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News >> Finance Committee Faults National Treasury Over Handling Of Impending Sale Of Uchumi Langata

P. 8. The National Assembly Departmental Committee on Finance and National Planning has faulted the National Treasury for lack of a proactive response



Devolution >> Devolution Improves Health Services - Report

P. 12. Seven out of 10 Kenyans believe that devolution has improved health services in their counties. State Department for Devolution Principal Secretary Teresia Mbaika said devolution's main aim is to bring power closer to the people by allowing citizens to participate in governance and decision-making.

Housing Levy Unconstitutional - High Court Declares

⚡ Delivering the ruling on yesterday, Justices David Majanja, Christine Meoli and Lawrence Mugambi said the deduction of the levy from employees is discriminatory and violates article 10 of the constitution. "We find that the introduction of the housing levy amendment section 84 lacks a comprehensive legal framework in violation of article 10 of the constitution, that levy against persons in formal employment to the exclusion of other non-formal income earners without justification is discriminatory and irrational," stated Justice Majanja.



Justices David Majanja

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Pastor Dorcas Want Rehabilitation Wards Opened In Every Hosp

By: OSDP



Pastor Dorcas Rigathi opening the Ihururu Rehabilitation Centre in Tetu, Nyeri County yesterday. Looking on are among others, area MP Geoffrey Wandeto, Nyeri Governor Mutahi Kahiga and his deputy David Kinaniri.

Worth Noting:

- The region comprises the counties of Kiambu, Murang'a, Nyeri, Kirinyaga, Laikipia, Tharaka Nithi, Embu, Meru and Nyandarua.

- "I intend to pursue the ministry of health at both the national and county level to be able to open up wards in their facilities to enable us to rehabilitate our youth. The crisis is huge, and even when we combine all the accredited rehabilitation centres in the country, it is impossible to contain the crisis in our nation," she said.

The Spouse of the Deputy President Pastor Dorcas is pursuing the County Governments and the Ministry of Health at the National Government to establish a ward in every hospital for rehabilitating those affected by alcoholism, drugs and substance abuse.

Speaking when she opened the Ihururu Rehabilitation and Treatment Centre in Tetu constituency of Nyeri County, Pastor Dorcas said the crisis of drugs and substance abuse in the country is worrying and urgent measures need to be taken.

During the event, it was noted that more than 600,000 youth in the Mt. Kenya region were affected by drugs and substance abuse.

The region comprises the counties of Kiambu, Murang'a, Nyeri, Kirinyaga, Laikipia, Tharaka Nithi, Embu, Meru and Nyandarua.

"I intend to pursue the ministry of health at both the national and county level to be able to open up wards in their facilities to enable us to rehabilitate our youth. The crisis is huge, and even when we combine all the accredited rehabilitation centres in the country, it is impossible to contain the crisis in our nation," she said.

Pastor Dorcas said the rising numbers of youth in need of rehabilitation can overwhelm the current accredited rehabilitation facilities.

The Ihururu rehabilitation facility has admitted a cohort of youth screened from various parts of the region. The hospital will provide professional, psychosocial, and spiritual services for the youth with addictions to change, live a dignified life, and become productive citizens. Last week Pastor Dorcas opened a rehabilitation facility at the Koiwa Hospital in Bomet County that admitted a cohort of 100 youth from the county. Nyeri Governor pledged to mobilize governors from the region to revive rehabilitation centers which have been neglected as well as equip those in existence.

Tetu MP Geoffrey Wandeto lauded the efforts taken by Pastor Dorcas in rehabilitating the youth terming the move the right direction to the future. Nyeri County Commissioner Pius Murugu said the local administration has made strides in the fight against illicit brews and drug abuse in the region. Others present were Deputy Governor Kinaniri Waroc, Nacada Chairman Dr Stephen Mairuri, CEO Antony Omerikwa, Nyeri MCAs Gibson Wahinya, Janet Muthoni, Njuguna KaWanjiku, and Agnes Wanjiku among others.

Editor's Desk

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Migori County has launched 16 days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV), aiming to raise awareness and combat violence against both men and women. The campaign focuses on domestic violence, sexual abuse, and harmful cultural practices like child marriage and Female Genital Mutilation. County Director of Gender, Rev. Kenneth Oomo, and County Director of Gender and Social Services, Lillian Atieno, urged residents to safeguard their children, women, and men’s rights to ensure society is protected against GBV. Migori Youth President, Joseph Nyapete, urged local residents to share their experiences of GBV to help raise solutions. The awareness campaign will end on December 10 and will be observed in all 12 sub-counties of Migori County.



Residents of Shaviringa sub-location in Hamisi sub-county are being urged to stop engaging in criminal activities such as stock theft, thuggery, burglary, and mugging. Vihiga County Commissioner Felix Watakila warned criminals that their days were numbered and called for information to be passed to security agencies. He also highlighted the issue of sexual violence, particularly against women and girls. Deputy County Commissioner Ruth Lurete called on citizens to be ‘each other’s keeper and called for effective policing to reduce crime.

Garissa Governor Nathif Jamah has warned traders to revoke their licenses for hoarding essential commodities due to the closure of major supply routes due to El Nino rains. The Kenya National Highway Authority (KeNHA) has temporarily closed the Garissa-Nairobi highway and Garissa-Mombasa road, which supply essential items from Nairobi and Mombasa. The governor has called on religious leaders in Garissa town to speak out against the practice, which he deemed “immoral” and against Islamic teachings. The prices of essential commodities in Garissa town and neighboring towns have doubled or tripled in the last two days, with prices potentially skyrocketing if the Garissa-Nairobi highway is not opened.



ICC Formally Closes Cases Against President Ruto, Joshua Arap Sang

By: Capital Correspondent

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has formally closed the cases against President William Ruto and former Journalist Joshua Arap Sang where they are accused of crimes against humanity in the 2007 post-general election violence.

In a statement, the ICC however stated that the charges against Walter Barasa, Philip Bett will remain active.

Deputy Prosecutor, Nazhat Shameem Khan stated that she had reached the decision to terminate the case after assessing the information available to her.

“After assessing all the information available to me at this time, I have

decided to conclude the investigation phase in the Situation in Kenya. I have reached this decision after considering the specific facts and circumstances of this situation,” she stated.

On March 31, 2010, ICC’s Pre-Trial Chamber II granted the request of the Office of the Prosecutor to open an investigation proprio motu in the Situation in the Republic of Kenya (“Situation in Kenya”), in relation to alleged crimes against humanity committed in the during the 2007/2008 post election violence.

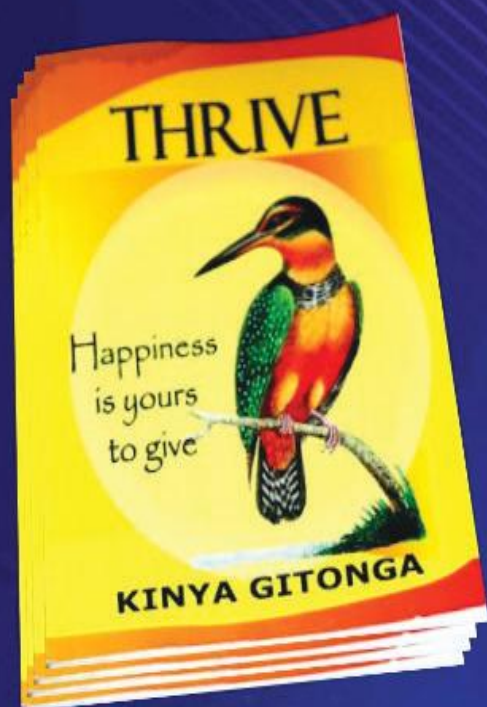
The Office’s investigation led to charges against six suspects in two separate cases, and the suspects included Ruto alongside Uhuru Kenyatta, Joshua Arap Sang, Henry Kosgey, Mohammed Hussein Ali, and Francis Muthaura.



Judges of the Trial Chamber had earlier slated next Thursday and Friday as the dates of hearing the oral submissions of the motion/ FILE.

Kingya N. Gitonga

PSYCHOLOGIST, AUTHOR, MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCATE
& FOUNDER SOUND MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION
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Kingya N. Gitonga

How To Create Wealth Through Real Estate Investments



By: Daniella Nyakura
@themtkenyatimes



various investment options available to help in building one's wealth. In a bid to gain wealth, it is advisable to diversify your investment portfolio across different asset classes which in turn helps in minimizing risks and increasing your returns. When you invest in various asset classes, you are able to have different avenues bringing in returns. Diversification into asset classes that perform differently is beneficial since if one asset class is experiencing some risks, then the others can help keep you afloat and ensure you keep on having returns streaming in. Real estate investment enables you to expand your portfolio beyond equities, bonds, and fixed income.

Investing in commercial real estate

Commercial real estate properties such as malls, shopping centres, and office spaces are investments that can offer you an avenue for building wealth. The renting or leasing of the spaces might result in a consistent flow of income. Commercial real estate properties that are in prime areas, have the potential for exponential growth through valuing the property rent in a manner that will bring you great returns over the years.

The journey towards wealth creation is not just for you, but also for your future generations. Choosing the right investment and working with real estate investment experts will bring you closer to sustainable wealth, one property at a time.

Daniella Nyakuraya, is Safaricom Investment Co-operative Housing Unit Manager

Worth Noting:

- Real estate investment is more than having a home to live in or land to build on, it is also a means to wealth creation. Real estate properties' potential for consistent appreciation and income generation makes the sector an excellent wealth-building tool.
- Land is a commodity that will always be in demand and is one of the most effective investment options that can be used to help bring in generational wealth.

Real estate investment is one of the myriad of ways that you can use to create wealth. Wealth grows through compounding, which means putting money into something with the expectation of making a profit on both your original investment as well as the accrued interest over time. According to the Global Real Estate Market report, the real estate market is expected to keep on growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.9 percent from 2022 to 2028 which provides investors with the opportunity to keep on creating more wealth as the sector keeps on growing. Real estate has been a consistent compounder for a simple reason: there will always be land to build on and houses to rent out!

Real estate investment is more than having a home to live in or land to build on, it is also a means to wealth creation. Real estate properties' po-

tential for consistent appreciation and income generation makes the sector an excellent wealth-building tool.

Below are a few ways that investing in real estate can help you create wealth:

Buying and holding land

Land is a commodity that will always be in demand and is one of the most effective investment options that can be used to help bring in generational wealth. Investing in land in an area with potential for growth, allows you to build wealth since you can hold onto the land until it increases significantly in value, which will yield high returns when you sell it. Holding land also allows you to give your future generations an investment that will grow in value and help with cushioning against inflation. Land investment

will also help you in building equity which can eventually lead to wealth creation. You can also use your land investment to bring in a stream of income through renting it out.

Buying and renting homes

Having a reliable source of income to augment your regular income is one approach to building wealth. You can generate an alternate source of income by investing in a residential property that you can rent out or by providing short-term housing rental services, like Air BnB services. Buying a property in a sought-after location will attract tenants, and the consistent flow of rental income will ultimately allow you to recover your investment and amass wealth.

Portfolio diversification

Real estate investment is one of the

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Finance Committee Faults National Treasury Over Handling Of Impending Sale Of Uchumi Langata

By: PSCU

The National Assembly Departmental Committee on Finance and National Planning has faulted the National Treasury for lack of a proactive response towards the sale of Uchumi Langata Hyper Land sought by a foreign bank, a creditor to Uchumi Supermarkets.

The matter which is before the committee following a Statement sought by Soy Constituency legislator, David Kiplagat follows a petition filed in court by a creditor; UBA bank, who sought the court's leave to enforce the recovery of KSh163 million loan, through the sale of the land which was offered as collateral security when Uchumi sought the loan.

Speaking when the committee met with the Principal Secretary for National Treasury, Dr. Chris Kiptoo, members led by the chairperson Kuria Kimani expressed concerns over the manner in which the government had responded to the matter during and after the litigation process.

“PS, the Government of Kenya is the major creditor in this matter- owed about KS h1.2 bn yet there is no confirmation that after the court verdict, the National Treasury filed any objections to the sale before the expiry of the timeline set by the court, nor filed an appeal when the court granted leave to the bank to enforce the sale”, he observed.

Other members sought to know why the National Treasury never opted to clear the loan owed to UBA bank to safeguard the interests of taxpayers. The government through the National



National Assembly Departmental Committee on Finance chairperson Kuria Kimani .

Treasury owns a stake in the defunct Uchumi Supermarkets.

“Why should one creditor owed about 10% of the total value of the land be the one seeking the enforcement of the sale to recover their loan? Would it be more prudent to pay them off and halt the sale and have the government keep the land in public interest? posed Adipo Okuome.

Appearing on behalf of Kiplagat who had sought a response on the

floor of the House, Nandi Hills legislator Hon. Bernard Kitur observed that while the government had extended a KSh1.2 bn loan facility to Uchumi Supermarkets earmarked to boost its turnaround efforts, there had been follow up on how the firm was operating. He implored on the PS to have his State Department take interest on how Uchumi Supermarkets can be revived to safeguard the jobs of employees working there and busi-

ness for the suppliers.

“PS, all that your State Department needs to do is to engage with Uchumi Supermarkets and see how to boost their turnaround efforts. They do not even require exchequer funding.”, he held.

In response, PS Kiptoo acknowledged that due to some technical challenges, there had been lapses in handling the matter but which had not been deliberate. He revealed to the Committee that while serving as PS Trade, he had negotiated for the cabinet's approval for the loan facility, but due to mismanagement, the expected turnaround did not materialize.

“I admit that we have not acted as government should, on this matter. This largely because we do not have representation at the Board. I will however meet with Uchumi to ensure that we get the most optimal value for money”, he told the MPs.

The PS further admitted that there was need to secure the land until a proper valuation had been made . UBA had in a report filed in court given the value of the land at KSh600 million as at 2018.

The chairperson directed that the PS appears at a later date to shed more light on the matter, including offering a confirmation as to whether the Attorney General's office had filed an appeal on the court ruling.



Principal Secretary for National Treasury, Dr. Chris Kiptoo.

Worth Noting:

- “PS, the Government of Kenya is the major creditor in this matter- owed about KS h1.2 bn yet there is no confirmation that after the court verdict, the National Treasury filed any objections to the sale before the expiry of the timeline set by the court, nor filed an appeal when the court granted leave to the bank to enforce the sale”, he observed.
- Other members sought to know why the National Treasury never opted to clear the loan owed to UBA bank to safeguard the interests of taxpayers. The government through the National Treasury owns a stake in the defunct Uchumi Supermarkets.

Gov't Will Respect Court Ruling On Housing Levy, Says President Ruto

By: Prudence Wanja

The Government will respect the ruling of the court on the housing levy, President William Ruto has said.

Reacting to the High Court ruling that declared the housing levy unconstitutional, the President said his administration will do as the courts have directed on the matter.

Speaking during the 5th Congress of the International Trade Union Confederation-Africa at Safari Park Hotel, Nairobi, President Ruto said he respects the rule of law and that applies to the entire government.

"The courts have said we have to re-adjust the law. This is what we are going to do. We will do as the courts have said on the housing levy," said President Ruto.

The Head of State noted that the affordable housing project was critical for the creation of employment opportunities for the youth. He argued that 120,000 people have so far been employed through the affordable housing project, noting that the number was expected to be 500,000 by 2027.

At the same time, President Ruto said the government is committed to safe-



President William Ruto.

guarding the welfare of workers in the country.

The President said labour relations, trade unions and social security are recognized as human rights and fundamental freedoms.

This, he said, has promoted human dignity, equity, social justice, inclusiveness, and equality in the labour market.

He noted that setting out the respective rights and obligations of

workers, employers and government has enhanced the right to fair labour practices

"Our determination to actualise the best standards of worker protection and welfare has inspired us to endeavour to align our labour policy framework with all international labour standards that have been ratified by Kenya," he said.

The President said this includes the upgrading of the country's occupa-

tional safety and health as well as work injury benefits regimes.

The Head of State said prioritising workers' welfare was the surest way of accelerating the actualisation of the government's worker-centric Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda.

This, he explained, will stimulate economic vigour, increase incomes, enhance savings and promote investment.

"The gap that exists is that of making sure that adequate arrangements exist to ensure that workers have decent jobs, safe and dignified working environment, a fair regime of income and remuneration, which rewards skill and productivity," he added.

The President called on Pan African trade union leadership to spearhead the realisation of the African Continental Free Trade Area that promises a better future for workers in the continent.

Barbados Prime Minister Mia Motley emphasized on the need for governments to protect and empower workers through training.

"We must protect the most vulnerable workers amongst us besides empowering them through training," said Ms Mia who spoke virtually.

Director-General of the International Labour Organisation Gilbert Hounbo, said combating inequality and poverty remain key to the welfare of workers.

He urged African governments to address the problem of child labour, saying it was still rampant in the continent.

"We owe our children a better future. We must stop child labour for the sake of their future," said Mr Hounbo.

High Court Declares Housing Levy Unconstitutional

By: KBC Digital

A three-judge bench at the High Court has declared the housing levy proposed in the Finance Act 2023 as unconstitutional.

Delivering the ruling on yesterday, Justices David Majanja, Christine Meoli and Lawrence Mugambi said the deduction of the levy from employees is discriminatory and violates article 10 of the constitution.

"We find that the introduction of the housing levy amendment section 84 lacks a comprehensive legal framework in violation of article 10 of the constitution, that levy against persons in formal employment to the exclusion of other non-formal income earners without justification is discriminatory and irrational," stated Justice Majanja.

The court also found that it was unlawful for Cabinet Secretary of lands to authorize Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) to collect 1.5pc from employees salaries as outlined under section 84 of the Finance act 2023.

The petition by Busia Senator Okiya Omtatah and six others sought to stop the implementation of the of Act in its entirety.

They claimed its passage in Parliament was unprocedural, and that it will affect many Kenyans who are already overburdened by the current high cost of living.

The petitioners also sought to have the new law declared unconstitutional arguing that the Finance Act 2023 was illegal because the Bill did not pass through the senate as envisioned by the law.

They argued that there was no concurrence of both Speakers of the National Assembly and Senate on matters relating to counties.



Justices Christine Meoli, David Majanja and Lawrence Mugambi

Laboring Hearts



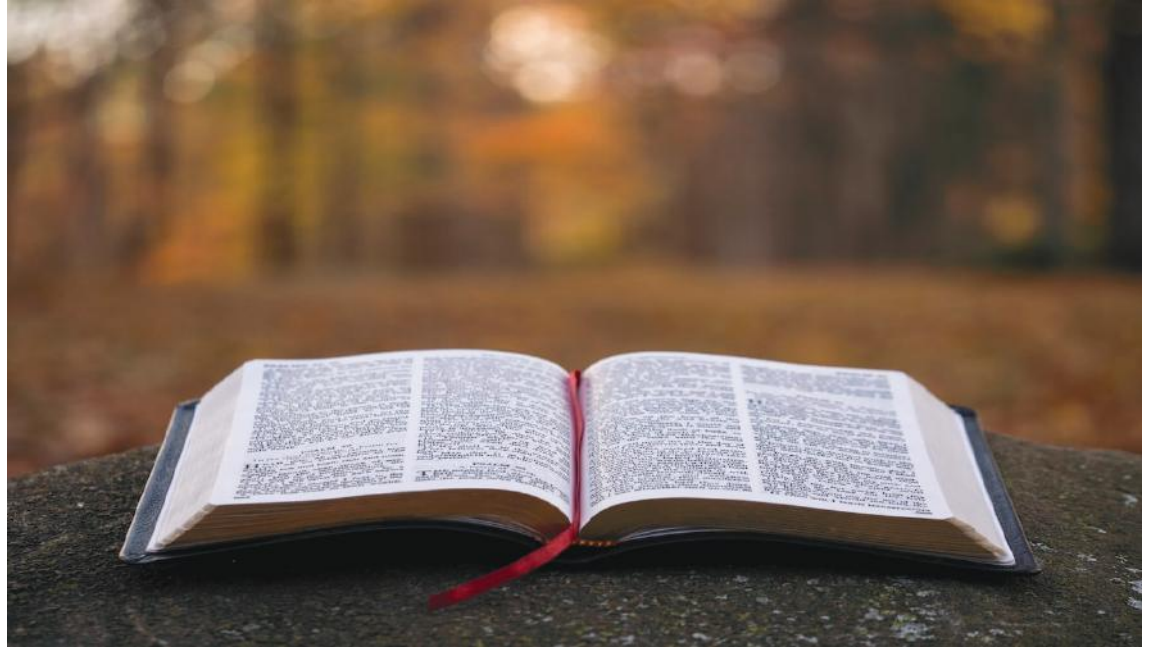
By: Eric Musa
EMEA.ericmusa@gmail.com

Greatness depends on a core of people who are willing to put out as the situation demands. Men, we have to understand that we will never do great things for God without the willingness to extend ourselves for the sake of the gospel even when bone-tired. Christ's example teaches us that a ministering heart must of necessity be a labouring heart. The Apostle Paul had a heart like that: "Surely you remember, brothers," he says, "our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you"(1 Thessalonians 2:9).

This apostolic work ethic is a prominent theme with Paul: "I have labored and toiled," he told the Corinthians, "and have often gone without

sleep . . ." (2 Corinthians 11:27). The fact is, anyone who has ever done anything for God has had a laboring heart — no exceptions. Luther is said to have worked so hard that he often fell into bed, not even taking time to change his sheets for a whole year! D. L. Moody's bedtime prayer on one occasion, as he rolled his bulk into bed, was, "Lord, I'm tired! Amen." Big hearts, the enlarged hearts that God uses, are laboring hearts which, though weary, will willingly be expended as necessary. You may fancy that you have a ministering heart, but if you are not laboring for the gospel in the place where God has put you, and do not find yourself being inconvenienced by your commitment, you are deluding yourself.

Ministering hearts are disciplined to labor, for they regularly move beyond their comfort zones, they put themselves in vulnerable spots, they make commitments which cost, they get tired for Christ's sake, they pay the price, they encounter rough seas. But their sails billow full of God's Spirit. One may ask: how can one attain, and maintain a constant labouring heart? I firmly believe it is



the Holy Spirit full surrender, full control and strengthening. On our part we must push ourselves and be self disciplined.

MAY GOD TRULY HELP US, AND WE BE WILLING TO PUSH OURSELVES TO GO TIE EXTRA MILE, SELAH: AMEN.

References:
The Living Bible

Discipline of a Godly Man(Book by Kent Hughes)

Evangelist Eric Musa:

(My message continuously: If you are not saved: Believe, accept, receive and confess Christ Jesus as your Lord and Saviour and be filled with the Holy Spirit, as it is written; "NOW is the acceptable time, TODAY is the day of SALVATION.- 2

Cor 6:2". For prayers, devotion, and to support the ministry contact Evangelist on +254722157300 (Email: EMEA.ericmusa@gmail.com). Remember, God Loves you and I unconditionally, perfectly and always: SHALOM

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Natembeya's Claims That Gachagua Was Undermining His Leadership Did Not Hold Any Water



By: Joseph Mutua Ndonga
mutuandongaa@yahoo.com



Worth Noting:

- The governor alleged this is where the rains started beating me. I did not attend the meeting. This was not because of disrespecting the President. I had not been invited. If I gatecrashed I would not be in this trouble. I regret why I did not do this, he claimed.
- Since then, my deputy become big headed. I have not been seeing reporting to her office.
- Natembeya further stated. She was among top county executives drawn from various counties who had attended the recent high profile meeting of United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) held in New York in America. Six governors were in that delegation.



Trans Nzoia governor George Natembeya .

Trans Nzoia governor George Natembeya told the Senate Committee a few days ago that he was having a strained relationship with his deputy Ms Philomenah Kipkory.

He dropped the name of Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua and alleged that he was behind his woes.

My deputy started defying me following the statement made by DP in August this year.

The DP who had accompanied President William Ruto during a working tour in Western had rallied the regional leaders to attend a Presidential meeting in Kakamega State Lodge.

He had warned those who will not turn up that the national government will not take the matter lightly.

We shall assume that you are not willing to work with us and you out to sabotage projects and programmes we were launching and commissioning.

The governor alleged this is where the rains started beating me. I did not attend the meeting. This was not because of disrespecting the President. I had not been invited. If I gatecrashed I would not be in this trouble. I regret why I did not do this, he claimed.

Since then, my deputy become big headed. I have not been seeing reporting to her office.

Natembeya further stated. She was among top county executives drawn from various counties who had attended

the recent high profile meeting of United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) held in New York in America. Six governors were in that delegation.

I had told her not to attend this meeting because the forum will not add any value to our county of Trans Nzoia. She declined.

As a writer and political analyst, I stepped out to seek the views of a cross section of residents in Githurai estate.

Majority of them averred that Natembeya's remarks reeked of hypocrisy, malice, envy and seniority complex.

The governor believed that he was the most senior leader and as such he is one who was supposed to represent the county at UNGA meeting.

Six governors attended the forum. So alleging that the forum would not add any value to the counties, this would amount to insulting his colleagues.

This would be interpreted to mean they had gone there for joy ridding and luxuries.

It was also wrong to drag the name of DP Gachagua.

As enshrined in Article 147 of the Constitution, the role of DP is very clear. He is the Principal Assistant to the President and this places him in the position of the second-in-command.

Given this scenario, the responsibility of mobilizing the local leaders to attend the Kakamega meeting lied squarely with him.

The main agenda of this meeting revolved around matters of development. If you did not attend it, then it means you had a hidden agenda.

As we know, Natembeya was elected on a ticket of the DAP-K, an affiliate party of Azimio La Umoja One Kenya Coalition.

The party is led by former Defense Minister Eugene Wamalwa, a key ally and confidante of Azimio's defacto leader Raila Odinga. Could this be the reason why Natembeya snubbed the meeting?

It is hard to believe he had not been invited.

The position of President William Ruto's administration has remained clear. Elections were over and behind us. This was the time for all leaders of all political persuasions to join hands and fulfill the pre-election promises.

But Azimio leader had never recovered from the devastating loss he suffered during the election.

Dr Ruto's working tour of Western came at a time when he was still in a combative mood.

In trying to further justify his misconceived claims that the DP was undermining his authority, I heard Natembeya saying this.

The invitation letter for his deputy governor to attend the UNGA meeting came through the office of DP.

Gachagua is there to help the President.

So, writing and sending invitations to the state officials who will accompany his boss in such trips is part of his job descriptions.

During the session with the Senate, the governor had also attributed his woes to multi-ethnic wars.

He did not dwell much on this issue. But to me, this was main cause of his woes.

For starters, Trans Nzoia is a cosmopolitan county which means it is populated by all the communities.

One would expect Natembeya to change his style of leadership if he wants to survive.

He should shed off his arrogance, pride and stop looking for scapegoat. Instead, he must cultivate a cordial working relationship with the county MCAs and other elected local leaders.

Besides, he should treat all communities equally and with decorum and utmost respect.

Otherwise, blaming Gachagua will not help you. You may be trumpeting for political forces opposing DP in Western.

If this is true, be wary. You are greenhorn in politics. Those using you are veterans. They thrive in politics of Use and Dump.

Joseph Mutua Ndonga Is A Writer And Political Analyst Based In Nairobi

Devolution Improves Health Services - Report

By: Onyango Venah

@themkenyentimes

Worth Noting:

- “Devolution has enhanced the capacity development of national and county governments to enable them to implement their respective functions and powers under the devolved system of governance and mobilise resources from local and international partners to support county governments in delivering services to citizens, among others,” said Mbaika.
- The PS explained that the majority of Kenyans agree that devolution has brought a number of positive changes, with 3 out of 4 Kenyans saying that devolution has led to an improvement in services and 6 out of 10 reporting seeing positive economic developments in their counties.



PS Teresiah Mbaika

Seven out of 10 Kenyans believe that devolution has improved health services in their counties.

State Department for Devolution Principal Secretary Teresia Mbaika said devolution’s main aim is to bring power closer to the people by allowing citizens to participate in governance and decision-making.

The PS was speaking in Nairobi on Monday during the release of the Twaweza East Africa research findings, said that devolution has had several achievements since 2013, such as the formation of intergovernmental relations systems that facilitate consultation, cooperation, and coordination between the two levels of government in serving citizens.

“Devolution has enhanced the capacity development of national and county governments to enable them to implement their respective functions and powers under the devolved system of governance and mobilise resources from local and international partners to support county governments in delivering services to citizens, among others,” said Mbaika.

The PS explained that the majority of Kenyans agree that devolution has brought a number of positive changes, with 3 out of 4 Kenyans saying that devolution has led to an improvement in services and 6 out of 10 reporting seeing positive economic developments in their counties.

“Specifically, 7 out of 10 citizens say that devolution has improved health services in their county. Important-

ly, more women, young people, and those who earn their income from agriculture are more likely to say health services have improved due to devolution than their older, richer male compatriots,” said the PS.

She explained that three out of ten Kenyans now say it is very easy to meet the leaders of their county; three out of ten say it is very easy to influ-

ence county decision-making; and say it is very easy to access information.

These findings were released by Twaweza East Africa in a research brief titled Power to the People: Kenyan citizens’ experiences and opinions on ten years of devolution with data from Sautiza Wananchi, Africa’s first nationally representative

high-frequency mobile phone survey.

Respondents were selected through random sampling from a database of contacts from previous surveys to establish a new representative panel of the country’s population.

For this brief, data was collected from 3,746 respondents in the 10th round of the special panel, conducted between July 19 and July 27, 2023.

Around half of Kenyans also agree that devolution has brought benefits in terms of inclusion and accountability, including greater involvement in decision-making; more transparency and accountability; and fairer distribution of resources.

Significantly, 8 out of 10 Kenyans support devolution, including 47% who support it strongly. Tana River, Marsabit, Turkana, Makueni, and Elgeyo Marakwet are the counties in which more residents support devolution.

Similarly, half of citizens say devolution is being implemented well.

In 2015, 2 out of 10 citizens had attended county meetings, which by 2023 had risen to 3 out of 10.

Similarly, in 2015, 1 out of 10 citizens said they asked a question or raised an issue at such a meeting, which by 2023 had risen to 2 out of 10.

However, attendance and active participation are still dominated by men, older people, and those in rural areas.



Kerugoya Referral Hospital .

Nyaribari Chache And Nyaribari Masaba Residents Disassociate Themselves From Deputy Governor Robert Monda's Opposition To UDA Leaders In County Leadership

By: Elizabteh Angira
@themkenyaintimes

Residents of Nyaribari Chache and Nyaribari Masaba have distanced themselves from Deputy Governor Robert Monda's recent move to join those opposing UDA leaders in the county leadership.

This clarification came after a group of Kisii leaders held a strategic meeting at Deputy Governor Monda's residence in the absence of Governor Simba Arati.

Deputy Governor Monda, hailing from Nyaribari Chache, hosted Majority Chief Whip Sylvanus Osoro, Senator Richard Onyonka, Japhet Nyakundi (Kitutu Chache North), Daniel Manduku (Nyaribari Masaba), and Woman Rep Donya Dorice Toto for dinner, with the agenda undisclosed.

In a press statement, the leaders expressed their displeasure, stating that

they were not consulted by Deputy Governor Monda regarding his decision to join a political camp they deemed anti-development and anti-government.

Melzedeck Ratemo, reading the statement, emphasized that the deputy governor must consult with the Nyaribari people and the people of Kisii County before making any political decisions.

During the event, Osoro mentioned that Deputy Governor Monda expressed deep disappointment with the absorption of development funds in the devolved unit.

However, the leaders criticized Monda for going against Governor Kisii Arati, whom they believe has the county's best interests at heart.

They disassociated themselves and the entire Nyaribari community from Deputy Governor Monda's move, emphasizing that it was a personal decision not representative of Nyaribari residents.

The leaders reiterated their support



Residents of Nyaribari Chache and Nyaribari Masaba addressing press.

for Governor Arati and encouraged him to continue with his development agenda for the county.

The leaders called on UDA leadership, including South Mugirango MP

Silvenus Osoro, Senator Onyonka, Woman Rep Dorice Donya, and Deputy Governor Monda, to stop opposing Governor Arati and allow him to serve the people.

They demanded Deputy Governor Monda to clarify his stance within 24 hours, questioning whether he had defected or resigned from his role.

Gov't Sets Up Flood Emergency Multiagency Command Centre

By: Prudence Wanja

The government has established a Command Center for Flood Emergency Response and communication at the National Disaster Operations Center in Nyayo House.

The Command Center will document and report all flood disaster information from across the country during the ongoing heavy rains.

The team comprising of 11 Ministries and their relevant Agencies, adopting a Whole of Government Approach, will provide early warning information, flood alerts, flood preparedness, safety and emergency response information to stakeholders and the public.

According to Internal Security Principal Secretary, Raymond Omollo, the Council of Governors as well as the Red Cross Society have similarly been sanctioned to augment response and interventions being implemented.

"Saving lives and reducing the impact of the El Nino rains through early warning and disaster monitoring remains the Government's top priority and having every actor and stakeholder working in sync is the surest way of mitigating and responding to the emergency," said Omollo.

The team has also been tasked to mobilize resources and combine capacities at all levels of Government and liaise with agencies in National and County governments to better respond to emergencies.

Currently, four counties including Tana River, Garissa, Wajir and Mandera have been identified as the worst hit while 120 people have unfortunately lost their lives.

Ten counties including Isiolo, Samburu, Kwale, Homabay, Makueni, Tharaka Nithi, Lamu, Taita Taveta, Meru and Kisumu are on high alert.

Additionally, over 89,000 households have been displaced and being hosted in 112 camps established in the affected Counties.

"The Government has distributed



The command post will receive information from across the country following the establishment of a Multi-Agency team tasked to coordinate response to flooding occasioned by ongoing heavy rains/MINA.

food, water and non-food items to a number of counties including Busia, Marsabit, Isiolo, Mandera, Garissa, Wajir, Tana River, Lamu, Kitui and Mombasa Counties," the PS said.

With numerous road infrastructure affected by the floods such as the Garissa – Wajir road and the Maralal – Baragoi -North Horr which remain

impassable, the multi-agency team advised Kenyans not to cross flooded rivers and to gather flood alert information prior to traveling in areas prone to flooding.

The Kotulo – Elwak road has been re-opened and 36 trucks that were stuck for the last three weeks have now started moving to and from Wa-

jir and Mandera. "All major dams are being monitored but Kiambere has a meter remaining to overflow, we call on those downstream to move to higher ground even as government enhances power generation to mitigate the challenge," said Omollo.

Life...



Then the whole universe admire
will hold me, lustrous fate

Buriyeva Sitorakhan Azamatovna was born in 2001 in Kumkurgan district of Surkhandaryo region. Currently, he is a 3rd year student of the Navoi State Pedagogical Institute. "Ilhom

A member of the literary club, a young volunteer of the "Golden Wing" organization. His creative works have been published in Kenyan magazines. He is an ambassador on behalf of Uzbekistan in several international organizations.

In particular: Africa Nigeria is the ambassador of the organization "Global Education Ambassador" at Wisdom University of the country.

Member of the International Union of Writers of Science and Literature "Juntos por las Letras" of Argentina.

It stopped just a little bit... of a
heartbeat
Thinks... dreams are long without reins
Indeed, in the rainbow of the world..
I didn't have enough 7 glasses
the glass that I held in my hand is black
and white
I will make a picture with my heart

Bismillah



the "Alpomish" sports complex. After the achievements mentioned above, I had a question. How are our girls succeeding in this field?

We will find solutions to these questions together. After our country gained independence, a free and free society began to develop. In the conditions of today's rapid development and development, the great future of independent Uzbekistan is the educated, intellectually mature, courageous, high morale, and physically strong young generation.

It is considered one of the priority tasks of our state to bring up such a well-rounded generation. Good deeds and acts of bravery are among the qualities characteristic of people with strong faith. Therefore, making a worthy contribution to the development of the country, the responsibility of not tarnishing one's honor and always selflessly sharing is considered a sacred value. It is known., To achieve success in life, you need three things: attention, discipline and action" - Jalaluddin Rumi



"A country with many wrestlers is mighty, Humanity has appeared and fights with each other...Wrestling comes. Statues of wrestling wrestlers dating back to the 15th century BC were found in the territory of the Jez period. The ancient Greeks loved this type of sport and treated it not as a sport, but as a science.

In contrast to this, Abduhakimov Husan from Khayrma Mahalla, Khavos District, Syrdaryo Province, Saudi Arabia. He won the gold medal at the Kombat Games in the 80 kg weight category. At the same time, the World Championship was held in Syrdaryo.

The World Championship among seniors was full of uncompromising disputes. In particular, the final matches between heavyweight wrestlers on the last day were intense and uncompromising. It is worth noting that the final matches of wrestlers Bakhtiyor and Khusan from Khovos and Islam wrestlers from Mirzaabad were directly supervised by the governor of Syrdaryo region, Akmaljon Makhmudaliyev. Followed from

Communication Between Rose And Cactus



As we know communication is primary tool which can disclose feelings that we have in our inside world. Our tongue is key of our soul and tongue is means of communication, therefore, i wanted to reflect this situation through my following "metaphorical" story.

Once upon a time, in faraway dessert, rose and cactus lived together. Rose was gorgeous and a little bit boastful with its beauty. Doing thus, it was natural not to taking consideration cactus in all times. But cactus always cared about feelings and experiences of her neighbor. Even cactus treated rose with courtesy and respect, regardless rose's sarcasms. But rose make a complain that she is living next to ugly cactus. One sweltering summer, dessert became dry and there was no water for the plants. As a result magnificent rose quickly got wilt, and then she recognized that if she didn't ask for help from cactus, she definitely would disunite her beauty and even might lose her life consequently. Looking to the cactus, she was flourishing and brightening, ashamed rose was compelled to ask for help.

- please, could you give me water if you have?
- yes of course, there is no problem.
-i am surprised that you agreed so quickly even I hatred you with my nasty attitude so many times.
- come rain or shine, I don't want to separate such kind of neighbor.
- do you think our communications in the past give rewarding experiences?
-yes, i don't take serious what others say about me, others mock me, insult me like you. But it seems difficult for them to understand everything is not same as they are showed. So, i would recommend you "don't judge book by its cover".
-your words can responsible for smelting my heart, please, apologize me; li had never known existence of beauty under such a hideous look.
- Beauty isn't described related to outlook. Real beauty is when others need to assist, and even you can afford to help with only your words, their situation might be turned from worst to the best. When i reply you "there is no problem" you were surprised why i agreed as soon as you requested. Thus, even one word can describe whole of your world.

Real beauty is your soul, and you are able to disclose this beauty only with your own words. That's why, only words proof how beautiful you are. So, in every communication that you have, is the another chance to exposing your real world.

Madmarova Feruzakhon is 18 years old. She was born on November 24th in 2005 in Uzbekistan. Now she lives with her family Ferghana region of Uzbekistan. She is a student of Ferghana State University.

Rainbow



Nature is also wonderful,
He performed a miracle.

The field ,the garden disappeared,
From a sound rustling,
Insects are amazed,
The bird stopped flying.

The rain stopped suddenly,
The sun is in its place.
The sky cleared suddenly,
He looked beautiful.

Seven rainbows,
Universe smiles.
Washed , dust, powders,
The wind does not hurt.

By: Niginabonu Amirova

In the middle of the day,
It rained suddenly

I love the shine
If it shines, it's a rainbow.
When it rains,
I will die.

Sugarcane Farmers In West Kabras Say New Cane Prices Of Ton



By: Sefu Sabila
@themkenyatimes



Kakamega governor Fernandes Barasa, Senator Boni Khalwale, Lawmakers Injemdi Malulu of Malava, Innocent Mugabe of Likuyani, Lugari Nabii Nabwera, Shinyalu Fred Ikana and Masaka Shinali (Ikolomani), Johnson Naicca (Mumias West) aAseka Miradi (Khwisero), Emmanuel Wangwe (Navakholo), Tindi Mwale Butere and Titus Khamala (Lurambi) giving a statement after statehouse meeting in Nairobi in Saturday.

Worth Noting:

- “I’m very happy about the resumption of operations of sugarcane companies, the four months were very long to some it was worth it while others it was a loss as their sugarcane were already to be harvested.” Mr. Mulambula stated.
- Mr. Mulambula further says it is a relief since some of his farms had started rotting due to the heavy rains being experienced in the region, as some were almost approaching maturity when the operations stopped in July. His farmers far from home turned into grazing land for residents and thieves. This he says will affect the end harvest and tonnes during harvesting.

In June this year, Agriculture Food Authority AFA and sugarcane millers in Western Kenya agreed on temporary closure of sugarcane factories to give way for farmers to grow their sugarcane to maturity for harvest. In the July agreement, the letter paved saw all sugarcane factories cease operation and crushing of sugarcane.

The decision came after their was shortage of sugarcane in the region, where the county witnessed a hike in prices of sugar and sugar shortage in stores. The four months period is set to come to closure, after announcement of factories in the region to resume receiving sugarcane from farmers as of December 1st.

Isaac Mulambula a seasoned and renowned sugarcane farmer in West Kabras Ward Malava Constituency Kakamega county, gladly received the resumption of operations for sugarcane factories. According to him, the resumption is timely despite loss.

“I’m very happy about the resumption of operations of sugarcane companies, the four months were very long to some it was worth it while others it was a loss as their sugarcane were already to be harvested.” Mr. Mulambula stated.

Mr. Mulambula further says it is a relief since some of his farms had

started rotting due to the heavy rains being experienced in the region, as some were almost approaching maturity when the operations stopped in July. His farmers far from home turned into grazing land for residents and thieves. This he says will affect the end harvest and tonnes during harvesting.

“As much as we are celebrating the move, the closure came with its on challenges, I’m already counting less tonnes in one of my farms in the neighbouring villages as they are plucking and acting as fodder for their livestock. Sadly, it is on huge portions in almost all farms. Others were already rotting as they had reached maturity whole others were approaching maturity.” He explained.

However, sugarcane chairperson in Western Simon Otechere says the miseries of farmers will continue despite resuming of operations in the region. According to Mr. Otechere, the government’s move to importing huge tonnes of sugars in the country, will still be undermine the efforts of sugarcane farmers, as their harvest will be competition in the market with the impoterd sugar which will force millers to reduce the price of tonnes on farmers canes.

“Unless the government stops the importation of sugar in the country,

the cries of farmers will continue. The government has to regulate the imported sugar in the country, if they want to help sugarcane farmers to receive returns on their efforts, otherwise the problems will be recurring as it is now.” He firmly affirmed.

During an interview with Mt. Kenya Times, Mr. Mulambula disclosed the selective issuance of cutting permit, and increased corruption for sugarcane to be ferried from farms to the factory. Many farmers have to give handouts to have their canes despite maturity to get the permit from factories, Mr. Mulambala decried.

“ Unfortunately, connections and favoritism is massive. One has has to part ways with Kshs. 2000 to acquire the permit, and also bribe to for trucks to come and carry the cane. This is what the companies should work towards. It is very unfair for farmers, as they have other expenses like paying stakers and sugarcane cutters.” He lamented.

Last week in Saturday, Western lawmakers led by Kakamega governor Fernandes Barasa and senator Boniface Khalwale met president William Ruto at statehouse Nairobi, where governor Fernandes Barasa said key on the discussion was the sugarcane sector heavily on Mumias

Sugar Company which was not included in the debt payment as directed by the president. However the governor said a team of inquiry will be set by President William Ruto on the same matter.

“During our discussions, we addressed six crucial issues including a lasting solution for Mumias Sugar Company was agreed upon to ensure sustainable operations to ensure improved livelihoods for farmers and the people of Kakamega County. The National Government is addressing the significant debt burden of the miller which stands at KShs-33billion and also the factory is set to resume operations on December 1st.” Governor Fernandes Barasa said.

Senator Khalwale said that the Bill currently at the senate had some controversial sections especially to do with zoning which the senate would iron out for the good of farmers.

“We are quite pleased to announce to our people that from next month they will be free to sell their cane to Mumia Sugar company, West Kenya, Nzoia and so on. We want to do the contentious zoning so that even as we pass the law of zoning it doesn’t hurt any particular zone or milling factory. We have had Kabras Sugar and Butali sugar advertise their new cane buying rates and we hope that once Mumias Sugar comes back on board, they will learn from the rest and come up with new rates,” Khalwale added.

The zoning of sugarcane farmers had raised alarms among cane farmers in the region, with farmers had strongly opposed and moved to court. The president had however, assured the farmers during his visit in the region that none of their ancestral lands will be handed to strangers. The president had openly clashed with sugar millers in the country.

Butali, Nzoia and West Kabras sugar, had put set Kshs.6050 as the fee for a tonne of sugarcane, with a circular from Mumias released with similar charges. The factories had called on farmers to seek assistance on fertilizer, seeds and planting as the factories resume full operations.

BUSINESS

Farmer's Choice Backs Ian Duncan For The Return Of 'The Flying Sausage' In The 2023 East African Safari Classic Rally

By: John Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- Ian Duncan expressed gratitude for the support, excited about the opportunity to replicate his historical performance with the brand.
- "Farmer's Choice is part of rally heritage in Kenya and I am excited for this opportunity to partner once again to recreate the success of the Flying Sausage in this year's Classic Safari Rally. We're optimistic about a great performance and invite all motorsport enthusiasts to come out to support the drivers, enjoy the rally and continue to grow the development of the motorsport community as part of our national heritage."



Ian Duncan and James Taylor MD Farmer's Choice

Farmers Choice Limited, the leading purveyor of fresh and processed meat products in the region, has announced its support towards Kenyan rally legend Ian Duncan for the 2023 East African Safari Classic Rally.

The company has committed to support Ian Duncan's participation at the 11th edition of the Safari Classic Rally running from 9th to 18th December 2023 as they reminisce on 30 years since their last successful partnership when Ian and the iconic Flying Sausage made history winning the WRC East African Safari Rally in 1994.

During the kit handover ceremony, Farmers Choice CEO, Jim Taylor, expressed enthusiasm about rekindling the partnership, emphasizing the alignment of values with Ian Duncan's illustrious career.

"We are delighted about our partnership with Ian for the East African Classic Safari Rally. Ian's unwavering focus and commitment mirror what we stand for as a homegrown Kenyan brand and we are proud to bring back the "Flying Sausage" this year. Our partnership extends beyond the rally and we are honoured to be part of his endeavours, we hope it drives a new generation to pursue motorsport activities inspired by his career," he said.

The company's dedication to quality and innovation in meat production aligns with its commitment to nurturing local talent and promoting perseverance in motorsport. The company first sponsored Ian Duncan in 1994, where he represented Kenya under the Farmer's Choice banner as he

drove a Toyota Celica GT4 dubbed the "Flying Sausage" in the World Rally Championship. His win was the first of his international career and he was honoured by Farmer's Choice who introduced "Safari Sausages" with special branded packaging.

Ian Duncan expressed gratitude for the support, excited about the opportunity to replicate his historical performance with the brand.

"Farmer's Choice is part of rally heritage in Kenya and I am excited for this opportunity to partner once again to recreate the success of the Flying Sausage in this year's Classic Safari Rally. We're optimistic about a great performance and invite all motorsport enthusiasts to come out to support the drivers, enjoy the rally and continue to grow the development of the mo-

torsport community as part of our national heritage."

Ian Duncan and his navigator Jaspal Matharu, will take on 62 other drivers, covering over 4000km across the rally route, marking the largest number of driver entries in the history of the Rally. Various promotional activities by Farmer's Choice, including retail store promotions, aim to amplify interest and support for the sport nationwide.



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COP28 Should Focus On Operationalizing Loss And Damage Fund And Recognizing Gender Responsive Measures For Climate Justice



By: Twongirwe Ireen
ireentwongirwe64@gmail.com
CEO - WoGEM Uganda



Worth Noting:

- As countries look to transition their economies away from fossil fuel extraction and other harmful environmental practices, it will be essential to ensure that the benefits of these changes are fairly distributed, ensuring gender-responsive transitions that prioritize the rights of women.
- More so. Keeping 1.5 alive through mitigation and a just equitable transition according to Paris agreement while addressing climate change impacts, it requires a radical structural shift to build a low-carbon and climate-resilient world. This shift must incorporate a just transition for present and future workforces, guaranteeing decent work and training opportunities for marginalized communities especially women and girls.

In the three decades since the Rio Summit and the launch of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COP) has convened member countries every year to determine ambition and responsibilities, and identify and assess climate measures. The 21st session of the COP (COP21) led to the Paris Agreement, which mobilized global collective action to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels by 2100, and to act to adapt to the already existing effects of climate change.

This year, COP28 will convene in the UAE in November 2023. COP28 UAE brings the world together at a critical moment for global transformative climate action.

Editor, its important to note that COP27 which happened last year in Sharm el-Sheikh closed with a breakthrough agreement to provide loss and damage funding for vulnerable countries hit hard by floods, droughts and other climate disasters. This was the achievement made during last year's Conference of parties (COP). This was widely lauded as an historic decision. Why? Because for the first time, countries recognized the need for finance to respond to loss and damage associated with the catastrophic effects of climate change, and agreed to the establishing of a fund and the necessary funding arrangements. However, who should pay into the fund, where this money will come from and which countries will benefit were not finalized during the conference.

More so, they didn't discuss on

whether the fund will focus on Economic Loss and Damage or None Economic Loss and Damage (ELD and NELD). It's clear that ELD is totally different from NELD because they can be quantified and yet NELD are hard to Quantify.

To you attention, Loss and damage refers to the negative consequences that arise from the unavoidable risks of climate change, like rising sea levels, prolonged heat waves, desertification, the acidification of the sea and extreme events, such as bushfires, species extinction and crop failures. As the climate crisis unfolds, these events will happen more and more frequently, and the consequences will become more severe.

Historically, climate change scientists, researchers and policymakers have struggled with how to make the vital connections between gender, social equity, and climate change. As more and more data and research reveal their clear correlation, during COP28, they should talk about the disparate impacts of climate change and the linkages between women's empowerment and effective, global climate action.

The climate crisis is not "gender neutral". Women and girls experience the greatest impacts of climate change, which amplifies existing gender inequalities and poses unique threats to their livelihoods, health, and safety.

Across the world, women depend more on, yet have less access to, natural resources. In many regions, women bear a disproportionate responsibility for securing food, water, and fuel.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

There is need to integrate gender equality perspectives into the design, funding, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs on climate change mitigation, adaptation, loss, and damage.

As countries look to transition their economies away from fossil fuel extraction and other harmful environmental practices, it will be essential to ensure that the benefits of these changes are fairly distributed, ensuring gender-responsive transitions that prioritize the rights of women.

More so. Keeping 1.5 alive through mitigation and a just equitable transition according to Paris agreement while addressing climate change impacts, it requires a radical structural shift to build a low-carbon and climate-resilient world. This shift must incorporate a just transition for present and future workforces, guaranteeing decent work and training opportunities for marginalized communities especially women and girls.

The Loss and Damage decision-making process belongs to everyone. The Loss and Damage decision-making process should be inclusive and consider the needs and priorities of children, youth, and women, particularly those located in the marginalized and frontline communities within the UNFCCC process and beyond. We demand that: Active participation of women and girls in climate change decisions on the national and international levels are active stakeholders in taking concrete action to address the climate crisis.

More so, Just Transition' must be defined in a way that recognizes the views of vulnerable countries, and considers good practices to address

loss and damage. Finance for just transition and related means of implementation (e.g. capacity building, technology, etc...) must be made available, especially for the most vulnerable countries to ensure that none is left behind.

Loss and Damage Fund should acknowledge and address displacement incurred by vulnerable people. Its decisions on structure, governance, terms of reference and disbursement should mobilize funding to avert and address forced displacement due to climate change. Funding should be rooted in equity and justice and be rapidly accessible to African communities. Decision makers at every level should be well informed about the evidence and many nuances of climate-linked mobility in Africa. They must ensure disbursement modalities grounded in climate justice that allow simple, rapid access.

In a nutshell, Loss and damage funding is a major development for African communities. COP28 is a pivotal moment to determine how, when, where and how much the Loss and Damage Fund can provide relief for the most vulnerable people. And it should be urgent.

There is no Climate Justice without Human Rights

There is Climate Justice without Gender Justice

Climate Finance Now

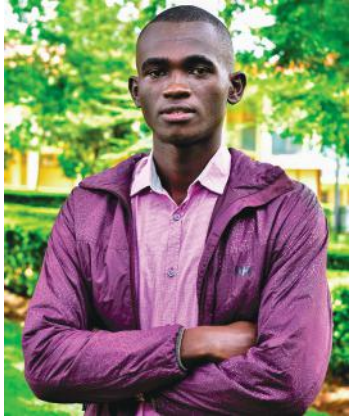
For God and my Country
Ireen Twongirwe

Executive Director Women for Green Economy Movement Uganda (WoGEM Uganda)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Building And Construction: A Source Of Employment That Affects The Environment And Health Negatively



Tony O. Blair .

Oyugis, an upcoming town located in Homabay County, is a place that holds great potential for growth and prosperity in the coming years. The town boasts of well-designed, structured and built-story buildings that line its streets. However, as we admire these impressive structures, it is also important to consider the safety of the builders who work tirelessly to construct them. This includes their health and the environment they interact with during the construction process.

Stephen Odhiambo, a 31-year-old resident of Uriri in Migori County who lives in Oyugis with his family, makes a living through building and construction. As the town continues to grow and develop, it is crucial to ensure that the builders who contribute to this growth are safe and protected.

“I have been working in the building and construction industry for about 8 years now, and I am grateful that I have been able to provide for my family’s needs. My kids are attending school, and I am proud to be able to support them. Specifically, I work in four different sectors: painting, roofing, construction, and tiling. Although each sector offers good pay, there are also challenges that come with them - both in terms of health and the work environment. One of my friends, for example, accidentally got cement in his eyes and now suffers from poor vision.” Stephen Says.

According to the Guardian, concrete is the most widely used substance on the planet. But its benefits mask enormous dangers to the planet, to human health and to culture

itself. Furthermore, according to the Health and Safety Environment (HSE), exposure to high levels of cement dust irritates the nose and throat. Longer-term exposure could lead to occupational asthma. Mortar can also contain respirable crystalline silica (RCS).

He added, “Most of us assume putting on protective gears when working hence are exposed to health complications. The process of tiling and construction involves the use of cement, and in most cases, we are exposed to the cement dust which we literally inhale; with time it causes a lot of health complications like chest problems and other diseases related to respiratory. I remember sometime back when I had chest complications the doctor advised me to take fresh milk after work. I complied. So, of late I’m relatively better. Again, I suspect that dust not only affects us but also the neighbourhoods within the construction areas, dust causes air pollution which later interferes with the environment directly or indirectly.”

According to the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), cement emits a lot of dangerous dust into the air causing air pollution that’s linked to an array of health harms; the cement industry is the third largest source of industrial air pollution such as sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides (NOx) and carbon monoxide.

“On the other hand, painting again has another challenge revolving around health issues especially when it involves the use of “Super gloss paints” The mixing process involves the use of “turpentine”, when inhaled can easily cause suffocation for those who meet it for the first time, and even if you wear your mask; there is a given percentage that goes through the mask hence do not favor those who are asthmatic. Also if the paint drops in your eyes it may cause some damage. With roofing, it kills easily since if you wrongly balance yourself you definitely fall off the roof, you break your legs or any part of you.” Stephen says.

He concluded, “But we have no otherwise we have just to risk at least in order to put something on the table at the end of the day.”

According to Nancy Awuor, 26,

a single mother of one, up to 5 pm in the evening we have to be in the construction sites work for us to earn something at the end of the day.

“I found myself in this work some 3 years ago after my fourth form, my parents could not sustain my college education. So, in the process, I got my first kid. In this field, the main challenge is that it’s monopolized by men hence securing a chance as a lady is hard. Furthermore, if it happens that you get a chance, the foreman or manager of the site will follow you up and down demanding “sex” for him to give you a chance the following day to work.” Awuor says.

According to the Ministry of Land, Housing and Urban Development, the sole mandate of the National Construction Authority (NCA) is to register and certify contractors and accredit skilled construction workers and site supervisors. Project registration and issuance of site compliance certificates. Mandatory construction site inspections for quality assurance purposes. Enforcement of the building code.

“At times I find myself depressed and stressed, I even think of killing myself but again what about my kid? So, I just have to go through those

harassments as I look for another alternative for survival. In the site, we are exposed to a lot of pollution that normally affects us negatively. Building and construction is well paying but it has its negative impacts on health and also the environment.” Awuor added.

In collaboration, the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) should ensure that these construction sites do not affect the relative environment. They should also create awareness of the importance of environmental conservation and the sole responsibility of everyone in promoting nature. Furthermore, they should get hold of those who ignore them and hold them accountable for causing environmental degradation.

Finally, the National Construction Authority (NCA) should up its game and ensure that the code of conduct within the construction sites is upheld to the latter so that we can promote a civilized society with equal opportunity which is also an ambassador of integrity within those jurisdictions. Again, to those working in construction sites; prevention is better than cure, let’s make putting on protective gear a culture or a norm, so as to prevent these unnecessary



People working in a construction site without protective gear .

You can write letter to the Editor on any subject through:

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health complications unnecessary health complications.

Tony O. Blair is an undergraduate at Rongo University, Kenya; pursuing a degree in Education Science (Physics and Chemistry). A passionate environmentalist.

Sameer Africa Breaks Ground on Ksh XXX Million Industrial Warehouse

By: John Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes

Sameer Africa has begun construction of a groundbreaking 'built-to-suit' industrial warehouse within its Nairobi complex, marking a significant leap forward in the company's expansion strategy.

This state-of-the-art facility, with a total investment of Ksh XX million, is slated to commence operations by mid-2024. Engineered with the latest technologies and innovations, this custom-built establishment is poised to elevate operational efficiency and productivity significantly.

Among its key features, the property boasts a robust infrastructure, including a 10 MVA installed electrical power supported by reliable 66kV transmission lines, high-speed and reliable fiber connectivity, ample utility water sourced from dedicated boreholes with backup storage, and an in-house property management team dedicated to ensuring seamless operations.

John Mugo, Managing Director of Sameer Africa, emphasized the

tailor-made nature of the project, stating, "This facility has been meticulously crafted to align with our tenant's distinct needs, encompassing considerations of size, layout, features, and functionality. By constructing a bespoke facility from the ground up, our tenant can sidestep costly retrofits or modifications to an existing space."

Mugo elaborated on the company's decision to venture into industrial warehousing, citing the escalating demand for customized warehousing services in the country. "In a landscape riddled with supply chain disruptions and soaring real estate costs, businesses clamor for a proficient team capable of delivering flexible, purpose-built facilities tailored to their operational uniqueness. Grade A warehousing, like the one under construction, is poised to empower businesses to achieve unprecedented operational efficiencies, enhancing profit margins, and facilitating scalable growth while curbing operational expenditure," stated Mugo.

Erastus Mwangera, Chairman of Sameer Africa, outlined the company's commitment to investing in industrial property development through



Left to Right) Sameer Africa MD John Mugo accompanied by Sameer Africa board members Akif Butt, Mary Ngatia, Sameer Mer-ali, Eng. Erastus Mwangera, Dr. Lydia Mbuthia and Peter Gitonga during the ground breaking of Sameer Africa Ksh 260 Million Purpose-Built Industrial Warehouse.

greenfield projects and enhancing existing properties. "Our strategic growth blueprint underscores the revitalization of our property business, which has consistently proven to be a robust source of income and growth for the Group. The property sector presents us with a distinctive

opportunity to steer the future of our company while propelling Kenya's emergence as a leading logistics hub," affirmed Eng. Mwangera. Sameer Africa embarked on its foray into industrial warehousing in January 2021, following the approval of a four-year Strategic Plan

by the Board of Directors. This strategy, anchored in the company's extensive real estate portfolio and tyre industry expertise, is currently underway, reshaping the landscape of Sameer Africa's property business, a steadfast source of income and growth for the Group.

GB Auto Launches King Long Kingwin XMO6520 Microbus

By: John Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes

GB Auto SAE, a publicly listed company based in the Arab Republic of Egypt, known for its extensive footprint in North Africa and the Middle East, particularly in Egypt, announces a significant investment in the Kenyan vehicle assembly, sales, and after-sale operations market.

As a proud member of the GB GROUP, a company renowned for its distinguished portfolio of global brands, GB Auto serves as the authorized representative of superior Volvo construction equipment, King Long Kingwin Microbus, and Eicher trucks and buses in the Kenyan motor market.

The company's dedication to the Kenyan market encompasses a wide range of vehicles designed for passengers, public transportation, and

goods logistics. This initiative is poised to elevate and transform the mobility experience within Kenya.

King Long, a subsidiary of Xiamen King Long Motors, Group Company Limited, brings a wealth of expertise and determination to the automobile industry. With a strong presence in the industry, King Long's influence extends across four major production bases, each specializing in distinct facets of intelligent transportation, including large and medium buses, autonomous buses and chassis, special vehicles, trucks, and recreational vehicles. One of the flagship products in GB Auto's Kenyan portfolio is the Kingwin XMQ6520EA Microbus, a EURO 4 Microbus meticulously crafted to cater specifically to the unique requirements of the Kenyan market. GB Auto proudly holds the distinguished position of being the sole dealer for this exceptional vehicle in Kenya.

This strategic investment reaffirms GB Auto's commitment to contrib-



GB Auto Launches King Long Kingwin XMO6520 Microbus.

uting to the growth and development of the Kenyan automobile market. The company looks forward to play-

ing a pivotal role in shaping the future of mobility in Kenya, and building lasting partnerships with local

stakeholders.

Youth Led Organisations In The Civic Society In Conjunction With Mural Tourism



By: Memory Phiri
 @themtkenyatimes



Worth Noting:

- Retrospectively in our neighborhoods, this typology of art started as a past time with artists drawing on durawalls. Then they descended on kindergarten pre-schools where it became a trend to have the popular animation of Mickey mouse illustrated in a Disney-like setting.
- Putting two and two together, it can be seen that our tourists are prone to experience travel photography when they pose in the midst of all these drawings.
- On all intents and purposes, the love of art has always been the root of unity propelling a common goal. A good example that can justify this imagery is that of the Mbuya Nehanda and King Lobengula mural that was done to thwart tribalism.

Kumbekumbe Arts Trust is one of the many youth led organisations doing an outstanding job towards empowering the youths through its civic initiative of mural painting. Contemporary art in this case is done to create awareness to the community at large.

Thus, the colorful murals depict topical issues that range from acknowledging girl power, paying homage to love, appreciating peace and upholding our cultural heritage. That is why tourists are banking their money on destinations that are showing off this brilliant artistry.

Instead of a banner that will be affected by the weather, murals beg to differ by lasting for a longer period. This artistic footprint is here to stay and as deliberate as it comes, it portrays art on a large scale.

Our artists also practice graffiti or spray painting to make us pay attention to detail. Under normal circumstances, the vivid paintings are doing us a huge favor for they can change the future of mural tourism perse.

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Kumbekumbe Arts Trust works with other non-profit organisations for the funding of the art projects that are instilling hope for the downtrodden youth, proving that they can be gainfully employed. This is because an idle brain is the devil's workshop.

In addition, drug abuse and criminal activities are palpable stones in our shoes but through Kumbekumbe Arts Trust these obstacles will never haunt the upcoming generation. Infact, the ghetto youths will definitely have something to do and to look forward to.

It's an understatement to say that the forthcoming competitions by the art organisation will help in marketing one too many a destination and mural tourism potently. Similarly, Mbare is an interesting destination when we talk of street art for it symbolises the dancehall movement which is the brainchild of the Chillspot Studios.

Furthermore, humble towns such as Chitungwiza which are under the Kumbekumbe Arts Trust wing have managed to keep corporate social responsibility with the artistic culture alive. Pressing the same point, Van Choga sang that 'Without art you never rise.' Indeed, let's stop and stare at art that also elevates our domestic tourism package.



SPORTS NEWS

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Sports >> *Kenya will host the 2024 ISF World School Cross Country Championships in Nairobi after the government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International School Sport Federation (ISF)

Kenya To Host ISF World School Cross Country In May



ISF president Laurent Petrynka (second left) after signing MoU with the KSSSA chairman Kipchumba Maiyo (right) on Tuesday, November 28 at Jogoo House. Education CS Ezekiel Machogu (second right) and Athletics Kenya (AK) boss Jackson Tuwei (left) were also present. Photo by Ministry of Education..

Kenya will host the 2024 ISF World School Cross Country Championships in Nairobi after the government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International School Sport Federation (ISF) yesterday ahead of the event set for May 10 to 15.

The MoU was signed by the chairman of Kenya Secondary Schools Sports Association (KSSSA) Kipchumba Maiyo and the president of ISF Laurent Petrynka at the Ministry of Education headquarters at Jogoo House.

Education CS Ezekiel Machogu, who witnessed the ceremony alongside the Principal Secretary for Basic Education Dr. Belio Kipsang, hailed the decision by ISF to grant Kenya the

hosting rights of the global event that will see learners aged between 12 and 18 from over 134 countries take part in the championship to be held at the Ngong Race Course.

Machogu promised that his ministry in collaboration with other partners will pull out all the stops to deliver a top class championship.

“I assure ISF and KSSSA that the government will ensure this championship is held successfully. We operate under the one-government approach mantra and we will reach out to the concerned partners like the Ministry of Sports in order to host a wonderful event next year in May,” said Machogu.

He added that Kenya’s education reform had anchored sports

in the curriculum providing options for talented young people to nurture it to their fullest possible extent and make a career out of it.

The world school sports governing body boss expressed his satisfaction after the government pledged support adding that Kenya hosting the event will cement her athletics’ rich history.

“I’m happy with the way the government of Kenya is committed to ensure this event will be held successfully. We’ve signed all the agreements and I can confirm ISF is satisfied after the government’s support and commitment towards this event,” said Petrynka.

Last year’s 25th edition was held in Slovakia.

Besides sporting activities, the

organisers are planning to spice up the championship with cultural activities to give delegations opportunities to exchange and learn about each of the participants and their countries.

Others who attended the occasion included Athletics Kenya boss Lt (Rtd) General Jackson Tuwei, Director of Field Coordination and Co-Curricular Activities Hassan Duale, the presidents of Federation of East Africa Secondary Schools Sports Associations (FEASSA); Justus Mugisha of Uganda, Rwanda’s Luke Karemangingo and Dennis Otieno of Tanzania.

Citizen Sport

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *Sports Cabinet Secretary Ababu Namwamba has pledged a bag of goodies for Harambee Starlets should they secure qualification for the 2023 Women's Africa Cup of Nations.

Ksh.5M Award Intact, Sports CS Namwamba Assures Starlets



Sports Cabinet Secretary Ababu Namwamba has pledged a bag of goodies for Harambee Starlets should they secure qualification for the 2023 Women's Africa Cup of Nations.

Namwamba visited the Starlets in the camp earlier today at Nyayo Stadium, ahead of their WAFCON qualifier against Botswana tomorrow, Wednesday, at the same venue.

"The same way we support our sports men, we must similarly support our sports women. The same support we give to Harambee Stars must be extended to Harambee Starlets.

"And so the same package we offered Harambee Stars must be available to the girls.

"There are plans already in a top European playing nation for a training camp in the build-up to the tournament," assured Ababu.

FKF President Nick Mwendwa has welcomed the government's gesture and, at the same time, lobbied for more than just financial support.

"I would tell you that since I was here, we have never been supported and support is not just money. When did you last see me on the pitch with a minister watching training?

"We are doing these things now regularly. We haven't gotten there completely; we are on our way but the spirit from the government and the ministry have been so good," said the FKF boss.

At the same time, Starlets tactician Beldine Odemba has received a massive shot in the arm after the duo of Sheril Angachi and Slavia Prague's Marjolene Nekesa was declared available for the Botswana tie.

"We are very happy that we made a request through the ministry of sports and through the CS and they were able to release her (Angachi).

"It has never been done before, we have been told that several times but we are happy she is here and she will give us something," said Odemba.

Angachi was involved with KDF recruitment and had to be released by the ministry of defence upon consideration of the request of CS Ababu.

Gate charges for the match have been waived in a deliberate effort to rally more support for Starlets.

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The Award-Winning Visual Artist Of All Trades Regis Manja



By: Abigail Phiri
@themkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

Under these harsh circumstances, Regis noted that political instability in Zimbabwe also pushed him to migrate to South Africa where he is currently living. Worth noting, up to now he is teaching art in South Africa at a junior school. In the year 2008 when things were so tough in Zimbabwe, at that particular point in time Regis hung his art boots and even went on to apply to join the Zimbabwe National Army.

However, it is said a true creative can never give up on his dreams. This is because the passion to tell a story runs hot in his or her blood. For that reason, Regis took up where he had left off.

Facebook is working its wonders in connecting people to their friends, business, and passion. As a result, this is how I personally found the good works being done by Regis Manja. One can tell a story through visual arts and this exactly is the case with the multitalented Regis Manja. Truth be told, Regis is an affable fellow who sees the world in a different way, which he captures through his African art or murals. All this he depicts in an aesthetically pleasing way in his sculptures, paintings, ceramics, graphic art and murals.

Regis notes that he got inspiration from Sylvester Mubayi, a first Zimbabwean-generation stone sculptor. This is because in this life you have to draw inspiration from somewhere. Thus, Regis's visual artistry journey has been colorful given he has received a plethora of awards in sculpture and painting. Some of these awards have been from prestigious boards like the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, which is the dream of many visual artists to get recognition from highly acclaimed institutions. The icing on the cake he has participated in a number of exhibitions both in Zimbabwe and abroad over the years. Furthermore, his artworks have been sold and now rest on walls and galleries of many countries such as America, UK and Australia to name but just a few.

Retrospectively, Regis noted after high school his parents sent him to do an agricultural course in which he was equally good at. Consequently, they wanted him to broaden his options with regards to how he would get his source of living. In addition, after finishing his art studies at BAT Visual Arts Studios he moved to South Africa looking for greener pastures. Needless to mention, the exodus of Zimbabweans to South Africa has been prevalent since the beginning of time.

Under these harsh circumstances, Regis noted that political instability in Zimbabwe also pushed him to migrate to South Africa where he is currently living. Worth noting, up to now he is teaching art in South Africa at a junior school. In the year 2008 when things were so tough in Zimbabwe, at that particular point in time Regis hung his art boots and

even went on to apply to join the Zimbabwe National Army.

However, it is said a true creative can never give up on his dreams. This is because the passion to tell a story runs hot in his or her blood. For that reason, Regis took up where he had left off. Thankfully up to this very moment, he still paints and sculpts to his heart's content. Interestingly, he sees himself opening a very big art center in his hometown Marondera, a quiet and neat place where he grew up. For all intents and purposes, he wants to give back to his hometown for his big dream is to teach underprivileged children on a voluntary basis.

Frankly speaking, I was pleased with Regis Manja artworks and the way he approaches life. This easygoing way of seeing things is how he translates life to his art. I must say the artworks speak volumes for they are vividly done with a skillful hand that pays attention to detail and technique. In a way, Regis artworks are life-changing for he is also upholding the doctrine of ekphrasis. When gifted with such an innate talent it is a shame to let it go to waste by not utilizing it. The beauty of life is enhanced by artists who capture moments and immortalize them on paper, walls and different objects. Indeed, this is proof of Regis's fantastic artistry for in every artwork he makes a firm statement. We give glory to God who bestowed such astounding talents to individuals like Regis who is doing the honors to share his work with all and sundry. To all people interested in getting in touch with him, +27 71 733 9800 is his direct line for calls and WhatsApp. In addition on Facebook, he goes by his given name Regis Manja. Undoubtedly, he is one of the best of the best. A visual artist Dr. who has raised the bar high by painting a container. The level of such artistry is breath taking for Regis's artworks can take you to places you have never been before. Henceforth, never underestimate the power of the brush held by a visual artist.

