KWS Rallies Communities To Protect Ecosystems

As the countdown to World Wildlife Day celebrations enters its homestretch, the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) has rolled out an ambitious initiative to create awareness on communities' key role in conservation of lakes and rivers in Nakuru County, as more than 70 per cent of their ecosystems lie outside protected areas.

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CJ Koome, Heads Of Courts Deliberate On Judicial Independence, Performance

"Chief Justice Martha Koome has convened a meeting for Heads of Courts with an emphasis on judicial independence, improved performance, enhanced accountability, and seamless service delivery.

The meeting, which ends tomorrow comes at a critical moment for the Judiciary, after recent events put the role of judges in the limelight.

Chief Justice Martha Koome with other judicial officers

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News>>National Vs County Governments: Why Devolution Is Under Siege

P. 8. President Ruto and National Assembly have been subjecting devolution to fundamental undermine and systematic 'take what given' destructive path.

News>>Community Health Promoters To Receive Payments - Public Health PS

P. 12. Public Health and Professional Standard Principal Secretary Mary Muthoni, has assured all Community Health Promoters, that they will receive their payments.

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Kenyans Sensitised On Safe Labour Migration

By: Salome Alwanda
@themtkenyatimes

Kenyans Sensitised On Safe Labour Migration.

Worth Noting:

- **"In Kenya, the minimum wage should be Sh8190, yet some employers pay as little as Sh3, 000,' he said, adding that this is a violation of the law.**
- **The official, however, pointed out that lack of understanding of the Kenyan language and suspicion of the union workers is a major challenge for Ugandan natives seeking employment in Busia.**
- **"So on several occasions, they try to avoid us," he said, adding that a section of employers immediately dismiss the foreign employees on realising that the workers' union has sensitised them on their rights.**

Residents of Busia who are interested in seeking jobs in foreign countries have been advised to visit the Labour Office for proper guidance.

Speaking during a peaceful procession in Busia town on yesterday, the Chairman of the Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotel, Educational Institutions, Hospitals, and Allied Workers (KUDHEIHA) Busia Chapter, Justus Namunde, said that a number of local residents face a lot of challenges after leaving the country.

'So we want to thank COTU and ILO for supporting the sensitisation programme so that the local residents are guided accordingly,' he said.

Namunde urged the employers in Busia to adhere to the labour laws whenever they engage workers from foreign countries.

"In Kenya, the minimum wage should be Sh8190, yet some employers pay as little as Sh3, 000,' he said, adding that this is a violation of the law.

The official, however, pointed out that lack of understanding of the Kenyan language and suspicion of the union workers is a major challenge for Ugandan natives seeking employment in Busia.

"So on several occasions, they try to avoid us," he said, adding that a section of employers immediately dismiss the foreign employees on realising that the workers' union has sensitised them on their rights.

The COTU Labour Migration Programme Officer, Triza Abuko, said that there was need to sensitise the locals on safe labour migration because most of the immigrant labourers are from rural communities.

'In the rural villages, most people do not understand the right procedures on how to migrate to foreign countries,' she said, adding that a number of the workers use tourist visas to seek employment opportunities in foreign countries.

Abuko advised the local residents to visit the labour office so that they can be guided on the right procedures.

She pointed out that women and youth are the most affected when it comes to labour migration due to poverty and unemployment.

'Sometimes the agents take advantage of the vulnerability of the job seekers and use it as an opportunity to defraud them,' she said.

The official further urged interested job seekers to seek advice from other union workers, like the Union of Long Distance Truck Drivers and the Amalgamated Union of Kenya Metal Workers, which are affiliated to COTU.

Rose Omamo, the Executive Secretary for the Amalgamated Union of Kenya Metal Workers, said that COTU has a labour migration centre whose role is to sensitise labour migrants on safe migration.

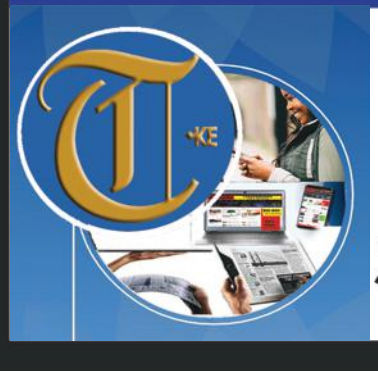
Omamo underscored the need to ensure that labour migrants are granted decent jobs.

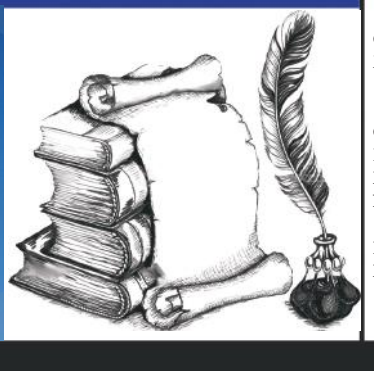
'We want our migrant labourers to be respected and accorded human dignity,' she said.

She at the same time disclosed that the government is currently working on the Labour Migration Bill with a view to address the gaps.

Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times





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NEWS IN BRIEF

Uasin Gishu County has disbursed Sh13 million out of the Sh19 million approved to loan various cooperative societies this financial year.

The funds will be used to boost cooperatives that applied for the loan to boost their enterprises.

The county chief officer for Cooperatives and Enterprise Development, Ruth Samoei, stated that her department will work on mechanisms to enhance the fund in the coming years to benefit more societies.

The County Enterprise Development Fund (CEDF) committee chair, Philip Mamet, noted that the county has made the fund accessible, affordable, and available for society. He called on societies to adopt swift repayment models for other societies to benefit from and challenged committee members to strengthen the fund to make it more sustainable.

The Kenya Kwanza administration has developed a blueprint to unlock blue economy opportunities in Lake Victoria, aiming to benefit millions of Kenyans living in the Nyanza region.

Information, Communications, and Digital Economy Cabinet Secretary Eliud Owalo stated that the plan was a deliberate plan to spur economic growth in the region, which has lagged behind in development for decades.

The multi-billion project includes the construction of a Sh. 2.5 billion Kabonyo Kanyagwal aquaculture centre of excellence, a ring road along Lake Victoria, the revival of lake transport, and the construction of landing beaches.

Negotiations with the World Bank are ongoing to kick start the project.

The multi-billion project will open up Lake Victoria for tourism, travel, and business, creating job opportunities for locals.

The government has established new administrative units in Homa Bay County to enhance service delivery. Suba Central and Suba West have been created, along with new divisions including Ruma/Kaksingri East, Kaksingri West, Gwassi South, and Gwassi North. The Suba region also saw the hiving off of new locations like Rang'wa East, Nyamarandi, Sindo, Kwirathia, and Mwegemu. UDA party youth and women in Suba expressed gratitude for the initiative and expressed appreciation for the ongoing tarmacking of the 74-km Mbita-Magunga-Sori road.

The youth coordinator, Bruce Ogweno, and his women's league counterpart, Josephine Abonyo, emphasised the importance of the new administrative units and development projects in uplifting the local economy. The region previously had two subcounties, Suba and Mbita.

Devolution Principal Secretary Teresia Mbaika has urged parents to invest in the education of their children, stating that it is the best form of inheritance they can bequeath their children.

"Education remains the equaliser in modern society, shaping our children to become good communicators and eventually secure jobs from where they can serve the country," said the PS.

Adding to that, "the government is keen to help students endowed with talents to make them self-reliant."

She urged local leaders to avoid divisive politics and work closely with other officials, especially those from the national government, to foster development in the county.

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Pastoralists In Kajiado County Urged To Embrace Beekeeping

By: Rop Janet
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- **The CECM said beekeeping is a profitable economic activity and appealed to locals to fully tap into the opportunity of producing quality honey since there is a ready market for the product.**
- **He added that through beekeeping, farmers can sell products such as honey and beeswax to both local and international markets.**
- **Ken Matampash, a beekeeper and the Director of the Neighbours Initiative Alliance (NIA), reiterated the need for pastoralists to embrace beekeeping as an alternative economic activity, adding that they had incurred massive losses during the recent drought witnessed in the county.**

A man harvesting honey.

Pastoralists in Kajiado County have been urged to embrace beekeeping as an alternative source of livelihood to combat the adverse effects of climate change.

Speaking at a sensitisation forum on beekeeping, Kajiado County Executive Committee Member for Livestock and Agriculture Jacktone Achola noted that there is a huge potential in the county for modern and commercial bee farming.

Achola revealed that the county government is encouraging farmers to embrace beekeeping by conducting training on how to make traditional hives from locally available materials, proper bee management, establishing colonies, and honey harvesting.

"Kajiado County has a lot of potential for honey production. We will support farmers to ensure that they reap maximum benefits from beekeeping," he said.

The CECM said beekeeping is a profitable economic activity and appealed to locals to fully tap into the opportunity of producing quality honey since there is a ready market for the product.

He added that through beekeeping, farmers can sell products such as honey and beeswax to both local and international markets.

Ken Matampash, a beekeeper and the Director of the Neighbours Initiative Alliance (NIA), reiterated the need for pastoralists to embrace beekeeping as an alternative economic activity, adding that they had incurred massive losses during the recent drought witnessed in the county.

Matampash revealed that over 700,000 livestock were lost during the drought witnessed last year and added that it was high time locals embraced other sources of livelihood to avoid the recurrence of the same.

"Climate change necessitates a shift in livestock keeping as an economic activity. Diminished land sizes and erratic rainfall patterns have made it unsustainable for pastoralists to depend only on livestock keeping," Matampash said.

Consumer Grassroots Association Executive Director Alice Kemunto, emphasised the importance of bees in the eco-system.

She noted that bees are fundamental for the health of ecosystems and food security as they help maintain biodiversity and ensure the production of nutritious food.

However, she said bees are drastically reducing in numbers as a result of the combined effects of climate change, intensive agriculture, pesticide use, biodiversity loss, and pollution, thus threatening global food and nutrition security.

"The use of chemicals in agriculture such as insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, and even antibiotics results in the deaths of bees and other pollinators. This threatens the biodiversity of our ecosystem and the survival of humanity," Kemunto said.

Kemunto called for the adoption of agricultural production practices that are friendly to the bees to ensure that pollination, which is critical for increased agricultural production, is not threatened.

The beekeeping sensitization forum comes ahead of the World Bee Day, which is to be marked on May 20 in Kajiado County this year.

World Bee Day is observed on May 20 each year to draw attention to the essential role bees and other pollinators play in keeping people and the planet healthy.

It provides an opportunity for governments, organisations, civil society, and concerned citizens everywhere to promote actions that will protect and enhance pollinators and their habitats, improve their abundance and diversity, and support the sustainable development of beekeeping.

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National Vs County Governments: Why Devolution Is Under Siege

By: Ndung'u Wainaina
@themtkenyatimes

President Ruto and National Assembly have been subjecting devolution to fundamental undermine and systematic 'take what given' destructive path.

Critical policy decisions on legislation, budget and fiscal are made by national government without consultation and consent of devolved units.

Also there is subtle retention and grab of devolved functions and funds.

It is important to note that after 10 years of devolution, counties have become the launch pads for economic development, agricultural and industrial transformation; centres of innovation, private sector growth and services delivery.

Devolution enables people to tap their unique potential and prioritise local needs away from the centrally controlled economy, security and governance.

Devolution has not only improved the economic and social welfare of people in rural areas, it has, to a great extent, increased the democratic space.

The primary national conversation is the devolution of resources and power, economic democracy and freedom, and tackling inequities.

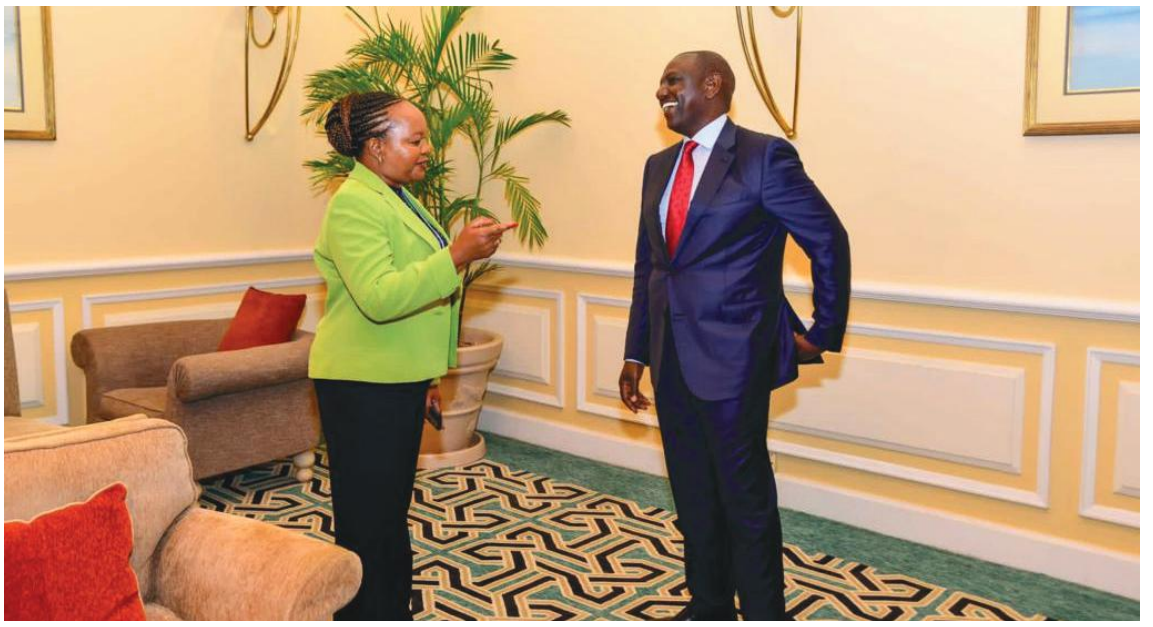
Since devolution started, the national executive and its agencies have exercised undue power leverage against the county governments.

These include delaying or slashing their revenues, enacting recentralisation laws and administrative policy actions and finance policies that undermine deepening of devolution.

Most national laws in respect of key devolved functions are largely not compliant with the Constitution.

The critical sectors affected are health, agriculture, public finance, trade and industry, land, physical planning, urban development, natural resource management, water and roads.

These functions constitutionally fall squarely under the jurisdiction of county governments providing key services to local people.



President William Ruto and CoG Chair Anne Waiguru.

County governments must have a voice on key national fiscal, taxation and economic policy decision-making processes. Big budget allocations to ministries, departments and agencies should be reduced significantly as majority of them have a policy and regulatory mandate while counties are responsible for service delivery.

It should be more about counties and less about the national government. In addition, all scattered devolved funds in counties should be consolidated under the County Treasury.

National Treasury must be reformed to efficiently serve two levels of government. This will streamline and hasten the process of transferring funds, conditional grants and donor funding to county governments.

Ndung'u Wainaina is a Transitional Justice and Human Security Fellow

Governor Njuki Calls For Erection Of More Speed Bumps Along Mwea-Meru Stretch To Reduce Accidents

By: Denis Mutua
@themtkenyatimes

Following increased road accidents along Nairobi-Meru highway, Tharaka Nithi governor Muthomi Njuki is proposing erection of more speed bumps especially on the stretch from Mwea to Meru to minimize accidents.

He argued that however motorists have always been against the erection of bumps opting for the Nanyuki route, it serves no purpose when residents continue losing lives from accidents.

"Motorists who will feel bitter from the many bumps along the route can use the alternative Nanyuki route because we will erect more of them. We better lose roadside customers than continue losing innocent lives," Njuki said.

Tharaka Nithi governor Muthomi when he visited the family of the late Pharis Mutembei from Kirigi village in Magumoni ward to console them. He was in the company of his deputy Nyagah Muisraeli, Chuka Igambang'ombe MP Patrick among other leaders.

In collaboration with Kenya national highways authority, Njuki says a plan is in place to construct a flyover at Kangoro area in Chuka to avoid cases of pedestrians being knocked by speeding vehicles while crossing the highway.

Njuki was speaking when he visited the family of the late Pharis Mutembei from Kirigi in Magumoni ward of Chuka Igambang'ombe Constituency, who together with his wife and daughter perished in a road accident at Kirubia a week ago.

The three were aboard a mortorbike on their way to Church on the fateful Sunday when an oncoming vehicle hit and killed them on spot.

When Tharaka Nithi woman representative Susan Ngugi Mwindu visited the family late last week, she proposed installation of speed cameras on Kenyan highways to monitor compliance to the speed limit set by Kenya National Highways Authority, since she said over speeding has been a major cause of accidents.

Governor Njuki called on motorists to have respect for other road users including bodaboda riders and pedestrians since they are also humans like them.

He was in the company of his deputy Nyagah Muisraeli,Chuka Igambang'ombe MP Patrick Munene among other leaders.

The burial of the three family members is set for today.

CJ Koome, Heads Of Courts Deliberate On Judicial Independence, Performance

By: Michael Omondi
@themtkenyatimes

Chief Justice Martha Koome with other judicial officers

Worth Noting:

- **"Concerns mainly relate to the timelines for hearing and resolving cases involving time-sensitive government programmes, especially when ex-parte orders are issued and the hearing dates are set many months later," explained Koome.**
- **The CJ, while addressing the Judges, said it was critical to ask whether the courts handle public interest cases in a way that respects judges' decisional autonomy, while actively managing cases of public interest.**
- **"It is important that we reflect on our rules of procedure, especially the Constitution of Kenya (Protection of Rights and Fundamental Freedoms) Practice and Procedure Rules, 2013 and the Judicial Review Procedure Rules, and whether they facilitate speedy handling of time-sensitive public interest cases," she remarked.**

Chief Justice Martha Koome has convened a meeting for Heads of Courts with an emphasis on judicial independence, improved performance, enhanced accountability, and seamless service delivery.

The meeting, which ends tomorrow comes at a critical moment for the Judiciary, after recent events put the role of judges in the limelight.

The CJ maintained that dialogue with other branches of government to resolve challenges in the administration of justice does not undermine judicial independence.

"We can engage in constructive conversations that enable the institution to perform its role optimally, while ensuring that we do not engage in discussions that dictate how the cases in court should be decided. That must always remain a no-go zone!" stressed Koome.

She, however, said there was need to examine the manner in which courts handle cases that affect public interest and policy.

"Concerns mainly relate to the timelines for hearing and resolving cases involving time-sensitive government programmes, especially when ex-parte orders are issued and the hearing dates are set many months later," explained Koome.

The CJ, while addressing the Judges, said it was critical to ask whether the courts handle public interest cases in a way that respects judges' decisional autonomy, while actively managing cases of public interest.

"It is important that we reflect on our rules of procedure, especially the Constitution of Kenya (Protection of Rights and Fundamental Freedoms) Practice and Procedure Rules, 2013 and the Judicial Review Procedure Rules, and whether they facilitate speedy handling of time-sensitive public interest cases," she remarked.

Koome noted that it was imperative to review the active case management practices to determine how to expedite the disposal of public interest cases.

She reaffirmed that the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) was mandated to deal with allegations of corruption, adding that the JSC remained committed to strengthening investigative and complaints resolution processes.

She maintained that Heads of Courts have a responsibility to motivate and inspire judges, judicial officers, and staff under their administration to adhere to integrity.

"Where you notice any concerns about possible corruption, you are obliged to bring them to the attention of my office or the JSC," she directed.

Further, Koome urged rigorous efforts to enhance the operational efficiency of the courts through the strategic utilisation of technology to streamline service delivery.

"This year will see a significant leap in leveraging technology as an enabler for the efficiency of our operations. Our e-filing initiative has progressed significantly, and we are now set for a nationwide rollout across all court stations on March 11, 2024," she disclosed.

Additionally, the CJ reiterated that the courts will embrace technology to ensure the accurate and prompt transcription of court proceedings with the establishment of a pilot transcription centre.

"To further enhance our operational efficiency and transparency, we are introducing a 'Tracking Dashboard'. This innovative tool will enable the Judiciary's leadership and court leaders to monitor court activities and outputs in real-time, providing immediate insights and trend analysis into the performance of our courts and facilitating informed decision-making," added Koome.

She revealed that the introduction of new features, such as the publication of rulings and judgments, along with Automated Daily Court Reporting, would address the discrepancies previously experienced in the Case Tracking System (CTS).

"These enhancements are pivotal in ensuring the reliability of our data, which is indispensable for informed policy-making and tracking the progress of our institutional development efforts," said Koome.

Parents Urged Not To Hide Children With Disabilities

By: Sadik Hassan
@themtkenyatimes

The Coast Association for Persons Living with Disability (CAPLD), has cautioned parents against hiding children with physical disabilities, to protect their families' public image.

The Organization's Executive Director, Hamisa Zaja, said that such acts of discrimination, must not be allowed and that the affected children must be assured of better living conditions.

Speaking at Sayyidah Fatimah Hospital in Mlaleo, Nyali Sub-county, on Sunday, Hamisa Zaja said the government should start a serious campaign to sensitise parents with special needs children on the importance of showing affection to the children.

CAPLD, in partnership with Dear Diaries Initiatives Kenya and Aisha Foundation CBO, donated assistive devices worth over Sh250, 000 for the Hospital's therapy Department.

Zaja stressed the need for the establishment of physiotherapy facilities at the ward level, to eliminate the need for patients to travel long distances for therapy services.

She noted that, as a result of inflation, the prices of equipment have gone up tenfold, discouraging people willing to donate the equipment, to special needs facilities.

"Equipment that we used to buy at Sh150, 000 now goes for up to Sh250, 000," Saja observed.

Aisha Foundation founder, Mwanaisha Chiku, said sometimes the problems facing the hidden disabled children are minor and can be managed if detected early enough.

She added that most of the special needs children they deal with suffer from Cerebral palsy (CP) and require a lot of physical therapy.

Chiku further decried the lack of enough therapy equipment and facilities in Mombasa, forcing parents to travel long distances, to the Coast General Teaching and Referral Hospital (CGTRH) for therapy services.

The high costs and distances associated with transporting special needs children to CGTRH for therapy sessions, often discourage parents, thereby, limiting their child's progress.

Said Abdalla, a parent of a Cerebral palsy child, said it is hard to raise a special needs child.

He called on the government to look into ways of helping parents with special needs children and help create better spaces for the children.

"It needs a lot of patience and heart. It is not easy. It is a difficult test from God. If you are not strong-willed, you can easily abandon your child or even throw them away. Husbands can easily abandon their wives because of the special needs children," said Abdalla.

Abdalla highlighted the limited number of school facilities for special needs children and the inadequate staff and equipment.

Sayyida Fatimah Hospital Administrator, Hannah Adam, said though they are a Level 4 facility, they are a community hospital that thrives in collaboration with partners, to help the community members.

Mlaleo Assistant Chief, Zubeda Farid, said the government has a way to help parents who cannot afford therapy and services for special needs children.

"There is no need to hide them. The fee is affordable, at about Sh150 per session, and if this is hard for you, we can also find a way to assist," she stated.

She added that it is unfortunate that some parents do not count their special needs children, when the government conducts an activity that requires one to account for the children they have.

"Last week, during the registration of children for the treated government mosquito nets, some parents who had five children, said they have only four just because one of them has special needs," Farid said.

Zac Ngugi Take On Shilling Gain Against The Dollar

By: John Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes

Reputable Certified Secretary Zac Ngugi has taken a moment to share with us his thoughts as pertaining shilling gaining against the dollar.

Here is what he had to say:

When foreign exchange is left to market forces of demand and supply, these determine the price. Recently in Kenya, and especially after the successful Eurobond offering, the foreign exchange market has experienced a strengthening of the Kenya Shilling against all major currencies and especially the USD. This indicates that Kenya is in good books with lenders, and also that demand for USD is lower than the supply. The optimism of Foreign Direct investment and foreign remittances is a boon and a vote of confidence in our economy. We should sustain the momentum to reap from the investor and lender confidence. We should also enhance production and move our economy away from consumer led growth. The strengthening of the shilling will see the price of imports go down as well. This includes fuel and fuel products which will in turn lead to lower the cost of living. We should as a country work towards more strength to the Kenya Shilling against all foreign currencies to boost consumption and improve the economy. Again, if we pay foreign debt in time and avoid default, it will mean that development partners will continue to support Kenya in its quest to achieve the projected 5% economic growth. The government should also concentrate on projects that offer stimulus to the economy so that the common Wananchi can feel something in their pockets in these hard times. We are heading to better times if the Exchange rate and the investor confidence is anything to go by. We should not falter. We should keep the pace and attract more investments."

Certified Secretary Zac Ngugi.

IMF, World Bank Conditionalities: Ruto Steering The Country In The Right Direction

By: **Joseph Mutua Ndonga**
mutuandonga@yahoo.com

Worth Noting:

- **This is because he had allegedly succumbed to the machinations of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank.**
- **Essentially, he was being held hostage by the Bretton Wood institutions.**
- **The Azimio La Umoja One Kenya Coalition critics would term the conditionalities imposed as a bitter pill to swallow. It means Kenyans will dig deeper into their pockets. This is at a time when they were already being overtaxed.**
- **I'm not holding brief for President Ruto. One thing is however clear. He inherited the IMF/ World Bank prescriptions from his predecessor, President Uhuru Kenyatta.**
- **During Uhuru's era, it dawned on IMF and World Bank that our economy was not doing well.**

The efforts by President William Ruto to stabilize the Kenya shilling have started to bear the fruits. The latest media reports show the shilling is appreciating and becoming stronger.

Dr Ruto had attributed the depreciation of Kenya shilling against the US dollar to a number of factors.

Topping the list was: He inherited an economy that had been run down by the 'handshake' government.

The country was also facing the biting drought rated to be the worst in 40 years and reeling under the weight of Russian-Ukraine war.

The country was also being weighed down by heavy foreign debts. The repayment schedule of the loans amounting to trillions of shillings had started maturing.

The country was also recovering from the devastating effects of Covid-19 pandemic.

Here we are. Dr Ruto's meant his words when he vowed to steady the ship in coming days.

With this, the President has proved wrong his critics who wanted Kenyans to believe that his efforts will not bear the fruits.

This is because he had allegedly succumbed to the machinations of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank.

Essentially, he was being held hostage by the Bretton Wood institutions.

The Azimio La Umoja One Kenya Coalition critics would term the conditionalities imposed as a bitter pill to swallow. It means Kenyans will dig deeper into their pockets. This is at a time when they were already being overtaxed.

I'm not holding brief for President Ruto. One thing is however clear. He inherited the IMF/World Bank prescriptions from his predecessor, President Uhuru Kenyatta.

During Uhuru's era, it dawned on IMF and World Bank that our economy was not doing well.

The Bretton Woods institutions took advantage of this to rollout their prescriptions.

Left with no option, President Uhuru had to cave in to their pressure.

I disagree with the critics. The privatization of state corporations stood as one of the key pledges that Dr William Ruto, Kenya Kwanza presidential candidate, made during campaigns.

As we know, the rules governing IMF and World Bank requires the two institutions to engage the sitting President. So, the critics' claims were cheap, hollow and misplaced. President Ruto is implementing what he promised Kenyans.

Yes, IMF headquarter is in America and the President has made a number of trips to that country.

It is also true that President Ruto has been holding talks with the President of IMF.

You cannot however use this as a basis of making such claims.

The recent social media reports have been alleging that Dr Ruto has so far signed up foreign loans worth billions of shillings.

President William Ruto .

In most cases, the critics would come out of blue to publish these alarming claims.

They would not tell us where they got this information.

As a way of fooling the masses, they would feature a photo of the Kenyan head of state and the President of IMF taken a long time ago.

Ruto's critics would further allege. Ruto said during the campaigns that his administration will never go for foreign loans.

Today, he is doing the opposite. He had borrowed more than his predecessor. I would call this a big lie because they were yet to provide any documentary evidence. I would have expected them to do a scientific and well-researched comparative analysis.

President Ruto has not changed his position.

What he meant during the campaign is that he will reduce in a big way the insatiable appetite for borrowing foreign loans that was the hallmark of the previous administration.

He has kept his word. The money that his administration has borrowed so far is a drop in the ocean.

It is worth noting that the IMF and World Bank have been partnering with many countries across the world.

In Kenya, the two institutions have been working together with the leaderships of the successive governments of Independent Kenya. This is on matters of resuscitation of economy and development.

They made the most memorable interventions during the era of President Daniel Arap Moi.

Upon realizing our economy was doing badly, they started to engage Moi and his administration.

This led to Bretton Wood unveiling Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs).

The public opinion was divided. Some supported the conditionalities and others argued they had been imposed terming them as a bitter pill.

President Moi had formed a team, dubbed the Dream Team, to coordinate and oversee the implementation of the SAPS. The team was led by Richard Leakey.

So, the lesson we learn here is that the pain of the IMF and World Bank prescriptions is for a while. The situation improves and get better thereafter.

Besides Moi, William Ruto's predecessors Mwai Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta have had engagements with Bretton Wood Institutions. This heralded in accepting the loans they offered and conditionalities attached.

Each administration would also prioritize on the issue of enhancing and expanding tax collection base. This is by drafting and enacting tax regime to fast track the process. President Kibaki is the one who had coined a slogan 'Kulipa Ushuru Ni Kujitegemea'.

A day had been set aside to cerebrate and reward Kenyans who paid their full taxes on time, thus complying with tax laws and regulations. Just like Ruto, Kibaki and Uhuru would mince no in calling on tax man to pursue tax defaulters. Every Kenyan must pay their taxes.

Some of Uhuru's meetings with Bretton Wood were held in US.

He had also made numerous trips to the USA. At one point, it dawned on President Uhuru that the economy was doing badly.

In the meantime, the Bretton Institutions were pilling pressure on him to allow them to intervene. He had no option but to succumb.

So, President Ruto took over at a time when the IMF and World Bank had already rolled out their prescriptions. His predecessor had signed them. It is therefore hard for Dr Ruto to get out. Uhuru is one who had been held hostage. Ruto is working hard to undo this.

He has so far made great strides towards rebuilding of our economy. He knows this is only way that can make them leave our country on their own volition.

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

Community Health Promoters To Receive Payments - Public Health PS

By: Mutai Kipngetich
@themtkenyatimes

Public Health and Professional Standard Principal Secretary Mary Muthoni addressing the media.

Public Health and Professional Standard Principal Secretary Mary Muthoni, has assured all Community Health Promoters, that they will receive their payments.

She revealed that the disbursement process is ongoing in collaboration with the county governments.

The PS said that the process, which started last Friday, saw promoters from 10 counties receive December and January stipends.

Speaking at St. Martin, Kambu Catholic Church in Njukiine Ward, Gichugu, Kirinyaga County, Ms. Muthoni said payments are done upon verification of the list by officers drawn from both levels of governments and how active an individual is, based on electronic gadgets provided.

The PS added that there is vibrancy in society and households, due to the services provided by the promoters at the doorstep.

She urged the public to continue observing basic health standards, hygiene, and environmental cleanliness, to prevent some diseases.

"Our community health promoters have been very active in our communities; we are paying them for the two months of December and January. The process started on Friday; we paid off about 10 counties, whose lists had been verified by National and County governments," PS Muthoni said.

She said the Quality of Care Bill being drafted by her Ministry after assessing all hospitals in the country, would provide guidelines on how to facilitate them, through the Social Health Insurance Authority.

The Bill will seek to know the services provided in hospitals, the human resources, the equipment available, the standards, and whether they will provide the quality care deserved by the users.

"We are in the process of drafting the Quality of Care Bill. We have done assessments of all health facilities in the country, more than 14,000. We need a guideline, an Act to follow on how these hospitals are inspected, approved, and recommended to the Social Health Insurance Authority."

The PS said, the Ministry is planning to deploy psychologists to counties to boost the already existing teams in a new programme to offer rehabilitation services.

"Drug addicts take a lot of time to recover, and the Ministry will commit to the programme," PS assured.

She cautioned the public against the consumption of alcohol, particularly illicit brew, referring to a tragic event in Kirinyaga County that killed 23 people.

Muthoni said alcohol will not only damage personal health, but can also cause other diseases, including heart attacks, and, furthermore, destabilise families.

"Alcohol is something that can damage your health. It can cause diseases that you never expected. It has destabilised many families. It is possible we can proceed without alcohol," she said.

Muthoni urged the 10 Mount Kenya counties to pass alcohol Bills, as soon as possible to streamline and regulate the business, which is claiming the future of the young generation.

Mathioya MP Asks Parents, Teachers To Unite To Boost Education

By: Purity Mugo
@themtkenyatimes

Mathioya Member of Parliament Edwin Mugo has asked parents to join hands with teachers to improve the quality of education in the area.

Mugo, who was speaking during the opening of upgraded classrooms at Kanoro Primary School, said that in addition to improving infrastructure, parents and educators have to work together to utilise the new infrastructure to improve the quality of education.

"I am asking parents and teachers to work together and improve the academic performance of our schools even as we work on improving infrastructure," Mugo said.

The MP, who said that he was improving infrastructure in the schools for posterity, observed that quality infrastructure is important when it comes to quality education as it offers a level playing field for children whose parents cannot afford to take them to private schools.

"By upgrading these schools, we want the children of Mathioya now and even in the future to be able to compete with their peers in private schools," Mugo said.

Mugo also urged parents from Mathioya residing in other parts of the country to consider educating their children in Mathioya, as the schools will now have modern infrastructure.

The MP also commissioned other upgraded classrooms in Ruiru Primary and Nyangiti Primary schools.

The upgrade involved the tiling of classroom floors, the replacement or painting of roofs, new windows and doors, as well as a fresh coat of paint.

In addition to infrastructure, Mugo also issued bursaries to the parents of 500 model students who will receive full scholarships throughout secondary school.

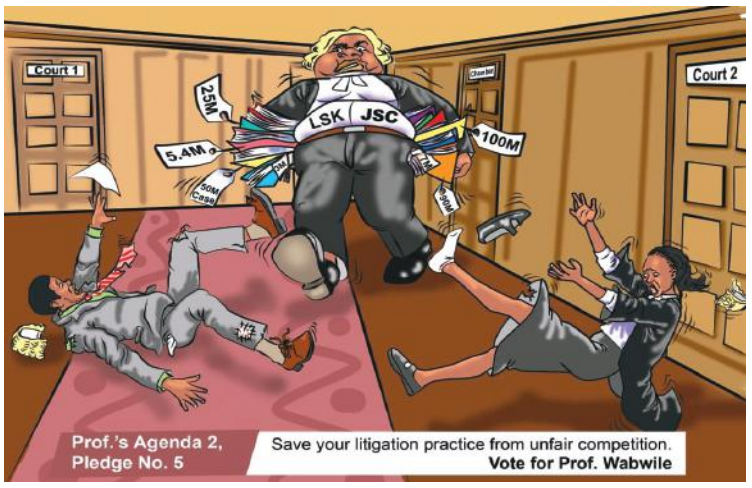
"The model students are the best-performing students at the sub-location level where we take a boy and a girl and sponsor them from Form-one to Form-four," Mugo said, underscoring the importance of education in uplifting society.

He further urged the parents of those students to strictly monitor the performance of those students since the NG-CDF office may not be able to keep tabs on all of them.

Mathioya MP Edwin Mugo.

Prof. Michael Wabwile A Frontrunner For Male Representative At JSC

By: John Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes



Prof. Michael Wabwile

Worth Noting:

- **Prof. Michael Wabwile has promised members of the Law Society of Kenya that he will not interfere, disrupt, or tamper with members' food chains.**
- **"I am the only candidate for JSC Commissioner who has guaranteed in a sworn statutory declaration that I shall not practice in any tribunal or court of law during my single term at the JSC. A JSC Commissioner who takes up litigation work will grossly disrupt and upset the practice space and displaced members because you cannot compete for work against a JSC Commissioner."**
- **This means that I am the only candidate for JSC Commissioner who will protect and promote the LSK Members' existing food chains.'**

Professor Michael Wabwile, a senior fellow in the legal profession spanning close to three decades, has rolled his sleeves ready to represent the Law Society of Kenya as the Male Representative at the Judicial Service Commission.

"My name is Professor Michael Wabwile I'm a council member of the Law Society of Kenya and one of the four upcoming representatives. I'm a Professor of Law and the Founding Dean of the Law School at Egerton University, I'm a candidate for the male representative at the LSK to the Judicial Service Commission.

I bring a stock of knowledge and experience to this office, including a technical understanding of the position's responsibilities and the job description. I have 27 years of experience as an advocate since my admission in the bar in 1997, I have management experience of over 18 years and I also have board experience of 7yrs at Kenya School of Law board.

I have stepped forward to provide leadership and make a unique contribution to the development of our Judiciary as a Member of the Judicial Service Commission.

Prof. Michael Wabwile has promised members of the Law Society of Kenya that he will not interfere, disrupt, or tamper with members' food chains.

"I am the only candidate for JSC Commissioner who has guaranteed in a sworn statutory declaration that I shall not practice in any tribunal or court of law during my single term at the JSC. A JSC Commissioner who takes up litigation work will grossly disrupt and upset the practice space and displaced members because you cannot compete for work against a JSC Commissioner."

This means that I am the only candidate for JSC Commissioner who will protect and promote the LSK Members' existing food chains.'

On Saturday, Prof. Wabwile candidly shared his manifesto with this writer:

"Towards this, I have two agendas: one is to oversee a Judiciary that works. In many countries especially developing countries, systems don't work, even in this country you go to some places, registries, and public and private offices things don't work.

During my watch, I seek to introduce eight policy innovations: to improve the functioning of the courts and open a new chapter in the people's experience with the Judiciary.

I've issued two statutory declarations, and each of them has timelines. One of them is to introduce a new judiciary staff recruitment policy within nine months. To introduce a new staff training policy within twelve months. So, all my manifesto pledges are time bound which means I have to deliver them within the time I have pledged.

There's no guesswork of whether I may or may not, this is serious and I have consulted with my advisory team and we have concluded that the time we need and the time we have allocated are just okay; I can even deliver before the time I have stipulated. So, this is signed, commissioned, and sealed. I have filed this with the CEO of the Law Society of Kenya, I have sent it to all the eight branch chairpersons and also, and I have filed this with the CEO of the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission so that they can monitor my performance when members take me to the JSC.

I have not seen any candidate who has legalized their manifesto. And even members have told me that they are taking me to the JSC and if I don't deliver as per the manifesto, they will petition for my removal for failing to fulfill a statutory and professional undertaking and I have said yes, I'm ready to face the petition but I will not wait to face the petition probably I should just resign, either I deliver or I resign. That is how people should behave in public office. Because of that I mean to perform. I want to say T.I.N.A (there is no alternative) but to perform.

One of the policies I have said is to introduce a judiciary anti-corruption policy so that the Judiciary itself is dealing with corruption in its ranks.

Because, as at now, the judiciary does not have an anti-corruption policy. They are being told they are corrupt but they do not have a policy document dealing with corruption within their ranks.

So one of the best ways to instill institutional culture change is to introduce a policy in which the staff and the people in that place, agree, they own up to what is being dealt with in the policy and they agree to do something about it.

And then we also have the outside stakeholders exerting pressure on them, there should be internal pressure through the internal policy and external pressure on how we are supposed to deal with them if they fail.

We want a judiciary that works. Judiciary officers are overworked, they are underpaid and sometimes advocates temp us with bribes. We shall review within twelve months the staff remuneration, benefits, things to do with transfers, some people think that this is an issue for representatives of judicial officers in the commission. Coz the Magistrates have a representative, High Court Judges have a representative, court of appeal judges, supreme court judges have a representative. I'm telling them this is my business. A judiciary that works is my business. If you want to have high performance you should have good compensation, for the person who is entrusted with delivering value. There will be temptation but if you are paid well, the threshold of falling victim is slightly improved than when you are critically on the edge all the time.

In agenda two I set out my code of conduct. You see, you can be doing so well but you are also harming your friends and colleagues. For example, A Judicial Service Commission member who is also practicing is obviously doubling in conflict of interest. Coz, you sit on the board that employs judges and magistrates and then you appear before them to do your case. They feel like they should help you because you are one of their own; they will come before you for shortlisting and for promotion.

There are files where there are complaints against them that are before you. You can find a JSC member who makes a phone call and talks to the Judge to help so and so in that judgment. All that is wrong.

And I have also said, a JSC person can also use that position to amass a lot of work, money, and wealth because clients run after you because you can help them better than the other advocates who do not have the Judiciary connection.

The law does not say anything about this. Like now I say I shall serve one term only, the Constitution allows a Commissioner to be nominated for another term. But we have said our values are even higher than the Constitution. It should be amended to provide for one term. Five years are enough, board members serve three years.

Practicing in these courts when you are a Commissioner, the Constitution is silent, but the leadership and Integrity Act in the Constitution say there should be values – leadership and integrity. Conflict of interest is an issue that is outlawed in the Leadership and integrity act.

So we have interpreted to mean a Principled JSC Commissioner who is an advocate, representing LSK should not practice in these courts during his tenure."

You Are Always In Our Hearts

When the winds of missing blow gently,
When the sun slowly shines from the blue,
A heart full of dreams, stirring hearts,
You left, father, leaving us.

The autumn that could not stand the separation,
The trees shed yellow leaves.
Great Motherland, ice in the heart of the people,
Today he knelt down to world affairs.

Congratulations to the Uzbek people,
We cry and shed tears today.
We are caught in a dream, in deep sorrow,
We will endure, but we will mourn.

You make high building, creating beautiful gardens,
Spreading the country's pride to the world,
Focus only on us
You left, father, leaving us.

Like the sun during the day, the moon at night is an example.
You used to stand up and spread clothes on your hands.
A heart full of hope, stirring hearts,
You left, father, leaving us.

Your name will not fade from the heart, from the hearts,
You sing like a melody in languages today,
Your books are from past hands,
You left us, lose away father.

Of course we will be sons and daughters worthy of you.
We will always follow in your footsteps,
We are proud to serve our country.
We are still building a great country.

The legacy left by you is protecting the Motherland,
We live in love for our country.
Promises made, justifying trust,
We take a bold step into the future.

Author:

National University of Uzbekistan
Faculty of Uzbek Philology
Russian language in foreign language groups
education level 3
student Nodirabegim Tojibayeva.

You Live In Hearts, Great Man

A generous farmer who made the country green without you,
The grandfather farmer who brought bread to the country without you,
Without you, the garden where we played and laughed,
You live in hearts, great person.

You were our shield and umbrella
You always kept your people safe,
Uzbekistan's people cried after you,
You live in hearts, great man.

It's the day you left, the flowers are blooming in the garden,
The kindest of the nation's leader has left,
The whole world mourned the day you left,
You live in hearts, great man.

The day you left, this nation was sad, like
If possible, I would give it to you,
The people you love cried hard, blood cried,
You live in hearts, great man.

When did we lose your warmth?
When will we see your blessing like a mountain?
Now where can we put this sad head?
You live in heaven, great person

Ilasheva Guljakhan Tulkin's girl
1st year student of the National University of Uzbekistan, Faculty of Foreign Philology, Philology and Language Teachi

You Live In Hearts Forever

(Dedicated to the memory of Islam Karimov)

I am proud to give to the nation,
Always you can wake the people,
The bright light that gave independence,
A cure for your people's pain,
You live in hearts forever.

Each of your lessons is a shining beacon,
The lamp that illuminates the happy happiness,
Every guest who comes says congratulations,
A cure for your people's pain,
You live in hearts forever.

Remembering you, we prayed every time,
Your words are gold, dear to my heart,
We stayed in the fire of missing in this place,
A cure for your people's pain,
You live in hearts forever.

Forgetting myself as my nation, my people,
Calling for freedom and equality,
We have reached it, a thousand thanks to the country,
A cure for your people's pain,
You live in hearts forever.

Your face is bright; your heart is bright,
Your words of wisdom conquered the world,
I always bow to you, my son and daughter.
A cure for your people's pain,
You live in hearts forever.

Khusanova Dilnoza Alimqul's daughter, is a student of the 2nd stage of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the National University of Uzbekistan.

My grandfather who is showed us the world

My grandfather who is showed us the world
My grandfather who is showed us the right path if we fall,
My grandfather taught us your life
I can't cry in the world without you
Pressing on your bosom and lovingly
The name of the Motherland is Uzbekistan
hugging tightly without giving to anyone
You spread the glory of fame to the world
Will I not be able to cry without you in the world, there is no one like you in every field of science,
I will not be able to find someone who burned as my country
Today, my world will be filled with tears,
I will not be able to cry without you in the world
Flowers bloom on your grave
The nightingales sing and cry
Miss you when it crushes my longing heart
I can't cry in the world without you
My grandfather Islam is my grandfather Islam

Patidinov Saidullo
Student of the 3rd stage of applied psychology at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the National University of Uzbekistan named after Mirzo Ulug'bek.

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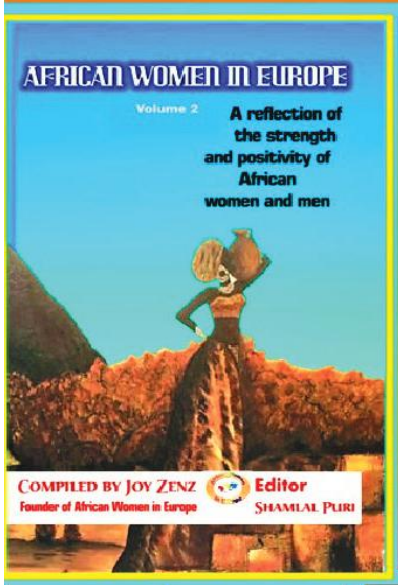

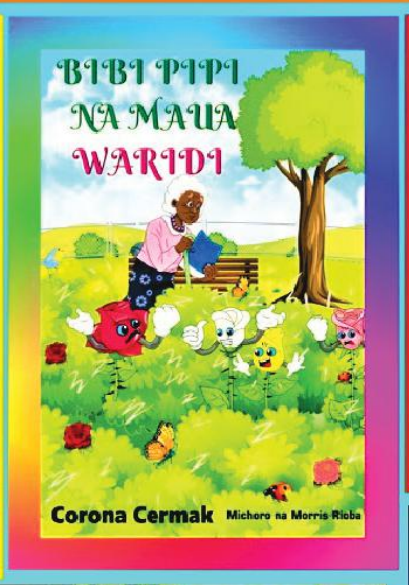

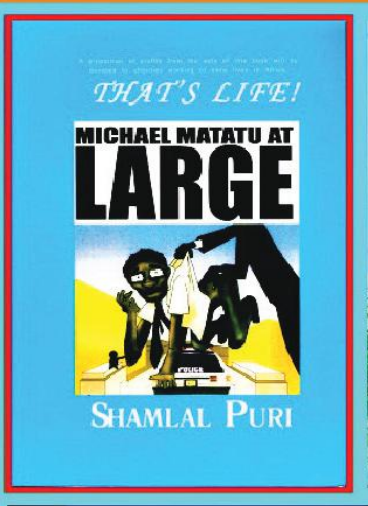

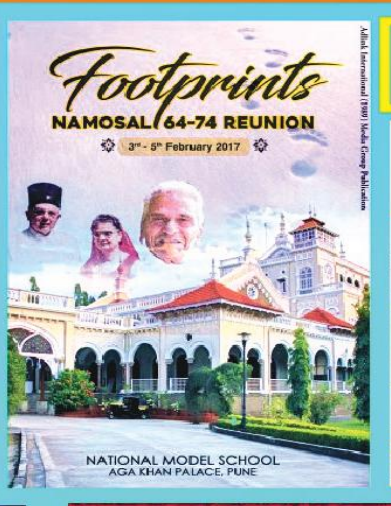

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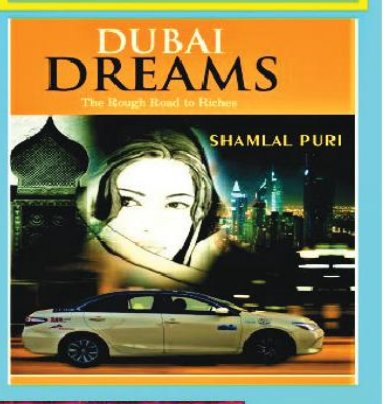

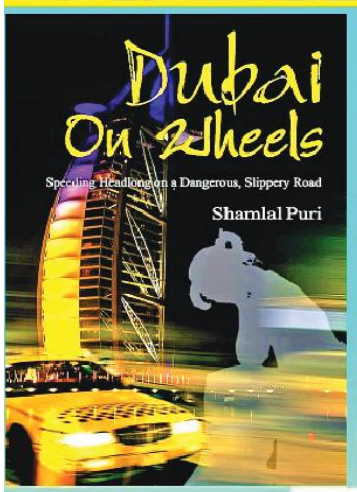

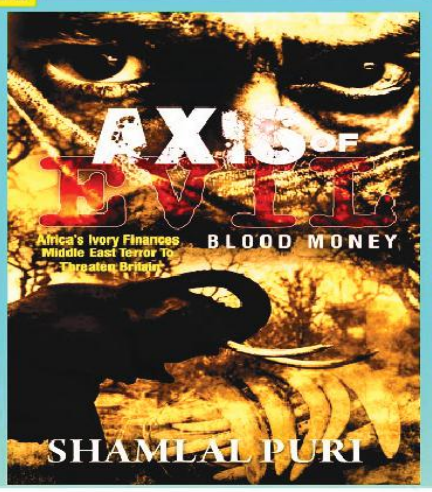

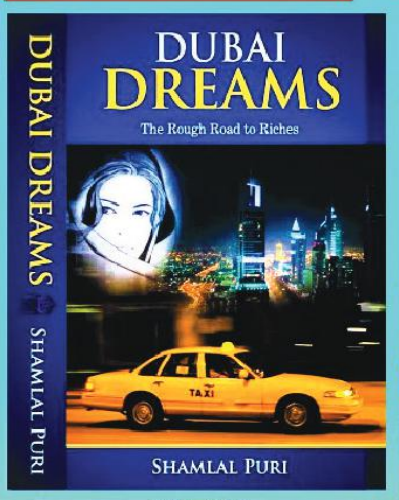

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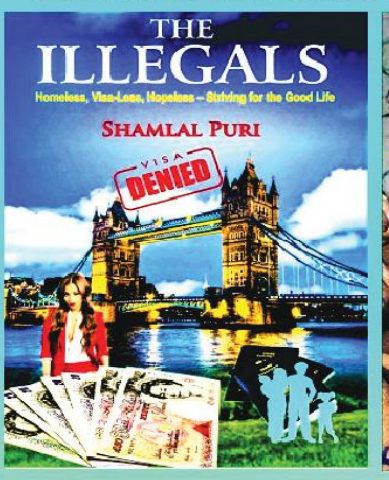

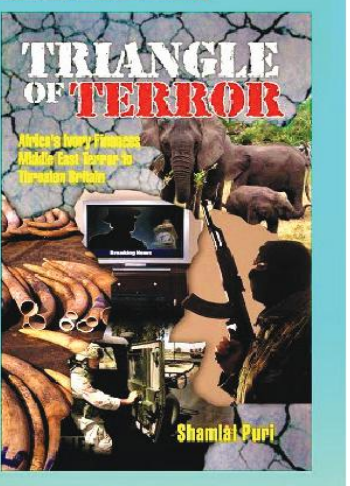

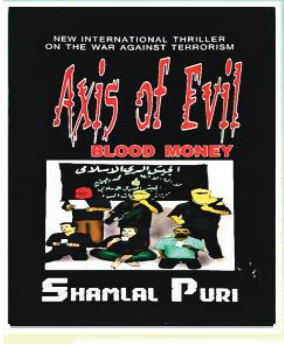

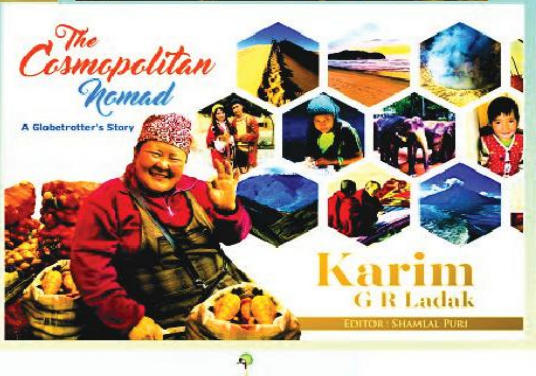

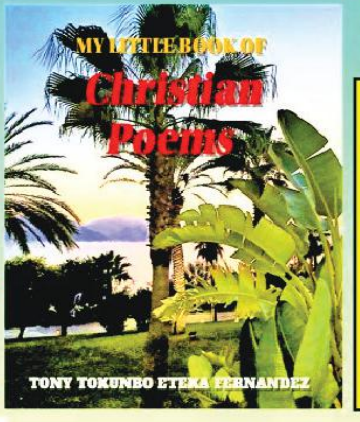

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Hundreds Show Up For Free Medical Checks

By: Steve Gatheru
@themtkenyatimes

Hundreds of patients yesterday turned up at the Embu Level 5 hospital for free treatment during a medical camp organised by doctors from the USA.

The medical outreach organised by US-based iHOPE International, in conjunction with the Embu County government, hopes to attend to over 10,000 people over the next four days.

The medical camp, set to run until, brought together a team of 48 specialist doctors and nurses who will offer a wide range of treatments, including surgeries, for patients with chronic illnesses.

Embu Governor Cecily Mbarire opened the camp and said that health matters were at the centre of her administration.

Mbarire lauded the team for volunteering to be part of the noble cause of alleviating the suffering of many patients unable to access treatment due to a lack of finances.

She said chronic diseases were especially devastating to family finances, adding that some families had been left destitute after a family member was taken ill.

"I am delighted as I open this exercise today; it's indeed a noble cause to have this medical camp at this time," said Mbarire.

She called on residents to take advantage of the opportunity properly since the exercise was free and urged many to come out for screening.

Embu County Executive Committee member for Health, Jamal Runyenje, expressed optimism that many patients suffering from various chronic illnesses will benefit and be able to live a normal life.

"We are set for major surgeries to be conducted by our doctors together with the US surgeons for the next week, but we are still calling on many people across the county who have suffered for a long time to come to the camp and have their issues sorted out," he said.

Some of the patients undergoing medical check-ups.

Amy Pajnik, the Chief Executive Officer of iHOPE International, said the free medical camp was a way of giving back to the community.

"It gives me pleasure to come back to Kenya and give back to society, and we call upon residents to come out in large numbers," she said.

Embu County Assembly Health Committee Chairman Job Itumo and Runyenjes Central Member of the County Assembly Edwin Murimi pledged to support the health sector in the county through proper legislation.

FGM Cases High In Kajiado Despite Legal Actions

By: Rop Janet and Seline Nyangere
@themtkenyatimes

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Kajiado County is still rampant, despite the practice being outlawed in Kenya in 2011.

According to the Kenya Demographic Health Survey (KDHS) 2022, the prevalence of FGM in Kajiado County is at 63 per cent, with emerging trends such as medicalisation and cross-border practice of the vice contributing to the high numbers.

However, despite the high prevalence rate, no FGM cases have been reported and successfully prosecuted at the Kajado Law Courts since 2011.

Speaking at Enkorika, Kajiado Central, during a sensitisation forum on sexual and gender-based violence organised by the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ) and Kajiado Court Users Committee, Roselyn Oganyo, Kajiado Chief Magistrate, revealed that there are currently zero active FGM cases at the Kajiado courts.

Oganyo noted that FGM is often carried out in secrecy; therefore, the culprits are never brought to court, and there are hardly any witnesses willing to testify, making it hard to prosecute the cases.

"There is very low reporting of FGM cases, the practice is deeply rooted in culture and done in secrecy. The perpetrators are never brought to court, with witnesses often bailing out for fear of reprisals by the community, "she said.

Pamela Achieng', Senior Principal Magistrate, reiterated Oganyo's sentiments, adding that FGM survivors are often denied justice as the cases are never brought to court.

She urged the community to report the cases to the police and authorities so that they are brought to court and perpetrators prosecuted.

"We encourage the community to take charge and report such cases so as to protect the girl child from this harmful practice. As a court, we do not see FGM cases in courts, but when you go to the rescue centres, you will find many girls who were mutilated and others who were rescued before being cut," she added.

The magistrate warned that FGM was illegal in Kenya and is a criminal offence under the prohibition of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2011, the Children's Act, and the penal code.

"Any person who conducts FGM or pays someone else to conduct the practice or provides his or her premises for it to be carried out, is guilty of an offence. Failure to report the act and possession of instruments used in FGM is also a crime," she noted.

Furthermore, a person convicted of these offenses can go to prison for between three and seven years, and be fined up to Sh500,000 Kenyan shillings.

Alex Labarakwe from the Witness Protection Agency said that the reason why these cases go unreported is because the people involved in this practice are either people from the government or parents of the victims, and because of intimidation and threats from them, members of the community choose not to take action.

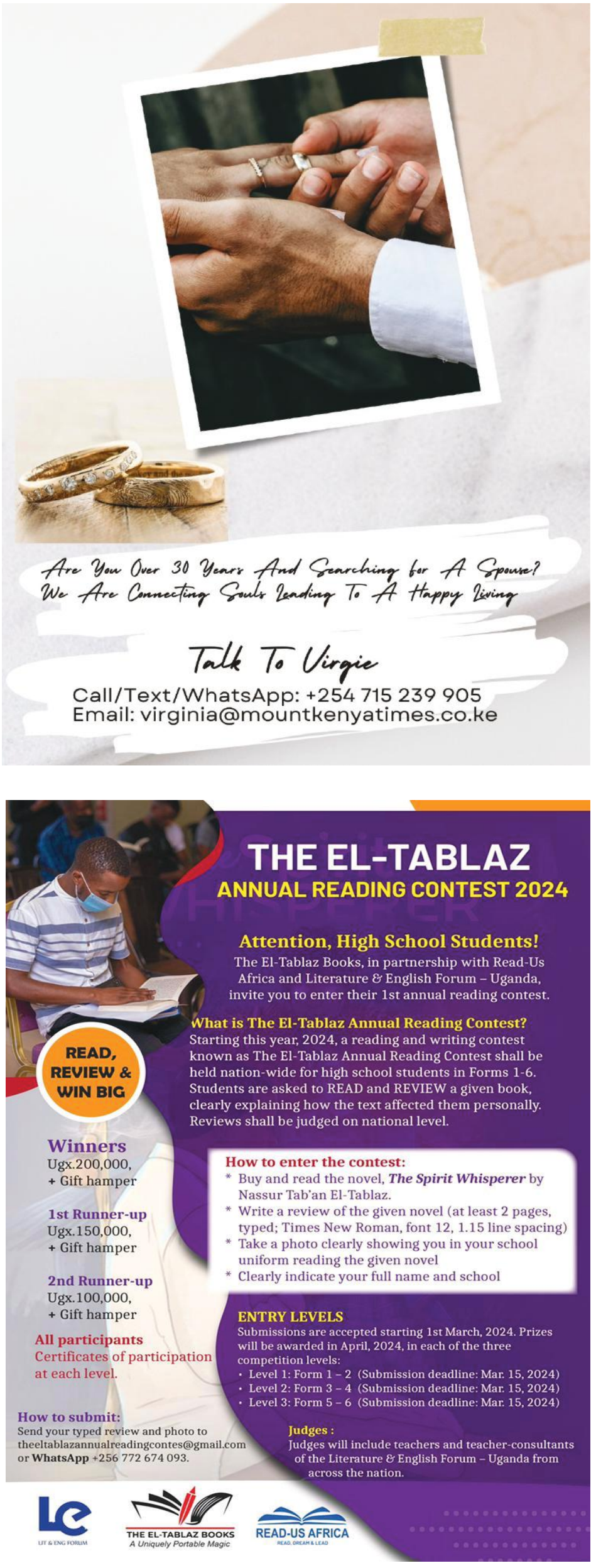
According to Beatrice Oluoch, AMREF Health Africa, there is need to strengthen the reporting systems and the Witness Protection Agency so as to encourage the community to report FGM cases without fear of victimisation.

Residents attending a sensitization forum.

Oluoch said FGM is deeply rooted in culture, and witnesses fear reporting the cases to avoid being ostracised by the community.

"FGM is deeply rooted in culture, so there is a need to strengthen the witness protection agency to ensure that witnesses can report FGM cases without fear of victimisation by the community, she said.

Oluoch further called for the adoption of the Alternative Rite of Passage (ARP), which retains cultural rituals and ceremonies in the transition to womanhood while replacing the harmful 'cut' by sexual and reproductive health rights education and the promotion of girls' education.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Attention, High School Students!
The El-Tablaz Books, in partnership with Read-Us Africa and Literature & English Forum – Uganda, invite you to enter their 1st annual reading contest.
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Starting this year, 2024, a reading and writing contest known as The El-Tablaz Annual Reading Contest shall be held nation-wide for high school students in Forms 1-6. Students are asked to READ and REVIEW a given book, clearly explaining how the text affected them personally. Reviews shall be judged on national level.
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* Buy and read the novel, The Spirit Whisperer by Nassur Tab'an El-Tablaz.
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* Take a photo clearly showing you in your school uniform reading the given novel
* Clearly indicate your full name and school
ENTRY LEVELS
Submissions are accepted starting 1st March, 2024. Prizes will be awarded in April, 2024, in each of the three competition levels:
• Level 1: Form 1 – 2 (Submission deadline: Mar. 15, 2024)
• Level 2: Form 3 – 4 (Submission deadline: Mar. 15, 2024)
• Level 3: Form 5 – 6 (Submission deadline: Mar. 15, 2024)
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KWS Rallies Communities To Protect Ecosystems

By: Anne Mwale and Dennis Rasto
@themtkenyatimes

KWS Rallies Communities To Protect Ecosystems..

Worth Noting:

- **KWS has also identified population pressure coupled with changes in land use as perils facing nearly all the wetlands in the devolved unit.**
- **Lake Naivasha is saddled with pollution and water abstraction from nearby farms, while effluent from the River Njoro, industrial runoff, and plastic waste are finding their way into Lake Nakuru.**
- **On the other hand, Lake Elementaita is threatened by pollution and encroachment by major tourism facilities.**
- **"Our human life is dependent on nature, and we have embarked on teaching the community, industrialists, hoteliers, and learners from the primary school level that abusing it is digging a grave for ourselves," said Mr. Chepkwony.**

As the countdown to World Wildlife Day celebrations enters its homestretch, the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) has rolled out an ambitious initiative to create awareness on communities' key role in conservation of lakes and rivers in Nakuru County, as more than 70 per cent of their ecosystems lie outside protected areas.

KWS has indicated that educating communities residing in water catchment areas, near the lakes' shores and along the rivers' courses on the value of natural resources would motivate Kenyans to act and ask national and county governments to enforce environmental laws and do their part in conservation.

Nakuru KWS County Warden Cheruiyot Chepkwony said the move was motivated by various scientific findings that have identified Lakes Nakuru, Naivasha, and Elementaita as the country's leading wetlands currently facing major challenges.

According to Chepkwony, the three lakes which have been declared United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage Sites are reeling under massive pollution, human encroachment, abstraction, and climate change.

Other natural resources exposed to similar existential threats, according to the County Warden, include Rivers Njoro, Makalia, and Enderit that drain into Lake Nakuru, the rivers Malewa and Gilgil; the seasonal Karati river, which flows into Lake Naivasha; and the rivers Mereroni, Mbaruk, and Kariandusi, which stream into Lake Elementaita.

KWS has also identified population pressure coupled with changes in land use as perils facing nearly all the wetlands in the devolved unit.

Lake Naivasha is saddled with pollution and water abstraction from nearby farms, while effluent from the River Njoro, industrial runoff, and plastic waste are finding their way into Lake Nakuru.

On the other hand, Lake Elementaita is threatened by pollution and encroachment by major tourism facilities.

"Our human life is dependent on nature, and we have embarked on teaching the community, industrialists, hoteliers, and learners from the primary school level that abusing it is digging a grave for ourselves," said Mr. Chepkwony.

The County Warden added that the campaign, while incorporating clean-up exercises of the natural ecosystems around the water bodies' basins and catchment areas, is also creating awareness among indigenous communities to at least know the economic value of nature as a motivation to consciously use natural resources sustainably.

The initiative that is being carried out through public barazas and lectures in educational institutions incorporates pollution prevention and sustainable consumption behaviour guidance, aimed at shaping community perceptions of the dangers of environmental degradation pollution and available solutions, thereby empowering more people to act responsibly.

"For instance, we are training the community members to do their part by reducing our use of single-use plastics, recycling, and supporting businesses that prioritise environmental sustainability," explained the warden.

In implementing the drive, KWS has brought on board several stakeholders, including the County Government, research agencies, entrepreneurs and workers in the hospitality and tourism industries, learning institutions, environmental conservation lobby groups, and environmental scientists, among others.

The initiative will also rope in industrial concerns; retailers and manufacturers, as Mr. Chepkwony stated, also have a crucial role to play in this effort, adding that business operations should be cognizant of the fact that their operations contribute to this problem and take steps to reduce pollution of the Lakes' ecosystems.

He said they were working with the County Government and authorised waste management agencies to address poorly handled domestic waste and oil residues from car wash facilities that ultimately end up in the water bodies.

At public barazas, the initiative aims at promoting proper agronomical practices among both small-holder and large-scale farmers by promoting minimal use of fertilisers and pesticides in agriculture and landscaping to prevent nutrient and chemical runoff into the lakes and replace chemical fertilisers and pesticides with sustainable methods like organic farming.

It is also encouraging proper disposal of household chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and hazardous materials to prevent them from finding their way into water bodies.

Mr. Chepkwony observed that World Wildlife Day, which will be marked on March 3, 2024, was an opportunity to celebrate Kenya's many beautiful and varied forms of wild fauna and flora and to raise awareness of the multitude of benefits that their conservation provides to people.

The event, whose theme will be 'Connecting People and Planet: Exploring Digital Innovation in Wildlife Conservation', was first celebrated in 1945.

Lake Nakuru is home to over 450 bird species, including flamingos that famously form a pink ribbon around the lake shore, attracting thousands of visitors to Nakuru County annually.

Over the years, thousands of flamingos in the lake have migrated to other lakes, including Lake Bogoria in Baringo County and Lake Natron in Tanzania.

Mr. Chepkwony affirmed that industrial pollution by the nearby Mwariki sewerage treatment plant and through the rivers that feed into the lake must be stopped to save the renowned lake.

He expressed regret that a cocktail of raw sewage and solid waste from Nakuru City industries and its suburbs, which mostly contains toxins and heavy metals, is washed down into the lake.

"The raw sewage from Nakuru City and residential areas ends up flowing into the lake. The problem is made worse by the discharge of industrial waste, mostly chemicals generated by factories within Nakuru City," noted the County warden.

He further stated that at least 30 to 40 tonnes of single-use plastic containers find their way into Lake Nakuru National Park every rainy season, posing danger to the wildlife and being a threat to one of Kenya's most visited parks.

The conservationist observed that the single-use plastic waste is generated from the County's urban centres and residential estates before being swept into lakes through storm water and rivers.

"Single-use plastic bottles are now a major cause of pollution and reduce habitat. We have come across animals entangled with these bottles. If ingested by wildlife, they end up dying and pulling back our efforts on conservation," he lamented.

Laboratory analysis sponsored by government agencies, educational institutions, and researchers have confirmed that a significant proportion of the plastic containers retrieved from waterways contained chemical traces, which in turn endanger marine life and wild animals.

Contd Page 20.

National Democratic Institute Criticizes 2024 Budget Policy Statement

By: Cynthia Masibo
@themtkenyatimes

In a recent development, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) has today raised concerns over the 2024 Budget Policy Statement. The critique comes amidst growing scrutiny of fiscal policies and democratic principles within the government's financial framework.

NDI's Perspective:

The NDI, known for its advocacy of democratic processes globally, has pointed out several discrepancies within the 2024 Budget Policy Statement. According to NDI representatives, the statement fails to adequately address key democratic principles and lacks transparency in budget allocations.

Mr Ndiritu Muriithi, an Economist and the former Governor of Laikipia.

Fiscal Priorities:

One of the primary areas of contention revolves around fiscal priorities outlined in the budget. The NDI has highlighted concerns regarding the allocation of funds, suggesting that certain sectors crucial for democratic development may be underfunded or overlooked.

Transparency Issues:

Transparency within budgetary processes is essential for ensuring accountability and fostering public trust. However, the NDI has raised flags regarding transparency gaps within the 2024 Budget Policy Statement, indicating a lack of clarity in expenditure breakdowns and revenue projections.

Alignment with Democratic Principles:

Central to the NDI's critique is the extent to which the budget aligns with democratic principles. Beyond financial allocations, the institute emphasizes the importance of ensuring that budgetary decisions reflect the interests and needs of the population, fostering inclusive governance practices.

Government Response:

In response to the NDI's critique, government officials have defended the 2024 Budget Policy Statement, asserting that it adheres to fiscal discipline and addresses key national priorities. However, calls for greater transparency and alignment with democratic principles persist.

Conclusion:

As the debate surrounding the 2024 Budget Policy Statement continues, the critique from the National Democratic Institute underscores the importance of upholding democratic values within fiscal frameworks. Moving forward, stakeholders are urged to engage in constructive dialogue to address concerns and ensure that budgetary processes remain transparent, accountable, and responsive to the needs of the populace.

Dr. Ekrah Ndungu Advises Us To Shun Social Media Pressure

By: John Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes

Social media can make people feel like their life is stuck whereas it's just their journey's season.

Dr. Ekrah Ndung'u Chaiperson Kenya National Association of Private Colleges (KENAPCO) took a moment to share with us some Monday motivation: Her word of advice revolves around the influence exerted by social media.

"Social media got pressure. Your self-esteem and mental health are your responsibility."... Sometimes scrolling all the pages and wondering if your life got a handbrake. A polite reminder, people rarely post their failures or their pains. Before branding yourself a failure look back and be grateful that you got breath...that's one great achievement that you're not gasping your last breath...a lot of people are lying in hospitals, ICU, HDU gasping their last breath while you're here being remorseful on what people are posting looking like an all rosy life. Social media is choreographed to show our best self to people who don't know us in person...it's just a sad generation with happy pictures online. Others are even going to an extent of faking their lifestyle – posing with high end cars, trending fashions, etc. Cultivate spirit of contentment be happy with your life as you work towards self-improvement daily without lowering your esteem because of pressure from strangers you see online.

Every stage in life can be an adventure, pick lessons from each stage. They'll become a life manual for someone else. Your life lessons can be documented into a survival constitution for other people.

If you didn't make it in your 20s you can make it in your 30s

If you didn't make it in your 30s you can make it in your 40s

If you didn't make it in your 40s you can make it in your 50s

Sanders of KFC made it in his 60s

Late President Kibaki became President in the 70s & in a wheelchair after attempting many times; he launched this country to a lifetime memorable legacy.

Grandma Moses a prolific painter made it in the 80s.

Stay consistent keep doing what you're doing without getting distracted by other people's lives. Never give up & never arrive.

This advices includes our university and college students, we're in a PR generation, they end up engaging in vices so that they look good on social media.

It's more important to look good in person and be happy in person than trying hard a showbiz while dying of depression offline said Dr Ekrah

Have a great start to a new week."

Dr. Ekrah Ndung'u is the Chair, KENAPCO..

Treasury PS To Kenyans: Fulfil Your Tax Obligation

By: Kiptanui Cherono
@themtkenyatimes

Kenyans have a civic obligation to pay their taxes to enable the government to render quality services to the people.

National Treasury and Economic Planning Principal Secretary Dr. Chris Kiptoo has observed that if everyone paid taxes dutifully, the tax base would increase, leading to more income for easier implementation of government services and development projects.

"There is no way the government will run and manage the affairs of its people without collecting taxes," said the PS, adding that tax payment was an obligation for every patriotic Kenyan.

Dr. Kiptoo made the remarks during a one-day stakeholder engagement forum that brought together Kenya Revenue Authority officials and the business community from the North Rift region at an Eldoret hotel.

Kenya Revenue Authority Commissioner General Humphrey Wattanga and Commissioner for Domestic Taxes Rispah Simiyu were in attendance.

The PS urged Kenyans to be patriotic and pay their correct share of taxes, as this would create a fair and competitive business environment, grow the economy, and enable the country to be self-reliant.

"I do not understand why the majority of Kenyans are reluctant to pay their taxes, yet they are more than willing to raise money for the construction of churches and schools without any coercion," he said.

He called on the business community to proactively pay their correct share of taxes and champion compliance initiatives if they expect the government to provide critical services and development programmes.

In his remarks, Wattanga said KRA has been implementing a more facilitative service-focused approach to tax collection to make tax payments easy for every Kenyan.

Principal Secretary for Treasury Dr Chris Kiptoo addressing the session.

He assured Kenyans of KRA's commitment to collaborate with stakeholders in implementing compliance support programmes that respond to taxpayers' unique needs.

"I want to appeal to all stakeholders to continue engaging with us as we work collectively to serve you better. We will enhance our focus on taxpayers's education and staff integrity," he added.

The Commissioner General further assured of KRA's collaboration to ensure the Tax Amnesty and e-IMS programmes successfully respond to its revenue goals.

KWS Rallies Communities To Protect Ecosystems

Contd from Page 18

The County Warden indicated that human activities in the catchment, such as quarrying, deforestation, road construction, and poor cultivation practices, among others, have contributed to increased sediments deposited into the lake.

He expresses worry that wildlife could be quenching their thirst with contaminated water.

"Wild animals may be feeding on contaminated food and water. If this pollution is not stopped, we risk losing the heritage site. There is a need for an upscale of waste water management as well as industrial discharge to ensure only quality water enters the lake."

In April 2021, dozens of the flamingos that inhabit the Rift Valley saltwater lake died of a disease believed to be caused by industrial pollution.

Various studies carried out between 1999 to 2021 to investigate the extent of pollution in Lake Nakuru revealed the presence of heavy metals and pesticide residues in the lake.

The scientific probes have revealed that contamination by most of the pollutants has increased over the past 25 years.

Mr. Chepkwony regretted that the effluent that flows into the lake has changed the pH from 5.86 to 7, making it unsuitable for wildlife.

"There should be a proper solid and liquid waste management system because there is a heavy flow of waste discharge into the lake, particularly during the recent rains, and this is harmful to wild animals," he said.

On the shores of Lake Elementaita, developers had encroached on the riparian land while constructing new hotels and lodges, posing a threat to over 400 species of birds, including flamingoes, pelicans, and 13 other globally threatened bird species.

The birds are very sensitive to environmental change. The County Warden said besides the developments, the water body was currently facing immense pressure due to pollution and encroachment.

Mr. Chepkwony observed that the degradation of the lake had adversely affected water quality, productivity, and biodiversity.

This, he added, affected its ability to support life. Of greater concern to the team is the fact that 75 per cent of the Lake Elementaita ecosystem is privately held by Soysambu Conservancy, a 45,000-acre wildlife and cattle ranch.

Lake Elementaita is a vital breeding site for the great white pelicans, has over 450 species of birds, and is a haven for thousands of greater and lesser flamingos that flock during favourable conditions.

It was designated as an Important Bird Area in 1999, a Ramsar site in 2005, a national wildlife sanctuary in 2010, and was inscribed as a World Heritage Site in 2011 by UNESCO, together with Lake Nakuru and Lake Bogoria, as part of the Kenya Lakes System in the Great Rift Valley.

Researchers have also warned of the presence of heavy and toxic metals in Lake Naivasha.

They have expressed concern that the water body is dying a slow death, which has seen several fish species disappear, and that the metals are occurring at levels above the Ministry of Health's recommended limits for drinking water.

The experts indicate that Lake Naivasha, being a freshwater lake, has pH levels of between 6 and 8, but pollution has led to acidification that has seen its pH levels drop to below 6.

They have also singled out soil erosion from the escarpments in the east of the lake's catchment, nutrient runoff, and pesticides from farms as the biggest ecological threats facing the water body.

The probe established that the source of heavy metals in the lake was mostly from farming, urban effluents, and beach activities.

"One other factor that could have contributed to increasing the heavy metals load is the fact that Lake Naivasha has been flooded for the last 7 years, rapidly increasing in area by about 58 per cent between 2010 and 2013 and is currently 158 square kilometres.

The flooded areas are the low-lying riparian land, which was farmlands, a public beach, and sewage points," they state in a report dubbed 'Heavy metals in surface sediments of Lake Naivasha, Kenya: spatial distribution, source identification, and ecological risk assessment'.

MOSES KURIA CUP

MOSES KURIA FOUNDATION - PRESENTS

MOSES KURIA CUP TOURNAMENT

11 Counties from Nakuru to Isiolo
66 Constituencies from Kuresoi to Isiolo
66 Teams

Constituency Trials Sunday **11th February 2024**
8 Group Matches Kick Off **Sunday 18th February**

233 Group Matches
8 Round of **16** Matches
4 Quarter Final Matches
2 Semi Final Matches

1 3rd Place Play off Match
1 Final
Total **249** Matches

Overall Winner gets **Ksh 5 Million**
Runners Up Gets **Ksh 3 Million**
Third Place **Ksh 1 Million**

Each of the other **66** teams get
10 Balls ☑
18 Shorts ☑
18 Jerseys ☑
18 Pairs of Socks ☑
18 Pairs of Playing Boots ☑
Ksh 100,000 Participation Fees ☑
Match Day **Allowances** for Teams ☑
Officials, Referees and Ball boys and Girls ☑

LET US JOIN HANDS TO SAVE OUR YOUTH

Sports >> ***Former England boss Hodgson, who had been under growing pressure, was hospitalised after falling ill during a training session last week as reports swirled that he was going to be sacked.**

Glasner Replaces Hodgson As Crystal Palace Boss

FILES) Frankfurt's Austrian head coach Oliver Glasner celebrates with the fans after winning the German Cup (DFB Pokal) semi-final football match VfB Stuttart v Eintracht Frankfurt in Stuttart, southern Germany on May 3, 2023. Oliver Glasner has been named as new Crystal Palace manager by the club, February 19. (Photo by THOMAS KIENZLE / AFP).

Former England boss Hodgson, who had been under growing pressure, was hospitalised after falling ill during a training session last week as reports swirled that he was going to be sacked.

Hodgson, 76, said in a club statement that he was stepping aside to allow the club to "bring forward their plans for a new manager".

Shortly afterwards, Palace announced they had appointed Glasner as Hodgson's replacement, with the Austrian signing a deal until the end of the 2025/26 season.

"I am very happy to join Crystal Palace FC as manager," said the 49-year-old Austrian, who led Eintracht Frankfurt to Europa League glory in 2022 and has also managed LASK and Wolfsburg.

"I am looking forward to working with the talented squad, meeting the club's supporters and experiencing the Selhurst Park atmosphere I have heard so much about."

Palace chairman Steve Parish said: "I'm delighted to welcome Oliver to the club. He has an outstanding record, and we believe he is the right manager to take the club forward at this pivotal stage.

"Wherever Oliver has gone so far in his managerial journey, success has been quick to follow, and we believe his ambition, as well as his exciting and attacking approach, is the perfect fit."

Palace are in deep trouble after losing 10 of their past 16 league games to slide to 16th in the table, just five points above third-bottom Everton, whom they face later on Monday.

Hodgson's assistants, Paddy McCarthy and Ray Lewington, are set to take charge of the team for the match at Goodison Park.

Hodgson's final match as Palace boss was a 3-1 home defeat against Chelsea on February 12, a loss that came after a 4-1 embarrassment at arch-rivals Brighton.

After the Brighton defeat he insisted he had the "strength, the resilience and the determination" to turn the team's poor form around.

The former Liverpool and Inter Milan boss returned for his second spell with the south London club in March last year after previously managing them from 2017 to 2021.

He signed a short-term deal to take over from Patrick Vieira, steering them away from relegation trouble and securing an 11th-place finish.

'Special place'

Hodgson, who was born near the club's Selhurst Park stadium and who was on their books as a teenager, also saved Palace from relegation in his first season in charge, in 2017/18.

"This club is very special and means so much to me and has played a big part in my footballing life," said Hodgson, who is now out of hospital.

"I am confident that the season will finish well and I wish the team every success in the weeks, months and seasons to come," he added.

Hodgson's largely successful reign turned sour this season, with fans criticising what they saw as dour football and handling of star winger Michael Olise, who limped off just 11 minutes after coming on as a substitute on his return from injury against Brighton.

Parish thanked Hodgson and said he should be respected for retaining the club's top-flight status.

"Roy has a special place in Crystal Palace history and this will never be forgotten," he said.

"After four years in which he led the club to maintaining Premier League status season after season, he once again joined us nearly a year ago to steady the ship, and worked wonders."

Hodgson's long and varied managerial career began in 1976 with Swedish team Halmstads and he worked at clubs across Europe, also coaching Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates and Finland.

He became England boss in May 2012, leading the team at three major tournaments but they failed to end their wait for a first trophy since 1966, enduring an embarrassing last-16 exit against Iceland at Euro 2016.

AFP

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> ***Emerse Fae was on Monday rewarded for guiding Ivory Coast to the African Cup of Nations title as interim coach by being given the job full time.**

Ivory Coast Reward Fae After Unlikely AFCON Triumph

Ivory Coast's coach Emerse Fae gives a press conference at Stade Charles Konan Banny in Yamoussoukro on January 28, 2024, on the eve of the 2024 Africa Cup of Nations (CAN) football match between Senegal and Ivory Coast. (Photo by Kenzo TRIBOUILLARD / AFP).

Emerse Fae was on Monday rewarded for guiding Ivory Coast to the African Cup of Nations title as interim coach by being given the job full time.

"Emerse was until now interim coach and has just been confirmed today as full coach," the Ivoirian federation boss Idriss Diallo said.

The Elephants were facing elimination when they fired veteran French coach Jean-Louis Gasset in January after winning just one of their three group games.

The next day, results fell the hosts' way and they squeezed through as the last of the four best third-placed teams. Fae, a former Ivorian international who had never coached before, took over.

Fae oversaw an incredible turnaround.

In the last 16, the Ivorians came from behind to beat holders Senegal on penalties. Then, playing much of the match with 10 men, they came from behind to beat Mali in extra time in the quarter-finals.

After beating the Democratic Republic of Congo 1-0 in the last four, they came from behind once more to beat Nigeria 2-1 in the final and lift the trophy.

AFP

The MT. KENYA TIMES

The Mt Kenya Times

Bukhara Is A Historical Country

By: Shokhijakhon Urunov
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- **The most famous of these is the Kalon Minaret, a 48-meter-high tower that was built in the 12th century and has survived numerous earthquakes and invasions. The intricate tile work and majestic domes of these structures reflect the skill and creativity of the craftsmen who built them.**
- **Bukhara is also a land of spiritual significance as it is considered a holy city in Islam. The city boasts over 300 mosques and has been a center for Islamic learning for centuries. The most renowned religious site is the Po-i-Kalyan complex, which includes the Great Mosque, one of the largest in Central Asia. The architectural style of these mosques is a blend of Persian, Arabic, and Central Asian influences, showcasing Bukhara's role as a cultural melting pot.**

Bukhara is a country steeped in history, a place where old-world charm and modernization coexist harmoniously. Located in central Asia, Bukhara is an ancient city with a rich and diverse cultural heritage. With a history spanning over thousands of years, this country has been the site of many significant events, making it an important destination for anyone interested in history.

Dating back to the 6th century BC, Bukhara is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. It was an important stop along the Silk Road, a vast network of trade routes that connected Asia, Africa, and Europe. The city's strategic location made it a center for trade, culture, and religion, resulting in the assimilation of diverse customs and traditions.

One of the most notable features of Bukhara is its extensive collection of architectural wonders. The city is home to hundreds of well-preserved buildings, including madrassas (Islamic schools), mosques, caravanserais (inns), and palaces, which are a testament to its illustrious past.

The most famous of these is the Kalon Minaret, a 48-meter-high tower that was built in the 12th century and has survived numerous earthquakes and invasions. The intricate tile work and majestic domes of these structures reflect the skill and creativity of the craftsmen who built them.

Bukhara is also a land of spiritual significance as it is considered a holy city in Islam. The city boasts over 300 mosques and has been a center for Islamic learning for centuries. The most renowned religious site is the Po-i-Kalyan complex, which includes the Great Mosque, one of the largest in Central Asia. The architectural style of these mosques is a blend of Persian, Arabic, and Central Asian influences, showcasing Bukhara's role as a cultural melting pot.

The city's wealth of history is not confined to its architecture but is also reflected in its art and literature. Bukhara has been home to many great scholars, poets, and artists, whose works have shaped the country's culture. The famous Persian poet, Navoi, was born in Bukhara, and his works are still recited and celebrated. The city's markets are brimming with colorful handicrafts, such as pottery, silk, and hand-knotted carpets, that have been a part of Bukhara's tradition for centuries.

Bukhara has also been the stage for some significant historical events. It was conquered by Alexander the Great in the 4th century BC, and the city has been under the rule of various empires, including the Greek, Arab, Mongol, and Russian empires.

Each of these rulers has left their mark on Bukhara, adding to its cultural and historical significance. Despite its turbulent past, Bukhara has remained resilient, preserving its heritage and traditions through the ages.

Today, the city is a vibrant blend of old and new, where traditional markets coexist with modern shopping centers, and ancient buildings stand tall amidst modern skyscrapers.

The people of Bukhara take great pride in their country's history and are eager to share it with visitors. In conclusion, Bukhara is a country that has stood the test of time, a place where the past and present merge seamlessly to create a unique and enchanting experience.

Its ancient monuments, vibrant culture, and rich history make it an exceptional destination for travelers, historians, and anyone with a thirst for knowledge. By immersing oneself in the sights, sounds, and flavors of Bukhara, one can truly appreciate the magnificence of this historical country.

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