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News>> National Assembly Committee Issues Stern Warning Over Procurement Violations In Higher Education Institutions

P. 8. The Public Investments Committee on Governance and Education yesterday concluded a comprehensive inspection tour across the Nyanza region.



News>> Non Communicable Diseases Among The Elderly Testing Launched In Murang'a

P. 12. Ushirika Wema in collaboration with Ahadi Kenya Trust has launched a communicable diseases testing exercise for the elderly in Murang'a County. Speaking at Kagunduini grounds Kandara, the Ushirika Wema chairperson and also the spouse of the prime cabinet secretary

AG Muturi: Housing Bill Has Addressed Issues Raised By Court



The draft Affordable Housing Bill, 2023 potentially addresses all the issues that the court raised when it declared the Housing Levy unconstitutional in November last year, the Attorney General Justin Muturi has said. The AG made the revelations yesterday when he appeared before the Joint-Committee comprising of the Departmental Committee on Finance and National Planning and that of Housing, Urban Planning and Public Works to offer clarifications on a section of the provisions of the Affordable Housing Bill.



Attorney General Justin Muturi when he appeared before the parliamentary committees yesterday

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FGM Prevalence Drops In Kajiado County

By: Seline Nyangere and Sammy Rayiani
 @themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

Musomi added that their approach dubbed ‘Community Conversation’ is used to sensitize the community to end FGM. The approach has been working in Kajiado as more girls are going to school, are performing well and transitioning to higher levels of education.

“One of the things we see happening is improved transition, improved retention and when girls are transiting and going to secondary school when they have not gone through the cut then we know the impact is there, great and felt,” added Musomi.



The prevalence rate of FGM cases in Kajiado has decreased from 96 per cent to 76 per cent.

Girl child Network Executive Director, Mercy Musomi, attributes the decrease to constant sensitization of the community on the dangers of the vise, which has been ongoing by different stakeholders.

Speaking in Kajiado during the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) celebrations, Musomi said that they are undertaking more sensitization at the community grassroots by engaging community people and community facilitators.

“We are engaging Men and women who have decided FGM is not the thing they want to engage in and we are training them on facilitation skills and how to have a dialogue between the communities on how to end FGM,” said Musomi.

Musomi added that their approach

dubbed ‘Community Conversation’ is used to sensitize the community to end FGM. The approach has been working in Kajiado as more girls are going to school, are performing well and transitioning to higher levels of education.

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Lamine Mamadou Sow, the Head of Education, UNESCO, East Africa Region revealed that UNESCO is working on a programme that promotes women’s health and well-being to ensure their rights are respected including the rights to education so that they can become very productive citizens within the communities.

“We have come here to celebrate with all the stakeholders involved in this very important battle because the phenomenon is very prevalent in Kajiado communities. We think that controlling the phenomenon and its effects will boost the success of girls attending, completing schools and then to get decent jobs and decent occupations to contribute positively to the community,” said Mamadou.

Cynthia Sintamei, FGM survivor said that she did a Bachelor’s Degree in Gender and Development studies to have a piece of knowledge on how to educate and champion anti-FGM in her community.

“I am happy that the theme is ‘Her voice, her future’ and as a survivor of FGM I can say that personal narratives are powerful tools that can be used to advocate for an end to FGM, I have tried and with the help of everyone here we can bring an

end to FGM and I want to say never underestimate the little effort you can take to bring an end to FGM”, said Sintamei.

Every 6th February, 17 countries in Africa and the Middle East join hands to celebrate the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and have witnessed the reduction of FGM cases in the affected countries.

Kajiado County being among the FGM prevalent counties, marked the day themed, “Her Voice, Her Future”

The County in partnership with Girl Child Network, Malkia Initiative, Il’laramatak, and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) celebrated the event at Oloosuyian Primary School with a focus on ending FGM and sensitizing the community on the risks of mutilating the girls.

Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times

The Mt Kenya Times is a Kenyan Newspaper that provides a unified view of Kenyan news, entrepreneurship, events, opinions, analysis, and a historical background to current affairs in a way that is both creative and innovative. It is published by **Exponential International Limited**, a Private Limited Liability company incorporated in Kenya to provide Communications and Media services.

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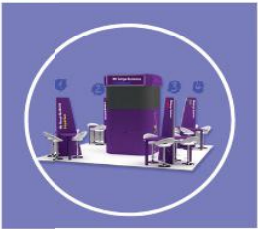
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NEWS IN BRIEF



Cabinet Secretary for Gender, Culture, Arts, and Heritage, Aisha Jumwa, has urged survivors of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) to collectively take action against the vice. She urged survivors to become ambassadors for change, raising awareness, educating communities, and advocating for laws and policies that protect girls and women from harmful practices. Jumwa also called for increased funding for the anti-FGM Board and mandated the CEO of the anti-FGM Board to engage with men at the grassroots level. She challenged the misconception that FGM is solely perpetrated by women and warned all involved to cease their actions or face legal repercussions. Other leaders, including Elgeyo Marakwet Deputy Governor Prof. Grace Cheserek, David Kosny, Mission Director of USAID, and Dr. Josephine Obonyo, expressed gratitude to religious institutions for their ongoing efforts against FGM and the need for collaboration between religion, culture, government, and development partners.



Rosemary Nyandua, a 30-year-old woman, has been struggling with alcoholism for over eight years. Her addiction led to a high alcohol tolerance, causing her to lose interest in her hobbies and relationships. She was confined to the Beyond Love Rehabilitation Centre in Njoro Sub-County, where she went through a 12-step recovery program. Now, Nyandua is ready to reintegrate back into society, equipped with vocational skills such as interior design, fashion, and electrical installation. She plans to help her family and aspires to set up a salon and boutique business.

Beyond Love Rehabilitation Centre's resident psychiatrist, Dr. Agnes Mwhaki, advises open communication and compassion towards family members who are struggling with alcohol abuse. She advises parents to avoid emotional appeals and offer advice rather than ultimatums. Dr. Mwhaki emphasises the importance of being proactive in mental health and seeking therapy if needed. The National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) reports that children as young as six have been introduced to drug and substance abuse in the last five years.

Loitoktok town's Sub County Environment Officer, Kelvin Wuantai, has urged plot owners to prevent garbage from being dumped in their plots or risk prosecution. According to environmental regulations, waste dumped on undeveloped plots becomes the property and responsibility of the plot owner. Wuantai emphasised the responsibility of private business owners to dispose of waste, urging them to have waste containers and categorise it into organic, paper, and plastic waste. He also urged the county government to engage registered private garbage collectors to collect garbage at the designated dump site in the Makaburini area.



Kenyans can enroll in the Basic Digital Skills Course, one of the three core subjects under the Citizen Digital Skills Programme, at a 40% discount from the initial cost of Kshs. 2,500. The course, which will run from February 1st to 29th, 2024, aims to equip Kenyans with the necessary knowledge and skills to thrive in a digitally driven society. The course covers ten modules, including Digital Devices in a Digital Workspace, Basic Productivity Tools, Communication and Collaboration, Accessing Government Services and Youth Opportunities, Basic Video Production and Editing, Learning Online, Basic Online Work Skills, Online Business & Digital Entrepreneurship, Cyber Hygiene for Workers, and Basic E-Waste Management. The ICT Authority's Chief Executive Officer, Stanley Kamanguya, urged Kenyans to take advantage of the registration window and register to acquire the skills and knowledge. The ICT Authority has a consortium of 50 institutions that will conduct the training physically, and the course is flexible, aiming to train five million Kenyans on digital skills in one year and 20 million by 2032.



Turkana County Commissioner Julius Kavita, who took over from Jacob Ouma, has urged civil servants to publicise the affordable housing programme to eliminate misinformation. Kavita emphasised the government's top priorities and urged the public to be sensitised to the program. Ouma, who was transferred to Meru County, commended the civil servants for their teamwork and prudent utilisation of government resources. Kavita emphasised the importance of teamwork in achieving a 100% transition and praised the county's progress in the education sector. Ouma's tenure also saw peace in the county and an open-door policy for government officers.



Gov't Told To Stop Using The Term Mùngiki To Oppress Kikuyus

Various leaders From The Most Populous Community In The Country Accuse The Current Administration Of Targeting Their Tribesmen And Women Whose Crime Is Enhancing Their Cultural Practices

By: Our Reporter
@themkenyetimes

Worth Noting:

- Addressing journalists in Murang'a town yesterday when he attended a court session in solidarity with 21 elderly women who are facing charges of being members of the sect, Dr Mathenge noted that it was unfortunate that the country was slowly sliding to old days when freedom of association was not guaranteed.
- He said the community was being harassed by the Kenya Kwanza administration despite overwhelmingly support its election.
- "Why should elderly women whose only crime was to carry out cultural be hurled in courts of law. This must stop," an agitated Dr Mathenge said.
- He told Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua who is the most senior political leader in the community to seek ways of uniting them and intervene to stop such harassment being perpetuated upon his people.



Dr Thuo Mathenge (in suit) with other leaders alongside elderly women who are facing charges of being members of the outlawed sect..

Leaders from the Agikùyù community want the government to desist from continually harassing and branding some of their tribe members as criminals under the guise of being members of outlawed Mungiki sect.

The leaders avers that from the on-goings, it has become a crime to practice some of the cultural done by the community in the past.

"This oppression has to come to an end. What is happening was started by colonialists during the struggle for independence when Kikuyus were rounded together in detention camps. The current government is now rounding up members in courts," said the community Patron Dr Thuo Mathenge.

Addressing journalists in Murang'a town yesterday when he attended a court session in solidarity with 21 elderly women who are facing charges of being members of the sect, Dr Mathenge noted that it was unfortunate that the country was slowly sliding to old days when freedom of association was not guaranteed.

He said the community was being harassed by the Kenya Kwanza administration despite overwhelmingly support its election.

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He told Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua who is the most senior political leader in the community to

seek ways of uniting them and intervene to stop such harassment being perpetuated upon his people.

"Other communities, freely carries out their cultural practices. Why is it a crime for our people to do the same," he wondered.

The plea to the government to halt the harassment directed towards women and young men who are oftenly unfairly branded as Mungiki was also expressed by lawyers representing the elderly women who are; Ndegwa Njiru, Jeremiah Kioni and Kinuthia Mwangi. Traditionalist Wambugu Nyamu and blogger Chege Majuice who were also in

court yesterday also supported the move to demand stoppage of harassment of the community under the guise of being members of proscribed group.

Kikuyu Council of Elders chairman Wachira Kiago who was also in court called on the judiciary not to be used to oppress some communities for practicing their traditions.

"The term mungiki has been laden with negative connotations, often associated with criminal activities and unrest. However, indiscriminate labeling and persecution only serve to exacerbate tensions and perpetuate injustice within communities,

the leaders noted.

The women were arrested on December 31st last year at Mukurwe-Wa-Nyagathanga in Kiharu constituency, Murang'a County and accused of being members of the sect.

They were charged in court but denied the accusations.

Yesterday, they were in court for the start of the hearing but the prosecution said they were not ready with evidence.

Senior Principal Magistrate Edwin Muriuki Nyaga deferred the hearing to February 28.

Yesterday, Dr Mathenge led the other leaders in advocating for the recognition of the inherent dignity and rights of every individual, regardless of their background or affiliations.

The business magnate and national chairman of The New Democrats (TND) political party summed his speech, thus "My advocacy underscores the fundamental principles of fairness, equality, and respect for human rights enshrined in democratic societies. It calls upon authorities to uphold the rule of law and ensure that all citizens are treated with dignity, fairness, and due process under legal frameworks,".

Kioni, the Jubilee party Secretary General noted that if Kenyans fail to rise up and say no to such oppressive tactics, they would soon find themselves under siege, akin to when the country was under one party rule.

Njiru and Mwangi observed that similar cases were going on in different courts in Nyeri, Nairobi and Nakuru.



Some of the women inside the Murang'a courtroom.

Council Of Governors Is Justified To Reject Proposed Revenue Share



By: Ndung'u Wainaina
@themtkenyetimes



Worth Noting:

- Fair and just sharing of revenue between two levels of the government is very important in the protection and realization of one of the most transformative features of the 2010 Constitution: devolved governance.
- In the current 2023/24 financial year, county governments were allocated KSh385 billion as equitable share of revenue. However, the Council of Governors strongly opposed this revenue share allocation and demanded a justifiably revenue share of KSh425 billion.

The devolved system of government is the cornerstone of the Constitution of the Kenya, 2010.

Its implementation, though with difficulties, has brought a major shift on how resources and services are shared in the country and changed the lives of Kenyans.

The responsibilities of county governments as established through the Constitution goes beyond the basic responsibilities that were the preserve of defunct local authorities. They go beyond providing basic services and ensuring that the public has access to social amenities.

The county governments are expected to facilitate the counties to move into a new trajectory of growth and development.

Put simply, in a number of years, Kenya should have thriving rural areas and towns all over the country and eventually these county towns and urban areas should be upgraded to cities.

Fair and just sharing of revenue between two levels of the government is very important in the protection and realization of one of the most transformative features of the 2010 Constitution: devolved governance.

In the current 2023/24 financial year, county governments were allocated KSh385 billion as equitable share of revenue. However, the Council of Governors strongly opposed this revenue share allocation and demanded a justifiably revenue share of KSh425 billion.

The National Executive in collaboration with National Assembly have been biggest obstacles to the progress and strengthening devolution. Both have worked in concert to cut down revenue share going to the Counties.

This is informed by Members of National Assembly strategy to increase the national government revenue in order for them to ensure increased allocation to the unconstitutional Constituency Development fund, which they control. The national government has successfully, through the National Assembly, pushed legislative, budgetary and administrative processes that subvert devolved functions.

County Governments handle the most crucial and close to the people devolved functions.

And therefore Counties must be allocated sufficient and necessary to effectively and efficiently deliver on their constitutional mandate.

The office of Auditor General incomplete audit reports that take long to be approved have resulted in the short-changing of county governments on revenue sharing.

This failure by the Auditor General to meet constitutional set timeline have seen counties getting 21.7 per cent less revenue.

There is a need to ensure allocations to county governments are increased proportionate to the national revenue share. Big budget allocations to national ministries, departments and agencies must significantly be reduced as majority of them have policy and regulatory mandate where counties hold responsibility of service delivery.

The Senate should push for to adopt a policy of "more county, less national". It must also review the fiscal, taxation and economic policy to give county governments' direct influence and voice in conformity with the design of devolution.

According to allocations as percentage of ordinary revenue, in the last three financial years the revenue share to the County governments have significantly declined while that of national government has remained

steady or increased.

In the proposed revenue share of KSh391 billion for FY2024/2025 to the County governments is only get 13.5 per cent of total ordinary revenue. This is unacceptable.

It is strangulation of devolution by the National Executive and National assembly. Therefore the Council of Governors is justified in rejecting in total the proposed allocation revenue share.

The Council must maintain its demand for KSh439.5 billion in equitable share. This is proportionate to overall national revenue increase.

Given that the total county revenue basket disbursements by the National Treasury make up a big chunk, over 70 per cent of the county financing requirements, delays in disbursement by the National Treasury adversely affects the day to day running of county activities to the extent that there is delayed payment of county staff, suppliers, and implementation of county work plans, programmes and development projects.

This delayed disbursement of revenue has continued to affect county services such as health care and other services offered to the counties.

The Senate must ensure a legal mechanism is in place for immediate disbursement of revenue share to the Counties upon passage Division of Revenue and County Allocation laws respectively.

Ndung'u Wainaina is the Executive Director for International Center for Policy and Conflict (ICPC)

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National Assembly Committee Issues Stern Warning Over Procurement Violations In Higher Education Institutions

By: PSCU

The Public Investments Committee on Governance and Education yesterday concluded a comprehensive inspection tour across the Nyanza region.

Led by Wanami Wamboka who is the MP for Bumula, the committee conducted a site visit at Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOUST), marking the culmination of its inspection visits to Kisumu, Kisii, Migori, and Siaya Counties.

During the inspection, documentation reviewed by the committee revealed concerning issues surrounding the construction of a Research Complex at JOUST.

The project, which commenced in April 2019, came to a halt in October 2020, with the contractor requesting an extension eight months after the contract had already lapsed.

Legislators identified significant

lapses in procurement processes, highlighting numerous instances of legal breaches.

Legislators were particularly concerned with the questionable variations in costs associated with the tuition block and ultra-modern library at JOUST, with reported total costs of KSh650 million and KSh739 million respectively. JOUST has been instructed to submit evidence to the Office of the Auditor General and appear before the Committee in two weeks for further scrutiny of the queries.

Members of the committee expressed deep concern over the widespread violations of procurement laws in various institutions. They emphasized the importance of institution heads diligently assessing the suitability of contractors to prevent project delays that disrupt students' educational experiences.

In his closing remarks, Wamboka said, "This committee will ensure that students have access to facilities that support their learning within specified timeframes. We will put an end to the unacceptable behavior



Committee members at the project's site.

of contractors and institutions that compromise students' education and training opportunities."

The committee will now review all

stalled projects across institutions, scrutinizing procurement processes used to engage contractors.

The committee aims to propose

amendments to procurement laws to safeguard the integrity of the country's higher learning institutions.

PIC On Commercial Affairs And Energy Concludes Review Of Kenya Maritime Authority Audit Queries

By: PSCU

The National Assembly Public Investments Committee on Commercial Affairs and Energy has concluded its probe into audit queries in the financial books of the Kenya Maritime Authority (KMA) between the 2018/2019 and 2020/2021 financial years.

KMA Director General Engineer Martin Munga was appearing for the second day before the Committee over queries raised by the Office of the Auditor General during the years under review.

Among the queries probed by the Committee chaired by Pokot South MP David Pkosing, were unconfirmed Revenues from Non-Exchange Transactions.

According to the Auditor General monthly and annual reports on imports and export fees collected were



The committee during yesterday's session.

not provided for audit, even though separate records indicated that the authority had collected merchant shopping levies totalling KSh1.6Million and KRA collection cost of KSh38.7 Million.

"As a result, the accuracy and competence of the revenue arising from the levies of KSh1.7 Million could

not be confirmed," reads the Auditor General's report in part.

During the probe, Munga who has been in his position for only six weeks was cautioned that nondisclosure of information sought by the committee would have implications on the culpability of KMA officials when the Committee retreats to draft

its report.

"This committee enjoys powers equivalent to those of a High Court and our final report is actionable by relevant authorities," warned Pkosing.

The committee noted that there were communication gaps between key departments in the Authority and di-

rected that Munga spearheads critical reforms to ensure more openness in accountability in subsequent years

On Tuesday, the committee also visited KMA Headquarters in Mombasa to inspect the administration complex whose construction has some of the audit queries under the Committee's probe.

Among the queries related to the KMA Headquarters were concerns of variations in payments totalling KSh505 Million during several stages of the tendering processes for construction works on the building.

Other concerns from the Office of the Auditor General were a query about an advance payment of KSh40.9 Million made to the building contractor.

Also under probe were rent expenses totalling KSh2 Million incurred by the KMA to temporarily resettle tenants of Reef Apartment Building whose stability was compromised during excavation for the foundation of the Headquarters complex.

Affordable Housing Bill Addresses The Issues Raised By The Court, AG Muturi Tells Joint-House Team

By: WILLIAM MUCHIRI and
PSCU @themkenyentimes

Worth Noting:

- Addressing the issues, the AG told the legislators that the proposed Bill was well in the way of establishing the legal framework for affordable housing and management of the fund to be collected under the proposed law.
- “In my opinion, the Bill has addressed the issues raised by the court. By proposing to enact the Bill, the government is responding to the ruling of the court by establishing a legal framework for affordable housing and management of the funds to be collected under the Bill,” Muturi told the committee.
- “The Bill further addresses the certainty of the law in terms of good governance, transparency and accountability as envisaged under Article 10 (2) (a) and (c) of the Constitution,” he added.



Attorney General Justin Muturi (3rd right) being welcomed by parliamentarians yesterday.

The draft Affordable Housing Bill, 2023 potentially addresses all the issues that the court raised when it declared the Housing Levy unconstitutional in November last year, the Attorney General Justin Muturi has said.

The AG made the revelations yesterday when he appeared before the Joint-Committee comprising of the Departmental Committee on Finance and National Planning and that of Housing, Urban Planning and Public Works to offer clarifications on a section of the provisions of the Affordable Housing Bill.

Last year, Judges Lawrence Mugambi, Christine Meoli and

David Majanja sitting in Nairobi declared that the 1.5 per cent levy, introduced in the Finance Bill 2023 to fund affordable housing, violated constitutional principles.

The Bill seeks to provide a legal framework for the establishment of the Affordable Housing Fund, access to affordable housing and to give effect to Article 43 (1) (b) of the Constitution on the right to accessible and adequate housing.

The House team had sought advisory from the A G on among other things, whether the Bill has effectively addressed the issues raised by the court, the interpretation and potential overlap regarding the housing

function in the Fourth Schedule of the Constitution and if there is any potential overlaps of functions with the Housing Act upon enactment of the Bill.

Addressing the issues, the AG told the legislators that the proposed Bill was well in the way of establishing the legal framework for affordable housing and management of the fund to be collected under the proposed law.

“In my opinion, the Bill has addressed the issues raised by the court. By proposing to enact the Bill, the government is responding to the ruling of the court by establishing a legal framework for affordable housing and management of the funds to be collected under the Bill,” Muturi told the committee.

“The Bill further addresses the certainty of the law in terms of good governance, transparency and accountability as envisaged under Article 10 (2) (a) and (c) of the Constitution,” he added.

Noting that law making is a process, he urged the committee which is being chaired by the chairperson of the committee on Housing, Urban Planning and Public Works, Johanna Ng’eno to institute any amendments that would tie all the loose ends on the Bill.

Asked by members led by Ng’eno to clarify on the potential overlap regarding the housing function

between the National and County governments as provided for in the Fourth Schedule, the AG told the MPs that while the law provides that the National Government be responsible for the Housing Policy, it also outlines that the county government shall be responsible for county planning and development including housing.

He observed that where there are overlaps between the two levels of government, the law has provided an express provision for consultation and cooperation.

Muturi was however categorical that since the Bill touches on counties, the input of the Senate shall be required before the Bill is enacted.

“Any overlap in discharge of functions can be sorted out through consultation and cooperation in line with Article 6 (2) of the Constitution which states that ‘the governments in both levels are distinct and interdependent and shall conduct their mutual relations on the basis of consultation and cooperation’”, he explained.

A number of lawmakers led by Bahati MP, Irene Njoki however sought to know how to ensure that the Bill is not discriminatory and that it caters for the interest of Kenyans of all walks.

“How do you ensure that the Bill has catered for the interest of every Kenyan? How would someone earning KSh20,000 be able to contribute the levy and also contribute monthly towards owning the house? Why can’t the government think of a model to rent out the houses to income earners to afford them decent housing?,”she posed.

On his part Kigumo MP, Joseph Munyoro questioned if the house levy could be modelled around the National Social Security Fund’s structure, to address the concern on discrimination.

He also proposed that the AG’s office guides on the development of a framework that would allow private developers to participate in the program.

Asked to address the land question, Muturi told the committee that the provisions for the management of affordable housing units developed on public land, has been adequately provided for in the Land Act, thus need not be replicated in the Affordable Housing Bill.



Attorney General Justin Muturi when he appeared before the parliamentary committees yesterday.

Choices / Decisions Pt 1.



By: Eric Musa
EMEA.ericmusa@gmail.com

Joshua, a great military leader in the history of Israel, when he was preparing to die, he called the Israelites at Shekem, where he addressed them:

“Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord! 15 And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord (Joshua 24:15).”

Alexander the Great was asked one time, how did he conquer the world,

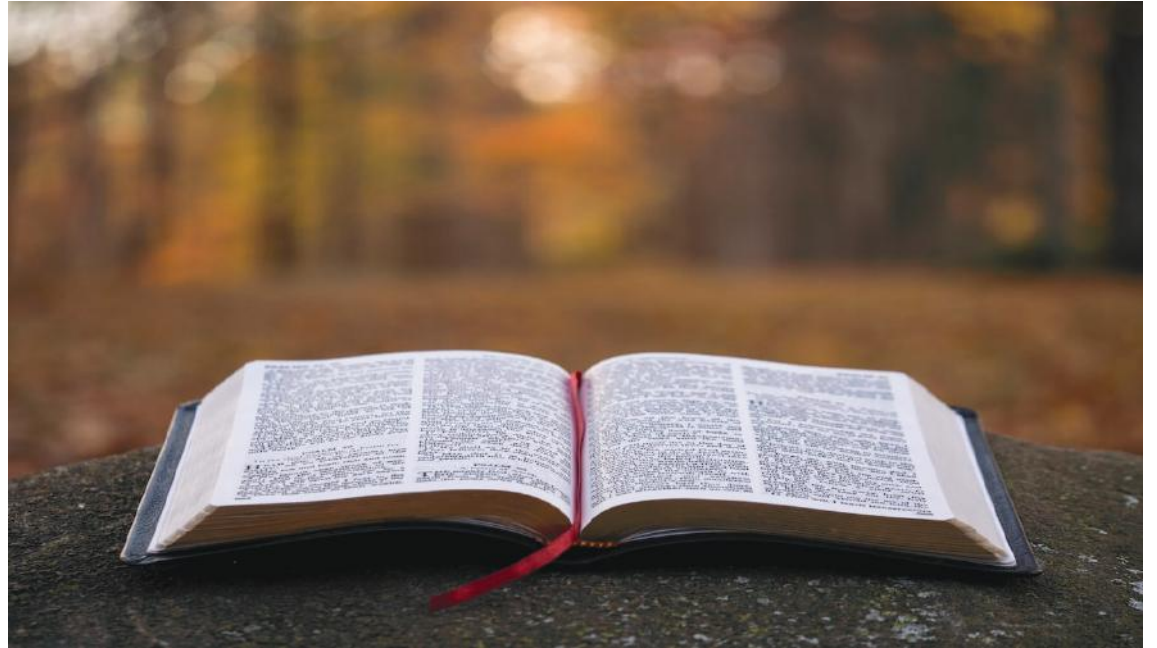
he said: “ by NOT WAVERING.” We’ve to make firm choices. The bible records that a wavering mind, is unstable in all it ways. We have sayings today: “A stitch in time, saves nine”; “Procrastination is the killer of time”; “No decision, is a decision”, and so on, all these are choices, make the right ones. Ask God for the grace to do so in Jesus name.

Choose TODAY, Christ demands first priority. It is either Him or the world, the Bible says: “ You cannot serve two master, you will either love or hate the other; you can NOT serve God and mammon.”

The Lord, God says “deny self, and take up the cross”. You have either chosen to serve the gods of pleasure, gods of materialise, or even gods of war. Some will not admit it that they serve these gods, some do not even know it; their minds is deluded, and have no awareness, nor understanding: God have mercy, deliver us.

Joshua said irregardless of your decision, “Me and my house, we shall serve the Lord”

Adam& Eve, first man made the wrong choice by choosing to listen



to the devil. From there, man’s perfect union was cut off, and he became sinful, in need of redemption, and so applies to every man born. David, the psalmist said “in sin, did my mother conceive me. The Bible records” We’ve all sinned, we are all idolaters,” Make that choice: give your life to Christ Jesus.

Evangelist Eric Musa:

(My message continuously: If you are not saved: Believe, accept, receive and confess Christ Jesus as your Lord and Saviour and be filled with the Holy Spirit, as it is written; “NOW is the acceptable time, TODAY is the day of SALVATION.- 2 Cor 6:2”. For prayers, devotion, and

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

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Why Talk Of Gachagua Not Safe Politically Cannot Be Swept Under The Carpet?



By: Joseph Mutua Ndonga
mutuandonga@yahoo.com

The other day I read a post in social media in which the author argued that Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua is not safe politically.

Some powerful political forces were working behind the scene to bring him down.

If the forces succeed, President William will pick another person from the Mountain as his running mate 2027.

That is if he opts he to have this seat remain in region.

It is worth noting that the prerogative of choosing a running mate lies squarely with the President.

You would expect him to pick the most popular candidate who will help him to deliver votes. Given that majority of voters in the region are young people, a youthful candidate may stand a high chance.

Given this scenario, I would not expect DP Gachagua to take lightly the recent political developments.

As a writer and political analyst, I have been following with keen interest the unfolding supremacy battle for Mount Kenya kingpin pitting him and Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro.

Recently, Ndindi opted to change his political strategy.

Contrary to the impression created by his critics, this was a tactical retreat.

Speaking when he was hosted by the leaders from Northern Kenya, Rift Valley and Nyanza, the Kiharu MP stated that his loyalty to President William Ruto and his deputy President Rigathi Gachagua was unquestionable.

As their worker, my job is to help them implement the pledges they made to Kenyans during the campaigns.

In Luo Nyanza where he was accompanied by local leaders and MP Babu Owino, Ndindi reiterated the commitment of President Ruto to develop all regions of Kenya.

All of us pay taxes and so we are entitled to development goodies.

Speaker after speaker showered Ndindi Nyoro with accolades.

Ndindi is youthful, development conscious and well educated on matters of good governance and social rights. He also believes in peace and unity. Therefore, he is a presidential material.

In his speech, Ndindi steered clear of succession politics. The talk is premature and ill-timed. This is the time of helping our beloved President and his deputy to succeed in their job of trans-



Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua.

forming the lives of Kenyans.

Ndindi's change of tack was well understood. It came hot on the heels of a meeting he had hosted in Kiharu constituency. It was attended by 20 members of parliament drawn from different parts of country.

Most of the speakers endorsed Ndindi as the best suited to replace former President Uhuru Kenyatta as the kingpin of Mountain and also to succeed President William Ruto in 2032.

This time, this meeting rattled the deputy President Gachagua and his allies.

The DP troops did not wait for the dust to settle. They accused Ndindi of working at the behest of powerful forces out to cut Gachagua to size.

Though they would not provide evidence to support their claims, media reports indicated that the DP opted to escalate this matter to State House.

Reportedly, this what prompted the President to wade into the succession battle pitting him and Kiharu MP.

My government promised to mentor youthful leaders. We have not changed but I want to caution young leaders not to engage in activities that could jeopardize our development agenda.

A friend of mine told me. Hon Ndindi have a track record of development, reconciling and uniting the people.

DP Gachagua is the opposite of this. He was known to be vengeful, divisive and deceitful politician.

This explains why he is yet to deliver on the job of addressing the plight of farmers in Mount Kenya and other parts of the country. From onset, the DP had curved a niche of being a staunch defender of coffee, tea and milk farmers.

He had also convinced the President that he had what it takes to eradicate the menace of illicit brews and drug abuse once and for all.

But more than one year down line, he has not done anything to talk about.

For the farmers, they are still toiling

and getting nothing in return. He had given them a false hope that they will start to put money into their pockets immediately.

Given this background, Ndindi seems to be the most favored candidate for position of Mount Kenya kingpin.

My friend added: We expect the duo to borrow a leaf from the late Kenneth Matiba who said in the countdown to 1992 general elections 'let the people decide'.

This means the people of Mount Kenya will choose candidate.

If it is Gachagua, then he will retain his position as Dr Ruto's running mate. If Ndindi defeats him, he will replace him.

Matiba had made the popular quote in the eve of 1992 general elections during a mammoth campaign rallies in Kiambu district.

This tour shocked Democratic Party (DP) leader Mwai Kibaki, who had taken his campaign there a week earlier. This is because all the gains he had made were watered down.

This is where Matiba branded Kibaki as 'general Kiguoya (coward)' amid cheers, ululations from mammoth crowds.

We wanted Kibaki to resign when he was demoted by President Moi from position of the Vice President to that of the Ministry of Health that had been run down.

He had agreed to do so. This is after a series of the secret meetings with other leaders from across the country who believed that Moi was taking the country in wrong direction.

Kibaki however betrayed us on the floor of parliament. He declined to second a motion of confidence against President Moi which I had just presented.

This was a great betrayal. I become a marked man. I was put on the radar by state security agencies and I ended up in detention, Matiba declared.

The 'let the people decide' clarion call resonated very well with the masses not

only in Mount Kenya region but Kenya as a whole.

I remember the famous words of former powerful Attorney General the late Charles Njonjo. He once said that politics is a dirty game.

You may think that today you are very powerful but you never know what will happen tomorrow.

Njonjo uttered these words after falling out with President Daniel Arap Moi.

He never thought that this can happen. This is because he was a close ally and confidant of President Moi.

Former Vice President Joshat Karanja had also suffered fate. After Moi fell out with his Vice President Mwai Kibaki, he pointed Doctor Karanja to this position.

Karanja stayed in office for less than one year. It is worth to note the political plot to hound him out of office had crafted by two lightweight politicians-Embakasi MP David Mwenje and the head of Motor Vehicle Inspection Unit Kuria Kanyingi. Just like DP Gachagua, he had downplayed the threat posed by the duo. President Moi replaced Karanja with the late Professor George Saitoti.

The name of President Moi was dragged into this matter. However, there was no tangible evidence that he was behind this plot or rather sponsored it.

Former secretary general of KNUT Wilson Sosian who was among the leaders hosted by Ndindi in Kiharu, stated. I want to assure you the people of Muranga that Ndindi was poised to succeed President Ruto in 2032 when he completes his second term in office. You can take this to the bank.

Soon after this event, a section of the politicians allied to DP started peddling unfounded rumors that President William Ruto was sponsoring Ndindi's campaigns. They would not produce an iota of evidence to support their claims.

This is not the first time that the name of the head of state would dragged into premature 2032 succession politics.

Sometimes back Kakamega senator Bonny Khalwale had made similar claims. This happened during Dr Ruto's visit to the region.

He alleged that President Ruto had held a closed door meeting with the leaders of Mulembe nation at Kakamega State Lodge. We managed to convince him to support the candidature of ANC leader Musalia Mudavadi in 2032.

Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua is not suitable for the position of the President. We want to tell him to forget it. President Ruto will pass the baton to Mudavadi, Khalwale added.

But in a swift rejoinder, Dr Ruto dismissed and denounced his remarks. It is premature and too early to talk about 2032 succession. We are hear to launch and commission development projects. This is in line with promises we made during the campaigns.

I'm not holding brief for the President but I'm persuaded to believe that his position is the same. This is regard to Ndindi's political game plan for the Mount Kenya region.

The DP should bear this in mind. Ndindi's political star was rising very fast.

I have been listening to the views of the Kikuyus living in Githurai and in my rural area.

Majority of them do not believe in him. To drive the point home, they would revisit his previous utterances and history.

You heard him likening Kenya to shareholding company. This was a reckless statement. They would also fault him for picking a war with Nairobi governor Johnson Sakaja. His statement was divisive, callous and designed to put the Kikuyus into a collision course with rest of the Kenyan communities.

This is because Nairobi is the home to all the 45 communities of Kenya.

Others would allege that Gachagua was only considering his home county of Nyeri for state appointments.

Some would recall the alleged 'ills' associated with him when he served as a 'special' District Officer (DO) during the era of President Daniel Arap Moi.

It is also worth noting that Gachagua was not the preferred choice of the majority of the United Democratic Alliance (UDA) leaders from the Mountain for the position of the running mate. The final decision however lied with presidential candidate William Ruto. He settled on him.

Given this scenario, one would have expected Gachagua to immediately start healing the wounds after being sworn in as DP. It is widely believed that one year down the line he has failed to do this.

The Kikuyus opposed to him would aver that Kiharu MP Ndindi is the most suitable candidate to lead the Mountain.

Apart from being youthful and well educated, he is a development conscious leader and a unifier.

Besides, he has never been implicated in corruption or any other wrong-doing. Ndindi's track record of development in Kiharu is there for all to see.

The MPs and other elected leaders are travelling there for bench-marking.

The other day a renowned opinion poll firm rated him as the best performer in the country. This is on matters of development.

Matters of education are close to his heart. Ndindi have done a lot in terms of building new state-of-art classrooms and renovating the old ones.

He has also been spending part of money he receives from National Exchequer to build TVET colleges.

National Government-Constituency Development Fund (NG-CDF) is one of the kitties

In this, the NG-CDF funds will cater for the school fees of the students in day schools in Kiharu. The parents will only pay Sh1,000 per term.

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

Non Communicable Diseases Among The Elderly Testing Launched In Murang'a

By: Florence Kinyua
@themtkenyetimes

Ushirika Wema in collaboration with Ahadi Kenya Trust has launched a communicable diseases testing exercise for the elderly in Murang'a County.

Speaking at Kagunduini grounds Kandara, the Ushirika Wema chairperson and also the spouse of the prime cabinet secretary of Kenya, Musalia Mudavadi, Tessie Musalia observed that advocating for early screening is pivotal in managing the now prevalent Non-communicable disease.

“Early screening of diabetes and hypertension among the elderly will go a long way in fighting its prevalence, especially among the older people as they are mostly at risk of getting the diseases,” she said.

“Age comes with challenges in their health and the prevalence of these conditions among the elderly is a pressing concern that requires proactive measures,” she added.



A medic testing an elderly woman during the exercise

The Community Health Promoters will be the drivers of the campaign and will help in monitoring and promoting early detection through their routine home visits to the elderly in their homes.

“Detecting any irregularities will enable timely intervention and man-

agement to make a substantial difference in the quality of life for the elderly” noted Ahadi Kenya Trust CEO Dr Stanley Kamau.

“As Ahadi Kenya and Ushirika Wema we will add more kits so that more elderly persons will be reached as most of them cannot get to the

hospital due to the severity of the conditions,” he added.

Kamau noted that most ailing and elderly people lack the resources to take them to health facilities as some are located in far-off areas.

Over 300 elderly women were checked for hypertension and dia-

betes.

They also received blankets and food essentials.

Hypertension is a significant contributor to most cardiovascular diseases and the second most common cause of mortalities in Kenya.

Notably, the burden of hypertension is on the rise mostly due to unhealthy diets, and sedentary lifestyles, and effective intervention includes screening, early identification, and early initiation of treatment to manage it.

Diabetes, on the other side can be managed through blood sugar monitoring and including a well-balanced diet, being physically active, and avoiding stress

One of the beneficiaries, 80-year-old Peris Njoki Muciri lauded the initiative noting that it was a relief to the many elderly people who are ailing.

“Apart from having my blood sugar and blood pressure checked, I have also been advised on how to live a healthy lifestyle and keep the diseases at bay.

Learners From Igwamiti Ward Get Bursary

By: Grace Njeri and Peris Wanjiku
@themtkenyetimes

Over 1000 learners from Igwamiti ward, Nyahururu Sub County in Laikipia County have benefitted from the Laikipia County bursary funds worth over KSh5 million.

Overseeing the disbursement of the funds, Igwamiti ward MCA Irene Wacuka called on the government to consider funding the bursary kitty according to population.

Speaking in Munyaka secondary in Nyahururu town, the legislator regretted that it is unfortunate that some wards have a high population yet they get the same allocation as wards with low populations.

She at the same time advised parents to consider taking their children to local vocational colleges arguing that the centers impart quick skills to the learners thus making them ven-

ture into the job market quickly.

She said that the county had funded every student who applied for a bursary from the vocational training centers because they wanted to encourage more students to join the institutions and pursue technical courses.

Moreover, the MCA encouraged teenage mothers to ensure they get back to school after giving birth saying that a child should not shutter their dreams to continue with their education.

However, she at the same time called for stern action for the perpetrators of teenage pregnancies to be arrested and be prompted to take equal responsibilities while raising the child.

On his side, Laikipia County Health CECM Wagura Taiti, who had accompanied the MCA, urged parents to invest all they could in education because it is a lifetime investment and could be a gateway to prosperity for their children.



Laikipia County officials led by Deputy Governor Reuben Kamuri (left) presenting a bursary cheque.

“Education is the key to everything and also the levels of development are normally directly proportional to the levels of education,” Wagura

said.

He at the same time promised to ensure the county government allocates more money in the next quota

to education bursaries to ensure as many learners remain in school to avoid the vices outside the classrooms.

Pastor Dorcas Rigathi Keeps Her Promise to Embu Widows

During A Meeting With Hundreds Of Windows Mid Last Month, Pastor Dorcas And Embu Governor Cecily Mbarire Promised Them that They Would Initiate Programs For Their Wmpowerment, Which They Launched Yesterday

By: OSDP

More than 700 widows met at a church in Kangaru, Embu County marking the start of the widows and orphans program under the office of the spouse of the Deputy President (OSDP) in the area.

The Christian Foundation Fellowship church hall was colourful, with the widows donning different coloured head scarfs, lesos, and their faces beaming with hope for the work ahead. Some were young, and others old and looked into the distance, thoughtful about their lives.

The spouse of the Deputy President Pastor Dorcas Rigathi on 16th January 2024 met with widows in Embu during her three-day working stay in the county.

During the meeting, Pastor Dorcas



Widows at the Christian Foundation Fellowship Church follow the meeting proceedings yesterday, where they met under the office of the spouse of the Deputy President (OSDP) Widows and Orphans Program. Photo/OSDP

and Embu Governor Cecily Mbarire promised the widows that they would initiate programs from their empowerment.

During yesterday's meeting, Pauline Gichovi, Director of Social De-

velopment in Embu County spoke to the hundreds of widows on how they would organize themselves into groups and work towards improving their lives and families.

A team from the OSDP, led by the Director of Widows and Orphans Program, Esther Waiganjo was also present and shared with the widows of the OSDP touching on the lives of the widows and orphans.

Ms Waiganjo guided the widows in the formation of groups, which cut across different parts of the county, through which different seminars, and programs would be rolled out.

"We shall have sessions for capacity building, social development, and economic empowerment," said Ms Waiganjo.

Bishop Harrison Kingangi hosted the meeting and encouraged the widows to remain strong and steadfast for the development of their lives, and families.

The OSDP has widows programs in Nairobi, Nakuru, and Narok Counties. In Nairobi, the widows are establishing a tree nursery of approximately 300,000 trees.

In Kajiado, the widows also have a tree nursery and months ago sold seedlings worth Sh500,000.

Pastor Dorcas, who was raised by a widow, is passionate about working with widows and started working with them since her days at the university.

The vision of her office is 'A Dignified Future for Vulnerable Populations' with the pillars of boy child, widows and orphans, people with disabilities, and established on the foundation of Chaplaincy, Outreach and Family Values.

Martha Wangari Receives A Delegation From The Maharashtra Legislative Assembly Of India On Behalf Of Wetang'ula

By: John Kariuki
@themkenyetimes

Martha Wangari (MP, Gilgil), a member of the Speaker's panel yesterday represented the Speaker of the National Assembly, Moses Wetang'ula to cordially engage and welcome a high-level delegation from the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly of India, led by their Deputy Speaker, Shri Narhari Sitaram Zirwal.

During the deliberations, the delegation exchanged matters touching on legislative procedures symbolizing a mutual acknowledgment and respect for each other's democratic systems. Together, they appreciated that knowledge sharing on Parliamentary procedures is key in enhancing parliamentary practices,

fostering transparency, and promoting democratic values, thereby enriching the fabric of governance.

According to statistics, India stands as Kenya's third-largest source of imports, a testament to the robust economic partnership between two countries; India and Kenya. Collaboration between the two countries involve several sectors including education, agriculture, ICT and Innovation among others.

Wangari noted that the partnership between India and Kenya not only drive economic growth but also facilitate knowledge exchange, technological advancements, and socio-cultural enrichment.

Further it was underscore that benchmarking against the legislative practices of a nation offers invaluable insights for best practices.

"By studying and learning from each other's experiences, we can continuously refine our legislative frameworks, strengthen democratic institutions, and better serve our respective citizens" said Wangari.

Shri Narhari Sitaram Zirwal said that the engagement served as a reaffirmation of the commitment to fostering international cooperation, advancing shared goals, and building a more interconnected and prosperous world.

Martha Wangari (MP, Gilgil)- Right.





Uzbekiston Respublikasi jizzax State Pedagogical University 2nd-year students of the Faculty of History under the guidance of Tutor Hayitgul Ganiyeva during the information dialogue hour, "Pay attention to literature – pay attention to spirituality, pay attention to the future!" "Was held on the subject. The lesson was actively mastered, various conditions and interesting methods were used among

the students. Books of different genres were introduced by the tutor. At the initiative of the President, a dialogue process was held on the issue of paying attention to reading and books.

By: Hayitgul Ganiyeva
Jizzax State Pedagogical University

Winter Is A Season That Is Eagerly Awaited



By: Eshbo'riyeva Shahnoza

Winter is a unique time of nature's paleness. It leaves unforgettable memories and presents us with many vivid impressions and feelings.

One of the main advantages of winter is the amazing beauty of nature. Snow-covered forests and fields, icy rivers and lakes give us the impression of being in another world. White fluffy snow decorated with ice crystals, pictures on the windows and New Year's decorations give a unique atmosphere of celebration and magic.

Winter also gives us the opportunity to play various sports and spend active time in the open air. Ice skating, skiing, and sledding are becoming indispensable pastimes for children and adults. Winter is also a time when many families gather for the holidays. New Year is a special day when the house is filled with the taste of festive food and warmth of family communication. Winter holidays create a charming mood, it's a time for family games, reading fairy tales and watching New Year's movies.

And so it has come – the long-awaited winter! It is good to run through the frost on the first winter morning! Even yesterday, the dreary streets are completely covered with burning snow, and the sun shines with dazzling brilliance. Strange patterns of frost lay on shop windows and tightly closed windows of houses, snow covered poplar branches. Whether you look across the street, stretched like a flat ribbon, look closely, look around – everywhere everything is

the same: snow, snow, snow ... The occasional breeze tickles the face and ears, but how beautiful everything is! What a soft, soft circle in the air! No matter how bitterly cold it is, it's also

nice. Isn't it because we all love winter, it fills the chest with an exciting feeling, just like spring.

Winter is the coldest of all seasons. However, many are looking forward to it. Harsh frosts freeze the rivers and the ice rink produces. A white blanket of snow covers the ground to prevent freezing. All nature goes to sleep for the winter, trees get rid of leaves, grass dries up, most representatives of the animal world hide in holes, prepare reserves or hibernate.

The days are very short in winter, but this does not prevent you from enjoying the beauty of winter nature. On a frosty clear day, when the sun shines especially brightly, everything around shines. Clear cold air makes breathing difficult and pinches the nose. Beautiful birches in silver ornaments. There are days when everything is covered with frost: wires, benches, tree branches. On such days, wonderful patterns are formed on the windows. They make the windows incredibly beautiful, like a product made of fine crystal.

How wonderful nature is in winter. A fairy tale becomes a reality. The world is shrouded in white. It covers everything from head to toe with its stunning appearance. It is not surprising that many poets and artists describe the beauty of snow-covered distances in their works. Nature changes in winter, sometimes this is the most "Russian" time of the year. The severity of winter frosts is similar to the character of the inhabitants of the Great Country. Winter beauty shows strength, endurance and humility before the magical element. An example of juniper. A snow cover is pressed on it, the branch bends under the weight, but does not break, only throws the excess load. This is the character of nature, it is revealed in all its glory only in winter.

In conclusion, winter is a season of the year that brings us many wonderful experiences and joy. It offers unique opportunities for sports and active recreation, as well as family traditions and warm communication. Despite some difficulties, it is worth welcoming winter with a smile and an open heart.

Termiz State Pedagogical Institute
Faculty of Philology,
Uzbek language and
a student of the direction of
Eshbo'riyeva Shahnoza

You Need, Woman



By: Bakhromova Nazokat

To prepare sweetness of soup
To be your lifelong beautiful,
You need your mother, woman!

To preserve male pride,
To get a castle from heaven,
To be a support at weddings,
You need your brothers, woman!

To see the thrown wrestler,
To return to childhood happy,
To go to your father's house,
You need your sisters, woman!

To grow a scientist and a genius,
To put a pillar of stone in the world,
To sprout plane from you,
You need the world, woman!

Bakhromova Nazokat

For every morning to be filled with love,
To speak with his head held high,
Even to disappear in illness,
You need your father, woman!

To make the room Angelic,

Miano Sheds Light On Kenya- Polish Economic Dialogue

By: John Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes

Ministry of Investment Trade and Industry (M.I.T.I) Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Miano has taken a moment to share with us good news of how Kenya is tapping into warm bilateral ties with Poland.

“During the Kenya Poland economic dialogue led by President William Ruto and his counterpart Andrzej Duda we explored areas of Poland’s expertise which presents great opportunities for collaboration with our Country” Miano noted.

Polish advanced agricultural practices, healthcare system, and education provides opportunities for Kenya to improve her agricultural productivity, healthcare capacity, and enhance education quality.

The economic dialogue gave a platform for 28 Polish companies to improve their business and investment partnerships with almost 100 Kenyan companies brokered during last

year’s October business forum. The discussions revolve around agriculture, manufacturing, ICT & digital economy, and construction. These areas are at the core of the BETA plan.”

President William Ruto and Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Miano.



Justice And Legal Affairs Committee Meets With Officials From The Judiciary And The Judicial Service Commission

By: John Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes

The Justice and Legal Affairs Committee (JLAC), Chaired by George Gitonga Murugara (Tharaka MP), has held an engagement workshop on the administration of justice, with officials of the Judiciary and the Judicial Service Commission (JSC).

Murugara welcomed the meeting, stating that the forum creates an avenue to deliberate and come up with a suitable strategy for effective working relationship between the Judiciary and the Committee, highlighting some of the gains made by JLAC so far.

“We have been engaging with the NCAJ, on the proposals to amend the Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code, which are currently being processed for committal to the Committee. The Committee has also successfully concluded public participation on the Tribunals Bill,

2023 and the Statute (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill, 2023 on the review of the facilitative mandate of the Judicial Service Commission.” Stated Murugara.

During meeting, the Ag. Chief Registrar of the Judiciary and the Ag. Secretary to the Judicial Service Commission Mr. Paul Ndemo, presented before the Committee, the budget implementation for the Financial Year 2023/24, the budget proposals for FY 2024/25, and the Medium-Term.

Members were taken through the vision outlined in the Social Transformation Through Access to Justice (STAJ) blueprint 2023 to 2033; whereby the Judiciary aims to establish High Court and Courts of equal status in every County, and Magistrates’ Courts in every Sub-County.

“There are 62 requests for the establishment of Sub-County Courts received by the Office of Registrar Magistrates Courts, including 5 Courts in Nairobi, which was started by the Nairobi Metropolitan Services (NMS).” Said Mr. Ndemo.



Gatanga MP Edward Muriu sits in that committee..

Some of the areas of focus for JSC funding include recruitment of Judges, Judicial Officers and staff, to enhance administration of justice and reduce case backlog in the Judiciary; review and approval of policies, automation of JSC operations, capacity building and stakeholders’ engagement.

Murugara assured the officials that JLAC will continue to foster good relations premised on transparency, openness and information sharing, whilst maintaining the autonomy and independence of each arm, as envisioned by the doctrine of separation of powers.

COURTS

Senators Raise Apprehension Over Contempt Of Court By Governors

By: Mabel Keya –Shikuku
@themtkenyetimes

Worth Noting:

- The Senator cited the case of Nakuru County, where the County Government led by Susan Kihika, has been accused of disobeying court orders emanating from the case of forceful takeover of the War Memorial Hospital, which has dominated the media for the last few weeks.
- Karanja said in November last year, the Nakuru County Government stormed the Nakuru War Memorial Hospital, in a bid to forcefully take over on allegations that the Hospital lease had expired and sent enforcement officers in the middle of the night, where patients were chased and forcefully removed from dialysis machines, leading to loss of lives after the disruption.



Nakuru Senator Tabitha Karanja addressing journalists last week.

Members of the Senate Liaison committee, have voiced concern over what they term, as blatant disregard of court orders by a section of Governors, whom they oversight.

Led by Senate Deputy Majority Leader, Tabitha Karanja Keroche, the Senators said if allowed to continue, the situation would lawlessness in the country.

"If only 10 governors gang-up and decide to disobey the Court Orders, the counties and country at large may descend to anarchy and the country may be ruined," Karanja said.

Consequently, she urged all senators to come together, to ensure that governors are operating within their constitutional mandates, devoid of misuse of power and manipulation of security apparatus to their advantage.

Karanja was speaking in Naivasha on Tuesday, during the opening of Senate Liaison Committee's retreat ahead of opening of third Session of the House, which will be next Tuesday.

The Senator cited the case of Nakuru County, where the County Government led by Susan Kihika, has been accused of disobeying court orders emanating from the case of forceful takeover of the War Memorial Hos-

pital, which has dominated the media for the last few weeks.

Karanja said in November last year, the Nakuru County Government stormed the Nakuru War Memorial Hospital, in a bid to forcefully take over on allegations that the Hospital lease had expired and sent enforcement officers in the middle of the night, where patients were chased and forcefully removed from dialysis machines, leading to loss of lives after the disruption.

"Several lives were lost during the uncoordinated transfer of patients and removal of dialysis machines, while patients were on them and many of the patients have had to travel hundreds of Kilometers to access Dialysis in towns like Eldoret and Nairobi and the end proved not sustainable for many of the patients," she narrated.

The Senator alleged that currently, over 50 dialysis patients are stranded since their medical covers had Nakuru War Memorial, as their treatment centre through various covers and now, goons have taken advantage of the situation and vandalized the hospital.

"Even after the Directors of the Hospital had gone to court to seek redress, the Nakuru County government dis-

obeyed the court orders and in a case of evil alliance with the Police led by the Nakuru County Commander of Police," Karanja remarked.

She informed the senators that after the courts pronounced themselves on the matter and issued a warrant of arrest to the County Police Commander, he obliged but instead of providing security to the Hospital management to continue with services as ordered by the Court, he handed the facility to the over 200 goons, who took the management of the Hospital in full view and presence of the police.

"This blatant disregard of court orders by the Nakuru County government and the use of goons have had a very negative effect, as many investors are scared by the happenings and actions of the Nakuru governors and the impunity exhibited by the police, who are supposed to offer protection, but instead expose them to goons," Karanja claimed.

The Senator hailed the recent operationalization of the Senate Oversight Fund, which she said will go a long way in addressing the gaps that existed in our mandate and provided by the Constitution of Kenya.

"I hope that Senators will take the opportunity to establish structures

that will withstand the challenges presented in our oversight work and at the end of this retreat, we shall come-up with modalities for enhancing the committees, to effectively discharge their mandate with a view of providing the best oversight across our counties," Karanja added.

Acting Vice Chair of the Senate Departmental Committees Senator, Mohammed Chute, said court orders must be respected by the executive, otherwise disobeying of such orders risks throwing the country into disorder.

Chute who is also the Marsabit Senator also welcomed the senate oversight funds, noting that it will help the senators, to undertake their oversight role by Governors effectively.

"The funds will also enhance their oversight mandates to curb increased mismanagement of county funds and ensure the funds geared towards public service delivery is well utilized," he said.

The Senator also added that the retreat will enable the Senate committees to review their mandates, highlight challenges faced and solutions needed as the parliament starts its third quarter operations.

Senate Majority Leader, Aaron Kipkirui Cheruiyot, said the Senate committees had built a reputation beyond the plenary and the senators who are tasked with oversight of counties, have realized the value of committees.

He attributed this to their due diligence and professional work, the number of summons or invitations by County governors, that have been honored has gone down.

"The first senate was faced with issues of Governors ganging-up not to honor summons but with time they realized that the committees we lead are professional," said Cheruiyot.

Majority noted that in the second session of parliament, 62 Bills were introduced into the Senate out of which 11, have been assented to including key Health Bills and so far, the assented Bills include revenue Bills, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) Bill, the Public Finance Management Amendment Bill, and the Climate Change Bill.



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**



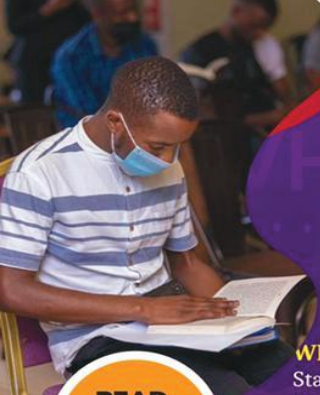
Each of the other **66** teams get
10 Balls ☒
18 Shorts ☒
18 Jerseys ☒
18 Pairs of Socks ☒
18 Pairs of Playing Boots ☒
Ksh 100,000 Participation Fees ☒
Match Day **Allowances** for Teams ☒
Officials, Referees and Ball boys and Girls ☒



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13th Feb 2024
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Time:8am
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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

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)

Judges :
Judges will include teachers and teacher-consultants of the Literature & English Forum – Uganda from across the nation.

Winners
Ugx.200,000,
+ Gift hamper

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

2nd Runner-up
Ugx.100,000,
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All participants
Certificates of participation at each level.

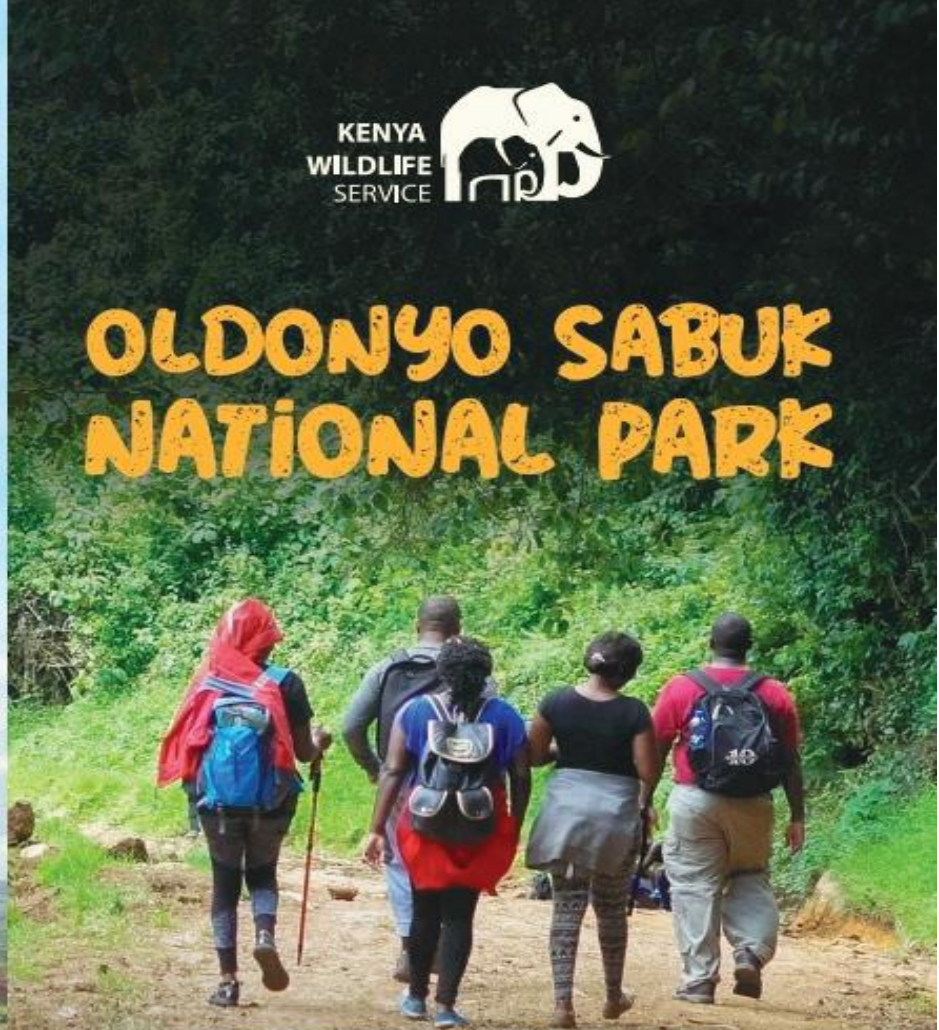
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Balancing Acts: Ethics And Data Portability In The Digital Sphere



By: Odhiambo Jerameel Kevins Owuor
@themkenyatimes



Worth Noting:

- The ethical implications of data portability extend beyond individual privacy and security concerns. The widespread adoption of data portability measures can have far-reaching consequences for society as a whole, influencing issues such as data ownership, consent, and accountability.
- Questions arise regarding who ultimately controls the data once it is transferred and how it can be used by different entities. Additionally, there is a need to ensure that individuals fully understand the implications of data portability and are equipped with the knowledge and tools to make informed decisions about their data.

The concept of data portability is hailed as a beacon of empowerment, promising individuals the freedom to transfer their personal information seamlessly across various online platforms and services. This capability represents a significant shift in the digital landscape, granting users unparalleled control over their digital footprint. By enabling individuals to decide where and how their data is stored and used, data portability promotes choice and competition among service providers, ultimately enhancing consumer welfare and driving innovation.

However, beneath the surface of this empowerment lies a complex web of ethical considerations that warrant careful scrutiny. While data portability empowers users with greater control, it also introduces new risks and challenges. The ease of transferring data between platforms increases the potential for exploitation, providing malicious actors with opportunities to access sensitive information or perpetrate identity theft. As individuals exercise their right to data portability, they may inadvertently expose themselves to privacy breaches and security vulnerabilities, raising concerns about the safeguarding of personal data in an interconnected digital ecosystem.

The ethical implications of data portability extend beyond individual privacy and security concerns. The widespread adoption of data portability measures can have far-reaching consequences for society as a whole,

influencing issues such as data ownership, consent, and accountability. Questions arise regarding who ultimately controls the data once it is transferred and how it can be used by different entities. Additionally, there is a need to ensure that individuals fully understand the implications of data portability and are equipped with the knowledge and tools to make informed decisions about their data. Failure to address these ethical considerations could undermine trust in the digital ecosystem and erode the fundamental rights of individuals to privacy and autonomy.

Privacy and consent stand at the forefront of ethical concerns surrounding data portability. While individuals have the right to transfer their data, they must also be fully informed about how their information will be used and shared by both the sending and receiving parties. Failure to obtain explicit consent or provide transparent information can lead to privacy breaches and undermine trust between users and service providers.

The potential of data portability to exacerbate existing inequalities in access to digital resources cannot be overlooked. While data portability promises to empower individuals with greater control over their personal information, those with limited technological literacy or resources may face significant barriers in exercising this right. Without the necessary skills or tools to navigate the complexities of data transfer, marginalized groups risk being left behind,

further widening the digital divide. Addressing these disparities requires proactive measures to ensure that data portability mechanisms are accessible and inclusive for all users, regardless of their socio-economic background or level of digital proficiency.

The concentration of data in the hands of a few dominant players poses a significant risk of unfair practices and exploitation. As large tech companies amass vast amounts of user-generated content, they wield considerable power over the digital ecosystem. This concentration of data not only stifles competition but also raises concerns about privacy and data sovereignty. Without adequate safeguards in place, users may find themselves at the mercy of these tech giants, with limited recourse in the event of data misuse or abuse. To mitigate these risks, policymakers must implement robust regulations and oversight mechanisms to ensure that data portability is implemented ethically and equitably.

Transparency and accountability are essential pillars of ethical data portability. Users have the right to know what types of data are being transferred, how it will be used, and what measures are in place to safeguard their privacy and security. Similarly, service providers must be transparent about their data handling practices, providing clear and accessible information to users about how their data is collected, stored, and shared. By promoting transparency and accountability, stakeholders can build trust

and confidence in data portability mechanisms, fostering a more ethical and responsible digital environment.

Effective governance frameworks are necessary to ensure compliance with ethical standards and regulations. Policymakers, industry stakeholders, and civil society organizations must collaborate to develop and enforce guidelines for the ethical implementation of data portability. This includes establishing mechanisms for monitoring and auditing data practices, as well as providing avenues for recourse in the event of violations. By fostering a culture of accountability and responsibility, stakeholders can uphold the principles of fairness, transparency, and user empowerment in the realm of data portability.

In conclusion, while data portability holds great potential for empowering individuals and driving innovation, it also raises complex ethical dilemmas. Addressing these issues requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders, including policymakers, technology companies, and civil society organizations. By navigating these challenges with integrity and foresight, we can harness the transformative power of data portability while upholding fundamental principles of ethics, privacy, and human rights in the digital age.

The Writer is a Lawyer with interest in Constitutional law, Data Protection and Environmental Law.

Governors Seeks Amendment Draft Of Cooperative Bill 2023

By: Douglas Mudambo
@themtkenyetimes

Council of Governors through the Agriculture and Cooperative committee has proposed amendments to the draft Cooperative Bill 2023 currently in the National Assembly on the management of Cooperatives in the Country.

During a meeting chaired by Bungoma governor Kenneth Lusaka, the Council of Governors, Agriculture and Cooperative committee and the Ministry of Cooperatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Development, held on Wednesday at Argyle Grand Hotel, Nairobi where they resolved to propose some changes.

COG is among other things, seeking clarity on the roles and linkages between the National and County governments on the issues of Cooperative registration certificates, issuance of demand and agency notices, inspection of cooperative societies,

and inquiry into the affairs of the primary and secondary cooperatives among others.

The Council, in their recent address to the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Cooperatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Development, expressed critical concerns regarding the draft Cooperative Bill 2023, emphasizing the necessity of establishing a robust legal framework in the management of cooperatives in the Country, a devolved function of County Governments as enshrined in the Constitution.

The Council further stated the urgency in resolving the lingering stalemate to foster a more conducive environment for the growth and success of cooperatives in the nation.

“It is crucial to acknowledge and adhere to the constitutional functions of devolved governments, more so in agriculture”, asserting that the absence of automated systems for and management of cooperatives is detrimental to the growth and success of cooperatives



Nyeri County governor Mwalimu Mutahi Kahiga and his Bungoma counterpart Kenneth Lusaka during the meeting with Cabinet Secretary Simon Chelugui

in the country.

They further proposed that the Ministry of Cooperatives recall the Bill submitted to the Parliament to allow the incorporation of concerns raised by the Council of Governors and alignment of the draft regulations of the Cooperative Bill with the outcome of the unbundling exercise and amendments in the Bill.

The meeting was presided over by the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Cooperatives and MSMEs Development, Simon Chelugui, and attended by Governors; Mutahi Kahiga (Nyeri), Dr Paul Otuoma (Busia), the council CEO Mary Mwititi among others.

Government Disburses Inua Jamii Funds To Beneficiaries

By: Peace Maziga and Elvis Ngaruiya
@themtkenyetimes

The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, has announced the disbursement of funds for the January payment to beneficiaries enrolled in the Inua Jamii programme, alongside the Nutrition Improvement through Cash and Health Education (NICHE) programme.

Speaking at the event, State Department for Social Protection and Senior Citizen Affairs Principal Secretary, Joseph Motari, stated that a total of KSh2,089,844,000, was released for Inua Jamii beneficiaries, and KSh5,930,000 for NICHE beneficiaries.

“The payment, slated to begin today 7th February 2024, follows a Presidential Directive to facilitate stipend disbursements through M-pesa,” said Motari.

The PS disclosed that the targets of this initiative through Cash Transfers are Orphans and Vulnerable Children (CT-OVC) and Caregivers of Persons with Severe Disabilities (PWSD).

To enrol for M-pesa payment, he posited, caregivers are required to dial *222# using their registered M-pesa phone numbers.

According to Motari, there are currently 207,000 beneficiaries enrolled for M-pesa payments, who have already received their December stipends. However, approximately 100,000 beneficiaries are yet to enrol through *222#.

“These beneficiaries will receive their payments through bank accounts for the last time this month and are urged to enroll for M-pesa payments, to ensure continued receipt of Inua Jamii stipends,” he reiterated.

The Ministry emphasizes that caregivers for CT-OVC and PWSD must



Official addressing the media on disbursement of the funds

register for M-pesa payments to avoid disruption in stipend disbursements which are meant to cushion them from poverty, hunger and improve their lives.

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Mixed Reactions After The Relocation Of The New Nyeri Town Market

By: Samuel Maina and Molly Kendi
@themtkenyatimes



The modern market.

Worth Noting:

- This challenge was eventually addressed by the county authorities on July 30 last year after it ordered the relocation of over 1,000 traders from the Kamukunji grounds to the sh 700 million ultra-modern Field Marshal Muthoni Kirima market.
- But Samuel Maina Kamami who is the chairman of the Asian Quarters Muthoni Kirima Traders Association traders says the county government is yet to address some of the challenges they had raised before their relocation.
- Among the issues the traders had been promised included relocating the current matatu terminus to the site as soon as possible as this would have contributed to a crucial section of their clients.

Traders who were moved from the Nyeri Kamukunji grounds to the Field Marshal Muthoni Kirima bus terminus have expressed some reservations, six months later after relocating to the new site.

The county government set up stalls at the Kamukunji grounds in 2020 to allow hawkers who previously operated along the Gakere and Kamukunji roads to enable them to continue with their work from there.

Some of the affected traders were however opposed to the arrangement as they argued that the stadium had little foot traffic.

The shift to the stadium however ended up affecting national holiday celebrations forcing organizers to host the events at the DEB Muslim Primary School grounds.

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But Samuel Maina Kamami who is the chairman of the Asian Quarters Muthoni Kirima Traders Association traders says the county government is yet to address some of the challenges they had raised before their relocation.

Among the issues the traders had been promised included relocating the current matatu terminus to the site as soon as possible as this would have contributed to a crucial section of their clients.

This has however not happened six months down the line.

“We had been promised that our businesses would receive a boost once the main matatu terminus is relocated to this place as there would be more traffic as compared to Kamukunji grounds. This was supposed to have been affected within two weeks but six months down the line, nothing has happened. Traders are now counting losses as very few people are willing to walk to this market due to its long distance from the CBD,” lamented Kamami.

The trader has also faulted the county government for allocating two days only; Wednesday and Saturday as market days, terming it inadequate to undertake any meaningful business.

He also claims that many of their traders who had paid for their stalls are yet to open shop owing to bureaucratic procedures involving something he says has impacted negatively to the success of the relocation.

“We normally operate on Wednesdays and Saturdays and thereafter close for five days of the week which to me translates to lost business. This should not be the case if we are going to boost the income of small businesses in this county. Moreover, some of our members have already paid for their market stalls but cannot open them since the county government is yet to issue them with trading licenses. This means their stalls will remain closed for business even though they have paid for them,” he claims.

His sentiments are echoed by Winfred Nyaguthii Gitonga who runs a food vending stall at the new terminus.

Ms Gitonga says she had hoped to cash in on traders and passengers once it was operationalized but now feels let down after the county authorities failed to move PSV matatus from the CBD to the site.

The lack of clients has taken a toll on her business and that of her colleagues whom she says feel short-changed by the very government that had promised to enhance their ease of doing business.

“My plea is for the county government to implement the promise of making this market work by relocating the old bus terminus here. Right now, some are opting not to open at all to avoid wasting an entire day waiting for non-existent clients. Had the county government relocated the main matatu terminus to this place as promised, this place would be an ideal site to undertake business,” she stated.

The trader has also called upon the authorities to erect permanent roofs over their stalls and also put cabral walkways to shield both traders and customers

against the vagaries of extreme weather.

She said the national government had pledged some funds for the construction of shelters over the stalls and also put up cabrals for the walkways by both clients and traders.

“When the President came here last year, he promised some funds to the county to help finalize construction of modern walkways and put overhead shades to shield traders from rains and the scorching sun. Unfortunately, the county government is yet to implement this directive leaving buyers and sellers at the mercy of elements of weather,” she lamented.

On August 7, last year, Dr Ruto had directed the lands ministry to set aside KSh150 million for the upgrading of the terminus.

While commissioning the multi-million bus terminus the Head of State said the government would ensure the traders who were relocated from Kamkunji grounds conduct their business in a conducive environment.

The President also directed the Ministry of Information, Communication, and the Digital Economy to connect the facility with free public Wi-Fi to enable business people in the terminal to leverage e-commerce.

“I have set aside KSh150 million for the construction of the sheds and I have directed the Land CS, Zacharia Njeru, and the Housing Principal Secretary Charles Hinga to ensure that the construction starts in the next one and a half months completed in the next six months so that traders can conduct their businesses,” said the Dr Ruto.

“I know you have smartphones and sometimes affording bundles to place an order for your stock can be a challenge. I have directed the CS in charge of ICT to connect the terminus to Wi-Fi so that you will have free internet,” he said

But Moses Maina Mwangi, a shoe seller at the new market says the woes facing them lie squarely at the doorstep of the county government.

Mwangi says before the relocation, the county government should have first undertaken a public sensitization forum to inform the people of the planned changes.

The trader says this was never done and therefore many residents of Nyeri are still unaware of the existence of the

new market.

“The biggest challenge that has contributed to low business here is lack of awareness of our existence. People don’t know there is a market here. What the County officials should now do is undertake a comprehensive sensitization campaign and popularize this market as an ideal shopping place where they can get what they want. Unless this is undertaken, our businesses will continue doing dismally just as they used to do during the Covid-19 pandemic,” he pointed out.

The Field Marshal Muthoni Kirima bus terminus was expected to address the challenge of endless traffic gridlocks that end up inconveniencing commuters in wasted man-hours.

While announcing a mini-reshuffle in his government in 2022 Governor Mutahi Kahiga had directed the then Lands Chief Officer Ms Beatrice Koech to ensure there was a speedy relocation of traders and PSV matatus from the old terminal to the new bus park.

Kahiga had pointed out that the move to the new bus park was a critical project that needed to be undertaken as a matter of urgency.

“The Asian quarter’s bus park is the next major thing on the desk. The completion and transfer of the existing bus stages and traders to the new park must be given priority and dealt with expeditiously while ensuring a smooth and efficient rollover,” he had told reporters.

The new Nyeri bus terminus whose construction began in 2019 for sh 700 million was being implemented in two phases by the Nyeri Town Municipality Board.

It was financed under the Kenya Urban Support Programme, a World Bank initiative whose objective is to spur economic development in countries through improved physical infrastructure development.

The facility features 240 matatus, bus, taxi, and tuk-tuk bays, 1,000 booking offices, 40 parking bays, and 98 passenger waiting bays.

In addition, the park hosts 1,000 business stalls, five sanitation blocks, high-level water tanks, and a modern solid waste chamber.



Some of the traders operating from the market

SPORTS
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BREAKING NEWS

Sports >> *The 2024 Magical Kenya Ladies Open tees off on Thursday at the Baobab Course at the Vipingo where a field of 108 is expected to take to the pristine, yet challenging, par-73 PGA-accredited course.

All Set For Magical Kenya Ladies Open Tee Off In Vipingo



Celine Herbin from France during the Pro-Am tournament at Vipingo Ridge on Wednesday

By Agencies

The 2024 Magical Kenya Ladies Open tees off on Thursday at the Baobab Course at the Vipingo where a field of 108 is expected to take to the pristine, yet challenging, par-73 PGA-accredited course.

Round one will tee off at 7:45am with the trio of Finn Emily Penttila, Slovak Pia Babnik, and Englishwoman Georgina Blackman teeing off at the first; whilst the trio of Tiffany Chan from Hong Kong, Sara Kouskova from the Czech Republic and Spaniard, Marta Sanz Barrio will tee-off from the 10th at the same time.

17-year-old amateur, Channele Wangari, will be the first Kenyan off the tee at the event at 8:07 am from the tenth in the company of Nataliya Guseva and Lisa Pettersson from Sweden – who

last year recorded the first hole-in-one at the event.

Naomi Wafula, who made history last year as the only Kenyan to have made the cut at the tournament, will tee-off at 8:40am alongside Kirsten Rudgeley from Australia and Madelene Stavnar from Norway.

Speaking on Wednesday in Vipingo, Naomi said she is aiming to finish higher at this year's tournament having gotten good exposure at events in Europe since last year's Magical Kenya Ladies Open.

"My main goal for tomorrow and the rest of the week is to do my best and not just make the cut, but also have a really good score that gives me the highest possible finish," she said.

Johnnie Walker-sponsored Kenyan amateur, Mercy Nyanchama, will tee-off at 9:02am alongside

Sofie Kibsgaard Nielsen from Denmark and Samantha Bruce from the Philippines. This will be Mercy's fourth outing at the event, where she will be looking to make the cut having missed out on weekend action in the previous tournaments.

Meanwhile, Dubai-based Kenyan amateur golfer, Kellie Wahito Gachaga, and Vipingo-Ridge-based Jacquelyne Walter will tee-off at 9:13am and 1:16pm respectively as they begin their quest at the event. This will be Kellie's debut at the tournament where she will be looking to make the cut.

April Angurasarane from Thailand has unfinished business in Vipingo having ended last year's challenge tied in second. She will take to the tee at 1:05pm to begin her charge.

Speaking ahead of the round,

she said: "I just have a lot of good memories here. Obviously, finishing second and just playing with many people in the first event. They are nice memories, everyone just made me comfortable and just made me enjoy everything. The crowd is really nice. Everyone here just makes me feel right where I think I need to be."

"I think I like this course in general. It looks good visually and this year's condition is better than last year. I think it's going to be really fun. The little extra stuff like giraffes and zebras, it's a nice element to have. Walking down the fairway and then just the giraffes casually walking the fairways, you don't get it anywhere. It's a good experience."

"My goals for the year, I want to get my first win obviously. I want to finish in the top 15 in the Order of Merit this year. Last year, I missed by one from my goal, but it was still a nice finish."

Alice Hewson from England, who finished joint second with April last year, will begin her challenge at this year's tournament at 12:21pm, while Diksha Dagar, the best-placed finisher at last season's Order of Merit, will tee off at 8:29am.

Meanwhile, Singapore's Shannon Tan, a rookie on the tour, will tee-off at 8:51am at the tenth.

Speaking ahead of the event, she said: "It is my first time in Kenya. I am excited about it. Before coming here, I was excited to begin with, so now that I am finally here, I am going to play my practice round in an hour or two. I am just excited to see what the course is like. I have heard about the course, but I want to see it. I have heard they've got animals, so that will be interesting."

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >>> *Organisers of a Hong Kong football match which drew boos after star man Lionel Messi failed to play said Monday they deeply regretted the no-show, and would withdraw a bid for a HK\$16 million (\$2 million) government grant.

Messi Match Organisers ‘Deeply Regret’ No-Show, Cancel Funding Bid



Inter Miami's Argentine forward Lionel Messi celebrates scoring his team's third goal during the round of 32 Leagues Cup football match between Inter Miami CF and Orlando City SC at DRV PNK Stadium in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, on August 2, 2023. (Photo by CHANDAN KHANNA / AFP).

By AFP

Organisers of a Hong Kong football match which drew boos after star man Lionel Messi failed to play said Monday they deeply regretted the no-show, and would withdraw a bid for a HK\$16 million (\$2 million) government grant.

Tatler Asia's CEO read out a statement Monday evening confirming Messi had been contracted to take the field, unless injured, in a pre-season friendly in Hong Kong.

Instead the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner, who has a leg muscle strain, stayed on the bench throughout Inter Miami's 4-1 win against a Hong Kong select XI.

The match ended with Messi, his Inter Miami team and club co-owner David Beckham being booed off by nearly 40,000 irate fans who had shelled out large

sums to see the World Cup-winning captain play.

Fans who had paid upwards of 1,000 Hong Kong dollars (\$125) to see Messi chanted "Refund!", gave thumbs-down signs and drowned out Beckham with jeers as he tried to thank the crowd.

"Tatler Asia deeply regrets the disappointing ending to what was an exciting occasion," said Michel Lamuniere, chairman and CEO, in the statement.

"(Tatler Asia) has decided to officially withdraw its application for... the HK\$16 million government grant."

Lamuniere said the organisers were made aware that Messi would not play only at half-time, after he had been named among the substitutes, and "Tatler Asia immediately informed the government".

That appeared to contradict Hong Kong's sports minister who told

reporters earlier Monday that government officials had been repeatedly assured Messi would play, even after half-time.

It was not until 10 minutes from the final whistle that secretary for culture, sports and tourism Kevin Yeung said he and officials were informed that Messi's injury -- inflammation of an abductor muscle -- would keep him out.

"We immediately requested (the organisers) to explore other remedies, such as Messi appearing on the field to interact with his fans and receiving the trophy," Yeung said.

"Unfortunately, as you all see, this did not work out."

Hong Kong's consumer council said it had received 38 complaints from 29 residents and nine overseas visitors about the match by midday on Monday.

They involved a total of HK\$216,964 spent, with the large-

est individual complaint amounting to HK\$22,338.

"Most of the promotional materials were using photos of certain players... so it was reasonable for consumers to expect that player to participate," the council said in a statement.

"Consumers can also seek independent legal advice on whether the incident is suspected of breaching a contract or could be subject to civil lawsuits."

Inter Miami and Messi are due to play the final pre-season match of their tour against Japan's Vissel Kobe in Tokyo on Wednesday. It is not clear whether Messi will recover in time.

The 36-year-old had played just six minutes in Miami's previous match in Saudi Arabia. The new MLS season in the United States starts on February 21.

SPORTS NEWS



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BREAKING NEWS



SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



Thai Superstar Kiddie Suparada Paosatheanpan Meets Prime Minister

By: Our Reporter
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Kiddie Suparada Paosatheanpan - 11 years old the Thai winner met the Prime Minister of the Government and the Minister of the Ministry of Education for showing the picture winning of the 2nd Kids 4 Human Rights contest. The Cristobal Gabarron Museum will inaugurate the first exhibition of the 75 winning drawings from the International Art Competition 'Kids For Human Rights'. The exhibition will be open from February 2nd to March 10th in Galleries 1 and 2 of our Museum. The next exhibition of the drawings will be at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, exact dates will be provided soon. Also, we are working in getting ready the achievement certificates of participation for all of you the 75 winners and finalists. In this second edition of the "Kids for Human Rights" contest, in collaboration with the United Nations, have participated 24,662 entries from 79 countries.



The Prime Minister of Thailand.



Kiddie showing winning picture.



TV interview.



Kiddie showing winning picture.