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President William Ruto



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GEMA WOMEN COUNCIL SUPPORTS CALL FOR UNITY IN MT KENYA REGION

By: GWC

Worth Noting:

- We support efforts made by the National and County governments spearheaded by the Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua to eradicate alcohol in Central Kenya and in the whole nation.
- GEMA Women Council has a leadership structure flowing from Central Region Economic Bloc (CEREB) level, County level, Sub-county level, Ward level all the way to our Villages. We, as leaders in the national level, through our leadership structure, are aware of the pain families are experiencing because of alcohol abuse.



Some of the GEMA Women Council members posing for a photo after a past meeting..

Mt Kenya region is home to women, men, girls and boys who work hard to build their homes and to build the nation. Peace in the region and in the country concerns all the 4 categories of people.

We have a brand of being hard-working people since time immemorial. We cherish our health, wealth and prosperity. That is why we wake up in large numbers to go and vote our political leaders, to propel our health, wealth and prosperity.

These 3 cannot be achieved when our political leadership is not united and speaking in one voice. There are even proverbs to support this value, and any person from the region knows the proverbs.

We, the women leaders of GEMA Women Council, join our GEMA elders and GEMA youth in supporting a call for unity.

We recognize the call for unity by our

GEMA chairman, Bishop Lawi Imathiu who has called for Mt Kenya unity and given a very clear path towards unity.

We urge our leaders from all political divides to remember our rich history and achievements through unity and agree to unite.

Our region has many challenges, top on the list being alcohol and drug abuse.

Both men and women, elders and youth, are abusing alcohol and other drugs.

Alcohol has become breakfast lunch and dinner for our people both in rural and urban areas.

We support efforts made by the National and County governments spearheaded by the Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua to eradicate alcohol in Central Kenya and in the whole nation.

GEMA Women Council has a leadership structure flowing from Central Region Economic Bloc (CEREB) level, County

level, Sub-county level, Ward level all the way to our Villages. We, as leaders in the national level, through our leadership structure, are aware of the pain families are experiencing because of alcohol abuse.

We hereby commit to engage national and county elected leaders and executive officials in support of initiatives against alcohol and substance abuse.

It is our desire as GEMA Women that our culture and cultural values, enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya (2010) are fully respected and allowed.

We hereby denounce the act witnessed in Murang'a where women elders were taken to court for going to Mukurwe wa Nyagathanga. We are Christians and we are also cultural.

We shall continue being us, and we shall lobby leaders to respect us as we are and that courts are used for crimes not cultur-

al activities.

We urge our political leaders to use any mechanisms to use government resources and rehabilitate our sons and daughters to stop using alcohol and use their energy productively. We urge them to stop branding them criminal gangs!

It is therefore our hope and desire that every woman, from Central Kenya, will wake up and say "Yes We Can End Alcohol and Drug Abuse". And, "Yes We can have Political leaders unite for health, wealth and prosperity"

This article was jointly drafted by ten County Coordinators of GEMA Women Council. It was submitted for publishing by the Council chairperson Mary Kabura Kabea Ngethe

The Mt. Kenya Times



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Group Executive Chairman
M. Danson

Our Contacts

P. O. Box 101 675 - 00101 Nairobi, Cell: 0700 161 866, 0705 215 262

Editorial Desk: editorial@mountkenyaintimes.co.ke, **Adverts:** ads@mountkenyaintimes.co.ke,

News Desk: news@mountkenyaintimes.co.ke, **Web:** www.mountkenyaintimes.co.ke

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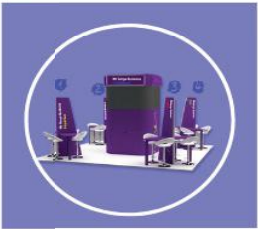
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NEWS IN BRIEF



The Uasin Gishu County Administration is making significant progress in implementing the County Aggregation and Industrial Parks (CAIPs) project, which aims to boost agriculture and manufacturing sectors for income generation, job creation, foreign exchange earnings, and poverty reduction.

The county is steering the County Aggregation Industrial Park situated at the Agricultural Mechanisation Services (AMS) in Moiben towards realisation, showcasing a transformative vision for the region's agriculture and trade sectors.

The construction has achieved key milestones, including the completion of a robust perimeter wall, site excavation, and foundation walling.

The park is set to be a game-changer for both small and large-scale farmers, providing a centralized platform for farmers to aggregate their produce and facilitate access to local and international markets.



The government, through the National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA), has launched a sensitization forum to educate local communities in Uasin Gishu on the effects of alcohol and drug abuse. The forum, held during the Community Outreach on the National Substance Use Prevention Week, aimed to save the future generation from perishing through alcohol and substance abuse.

NACADA Director Elijah Lagat called on society and stakeholders to come together to combat the menace, which has serious impacts on people's lives, especially the youth.

He highlighted the effects of alcohol and drugs on overall health, including lifestyle chronic diseases of the liver, kidney, and brain.

Lagat called for concerted efforts from the National Government Administrative Officers (NGAOs), civil servants, security officers, village elders, and members of the general public to come up with a lasting solution.

He commended the significant steps made by Uasin Gishu County in fighting illicit brew and drug abuse, urging them to continue with the same spirit to ensure the community is free from alcohol and illicit substances.

The county is committed to working closely with all government agencies and partners to ensure illicit alcohol is finished.



Environment, Forestry, and Climate Change, Cabinet Secretary Soipan Tuya, has urged the Maa community to support elected leaders in promoting development. She believes that more development can be achieved if people support the elected leaders in delivering their promises.

Tuya, who served as the women's representative for Narok County for ten years,

recalled her success due to the support she received from the Maa community.

She also highlighted the strategic decisions made by President William Ruto, which have brought the value of the dollar down, resulting in economic growth.

Tuya urged leaders to tell the truth and spread messages of peace to unite all people, regardless of their background.

She also highlighted the ongoing health sector reforms, which will help reduce cancer cases and other deadly diseases.

Kakamega County Widows Empowerment Project (KCWEP) is partnering with the International Society for the Development of People (CISP) to end violence against women and girls in Kakamega County.

The project, 'Together Empowering Society to Eliminate Abuse of Women and Children' (TETEA), is funded by the European Union and implemented by KCWEP, CISP, and a consortium of other partners.

The project aims to establish Child Rights Clubs (CRCs) in schools, encouraging children to communicate about their rights and any form of abuse or mistreatment.

Additionally, the project has installed 'talk boxes' for children to communicate their issues without speaking orally.

These boxes are opened monthly by a committee comprising the Directorate of Children Services, Child Rights' Patrons, head teachers, Parents Association representatives, and representatives from the TETEA Project.

The project aims to provide a proper channel of communication for children who may be undergoing abuse and suffering in silence.



The DCI Staff Clinic has received a donation of pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical commodities from the Nairobi County Government through the Chief Officer of Health Geoffrey Mosiria. Receiving the donations on behalf of the DCI, the Director Investigations Bureau Mr Abdalla Komesha commended the county government for adopting sustained efforts geared towards improving healthcare services, and at the same time welcomed more partnerships between the county govt and DCI's health department.

He noted that the supplies would go a long way in ensuring the smooth running of the DCI dispensary, especially by enhancing its capacity to offer a broad range of services to both staff and members of the public.

On his part, Mr Mosiria affirmed the county's support to ensure continued supply of drugs, lauding the management of the dispensary for opening its doors to the public, especially on maternal child health, vaccinations, counselling, consultations and laboratory services.



Kenya's Innovation Ecosystem is ranked eighth among the 28 economies in Sub-Saharan Africa in the 16th Edition of the Global Innovation Index 2023 report by the World Intellectual Property Organisation.

The country lags behind globally in skills, infrastructure, and financing dimensions. Cabinet Secretary (CS) for Youth Affairs, Creative Economy, and Sports Ababu Namwamba launched the Kenya Innovation Agency's (KeNIA) second strategic plan for 2023–2027 to meet the agency's mission statement of developing and managing a dynamic national innovation system that catalyses jobs and wealth creation.

The CS highlighted the crucial role of innovation in accelerating Kenya's bottom-up economic transformation agenda, highlighting the Science and Technology Act (STI) Act 2013, IP Acts 2001, and STI policy 2020 as a good foundation for interventions aiming to improve the ecosystem.

Namwamba also urged KeNIA to develop an information portal on funding opportunities, stating that potential sources of funding such as the Youth Enterprise Development Fund have not been exploited adequately by Kenyan innovators.

Namwamba also urged KeNIA to create an inventory, document innovations and start-ups at the county, national, and local levels, and increase awareness of the services offered by innovation hubs to the public.

He also called on KeNIA to support innovators in protecting their innovations through Intellectual Property Rights and called upon stakeholders to collaborate with KeNIA for the success of initiatives aimed at enhancing Kenya's shared socio-economic development.



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The government and its partners are focusing on education in refugee camps, particularly for Elimu Scholars.

The Ministry of Education is advocating for quality education at various learning institutions, including boarding schools, to help students overcome everyday challenges.

The delegation of the Ministry of Education has reached a truce on contentious issues, such as the separation of some refugees on Elimu Scholarships from their families.

Dr. Hellen Boruet, a member of the Ministry of Education team, encourages camp community leaders to champion parents and motivate their children.

Dr. Boruet emphasises the importance of girls' education, as it is key to life and teaches them problem-solving skills.

The transition from the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) to the Social Health Insurance Fund (SHIF) has caused issues in the service delivery of Edu-Afya.

The stakeholders recommend that school management look into modalities to meet medical costs where parents and guardians cannot pay.

Studying in distant boarding schools is considered better than studying in day schools in refugee camps due to their protection.

Some refugees face challenges with English and Kiswahili, and school principals, teachers, and students are urged to aid in translation.

UNHCR representative for education in Kakuma refugee camp, Mr. Ali Duale, assures beneficiaries of Government Elimu Scholarships that food rations from the World Food Programme are safe and will be available during school holidays.



Three suspects found with four pieces of elephant tusks have been arrested in Narok following a joint operation by DCI's Serious Crime Unit detectives and the area police.

Joseph Mutuku, 44, Julius Mwanduka Kiema, 72 and Alfred Nzioka Mutie, 44 were arrested at Kisiriri area in Narok North. The tusks weighing 27kg with an estimated street value of KSh2.7 million was found in their possession.

The three were locked up in cells pending arraignment for relevant offences under the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act 2013 (WCMA)

Benjamin Kiprotich, the Chief Officer in Charge of Trade, Tourism, and Industrialization at Nandi County Government, has announced plans to digitise all tourist sites in the region to increase revenue collection and accessibility.

The county's rich historical and cultural heritage is expected to attract tourists and generate income. Kiprotich believes that a public-private partnership with Tripesa, a Nairobi-based technology company, will help improve revenue collection and create job opportunities for the youth.

Some of the unexploited tourist sites include Chepkiit Waterfalls, Nandi Rocks, Kapsimotwa Gardens, Bonjoge National Reserve, Kipsigak Museum, Ndalat Hills, and Kingwal Swamp. Experts suggest that Nandi could become an international tourist destination if the Sitatunga antelope, a rare antelope, is protected from poachers and human encroachment.

Tripesa Country Manager Muturi Kinyamu believes that digitization and signage will help in marketing the sites and promoting the region as a tourist destination.



Laikipia County governor Joshua Irungu and his Deputy Reuben Kamuri attended the Inaugural Stakeholder Forum for women inclusion in Development at Governor's Compound Nanyuki.

The stakeholders meeting brought together about 1500 leaders of women's groups from Umande, Segera, Thingithu and Nanyuki wards. In line with the administration's manifesto, the government aim to empower women through water harvesting which enables them to have kitchen gardens and access to clean consumable water.

The meeting presented an opportunity for insightful discussion about women's role in development, challenges, experiences while exchanging ideas and formulating actionable strategies towards their empowerment.

The two leaders noted that the county can never flourish if the potential of our women and bereave ourselves to their contributions in development is stifled.

On Friday, the duo convened a second meeting of Stakeholders Forum for women inclusion in Development in Nyahururu where they engaged more than 400 women on their role in the development agenda in the county.

The women leaders were drawn from Igwamiti, Salama and Marmanet wards represented different social groups; youths, civil society, persons living with disabilities, Religious groups and traders.



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State Pledges To Support SACCOs

By: Sadik Hassan
@themkenyentimes

Worth Noting:

- The amendments will also enhance confidence among SACCO members by establishing a Deposit Guarantee Fund, the CS said.
- Another law that is a game changer, is the Cooperative Act, which will pave the way for the development of prudential regulations for startups and small SACCOs, that are not under the purview of the SACCO Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA).
- Chelugui noted that SACCOs would be stratified into tiers based on size and shall be subjected to segregated prudential standards, enforced by county governments.
- “The National government will support counties in this role by developing standards and building their capacities through training,” he said.



Cabinet Secretary Simon Chelugui while addressing the conference.

Cabinet Secretary for Co-operative and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Development, Simon Chelugui, has reiterated the government’s commitment to ensuring SACCOs play a significant role in financial inclusion.

Speaking during the closing ceremony of the 9th Annual SACCO Leaders Convention in Mombasa, Chelugui said cooperatives have long been the backbone of financial inclusion, providing services to the unbanked, and fostering financial literacy and resilience.

“They also facilitate access to Affordable Housing and essential services, ensuring that no Kenyan is left behind in our journey towards progress. It is against this backdrop that the government has recognised co-operatives as key enablers of implementing the BETA Agenda,” he said.

He noted that the government has instituted several legal amendments to streamline the cooperative sector, including the SACCO Societies Act, which aims at increasing short-term liquidity through inter-borrowing and access to central payment systems.

The amendments will also enhance confidence among SACCO members by establishing a Deposit Guarantee Fund, the CS said.

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of prudential regulations for startups and small SACCOs, that are not under the purview of the SACCO Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA).

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“The National government will support counties in this role by developing standards and building their

capacities through training,” he said.

Other key reforms targeting the SACCO sub-sector include bringing all cooperatives undertaking withdrawable deposits, under the SASRA regulatory framework.

“These measures are designed to ensure financial stability within the cooperative movement and the entire country. They will ensure that a shilling saved in a SACCO is as safe as one saved in a bank,” stated the CS.

He further disclosed that the government would support the productive sector through co-operatives and that various interventions were underway across various value chains, including dairy, cotton, coffee, the blue economy, mining, beef, and leather.

The efforts are being carried out in tandem with the establishment of an enabling policy and legal framework meant to foster growth and sustainability.

The CS hailed SACCO leaders for their commitment to driving sustainable development and fostering inclusive economic growth.

The government, he said, recognises the vital role played by co-operatives in improving the livelihoods of Kenyans.

“Cooperatives embody the spirit of unity and collaboration, bringing together individuals with common goals to achieve shared prosperity,” he stated, adding, that cooperatives have empowered Kenyans to overcome challenges and seize opportunities.

Acting Managing Director, Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (KUSCCO), Arnold Munene, encouraged SACCOs to adopt data-driven approaches to achieve diversity, equity, and inclusion.

“We also encouraged women to seek leadership positions within SACCOs and overcome fear and biases,” he said.



A section of the delegates in attendance follow proceedings during the 9th SACCO leaders’ convention at the Whitesands Hotel, Mombasa. Photo/Sadik Hassan.

UN-Kenya Empower Women In Diplomacy, International Relations

By: Billy Sabari
@themkenyatimes



Worth Noting:

- The DG highlighted the history of women in diplomacy, who only occupied technical positions, citing the fact that the first ever Center of Library and Research, was created by a woman, who also created the archives of the League of Nations and United Nations for peace and security.
- Further, Volovaya noted that the first multilateral organisation was created in 1919—the League of Nations—and that it had its headquarters in Geneva. For the first time in its charter, a special article, which said all positions in the secretariats of the League of Nations are equally open to both men and women.



Director General (DG) of the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG), Ms. Tatiana Volovaya addressing the session.

The Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs and the United Nations held an Exhibition and Conference, to showcase and discuss the important roles women play in diplomacy and foreign affairs.

Speaking at the event, the Director General (DG) of the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG), Ms. Tatiana Volovaya, pointed out that women and children are mostly the victims in cases of war and adverse climatic conditions, and called for the inclusion of women in the negotiation of peace treaties.

Volovaya observed that out of the 93 member countries of the United Nations, only 23 women were State leaders or Prime Ministers, and female Ambassadors constituted only a third of the total number.

She, however, noted that the female Ambassadors were more active and visible during negotiations, compared to their male counterparts.

The DG highlighted the history of women in diplomacy, who only occupied technical positions, citing the fact that the first ever Center of Library and Research, was created by a woman, who also created the archives of the League of Nations and United Nations for peace and security.

Further, Volovaya noted that the first multilateral organisation was created in 1919—the League of Nations—and that it had its headquarters in Geneva. For the first time in its charter, a special article, which said all positions in the secretariats of the League of Nations are equally open to both men and women.

At the same time, the Director General of the United Nations Office in Nairobi (UNON), Mrs. Zainab Hawa, also emphasised the important soft skills women possess, that could be harnessed in various global fields, including diplomacy.

Hawa recalled that the signing of a Gender Parity Policy in 2017 had contributed to the appointment of the highest number of women under the position of Secretary General, and that women now constitute over 50 per cent of the secretary generals and chaired three of the four economic commissions, which include Chile, Geneva, Lebanon, and Thailand.

The Conference pulled together participants drawn from the Kenyan Foreign Ministries, Members of the Diplomatic Corps in Nairobi, the United Nations, academia, and Kenya's retired ambassadors, among others.

The participants engaged in discussions through several panels and open questions from the audience.

The Conference stressed on the need for nurturing and mentoring women in diplomacy and called on governments and institutions, to invest in women diplomats by leveraging on their unique abilities, due to their understanding of women on various issues such as climate change and security, and that women diplomats are better suited to solving global challenges.

As such, the inclusion and empowerment of women address and provide the best strategy for solving global challenges.

The Conference highlighted the following five key areas in relation to women and diplomacy: On the role of women in peace and security, the conference acknowledged that the world is in a state of war and the majority of the victims were women and children, and that men alone cannot negotiate peace, climate change, and other global challenges.

Additionally, the UN Country Representative to Kenya, Ennis Hannah Mutavati, observed that Security Policy is the heart of diplomacy and there should be urgency to deliberately create awareness, train, and provide legislation that makes women qualified for diplomatic work, such as security.

On climate action and women, the Conference stressed on the essence of public participation, especially women and youth, in climate change and action.

The Ambassador of Sweden to Kenya, Caroline Visiny, urged that public diplomacy should be used to amplify important issues in society, such as climate change.

On women governance perspectives from multilateral settings, the Conference acknowledged the importance of laws laid by women to create legislation for other women diplomats, reiterating that the right to education is key to changing outdated cultural beliefs and norms.

On technology and innovation, it was observed that there is a need to incorporate science and technology experts in all diplomatic negotiations and a call to re-examine the role of women in science and technology.

The panel emphasised role modeling by encouraging girls and young female diplomats to engage in the ever-evolving world of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The Conference was also privileged to celebrate the 30th anniversary of women's empowerment in Romanian diplomacy.

The Conference looked at the growth of women in diplomacy using Romania as a case study.

The Ambassador of Romania to Kenya, Gentiana Sego, observed that the last three decades had seen a rise in the number of women in diplomacy, including Ministers and Assistant Ministers.

On personal reflections on women in Diplomacy, the Conference recognised the contribution made by Kenyan diplomats, pointing out that the success of diplomacy lies in creating interpersonal relationships and networks.

Adaptability was also considered an important skill for women that could be harnessed for diplomacy and international relations.

Citing the women's Agency in diplomacy and other professional settings, it was noted that women should leverage their judgement in situations of crisis.

The Conference ultimately called for a holistic approach to international relations in an endeavour to address women's issues.

Wangechi Gahuria, Head of IMLU, Calls for Government Action to Address Human Rights Violations



By: Cynthia Masibo
@themtkenyetimes

In a poignant and meticulously detailed presentation, Wangechi Gahuria, the Head of the Independent Medico-Legal Unit (IMLU), laid bare the culmination of months of tireless efforts. With a solemn tone that underscored the gravity of the situation, Gahuria unveiled the extensive findings compiled by IMLU, marking a pivotal moment in the ongoing struggle for human rights and justice.

The launch of the report served as a testament to the unwavering commitment of IMLU to uphold the principles of dignity and justice in the face of adversity. Over the course of several months, the organization diligently monitored 22 protests, meticulously documenting 303 distressing alerts that underscored the urgent need for intervention and reform.

Central to Gahuria’s impassioned address was a fervent call to action directed at the government and duty bearers, imploring them to confront the harsh realities laid bare by IMLU’s findings. At the heart of this call to action lies a fundamental imperative: the imperative to minimize the demographic toll exacted by violence and unrest, while steadfastly upholding the sanctity of human rights for all individuals.

IMLU’s commitment to providing psycho-social support to survivors emerged as a beacon of hope amidst the darkness of tragedy and loss. In a world fraught with uncertainty and despair, the organization remains steadfast in its mission to offer solace and support to those grappling with the aftermath of unspeakable trauma.

The report itself serves as a sobering indictment of systemic failures and institutional shortcomings that perpetuate cycles of violence and impunity. Through meticulous analysis and documentation, IMLU has unearthed a disturbing reality: the disproportionate toll exacted on individuals who fall victim to the indiscriminate use of force and brutality.

Indeed, the report reveals a chilling



Wangechi Gahuria, the Head of the Independent Medico-Legal Unit (IMLU).

pattern of violence, with many individuals succumbing to injuries inflicted by bullets or suffering fatal maulings—a stark reminder of the urgent need for comprehensive reforms and intervention strategies aimed at safeguarding vulnerable populations.

At the heart of IMLU’s advocacy lies a steadfast commitment to amplifying the voices of the marginalized and disenfranchised, ensuring that their struggles are not relegated to the margins of society. Through relentless ad-

vocacy and activism, the organization seeks to hold perpetrators accountable and demand justice for victims whose voices have been silenced by oppression and injustice.

Gahuria’s impassioned plea for expanded training initiatives resonated deeply, underscoring the urgent need to equip responders with the tools and resources needed to effectively address instances of violence and unrest. By investing in training and capacity-building efforts, stakeholders can

empower communities to confront the root causes of violence and foster a culture of accountability and respect for human rights.

As the echoes of Gahuria’s address reverberate, the nation stands at a crossroads, compelled to confront the stark realities laid bare by IMLU’s exhaustive investigation. It is a moment of reckoning—a call to action beckoning stakeholders to forge a path towards a future defined by dignity, justice, and respect for all.

Adopt Mediation To Settle Disputes Among Christian Faithful - Clergy

By: OSDP

The Muslim faithful have the Kadhi courts, and maybe it’s time the Christian faithful established a mediation mechanism to settle disputes that arise within the community.

This was the subject of discussion when Christian leaders that included Archbishops, Bishops, Pastors and the Spouse of the Deputy President, Pastor Dorcas Rigathi met at Karen on Thursday.

The idea of establishing a Christian Mediation Centre was explored, an institution centred on the divine order and with the Bible as central in guiding every decision made.

It was proposed that those who qualify as mediators would go through a rigorous training process, and screening to ensure they handle disputes professionally, in a divine and godly way.

Pastor Dorcas said that such mediation

would work towards safeguarding families and communities, saying, “Every law of the land and every divine law is to cement family values.”

She emphasized the need for the church to safeguard the family noting the advancement of same sex relationships in the society.

“We cannot legalise sin. Every divine order has consequences, and we must not defy the divine order. It is time the church boldly defends their faith, and one way is through mediating on issues affecting families,” she said.

The Christians face different kinds of disputes – family disputes, church disputes, marital disputes, and matrimonial property disputes – which could be resolved easily through a mediator, and promote harmonious living.

Archbishop Dr. Arthur Kitonga of Redeemed Gospel Church strongly condemned those advocating for same sex relationships, and asked the clergy to watch against such perversions.

The Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua later joined the meeting, and had a separate discussion with the church leaders, urging them to speak against

illicit brews and hard drugs from their pulpits.

“We are requesting that for the next six months, you dedicate some time in your sermon to speak about drug abuse and illicit alcohol as part of building a network of information against this menace,” said the DP.

Others present included Archbishop Gerry Kibarabara, Bishop Dr. Margaret Wangari, Bishop Dr. Mophat Kilioba, Ev. Mama Mwai, Bishop Paul Wanjohi, Bishop Dr. Pius Muiru, Rev. Dr. Lucy Muiru, and Bishop Dr. Stanley Michuki among others.

The spouse of the Deputy President Pastor Dorcas Rigathi shakes hands with Bishop Dr. Pius Muiru of Maximum Miracle Centre, as Bishop Dr. Stanley Michuki looks on after a discussion on mediation for churches at Karen on Thursday. Photo/OSDP.



Ruto Walking The Talk On His Pledge To Create Jobs For Kenyans



By: Joseph Mutua Ndonga
mutuandonga@yahoo.com



President William Ruto

Worth Noting:

- The provisions of Article 43 of the Constitution are very clear. The law outlined social and economic rights for all Kenyans. Affordable and decent Shelter, access to quality and affordable healthcare stood out as key basic rights.
- We know our political opponents were working day and night to derail and sabotage my administration's implementation plan. The corrupt judges were helping them.
- We want to tell them they were wasting their time. Our plan is unstoppable. The train had already left the station and has no reverse gear.
- The President further recalled the advise he had received from some Kenyans. I had been told to set aside budget for bribing judges If I want to have a good working relationship with the judiciary

A few days ago, President William Ruto stated that his pledge to create jobs for Kenyans was bearing fruits.

Speaking to members of Kenya Kwanza parliamentary attending a retreat in Naivasha, the President highlighted this as one of the key achievements of his government.

As you are aware, we have advertised some of these jobs. A good number of Kenyans who have since applied for overseas jobs have landed good jobs. Locally, we have put in place infrastructure for digital jobs. Today, thousands of Kenyans are earning their living through doing these jobs.

In runup to 2022 general elections, we promised to create jobs for millions of 'hustlers'. We have made great strides in these endeavors. I'm proud of this.

During the campaigns, Dr Ruto had identified the problem of unemployment as one of the greatest challenge he was poised to inherit.

Last year I wrote an article in this column. These were my observations. When he led the nation in celebrating 60th Jamhuri Day, President Ruto enumerated other achievements including the launch of Hustler Fund, the rolling out of affordable housing and securing of thousands of jobs abroad.

Recently, President Ruto reignited his blistering attacks on judiciary. Some of the corrupt judges were working at the behest of the opposition leaders.

After receiving bribes, they issued court orders and rulings that were so biased, unfair and skewed. The decisions flew in the face of Constitution and other written laws.

The provisions of Article 43 of the Constitution are very clear. The law outlined social and economic rights for all Kenyans. Affordable and decent Shelter, access to quality and affordable healthcare stood out as key basic rights.

We know our political opponents were working day and night to derail and sabotage my administration's implementation plan. The corrupt judges were helping them.

We want to tell them they were wasting their time. Our plan is unstoppable. The train had already left the station and has no reverse gear.

The President further recalled the advise he had received from some Kenyans. I had been told to set aside budget for bribing judges If I want to have a good working relationship with the judiciary. The previous government used to set aside this budget.

For me, I have no such money. I cannot cave in to their blackmail and intimidation. This is not the first time that the judiciary is clashing with executive.

The story was the same during the era of President Mwai Kibaki and his predecessor Uhuru Kenyatta. This brings me to the question. Will Dr Ruto succeed where Kibaki and Uhuru failed? Let us pray for him.

Back to Jamhuri Day, Dr Ruto stated. You have been seeing me making foreign trips. The problem of unemployment is one of the key issues taking me abroad.

The bilateral and multilateral negotiations had borne the fruits. I have secured thousands of jobs for Kenya.

Earlier in the week, the President who spoke during the passing out of 10,000 National General Service (NYS) graduates, listed 10 countries offering these opportunities including Germany, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Qatar, Canada and United Kingdom.

Reacting to this, I heard the Azimio La Umoja One Kenya Coalition leader Raila Odinga faulting the President.

When the President tells us that he was looking for jobs outside the country, then there is something wrong with his administration.

He is supposed to create jobs within the country.

To me, this was just playing politics and peddling propaganda. Reason? President Ruto is already creating jobs locally. Raila's reactions also reeked of hypocrisy and malice. I'm sure he was aware that our economy cannot accommodate all job seekers.

When he served as a Prime Minister during the era of President Mwai Kibaki and later as co-principal of the handshake government led by President Uhuru Kenyatta, Kenyans used to leave the country to look for green pastures abroad.

The two governments were helping

them to get these jobs. If he had a solution to ensure all jobless Kenyans got jobs locally, why did he fail to bring it on the table?

For President Ruto, the ongoing construction of affordable housing is at the core of generating jobs locally. His eyes are also trained in innovations and nurturing various talents. This is with a view of ensuring the youths are using the talents to eke a living.

He has since launched "Hera Talanta", talent money.

Recently, a three-judge bench delivered the much awaited ruling on a case challenging the housing levy a key pillar of the Finance Act of 2023.

Though the judges stated that the provisions of the constitution were not followed to the letter and spirit when it was enacted, they declined to issue orders sought by petitioner to stop the government from collecting the levies.

We have listened to all the parties and considered their submissions. The lawyers representing the government have requested this bench to give them time to file the appeals before the Court of Appeal and then at the Supreme Court. We have given the state until January 10 to align the housing levy with relevant provisions of the constitution. The Appeal Court have since upheld the ruling of the High Court

Reacting to this, President William Ruto stated that we have read the judgement. We believe in the rule of law. So, my government will fully comply with the orders issued.

We will take the necessary steps to ensure this law is aligned. The housing plan is noble idea whose time has come. As I speak, It has created 120,000 jobs. The job opportunities are set to increase to 200,000 and 500,000 in coming days. The mega project resonated very well with Ruto's concept of bottom up economic model. It is designed to address two main challenges: joblessness and lack of decent houses.

The President announced that 250,000 affordable housing units will be constructed in the first phase.

At one point during a visit to Busia county, he told the 'hustlers'.

The housing project is being opposed by those employed, who were receiving a monthly payslips, and their employers.

They do not want 1.5 per cent to be deducted from thier salaries.

The same case applies to the top leaders of the Azimio La Umoja One Kenya Opposition coalition.

Each one pockets a pension of more than 1 million from the National Treasury every month.

These are the same personalities who say they love you and were ready to die for you. Really, do they?

When they oppose a deduction of 1.5 percent from thier payslips, what message are they sending?

They don't care. They want you to continue being poor and to live in a state of desperation and hopelessness.

For starters, the Affordable Housing Plan stood out as one of the key propos-

als contained in the Finance Bill 2023.

The 'Hustlers' (those without a payslip) were excluded from paying the housing levy.

President Ruto have been rightly stating that the housing project is a game-changer. For the first time in our history, the sons and daughters of the hustlers will own decent houses.

Listen to critics. President Ruto's position is that the deductions are compulsory. He is therefore imposing this plan down the throat of Kenyans.

I disagree. The president has no legal mandate to pass this proposal into law. Parliament exercises this power and it had already passed the Bill.

Before being tabled in parliament, the bill had been subjected to public participation. The views gathered and collated were factored. In exercise of power conferred on him, the President consequently signed the bill into law.

For starters, the government is made up of three main arms: parliament, executive and Judiciary.

Though each is independent, the law requires them to always embrace the principle of interdependence and complementarity.

The President was in fore front of drumming support for Finance Bill 2023. Did this amount to overstepping his legal mandate? No.

The law allows him to support the proposals, particularly those originating from the cabinet. This is because he is the head of the executive and chairs the cabinet meetings.

Just like the President, the opposition leaders were entitled to discuss the Bill and come up with thier position.

They will whip up thier members to support this position when the Bill is tabled in parliament.

The Azimio La Umoja One Kenya Coalition leader Raila Odinga is opposed to it. His main bone of contention was the proposal to deduct 1.5 percent from the basic salaries of the workers. But a good number of Azimio MPs voted for the bill.

I would have expected him to be the last person to oppose this proposal. Why? During the campaigns, the house plan proposal stood out as one of his main election pledges.

If elected President, I will rollout a massive affordable housing plan. Majority of our people, who migrated to urban centers, were living in poor and highly deplorable conditions in slums. 'My government' will build decent houses for them. This is a commitment I have given to you.

Raila would add: A huge chunk of money to build these houses will come from our pockets. He would single out those employed, civil servants, state officers and other workers. The Government will deduct 1.5 per cent from the payslip of each.

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

Ruto Urges Athletes To Avoid Vices That Could Ruin Their Sporting Careers

By: Eric Biegon

President William Ruto has called on Kenyan athletes to keep off activities that could jeopardize their God-given talents.

President Ruto regretted that the use of prohibited substances among some athletes had tarnished the country's name and damaged their careers.

"I want to ask our athletes not to let illegal substances destroy their career," he said.

Speaking at the funeral service for the world record holder Kelvin Kiptum in Chepkorio, Elgeyo Marakwet County, President Ruto said such vices had forced the government to declare an all-out war on doping.

He said Kenya has put measures in place to ensure that doping does not result in a ban from international athletics authorities.

"When we took charge in 2022, Kenya was already listed because of doping. But we resolved the issue, and

now we are not on the list of countries targeted by doping," President Ruto said.

The Head of State announced that the government will spend Ksh 3.5 billion over the next five years to tackle doping-related activities.

Meanwhile, President Ruto said his administration had established a foundation and pension fund for the welfare of athletes.

"We have set up Foundations and Pension Funds to address the concerns of our athletes, especially after retirement," he said.

President Ruto instructed Sports Cabinet Secretary Ababu Namwamba, who was also present, to revise the system to reward athletes to meet their future needs.

He announced that the Chepkorio stadium would be built in honour of the late Kiptum. He also announced that the bidding process for the construction of the Kamariny Stadium in Iten is underway.

President Ruto urged Kenyan athletes to take time to prepare for the Paris Olympics to win many medals



President William Ruto .

in honour of Kiptum and Kenya. He described Kiptum as a strong athlete and a good person. "Kelvin Kiptum gave us a glimpse of the future of athletics in Kenya.

He was very professional and disciplined," said President Ruto. Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua said he would join the athletes in Paris later in the year to strengthen incen-

tives in honour of the late Kiptum. He said death had taken away a great athlete who was destined for greater things.

Gov't Supports Initiatives To Facilitate Regional Integration, Trade

By: Gatana Muchira
@themkenyatimes

The Government is committed to harmonising national laws, regulations, and policies with Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Agreements to facilitate regional integration and trade, SDT COMESA Focal Point Ms. Catherine Kithinji has said

Speaking Thursday in Moyale during a sensitization workshop, Kithinji said the government supports initiatives that aim to enhance coordination between border agencies, reduce duplication of procedures, and facilitate the seamless movement of goods, services, people, and information across borders.

She was addressing participants during a two-day sensitization workshop facilitated by COMESA on the Electronic Single Window (ESW) project currently in operation at the Moyale One Stop Border Point (OSBP).

Participants included Traders, Trade Associations, and relevant Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs).

The ESW project is among the projects that are supported by the European Development Fund (EDF11) in the recently signed sub-delegation agreement between COMESA and Kenya.

The agreement is meant to support programmes and projects that facilitate trade in Moyale One Stop Border Point OSBP to be fully operational.

She said the ESW project is an e-system that has greatly simplified trade by automating export certification documents, leading to a reduced number of processes and time taken by exporters at Kenyan border posts.

Kithinji thanked COMESA for supporting the system that enhances the creation of a harmonised and efficient trading environment within the COMESA region, a regional economic integration organisation consisting of 21 Member States aimed at creating a single market by boosting intra-regional trade.



Participants of the Marsabit meeting.

Facilitators in the workshop include Ken-Trade, while MDAs present include the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS), Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Services (KEPHIS), Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), Department for Immigration, the National Police Service, and National and County Government officials.

Moyale is a key point in cross-border trade within the COMESA region, and the Electronic Single Window project will enhance coordination between border agencies and traders.

In 2022, Kenya exported to Ethiopia mainly animal, vegetable, and chemical products and inorganic chemicals worth 90.2 million USD and imported mainly cereals, edible vegetables, and glass and glassware, which were worth 28.9 million USD.

Kenya Revenue Authority Surpasses Revenue Collection Targets: A Step Towards Economic Resilience



By: Cynthia Masibo
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- Looking ahead to the fiscal year 2024/2025 budget, revenue projections paint a promising picture, with a forecasted collection of Ksh 3.435 trillion, representing 19.1 percent of GDP. Of this, ordinary revenue is estimated at Ksh 2.948 trillion, constituting 16.4 percent of GDP. Meanwhile, total expenditure is slated to reach Ksh 4.188 trillion, with allocations earmarked for recurrent expenditure, development projects, and transfers to County Governments, underscoring the government's commitment to equitable distribution and sustainable development.
- To offset the anticipated fiscal deficit, including grants amounting to Ksh 703.9 billion (3.9 percent of GDP) in 2024/2025, the government plans to secure a combination of net external financing and domestic financing.



Treasury PS. Dr Chris Kiptoo

In a remarkable feat, the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) has exceeded revenue collection expectations, bolstering hopes for economic stability and resilience amidst global uncertainties. As of January 2024, the KRA reported a staggering Kshs 1.499 trillion in revenues, signaling a robust 14.4 percent increase over the seven-month period compared to the previous fiscal year's growth rate of 9.8 percent.

During a recent session in Parliament with the Departmental Committee on Finance and National Planning, Dr. Chris K. Kiptoo, the Principal Secretary at the National Treasury and Economic Planning, shed light on the government's proactive measures to enhance revenue administration. Dr. Kiptoo emphasized the imperative of implementing prudent economic policies at both national and county levels to stimulate shared growth and prosperity.

A cornerstone of the government's strategy lies in the Medium-Term Revenue Strategy (MTRS), designed to elevate tax revenue mobilization efforts to over 20 percent of GDP in the medium term. The utilization of cutting-edge technology, including the iTax and Integrated Customs Management System (iCMS), as well as the Tax Invoice Management System (e-TIMS), is

poised to fortify tax administration and curtail revenue leakages effectively.

Looking ahead to the fiscal year 2024/2025 budget, revenue projections paint a promising picture, with a forecasted collection of Ksh 3.435 trillion, representing 19.1 percent of GDP. Of this, ordinary revenue is estimated at Ksh 2.948 trillion, constituting 16.4 percent of GDP. Meanwhile, total expenditure is slated to reach Ksh 4.188 trillion, with allocations earmarked for recurrent expenditure, development projects, and transfers to County Governments, underscoring the government's commitment to equitable distribution and sustainable development.

To offset the anticipated fiscal deficit, including grants amounting to Ksh 703.9 billion (3.9 percent of GDP) in 2024/2025, the government plans to secure a combination of net external financing and domestic financing.

Amidst the economic landscape characterized by global turbulence, the government remains steadfast in its pursuit of the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), aimed at fostering job creation, poverty eradication, and climate change mitigation. The projected growth rate of 5.5 percent for 2024 reflects the government's opti-

mism and determination to steer the nation towards prosperity and resilience in the face of challenges.

The impressive revenue collection figures underscore Kenya's commitment to fiscal prudence and economic reform, positioning the country on a trajectory of sustainable growth and development in the years to come.

Furthermore, the government's holistic approach to economic management encompasses various facets aimed at enhancing fiscal discipline and efficiency. Dr. Kiptoo highlighted the government's emphasis on promoting economic transformation for shared growth through the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of prudent economic and financial policies. This includes creating a conducive environment to ensure low and stable inflation and interest rates, as well as stable exchange rates.

Moreover, the Treasury is dedicated to managing public debt efficiently and effectively, optimizing cash management, and administering the government's financial system with diligence. Proper management, control, and accounting of public funds are paramount, alongside providing independent, objective assessments of risk management strategies and practices.

Over the next four years, the gov-

ernment will intensify efforts on policy and structural reforms under the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) to navigate global turbulence, accelerate economic recovery, and address overarching development challenges, including job creation, poverty eradication, and climate change mitigation.

The government's commitment to scaling up efforts on policy and structural reforms underscores its determination to foster inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Through the Medium-Term Revenue Strategy (MTRS), tax revenue mobilization efforts are poised to exceed 20 percent of GDP over the medium term, reflecting the government's proactive stance towards fiscal sustainability and economic resilience.

In addition, strengthening tax administration through technology-driven solutions, such as iTax, iCMS, and e-TIMS, is pivotal in sealing revenue leakages and enhancing revenue collection efficiency. These measures not only bolster revenue streams but also foster transparency and accountability in the tax administration process.

The projected revenue collection figures for the 2024/2025 budget reflect the government's commitment to prudent fiscal management and sustainable development. With revenue collection targets set at Ksh 3.435 trillion, including Appropriation-in-Aid, the government aims to finance critical expenditures while maintaining fiscal discipline and sustainability.

Furthermore, the allocation of funds towards recurrent expenditure, development projects, and transfers to County Governments underscores the government's commitment to equitable resource distribution and inclusive growth. Investments in key sectors, including infrastructure, healthcare, education, and agriculture, are pivotal in driving economic transformation and fostering shared prosperity across the nation.

In conclusion, the Kenya Revenue Authority's remarkable achievement in surpassing revenue collection targets reflects the government's unwavering commitment to fiscal prudence, economic reform, and sustainable development. Through proactive measures and strategic initiatives, Kenya is poised to navigate global economic challenges, accelerate recovery, and foster inclusive growth in the years ahead.

Beauty Saves The World



They say "Beauty saves the world." But this beauty is not external beauty, but the beauty of the heart, that is, a heart full of kindness and love. I think that the beauty that saves the world is becoming rarer now. We can see an example of this in the image of the celebration that took place yesterday. At the request of my mother, I went to our neighbor's house to congratulate him on the holiday. I entered. The house was prepared for the arrival of the guest, the table was decorated with various sweets. We were talking together and they said to me, "Is affection being sold in markets,m'daughter?" I was surprised. Why do you say that? "You know, my nears haven't been coming to see me for a long time, so I thought that the price of kindness has increased and they can't afford it." Then I said, uncle, if they don't come, you'd better go yourself" My daughter, I went to their house recently and I thought that maybe they would come to the holiday, so I have been preparing and waiting for them since early morning." They spoke with such sorrow and regret that I wanted to talk to them more. "We grew up with 12 children. I was the eldest

child. I was the right hand of my mother, I raised my brothers as if I were raising my own children. They married me early. I worked tirelessly in the fields. When my children were a little older, there were years of famine. We lived in the dark for our daily bread. Even in those days When I fed my children little, I gave them more. They also got married and had children. When their children were sick, I suffered as if my own child was sick. I spent more time on them than on my own family, because I loved them with all my heart. But today I am left alone. Maybe they will come tomorrow." Not knowing what to say, I consoled them by saying, "You're right, maybe they don't have time today, they'll definitely come tomorrow." Then I went back home and thought that this person is not missing his brothers and sisters, but there are many people in the world who do not visit their parents once a year, or who fought over their birth and lost each other, who took their father and mother to the nursing home... It would not be an exaggeration to say that we are the reason why they become so reckless and evil. Many people think that I am an ordinary person and that I cannot save the world. In actuality, we can... Nazarova Sugdiyona was born on November 9, 2007 in Toraqorgan district, Namangan region. Currently, he is a 10th-grade student of the creative school named after Ishaqkhan Ibrat. He can write poems and stories and converse freely in English, Russian, and Korean languages.

Waiting

I will open and read your letter slowly,
I took it in my hand with a thousand
excitements.
For saying "Wait for me, I'll come"
I console myself.

I've been waiting for 1 year.
I can feel it, you are on your
way, wait.
Be patient for a while, and then you will come.
I smile and hold your hand.

Let's go to our happy destination, then,
Then we will build a castle of happiness
together.
Sweet worries... beautiful moments,
We live in a bright life.

Yuldasheva Asalxon Sharofoddin qizi, I was born in Khorazm district in 2007, 1th June. I'm studying the number of school 7th, grade 10.



Rain, Rain, Remove My Sorrow



Oh, Rain, so close to me,
I adore you, can you not see?
Your touch upon my body, so light,
Makes my hair dance in the breeze, oh, what a sight!

I love walking the streets at sundown's hour,
Watching the moon's reflection on the lake,
with energy.
Rain, my dear, protect me from sorrow and pain,
Wash away my troubles, let peace reign.

Listen to my voice, Rain, I'm all alone,

Remove this loneliness, and make my heart known.
I thirst for love, let it fill me inside,
With every drop of yours, may my pain subside.

The intoxicating scent of rain on dry earth,
oh, so sweet,
As I walk in the rain, a peaceful retreat.
To a place where no one hurts or rejects,
Where my simplicity and loyalty connect.

But remember, Rain, one day I'll be gone,
Leaving behind memories, like a distant song.
Yet, your essence will remain, forever in my heart,
A reminder of the peace and healing you impart.

Rain, Rain, remove my sorrow,
Bring me joy today and tomorrow.

Anila Bukhari

Rainy day



Rain began to fall from the dark clouds covering the sky. Couples who went out for a walk hurriedly grabbed umbrellas and some took cover from the rain with their outerwear. And the surroundings were instantly covered in the pleasant light of the rain. Despite the rain, the streets of the city are full of people. Some are rushing to get to their warm homes as soon as possible. How about reading a book while drinking delicious coffee next to Kamen in a warm house while watching the rain. It was one of those rainy days. The children sleeping in the cold room of the orphanage began to wake up slowly. Leyla woke up again in the same mood as usual. He hates rainy days. Because she believed that the rain was responsible for the death of his mother and father. Two years ago, Leyla and her family were going to her grandmother's house to celebrate Leyla's birthday. Being the only child in the family, Leyla was a very cheerful, manly and unique girl. The family members agreed to do whatever they were told so as not to hurt Leyla. They set out despite the bad weather. It was raining outside. The roads were becoming increasingly difficult to see due to the rain. Leyla's parents wanted to go

home but Leyla begged them to go on and they decided to go on. Even after two hours, the rain did not stop. Leyla's family did not reach their intended destination either. At that moment, a truck suddenly appeared in the middle of the road. Leyla's father lost control due to the hail and crashed into a truck. Leyla immediately passed out. He opened his eyes two months later in the hospital. When she regained consciousness, she asked where his mother and father. The doctor was afraid to tell her the news of her parents' death. But he had to say it anyway. Leyla's eyes darkened after hearing this news. She cried day and night for a week. She did not leave the hoshospital. She didn't even eat. After losing her family members, he was taken to an orphanage. Because he had no one apart from her grandmother and parents. Then she heard, the grandmother, who could not bear the death of her son, also died of a heart attack. Two years have passed since then. Leyla, who has experienced the most difficult years of her life, celebrated her 18th birthday today. An 18-year-old girl who has no trace of her former cheerfulness and masculinity.... A girl who lost everything in one night.... Strange.... It seems that someone has lost a loved one today..... Keldibekova Laziza daughter of Ilhom was born on November 6 ,2006 in Jizzakh region. My nationality uzbek, and she knows english, russian, and turkish languages. I studied lycem. I started writing articles and stories at the age of 16.

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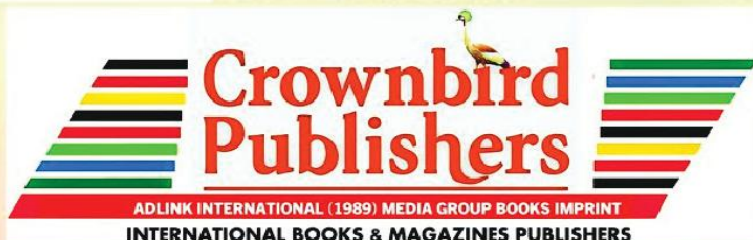
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CHURCH

ACK Mt Kenya West Diocese Set To Get New Bishop

By: William Muchiri
 @themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- Yesterday, one of the aspirant for the bishop position; Rev Sospeter Kuria, a trained lawyer said he is seeking the seat so that he can entrench his law professionalism and innovation into the church's leadership.
- "We need transformation and I believe that I will achieve this. I will embrace professionalism and technology so as to take the diocese to greater heights. The entire process will be smooth because our Archbishop has put in place proper measures and guidelines," Rev Kuria said.
- After the elections are held, the winner will assume the position of a bishop-elect. Archbishop Jackson ole Sapit will announce the date for consecration and enthronement of the next bishop.



Rev. Sospeter Ngumo; one the candidate during the interview with the media. Photo/PAUL WANJIRU.

Seven candidates are contesting to take over the leadership mantle of the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) Mt Kenya West diocese.

One of the seven is set to take over from Bishop Joseph Kagunda who is slated to retire on May 12.

The seven are; Archdeacons Peter Ngumo, Isaac Wanjii, Samuel Mwangi, Edwin Mbiiri, Gerald Muriithi, Charles Itegi and Reverend Sospeter Kuria.

They will be vetted by the church's special committee. After vetting, three of them will be shortlisted and approved to contest for the position.

The church will then nominate 23 members who will cast their votes to determine who will become the next bishop.

Yesterday, one of the aspirant for the bishop position; Rev Sospeter Kuria, a trained lawyer said he is seeking the seat so that he can entrench his law professionalism and innovation into the church's leadership.

"We need transformation and I believe that I will achieve this. I will embrace professionalism and technology so as to take the diocese to greater heights. The entire process will be smooth because our Archbishop has put in place proper measures and guidelines," Rev Kuria said.

After the elections are held, the winner will assume the position of a bishop-elect. Archbishop Jackson ole Sapit will announce the date for consecration and enthronement of the next bishop.

Rev Canon Wambugu Ngunjiri is optimistic that the process will not be marred with irregularities.

"We don't want politics in this process because manipulation through

bribes will only destroy the process. We just want the process to be smooth," Rev Canon Ngunjiri said.

The outgoing Bishop has already assured the church that the transition process will be peaceful.

Bishop Kagunda said he has consulted Archbishop Ole Sapit over the contest that has attracted seven can-

didates.

"According to me, all the candidates qualified to take over my position after my retirement. I know their capabilities because I have assigned them various responsibilities in the church and they have performed well," the Bishop said.

"I have no doubt in my mind that the

process will be peaceful and smooth because the candidates are well prepared," he added during an interview.

According to the church doctrines, Archbishop Ole Sapit will hold a retirement service for the outgoing Bishop.

He will then take over the diocese's leadership before elections are done and the new bishop consecrated and enthroned to the top seat.

The Mt Kenya West Diocese was created in 1993 after the subdivision of the Diocese of Mount Kenya Central.

It has its headquarters in Nyeri town. The first Bishop was the Rt. Rev. Alfred C. Chipman who was consecrated on 6 July 1993.

Bishop Kagunda who replaced Bishop Chipman was consecrated on 8th August 2004 in a colourful ceremony that was graced by thousands of guests who were led by the then Head of State, the late Mwai Kibaki.



Bishop Joseph Kagunda.

Government Plans To Boost Beef Production - CS Linturi

By: Antony Mwangi
@themkenyetimes

The government plans to boost beef production to meet the growing demand for beef.

Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Mithika Linturi noted that Kenya was yet to meet the high demand for beef both locally and internationally, and hence underscored the need for concerted efforts to ensure maximum production of beef.

He expressed the government's commitment to increasing the production of livestock in the country in a bid to boost meat and leather production and the entire value chain.

He said the country could not meet the international demand for beef and hide due to poor capacity building for farmers to improve their livestock production.

He spoke while on a tour of ADC Mutara and Ol-Pejeta Ranch in Laikipia County, in the company of Livestock Principal Secretary Jonathan Mueke and Laikipia Governor Joshua Irungu, among other gov-

ernment officials, to look into how beef production could be improved through the various players in the livestock sub-sector.

Linturi highlighted various measures that would help revive the livestock industry in the country in collaboration with the county governments and other livestock producers.

Top among them is the introduction of embryo and semen production at a subsidised fee, mass vaccination of livestock to prevent diseases and deaths of animals, fattening of cows, and the introduction of livestock nutrition for farmers.

His sentiments were echoed by Governor Irungu, who lauded the government's focus on livestock disease control and prevention, especially among pastoral communities, and effective and efficient rangeland management to enhance production.

"The government is keen on increasing productivity and changing the breeds, and there are plans to roll out a programme to support our farmers by supplying sexed semen at very subsidised rates as well as transfer knowledge to them on modern livestock production," said



Cabinet Secretary Mithika Linturi, Laikipia County governor Joshua Irungu, Livestock Principal Secretary Jonathan Mueke and other stakeholders at Mutara ADC farm.

Linturi.

The 33,000-acre ADC Mutara ranch has the potential to breed beef and dairy, and hence, the CS said the government would put it as one among centers for livestock production.

On his part, the Livestock P S Jona-

than Mueke noted that once the livestock sector is revived, Kenya would no longer import leather products.

"The leather industry is a key value chain, and we're building quality to add value to the industry," said Mueke.

Irungu praised the government's

plan to revive the livestock sector and called for a quick implementation of the periodic mass vaccination of livestock within pastoral communities to allow free movement of livestock and avoid diseases and deaths.

THE EL-TABLAZ ANNUAL READING CONTEST 2024

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.

What is The El-Tablaz Annual Reading Contest?

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.

How to enter the contest:

- * Buy and read the novel, *The Spirit Whisperer* by Nassur Tab'an El-Tablaz.
- * Write a review of the given novel (at least 2 pages, typed; Times New Roman, font 12, 1.15 line spacing)
- * Take a photo clearly showing you in your school uniform reading the given novel
- * Clearly indicate your full name and school

Winners
Ugx.200,000,
+ Gift hamper

1st Runner-up
Ugx.150,000,
+ Gift hamper

2nd Runner-up
Ugx.100,000,
+ Gift hamper

All participants
Certificates of participation
at each level.

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)

How to submit:

Send your typed review and photo to theelblazannualreadingcontest@gmail.com or WhatsApp +256 772 674 093.

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Data Breaches Pose Threat To Kenyans

By: Samuel Maina
@themkenyentimes



Patrick Kagwe, an officer from the Office of the Data Protection Commission (ODPC) addressing the forum.

Worth Noting:

- In the case of Mama Shirleen, the fraudster most likely got her details from a health facility where she had taken her daughter for routine clinic visits.
- “Criminals are using the very details we leave behind any time we put our details on paper in places where such information can be scrutinised by all and sundry. This can be at the guard’s desk in a public office or a private facility where one is required to write down his name, contacts, and national identity number. Once such information is left there, anybody can always quickly skim through or even take a quick photo using his phone and later use the data to advance his criminal activities,” he told journalists.

When a woman identified only as Mama Shirleen received a call from a stranger informing her that her daughter urgently needed sh70,000 for hospital admission following a sudden seizure, she had no time to verify the authenticity of the information.

For one, she knew her daughter had a history of convulsions since she was born, and therefore the information could only be candid.

She therefore sent sh90,000 to the ‘good Samaritan’ to cater for taxi charges and the fee for her daughter’s admission.

She afterward rushed to the school where her daughter was enrolled to follow up on the matter, but to her shock and dismay, she found her child well and up in class.

Only then did it dawn on her that she had been duped by someone who had her details and those of her daughter’s health condition.

Her caller had exploited this information to the maximum, swindling her off the money she would not have lost had she been sensitised on the importance of data protection.

Patrick Kagwe, an officer from the Office of the Data Protection Commission (ODPC), says Mama Shirleen’s incident is just one among hundreds of victims falling prey to fraudsters who take advantage of loopholes in data storage to con innocent Kenyans.

Kagwe says fraudsters are taking advantage of existing gaps in how individual information is recorded in public or private places, which at times are exposed to misuse.

In the case of Mama Shirleen, the fraudster most likely got her details from a health facility where she had

taken her daughter for routine clinic visits.

“Criminals are using the very details we leave behind any time we put our details on paper in places where such information can be scrutinised by all and sundry. This can be at the guard’s desk in a public office or a private facility where one is required to write down his name, contacts, and national identity number. Once such information is left there, anybody can always quickly skim through or even take a quick photo using his phone and later use the data to advance his criminal activities,” he told journalists.

In the case of Mama Shirleen, Kagwe says her vulnerability arose from the fact that she was dealing with an emergency for her child, whose medical history she was well conversant with.

There was therefore no time for her to verify the authenticity of the information, which she could have done by simply calling the school administration where her daughter was learning.

Alternatively, she could have rushed to the hospital where her daughter was reportedly taken to follow up on the matter, a process that could have saved her from the subsequent loss.

Kagwe says the commission is currently undertaking grassroots sensitization programmes to educate the public on the risks of exposing personal details to every Tom, Dick, and Harry and the dos and don’ts for those handling personal data.

He says the commission is planning training workshops for officials working in the security sector, the ICT department, and the media to help in cascading this information to the

general public.

“Any breach of an individual’s data should be reported to us within 72 hours of failure to which, the person in possession of this data becomes liable to a fine of up to KSh3 million. Such a breach may arise from a simple photo taken without the consent of the person and later shared on social media platforms such as Facebook or Instagram.

The Data Protection Act of 2019 compels persons intending to use personal information and photographs of individuals to first get written consent from them to avoid a scenario where they will have nowhere to run to in case of a complaint,” he explained.

In addition, those with grievances arising from the violation of their rights as far as private information is concerned should immediately lodge such complaints to the commission through its online portal.

The officer nevertheless says that where public interest rules are paramount, the rights to privacy may sometimes take a second stage.

“Those working in the media industry, research firms, and security agencies are, in most cases, given the leeway to share personal information such as photos and other details if such information is for the public good. Notwithstanding, even in such instances, players must be guided by a code of conduct as stipulated by their organizations. In addition, they should not use such information to advance ulterior motives against a person or a group of people,” he adds.

And while acknowledging the herculean task involved in safeguarding a person’s private information, Kagwe says the ODPC has made significant

strides in ensuring there is compliance in adhering to protecting the rights of Kenyans as outlined in Article 31(c) and (d) of the constitution.

Among the measures put in place include reigning on errant digital lenders who used to prey on government employees (after obtaining their contacts through unauthorised means) as easy targets for dishing out quick loans with unrealistic interest rates.

“One of the problems we have managed to sort out is outlawing digital lenders from calling individuals to market their products after obtaining their details without their consent. This had been the way of life in the past, but not any longer. Any digital lender who obtains an individual’s contact information without his consent is liable for a fine of between Sh 2 million and Sh 3 million for a breach of trust,” he explains.

On September 26, 2023, ODPC fined three firms a total of KSh9.4 million for infringing on personal data.

Mulla Pride Ltd., a digital credit provider, that operates KeCredit and Faircash mobile lending apps, was penalised KSh2.98 million for sharing complainants’ contact information and names with third parties where threatening messages and phone calls were used.

Casa Vera Lounge, located along Ngong Road in Nairobi, was slapped with a KSh1.9 million fine for posting a client’s image on its social media platform without consent.

Finally, Roma School, a learning institution in Uthiru, in Kiambu County, was ordered to pay the regulator KSh4.6 million for posting minors’ pictures without the parents’ consent.

UNEP Unveils Report On Heavy-Duty Vehicles, Environment

By: Anita Omwenga
@themtkenyetimes

Worth Noting:

- “Prioritising used HDV standards in global, regional, and national strategies is critical for combating air pollution, enhancing road safety, and addressing climate change,” he said, adding that heavy-duty vehicles are a major source of black carbon emissions, a short-lived climate pollutant.
- He noted that some of the key findings in the report were that the global sale of new and used HDVs doubled between 2000 and 2015, with carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions increasing by about one-third in the same period.
- “The adoption of Euro VI equivalent vehicle emission standards, coupled with the introduction of low-carbon medium and HDVs and with the shift towards electric modes, will support climate change mitigation,” he said.



Some of the stakeholders during the forum

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) have launched a new report on used Heavy-Duty Vehicles and the environment.

The report analyses the flow and scale of used Heavy-Duty Vehicles (HDVs) from three major used HDV exporters, who are the European Union, and the Republic of Korea and Japan.

The report also reviews the regulatory environment for used HDV imports in 146 countries, 122 of which are low- and middle-income countries.

Rob de Jong, Head of Sustainable Mobility Unit, UNEP, speaking during the launch at UNEP Headquarters in Nairobi, said the release of this report is the first attempt to qualify and quantify used heavy-duty vehicles globally, a major step towards making progress in tackling super pollutants in communities around the world.

He said that heavy-duty vehicles and engines are a major source of exhaust emissions globally, accounting for 44 per cent of on-road nitrogen oxide emissions and 63 per cent of on-road particulate matter (PM 2.5).

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“The adoption of Euro VI equivalent vehicle emission standards, coupled with the introduction of low-carbon medium and HDVs and with the shift towards electric modes, will support climate change mitigation,” he said.

Statistics from the International Organisation of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA) reveal that the total number of HDVs manufactured globally increased at an annual rate of 0.6 per cent over the last decade, from 4.3 million units in 2011 to 4.6 million units in 2020.

Emmanuel Imaniranzi, Director of Transport Policy and Planning, Northern Corridor Transit and Transport Coordination Authority (NCTTCA), Rwanda, said the Authority, together with UNEP and CCAC, is coming up with an operationalization of the emission notification method to be able to monitor, track, and record on a yearly basis the activities on the corridor.

“The Northern Corridor is the busiest corridor in East and Central Africa, with approximately coverage of daily truck traffic ranging between 2000 and 3000 and a fleet size of approximately 12,500 trucks,” he said.

He noted that with such huge truck activity, the Authority has formulated a programme focusing on fuel efficiency, and reducing carbon emissions and other pollutant particles.

“We will train 1000 truck drivers who use the Northern Corridor to equip them with appropriate skills in a bid to reduce fuel emissions like carbon dioxide by approximately 10 per cent as compared to the 2024 baseline,” he said, adding that they will also enforce measures and regulations like regulating imports of old, inefficient trucks.

Speaking during the launch, Sheila Aggarwal-Khan, Director of the Industry and Economy Division, UNEP, said a shared responsibility between both exporting and importing countries on used heavy-duty vehicles would help secure a stable climate, a healthy nature, and a pollution-free world.

“How countries set up regulations and implement them can have a developing country context, a situation where you have cleaner vehicles that are operating on our roads, until we have a transition in the foreseen future towards electric mobility,” she said.

On her part, Martina Otto, Head of Secretariat, UNEP-convened CCAC, said the release of the used HDVs report and its analysis will encourage other countries to take up the right policies and standards restrictions.

“HDV standards (used and new) are often not prioritised in global, regional, and national strategies for air pollution control, climate mitigation, and improved road safety,” she said, noting that regulations can take many forms, from age restrictions to fiscal instruments or complete bans.

Air pollution is one of the biggest environmental health risks of our time, with 99 per cent of the global population breathing air that exceeds World Health Organisation guidelines around pollutant levels.

Prolonged exposure to air pollution can cause pneumonia, heart and lung diseases, cancer, and more, and it is associated with 6.7 million premature deaths per year.

The report was released during the Climate and Clean Air Conference 2024 at UNEP Headquarters. The conference thematic area focuses on reducing the triple threat of climate change, biodiversity loss, and air pollution by mitigating short-lived climate pollutants.

Parliamentary Committee on energy engages ministry, SAGAs On Their Budget Policy Statements

By: PSCU



Worth Noting:

- The committee also noted that KETRACO has been facing delays in the completion of Key projects such as the Multinational Kenya-Tanzania Power Interconnection Project, Olkaria-Lessos-Kisumu transmission line, and Garsen Hola Garissa attributed to way leave challenges, underfunding of the GOK portion in the wayleave budget, expiry of loan agreements and challenges in Land ownership, and sought to understand the measures the management is taking to address the arising issues and ensure the completion of projects on time.
- The Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Corporation (REREC) had to answer to questions on the high connection fees cited as among the reasons affecting the uptake of electricity in rural areas, Incomplete projects spanning over six years, and a total pending bill of Kshs. 13.4 billion according to the Controller of Budget Report as of 31st December 2023.



Ministry of Energy officials during the Friday session

The Ministry of Energy and Petroleum Cabinet Secretary Davis Rotich on Friday appeared before the Departmental Committee on Energy chaired by Mwala MP Hon. Vincent Musyoka to answer budget questions.

In the company of the CS were the Principal Secretaries in the State Departments within the Ministry, as well as all the Semi Autonomous Government Agencies under its purview.

Among the questions the State Department of Energy had to answer include what measures its taking in the short term to lower the cost of electricity, risk-mitigating measures taken in order to ensure that there is a balance between risk, affordability, and value for money while undertaking the public-private partnership projects.

The Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA) was taken to task to explain among others the reason behind the increase in surcharges such as Fuel Cost Charge (FCC) despite the country experiencing enhanced rainfall during the El-Nino Season.

The Kenya Power was questioned

on the over-billing of customers in the year ended 30th June 2023 through unmatched passthrough costs to revenue, as well as the Auditor General's concern about delays in connecting customers with electricity even after payment, some of the claims dating back 11 years ago.

"What steps is KPLC taking to ensure they are well positioned to finance its debt obligations owing to the fact that their combined outstanding foreign currency obligations amount to approximately USD 1 billion?" posed the committee chairperson.

Kenya Electricity Transmission Company Limited (KETRACO) C.E.O was questioned on among others, the huge pending bills owed by the Company to the tune of KSh24.5 billion as at 31st December 2023, owed to contractors as well as compensation for wayleaves and project-affected persons.

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tributed to way leave challenges, underfunding of the GOK portion in the wayleave budget, expiry of loan agreements and challenges in Land ownership, and sought to understand the measures the management is taking to address the arising issues and ensure the completion of projects on time.

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In their appearance before the Committee, the Kenya Electricity Generating Company PLC (KenGen) was questioned on its role in the policy intervention on acceleration and investment in geothermal energy development, and if KENGEN is in a position to take up the development of green fields in geothermal energy development if given the first right of refusal.

The Geothermal Development

Company (GDC) was taken to task to explain delays in commencement of drilling activities at the Silali site given that the project has a budget allocation of KSh4.49 billion in FY 2023-24 and had a completion date of June 2024.

GDC also had to explain among others; the status of unproductive and abandoned wells they drilled as at 31st January 2024, and the current cost implications to the taxpayer for the wells.

The Committee engaged the Nuclear Power and Energy Agency (NUPEA) on the measures the Agency putting in place to foster public education and awareness in the local community that has shown resistance of proposed prospected sites to host Kenya's first nuclear reactor in Uyombo village in Kilifi.

The Committee is set to write a comprehensive report highlighting the responses given by the Agencies to these questions, as well as recommend appropriate budgetary allocations in accordance with the proposals made before it.

Security Committee Engages With Ministry And State Departments On The Budget Policy Statement

By: PSCU

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The Departmental Committee on Administration and Internal Security chaired by Gabriel Tongoyo (Narok West) met with representatives from the State Department for Internal Security and National Administration, State House, National Police Service, Executive Office of the President, Office of the Deputy President, National Police Service Commission and Independent Policing Oversight Authority in consideration of the 2024 Budget Policy Statement.

During his presentation, the Principal Secretary State Department for Internal Security and National Administration, Dr. Raymond Omollo, said that the State Department for Internal Security and National Administration’s Budget for the FY 2024/25 will implement five key priority areas.

“The State Department requests dor consideration for the FY 2024/25 totaling to Kshs 49,789.24 million to implement this key areas; Security sector institutional reforms, upgrade of systems for the delivery of citizen

services, improved border control, institutional reforms and capacity building and drug, alcohol and substance abuse management,” Dr Omollo

Katoo Ole Metito EGH, the Comptroller of State House said that the department requests for KSh16.2 Billion to fund the State House Affairs Programme in the FY 2024/25.

The National Police Service, Inspector General, Japhet Koome said that NPS has 80 projects out of which three are BETA projects, 19 projects are funded in the FY 2024/25.

The total funding for the projects in the FY 2024/25 and Medium Term is KSh2.13 billion, KSh3.5 billion and KSh3.9 billion respectively.

The Office of the President, according to the Principal Administrative Secretary, Mr. Arthur Osiya requires KSh15.9 Billion, KSh17.1 Billion and KSh18.5 Billion in FY 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27 respectively.

The Principal Administrative Secretary, Office of the Deputy President, Mr. Patrick Mwangi, requests for KSh4.298 billion comprising of KSh3.897 billion for recurrent expenditure and KSh400.4 million for development expenditure.

In the document tabled before the committee, the National Police Ser-



Some of the government officials at the session.

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vice Commission pleaded with the committee to support the approval of additional financial allocation to the NPSC for implementation of Key programs like recruitment of civilian staff and recruitment of the 10,000 officers.

The Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA) led by its CEO Mr. Elema Halake said that in the 2024 BPS the Authority has been allocated a budget ceiling of KSh1.09 Billion against a resource requirement of KSh2 Billion of the recurrent expenditure for the FY 2024/25 resulting in a budget deficit of KSh920.06 million.

The committee will review the submissions and make recommendations before the Budget and Appropriations Committee.

FKE Urges The Government To Improve CBC Implementation

By: Waithaka Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes

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The Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) has urged the government to streamline the implementation of the Competence Based Curriculum (CBC) to better align with the evolving needs of the job market. This was during the official launch of new classrooms at Omuga Primary School in Homabay County, funded by FKE under the Adopt A School Program. During her address at the launch, Ms. Jacqueline Mugo, Executive Director & CEO FKE emphasized the need for the government to take strategic measures to improve CBC’s effectiveness. “While FKE acknowledges the government’s commitment to implementing CBC, there is a pressing need for a comprehensive strategy to address current challenges and

ensure the curriculum meets the dynamic requirements of the job market” she said Ms. Mugo urged the government to prioritize equipping schools, particularly in rural areas, with the necessary infrastructure for seamless implementation of the CBC system. Emphasizing the importance of practical skills alongside academic excellence, she stressed the need for graduates to possess competencies that are in high demand by employers. Recognizing the increasing role of technology in the workforce, FKE asked the government to invest in technology in the early stages of learning like from grades 6-7. Waiting until high school may hinder students’ preparedness for the technology-driven future job market. FKE stressed the importance of providing students with practical skills that will make them competitive and adaptable in their careers. Addressing concerns raised by parents regarding the transition



period in the CBC, Ms. Mugo highlighted the uncertainty surrounding Grade 9 students who will remain in primary schools where Junior Secondary is based. FKE urged the Ministry of Education to provide clear communication and leadership to alleviate parental concerns and ensure a smooth transition for the students. The Federation of Kenya Employers remains committed to collaborating with the government, education stakeholders, and employers to enhance the effectiveness of CBC, creating an education system that produces graduates ready for the demands of the modern workforce.

Introduction Of Income Draw Down Funds Regulations Good Move To Secure Retirees – Enwealth

Pension scheme members to get an accurate depiction of their financial health with the regulatory changes on bond valuations

By: John Kariuki
@themkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- According to Orpah Wanyama, Manager of Legal & Compliance, Enwealth Financial Services while discussing the regulatory changes: “The regulations safeguard members and give them flexibility.
- Transfers from one IDD to another will be allowed after a membership of 5 years, effective November 2023, where all transfers shall be done in a lump sum and no provision for partial transfers of funds. This gives members choice and flexibility in case their scheme is not performing as desired”.
- There are also amendments for withdrawals from 15% to 12% per annum of the member’s outstanding account balance in the Income Drawdown Fund ensuring longer-term access to regular income for members.



Dennis Oluoch, Deputy Manager, Supervision Department, Retirement Benefits Authority during the Enwealth Pension Stakeholder Briefing on Friday February 23, 2024..

The introduction of Income Draw Down Regulations under the law will streamline the management of the funds and secure retirees in the long term. The Income Draw Down Funds are funds established to reinvest retirement benefits for retirees to provide regular pension income.

Pension industry stakeholders gathered at the Enwealth Financial Services Pension Stakeholder Briefing today welcomed the new regulations as a safeguard for retired workers. Previously the Income

Drawdown funds were run under Individual Pension Schemes regulations as Income Drawdown Prudential Guidelines (2012) but the new regulations as Retirement Benefits Regulations (Income Drawdown Funds) 2023 were introduced effective November last year.

According to Orpah Wanyama, Manager of Legal & Compliance, Enwealth Financial Services while discussing the regulatory changes: “The regulations safeguard members and give them flexibility.

Transfers from one IDD to another will be allowed after a membership of 5 years, effective November 2023, where all transfers shall be done in a lump sum and no provision for partial transfers of funds. This gives members choice and flexibility in case their scheme is not performing

as desired”.

There are also amendments for withdrawals from 15% to 12% per annum of the member’s outstanding account balance in the Income Drawdown Fund ensuring longer-term access to regular income for members.

“To ensure liquidity, the funds are not allowed to invest in immovable assets. The law now provides for the establishment of a trust fund under IDD where in case of death of a member, the beneficiaries can continue receiving the regular income,” added the Enwealth representative.

Other legal changes affecting the Pension industry discussed during the Enwealth Breakfast include the implication of the regulatory changes on Bond Valuations. The industry-wide adoption of the revised accounting

practices on bond valuations is expected to provide pension funds with a more accurate depiction of their financial health.

According to Dennis Oluoch, Deputy Manager, Supervision Department, Retirement Benefits Authority, while speaking at the Stakeholder Briefing, pension funds have faced challenges in accurately reflecting the true value of their bond holdings, potentially leading to misleading financial statements and investment reports, and financial statements. The regulations that came into effect on 31st December

2023 will instill confidence among stakeholders in the pension industry.

According to Legal Notice No. 18 of 2024 amended the requirements for the valuation of the scheme fund, the

value of debt instruments held to maturity shall be reported at amortized cost and the fair value method shall be used to determine the value of debt instruments that are available for sale, as well as equities. The other changes are in Legal Notices No. 19 of 2024 (The Retirement Benefits (Occupational Retirement Benefits Schemes) Regulations, 2000), Legal Notice No. 20 of 2024 (The Retirement Benefits (Individual Retirement Benefits Schemes) Regulations), 2000, Legal Notice No. 21 of

2024 (The Retirement Benefits (Umbrella Retirement Benefits Schemes) Regulations, 2017) and Legal Notice No. 22 of 2024 (The Retirement Benefits (income Drawdown Funds) Regulations, 2023) which amended the provisions relating to the determination of net interest to be declared and credited to members.

This means the net return declared and credited to members’ accounts shall exclude both unrealized gains and losses arising from changes in the value of debt instruments (bonds) held by the scheme at the end of the financial year.

The timing of these changes is crucial, given the backdrop of rising inflation since the previous year, which has adversely impacted the value of bonds. Income generated by bonds has struggled to keep pace with the eroded purchasing power caused by inflation. Fund managers, in particular, are optimistic about the positive impact on their bottom line as they navigate the challenges posed by inflation and ensure a more precise reflection of the value of bonds in their portfolios by using the amortized cost method. They can avoid declaring losses attributed to inflation, ensuring a more realistic representation of the bonds’ value, given their intended maturity date.



E-Citizen Is Not The Solution To The Existing Problems In The Collective Management Of Music Rights In Kenya

By: RIKE Board

The Recording Industry of Kenya, RIKE, is the voice of the recording industry in Kenya. Registered as a not-for-profit organization under the Kenyan law, RIKE campaigns for the rights of Kenyan record producers, either record labels or self-released artists who own their sound recordings and are the primary investors in music, by ensuring that the protection of their significant investments, financial and other, are properly protected and enforced and that the protection of the overall recorded music ecosystem is enhanced across the board.

RIKE is not a Collective Management Organization. We work with stakeholders to ensure that, among other things, the collective management of sound recordings aligns with global practice.

RIKE was founded by local record companies with the support of the major global companies (Universal Music Group, Sony Music Entertainment, Warner Music Group) who are also part of the founding mem-



bership which includes Sol Generation, Decimal Records, Kassanga Music, SubSahara Ltd, and Kalakata Music Records.

RIKE notes with great concern the announcement by the Kenya Copyright Board (KECOBO) that music royalties will be channeled through the government's E-Citizen platform. While the E-Citizen platform may be a competent public resource mobilization portal for government services, it is neither a solution for the existing collective management deficits nor proficient for the collection and distribution of rightsholders' royalties. E-Citizen lacks the technological knowhow requisite for accurately invoicing and licensing users of sound recordings and further does not exhibit any inbuilt capacities for actual monitoring of use of recordings to facilitate accurate

distribution of royalties.

Further, the Board and other proponents of E-Citizen must acknowledge and appreciate that copyright is a private right that can be managed either directly by the rightsholders or collectively through a CMO subject to mandates from the respective class of rightsholders, and that this is done within a functional regulatory framework. The work of the Government is to ensure rightsholders benefit from progressive policy, legal and regulatory environment.

The seemingly 'hostile takeover' of collective management by Government does not align with global practice or African standards and should not even be considered as a last resort.

Since the purpose of CMOs is to license the use of recorded music (in RIKE's case) of rightsholders

for broadcast and communication to the public, and distribute the license fees back to the said rightsholders they represent (be they domestic, regional or international), due deference to particular private contracts reflecting accurate metadata of rightsholders and specific share divisions which these contracts contain, they need IT systems that enable them to do this accurately and efficiently.

Such systems include fully scalable member management, repertoire databases, agreement / contract files, matching and distribution systems. Specialized and proprietary technologies for indexing, matching, and searching, are used which are compliant with the latest data supply formats commonly found at affiliated CMOs which in turn provide for seamless data exchanges – be they the import or export of metadata and / or royalty payments for both domestic and international sound recordings.

RIKE holds the view that to address the seemingly chronic rights management problem among CMOs, there is need to hold CMOs accountable within the law and global practice, and this process must include

a thorough audit of the CMOs, and prosecution of any individuals alleged to have been involved in the mismanagement of rightsholders' funds.

We urge Aisha Jumwa, CS Gender, Culture, the Arts and Heritage, to proactively engage with rightsholders towards establishing a culture of transparency, accountability, and good governance among the CMOs to ensure the CMOs serve the interests of rightsholders.

The Government needs to support RIKE's efforts in working with our global partners to locally facilitate the administration of International Standard Recording Code (ISRCs) to owners of sound recordings and music videos. The ISRC is the standard identifying code used to accurately track and manage sound recordings and music videos across revenue streams, including radio and TV broadcasting.

As the voice for the recording industry in Kenya, it is our responsibility to have right-holders well informed on the best global practices that will lead to their achievement of economic/financial prosperity.

Kenya, UAE Announce Historic Trade And Economic Partnership

By: Our Reporter
@themtkenyetimes

Kenya and the United Arab Emirates Thursday made a bold pronouncement to mutually advance trade, investment and economic cooperation.

The two countries have reached concurrence on the Kenya — UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), an instrument that will simplify trade procedures, enhance investor confidence, advance digital trade, strengthen cooperation between the private and public sectors, among other measures.

This was announced by the Cabinet Secretary for Investments Trade and Industry of Kenya, Rebecca Miano and the Minister of State for Foreign

Trade of the United Arab Emirates, Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi in Dubai Thursday.

Rebecca Miano, Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Investments, Trade and Industry, said: "The Kenyan leadership has identified trade as a key lever of economic growth and transformation. We are on a national development path that is seeking to increase industrial output, enhance the quality and global competitiveness of that output, and to expand the opportunities for its export. The Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement with the United Arab Emirates will play a key role in these efforts, enabling our exports to reach important markets in Asia and the Middle East, and also in stimulating the investment inflows that will further develop our national capabilities. We look forward to its implementation and the mutual benefits it will deliver."



Rebecca Miano and the Minister of State for Foreign Trade of the United Arab Emirates, Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi in Dubai Thursday

Waiguru Announces Re-Opening Of Bars Issued With 2024 License After Week Long Vetting Exercise

By: Our Reporter
@themtkenyatices

Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru has announced the re-opening of bars that have been vetted and issued with the 2024 liquor licenses. Waiguru said the county government had conducted fresh verification of some 700 liquor outlets across the county. She said the verification team had recommended reopening and closure of some of the facilities that had met the standard or were dimmed not to have complied with liquor licensing regulations. The re-opening comes just a week after she ordered immediate closure of all liquor outlets in the county following deaths of 17 people after consuming brew suspected to have been laced with ethanol at Kangai and Kandongu village in Mwea West. “We are in the process of issuing documentation and licenses today so that they can start operating this evening,” Waiguru said yesterday-

during a press briefing. She said bars that were found not to have met the licensing requirements have been advised to comply before being issued with 2024 license. Speaking after flagging off distribution of subsidized animal feeds for dairy farmers at Kiaga, the governor said the county will not relent on its effort to weed out illicit alcohol and bars operating without license in the county. The Council of Governors (CoG) said no bar will be allowed to operate without being given a clean bill of health and being issued with the 2024 license. “For the one that have not met the requirement or have not been licensed, the process will continue, there those who have not met the standard and they have been told what they need to do including the regulation of quality of alcohol that is going to be sold in Kirinyaga,” she said. The governor further warned bar owners against selling or distributing unauthorized liquor in their outlets saying the County Government will not hesitate from closing down



Kirinyaga County governor Ann Waiguru and other leaders during a media on Friday..

and taking legal action against them. She reiterated that bar owners have a responsibility to protect lives of their patrons by ensuring they stock authorized brands only. “They must ensure they are selling products that conform to standards

set out by the Kenya Bureau of Standards,” she said. She said the county has launched campaign dubbed “Fichua Pombe Haramu”, an initiative meant to help eradicate manufacture and sale of illicit brew through sharing of infor-

mation. “We have introduced a toll-free line 0800721812 and SMS number 0759674392 that you can use to give us information on suspicious cases of illicit alcohol brewing and sale in your area,” the Governor added.

Kirinyaga County Aims To Pass Six Bills For Equitable Development

By: David Wandeto and Sarah N. Wachira
@themtkenyatices

Kirinyaga County Assembly Speaker Muteti Murimi, has disclosed that they have six bills ready to be debated in the current sitting session. Speaking to the press, Muteti said that 2023 was a successful year where, in the first and second sessions, MCAs were able to debate and pass 67 motions touching on various departments in the county executive, as well as pass and enact six bills into law. Muteti explained that the bills were enacted after being subjected to the constitutional process of publication, first hearing and public participation, second hearing, third hearing, and the final stage of being signed into law by the county governor. He disclosed that the bills expected to be discussed included the Kirinyaga County Disability Bill 2023, the Kirinyaga County Alcoholic Drinks Control Bill 2023, the Kirinyaga County Public Participation Bill

2023, the Kirinyaga County Empowerment and Development Bill 2023, the Kirinyaga County Transport and Parking Bill 2023, and the Kirinyaga County Agricultural, Technical, and Vocational Training Bill 2023. He gave an example of what is contained in the Facility Improvement Fund Bill of 2023, which is a bill that will give autonomy to health facilities to be able to manage challenges faced in the health sector. The bill ensures that any funds collected from health services will only be utilised for health purposes and will be able to curb different challenges, e.g., shortages of medicine in different health facilities. Kirinyaga Inspection and Enforcement Services Bill 2023, on the other hand, is a bill seeking to ensure that there is compliance with the county laws and regulations. He added that they were in the process of bringing a bill to have a full office of the County Attorney with a County Solicitor and a Prosecutor to boost inspection services in the county. The Kirinyaga Industrial Develop-

ment Authority Bill of 2023 will create a board that will be responsible for mobilising investment in Kirinyaga County, specifically the Industrial Park that has been established in Sagana with an area of 274 acres. The board will have a role in identifying investors, especially those focused on agro-processing, to create a market for the local producers and create employment for the youth. The Kirinyaga Appropriation Bill of 2023 provides budget estimates on government expenditures, while the Kirinyaga Climate Change Bill of 2023 addresses the matter of climate change in line with mobilising resources. Harrison Kariuki, a nominated Member of the County Assembly who represents people with disabilities, said he appreciated the Kirinyaga County Assembly for introducing the Kirinyaga County Disability Bill 2023, which he said is a milestone for people living with disabilities. He added that since he joined the County Assembly, there have been some steps taken to protect people living with disabilities.



Kirinyaga County Assembly Speaker Muteti Murimi..

He divulged that he had mobilised people with disabilities to register for the disability card, which has a lot of benefits and is also used as an identification card. “The card helps us access bursaries and get tenders, and it also helps one import products cheaper without added cost, unlike others who don’t

have the card,” he said. Kariuki also pleaded that people with disabilities be allocated more money in their bursaries since they have more needs.



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 ✓



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Sports >> *Calls for support and protection of athletes by the government dominated the Friday's sendoff of the fallen world marathon record holder Kelvin Kiptum held at Chepkorio in Keiyo South Constituency, Elgeyo Marakwet County.

Calls For Athletes Support And Protection Dominate Kiptum's Sendoff



A side-by-side image of Kelvin Kiptum (left) and a casket carrying his body (right)..

Calls for support and protection of athletes by the government dominated the Friday's sendoff of the fallen world marathon record holder Kelvin Kiptum held at Chepkorio in Keiyo South Constituency, Elgeyo Marakwet County.

Active athletes, retired athletes and officials who rose to eulogise the 24-year-old star insisted on the importance of athletes' welfare, reflecting on several world beaters who have perished at young age, Kiptum being the latest.

Athletics Kenya (AK) president Jackson Tuwei and the National Olympics Committee of Kenya (NOC-K) boss Paul Tergat have recommended legislation from the law makers which will accord athletics champions VIP lifestyles.

"On behalf of the athletes I humbly request the members of parliament to put up legislation which will take care of our heroes. They've really sacrificed for this country and therefore

they need that special treatment to match their efforts," said Tuwei.

Tergat echoed Tuwei's sentiments even as he called on the Ministry of Sports to come up with measures to safeguard the welfare of sportsmen who have put Kenya on the global map.

"Our sportsmen and women need support from the government in order to enjoy their sweat. We request you the president (William Ruto) to help us accord respect to these great people of athletics."

Former Javelin world champion Julius Yego, speaking on behalf of athletes, said, "Kiptum could have survived" had he been given security.

"Mr. President, these athletes are requesting just a little recognition and support. The place where we are today is a place of champions but we do not have the training facilities at all. Across the North Rift, the three counties which are athletics bastions, unfortunately there are no

training facilities. I also want to urge the three governors in this area to please unite your minds and give us good training facilities."

"Again president, for these world record breakers please we request to be given securities. The loss we've encountered in Kiptum is very huge to the country and the world. If he had a security detail and a driver that time, maybe he would have survived," he added.

At the same time, Tuwei has said the Golazo Company which was working with the late athlete would set-up a foundation to take care of the athlete's two children and the community.

"To keep the memory of Kelvin Kiptum alive and support his family and community, Golazo is launching The Kelvin Kiptum Foundation and the fund will predominantly provide continued financial support for education and infrastructure."

World Athletics president Sebastian Coe said he was still dev-

astated by the passing on of the marathon sensation.

"Kelvin, you will be missed. Our grief and sadness will take time to dissipate, rest assured, your achievements are treasured, indelible and secure in the annals of our history and never forgotten."

Kiptum, 24, was killed alongside his coach Gervais Hakizimana on February 11 in a road accident near the Rift Valley town of Eldoret, leaving Kenya and the world of athletics reeling.

On the eve of Friday's funeral, Kiptum's coffin, encircled with flowers, was carried in a hearse through Eldoret, some people watching in silence, others singing hymns.

Citizen Sport

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >>> *Top athletes and dignitaries led hundreds of mourners at the funeral Friday of Kenya's world marathon record-holder Kelvin Kiptum in the nation's athletics heartland where he was born, trained and died.

Kenya Bids Solemn Farewell To Marathon Sensation Kiptum



Professional Kenyan athletes carry the coffin of Kelvin Kiptum after a memorial mass for the late marathon runner at a church in the village of Chepkorio, on February 22, 2024. Kenya's world-record holding marathon runner Kelvin Kiptum, a prodigy who ran three of the seven fastest marathons in history and was ranked first among the world's men's marathon runners, tragically died in a car crash in Kenya on February 11, 2024 at the age of 24, in an accident that shocked the world and plunged the East African nation into mourning. (Photo by LUIS TATO / AFP).

Top athletes and dignitaries led hundreds of mourners at the funeral Friday of Kenya's world marathon record-holder Kelvin Kiptum in the nation's athletics heartland where he was born, trained and died.

Kiptum, a 24-year-old father of two, was killed in a late-night car crash on February 11, just months after shattering the marathon record in Chicago.

President William Ruto and World Athletics head Sebastian Coe were among those attending the funeral in the Rift Valley town of Chepkorio.

"Kelvin's achievements were extraordinary. That he should have scaled such heights at such a young age in itself is almost unique," Coe told AFP Thursday after his arrival in Kenya.

Kiptum ran the Chicago race in October in two hours and 35 seconds, slicing 34 seconds off the

previous fastest time set by his Kenyan rival, the marathon legend Eliud Kipchoge.

While Kiptum only competed in three marathons, he won all of the races, posting three of the seven fastest times in history for the event.

His sudden death has left Kenya, and the wider athletics community, reeling.

"Fare thee well champ," was the front-page headline on Kenya's leading Daily Nation newspaper. Mourners, including 1,500m record-holder Faith Kipyegon, started arriving at the funeral venue at dawn, some wearing black T-shirts with a picture of Kiptum emblazoned across the front.

They viewed the body, laid out in a half-open casket on a red carpet, as a choir sang religious songs.

Four giant screens were mounted to stream the event for the many villagers gathered outside the ven-

ue.

Hundreds of people had turned out Thursday as Kiptum's coffin was taken from the Rift Valley town of Eldoret to his home village of Chepkorio.

Candlelight Vigil

And in the nation's capital Nairobi hundreds of people joined a solemn candlelight vigil, paying an emotional tribute to the rising star who had been the overwhelming favourite for the Paris 2024 Olympics.

After the funeral ceremony, Kiptum will be laid to rest in Naiberi, near Eldoret, where the government has built a new home for the family of the national hero.

Police said Kiptum was driving near Eldoret at around 11:00 pm on February 11 when his car careered off the road into a ditch and hit a tree.

Kenya's chief government pa-

thologist, Johansen Oduor, said on Wednesday the results of an autopsy showed Kiptum had suffered severe head injuries.

Toxicology tests were still under way, he added.

Kiptum's Rwandan coach Gervais Hakizimana, 36, also died in the crash.

Hakizimana, who had trained Kiptum since 2019, was laid to rest in the Rwandan capital Kigali on Wednesday.

Known for maintaining a grueling training schedule that sometimes topped 300 kilometres (190 miles) a week, Kiptum had recently announced he was hoping to smash the mythic two-hour mark at the Rotterdam Marathon in April.

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CS Ababu Namwamba Launches Innovation Agency 2023-2027 Strategic Plan

By: John Kariuki
@themkenyentimes

Worth Noting:

- KeNIA to create an inventory, and document innovations and start-ups at the county and national levels and increase awareness of the services offered by innovation hubs to the public.
- KeNIA to strengthen the capacity of innovators through training, provide learning and growth linkages support the commercialization of innovations, and facilitate access to funds for youth and other vulnerable groups.
- KeNIA to spearhead the development of a framework to enhance collaboration among all entities engaged in innovation activities to improve service delivery to the Kenyan innovation ecosystem.



CS Ababu Namwamba (2nd left) unveils the KENIA strategic plan.

Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Youth Affairs, Creative Economy, and Sports Ababu Namwamba on Thursday launched the Kenya National Innovation Agency (KeNIA) 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. The strategic plan will be geared towards meeting KeNIA's mission statement of developing and managing a dynamic national innovation system that catalyzes jobs and wealth creation.

KeNIA has within the last 3 years of its operational existence already rolled out various programs such as the Research to Commercialization Accelerator, offered Institutional Support to Universities in commercializing their research outputs developed a digital marketplace for innovators and investors, Kenya Innovation Week, Presidential Innovation Award, the Kenya Network of Entrepreneurial Institutions Leaders, among others.

"I am happy to launch this important institutional document that has

outlined key pillars, including: Commercialization Systems, Startup ecosystem, Institutional Capacity, Promotion and Awareness, and Policy, Legal, & Regulatory Framework." Remarked the CS.

The new strategic plan outlines an ambitious plan for the agency that has set out the following recommendations to strengthen the National Innovation Ecosystem:

KeNIA to create an inventory, and document innovations and start-ups at the county and national levels and increase awareness of the services offered by innovation hubs to the public.

KeNIA to strengthen the capacity of innovators through training, provide learning and growth linkages support the commercialization of innovations, and facilitate access to funds for youth and other vulnerable groups.

KeNIA to spearhead the development of a framework to enhance collaboration among all entities en-

gaged in innovation activities to improve service delivery to the Kenyan innovation ecosystem.

KeNIA to map out the funding landscape for innovation in Kenya: Not all sectors attract funding. It is evident that sectors such as Artificial Intelligence, Agriculture, Fintech, Energy, and e-commerce are the top four best-funded sectors in Kenya, while sectors like health, housing, water, and sanitation attract less funding.

The Government through KeNIA will develop an information portal on funding opportunities: There are potential sources of funding, which have not been adequately exploited by Kenyan innovators such as the Youth Enterprise Development Intellectual Property Rights: KeNIA should support innovators in protecting their innovations through intellectual property rights.

KeNIA should formulate recommendations to foster an innovation culture in Kenya, particularly on

how the Government can provide tax relief to investors in innovation, akin to reliefs available to the sports industry.

KeNIA to spearhead the development of a framework to enhance collaboration among all entities engaged in innovation activities to improve service delivery to the Kenyan innovation ecosystem.

KeNIA to invest more in enhancing the appropriate skills for innovation development, commercializing innovations, and managing innovation hubs.

Investing in skills and talent will contribute to boosting Kenya's innovation performance in future ranking.

While speaking during the launch, the CS affirmed that the Ministry of Youth Affairs, Creative Economy set up youth centers across all the constituencies and directed KeNIA to upgrade them into innovation hubs where innovation support programs will be implemented.

The CS also challenged KeNIA to leverage the 10-year Innovation Master Plan, launched by H.E President William Ruto in 2023 to develop a coherent Innovation Policy and Strategy to drive the ecosystem forward.

This strategic plan has aligned itself with the fourth Medium-Term Plan (MTP IV) of Kenya's vision 2030 that is aimed at creating jobs and enabling citizens to meet their basic needs, The Kenya Kwanza Bottom-up economic model, sustainable development goals (SDGs), among other national economic approaches in setting the momentum for economic transition to the next long term development agenda for the country.

The Kenya National Innovation Agency (KeNIA) has been tasked with developing and overseeing the Kenya National Innovation System. Therefore, the strategic plan is designed to comprehensively align with the agency's mandate through various strategies