, Brighton v Wolves

Sunday (1300 GMT unless stated)

Bournemouth v Leeds, Fulham v Manchester City, Liverpool v Tottenham (1530 GMT), Manchester United v Aston Villa, Newcastle v Southampton

Monday
Leicester v Everton (1900 GMT)

Tuesday
Arsenal v Chelsea (1900 GMT)

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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



Just Set A Goal And Achieve It

By: Nozima Gofurova
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Worth Noting:

- My first and early January achievement was this book. And I had a small article published in a book that was sold on morebooks in the UK, which is sold in 26 countries. At that time, I really wanted to write a personal book and have my articles published in newspapers of different countries. Believe it or not, a month later my poem and short story appeared in 2 other people's books.
- The same in Europe. I participated in many international webinars. I finished international courses. March has begun. In March, I only worked on my personal book. I worked hard. And finally, the month of April, the month of Ramadan, was a very important month for me throughout my life.



Nozima Gofurova

At this time last year, I was just a high school graduate, an ordinary student. I had almost no achievements. They didn't even know who I was. Everyday life continued. Days passed, days followed by months. My parents opposed me to study in the field I wanted. I gave them a teaching position according to their wishes.

But I fell. At first it was very difficult for me to come to my senses. I cannot describe to you what I felt at that time. Then, starting from December, I started to gather strength. I made new dreams for the New Year. I set clear goals for myself. Although I am not sure that my dreams will come true, I set big goals for myself. Alhamdulillah! So far, from the beginning of the New Year to now, I have achieved a lot. I am achieving all my goals one by one.

My first and early January achievement was this book. And I had a small article published in a book that was sold on morebooks in the UK, which is sold in 26 countries. At that time, I really wanted to write a personal book and have my articles published in newspapers of different countries. Believe it or not, a month later my poem and short story appeared in 2 other people's books.

The same in Europe. I participated in many international webinars. I finished international courses. March has begun. In March, I only worked on my personal book. I worked hard. And finally, the month of April, the month of Ramadan, was a very important month for me throughout my life. My article was published in the international newspaper "PAGE3 NEWS" which is sold in 8 countries. Also, my autobiography and article were published in the international student section of the Indian newspaper RKD×TIMES EDUCATIONAL.

In addition, 08.04.2023. I have published another article on KAVYA KISHOR website. 10.04.2023. My article about teachers was published in the Kenyan newspaper "The Mount Kenya Times" on April 14, 2023. My personal book went on sale on the European website morebooks.

Its name is "Heart therapy". The price is 43.90€ (\$48). Not long after that, my second book "Get the motivation in difficult moments of life" was published and sold on the same site at the same price. My poem about mother was published in "BEKAJON" newspaper of Uzbekistan, and an article was published in "YOSHLAR OVOZI" newspaper.

The most joyful thing happened today. A famous Korean journalist liked my article, and that journalist translated my article and information about me into Korean and published it on a famous Korean website and newspaper. I am proud of today, every moment of my life. In addition, my goals are getting bigger every day.

Action is also appropriate, of course. It was not easy to achieve these things. But I did not give up. I got up and started over. My advice is that if you make the right decisions and be with the right people, your work will develop.