



Raila Says Finance Act 2023 Is Oppressive
 ODM leader Raila Odinga says the Finance Act 2023 is an oppressive law. Speaking on Sunday during a recruitment drive in Suba South constituency, Homa Bay County, Raila claimed punitive taxes introduced by the law have come to haunt even the legislators who supported it.

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News>>Gachagua Chairs Consultative Meeting Over Insecurity In Laikipia County

P. 8. Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua held a high-level meeting of leaders and security chiefs of Laikipia county to strategise on ending the rampant insecurity in the county which has claimed lives and property.



News>>Gachagua Asks Counties To Enlist Services In Huduma Centre

P. 12. Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has asked Governors to enlist their services at Huduma Centres for citizens to enjoy them alongside those of the National Government.

Counties Set To Receive Additional Ksh. 46.4 Billion

Counties will now get an additional 46 billion shillings to facilitate their mandate after President William Ruto assented to the County Governments Additional Allocation Bill. Speaking while signing the Bill into law, President William Ruto said the state will continue to mobilize resources and support the smooth operations of County Governments.



President William Ruto signing the Bill into law

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Kirinyaga Tomato Farmers To Benefit From An Upcoming Seedlings Propagation Center

By: MTK Correspondent
@themtkenyatimes



Kirinyaga CECM for Agriculture, Dr. John Gachara (in suit) inspecting the ongoing construction of a seedling propagation center at Kangai.

Worth Noting:

- “Kirinyaga being a rural county, we have Wezesha as our version of the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA). Through diversified agricultural activities, we are empowering small-scale farmers to produce more and earn more from agriculture thus improving their standards of living,” she said.
- The governor said the seedling propagation center will provide farmers with high yielding and disease tolerant tomato seedlings so to increase production and lower cost of farming.

Tomato farmers in Kirinyaga County are set to benefit from a modern seedlings propagation center that is being constructed by the County Government.

Governor Anne Waiguru says construction of county automated seedlings propagation unit in Kangai area of Mwea West is expected to be completed by the end of this financial year.

Waiguru said the project will effectively address the longstanding challenges that the local farmers have been facing when it comes to sourcing of high quality and affordable seedlings.

Kirinyaga is one of the leading horticulture producer in the country. It is the leading producer of tomato, with an annual production of about 116,431 tons which has been steadily rising from the 46,594 tons produced in 2017.

Construction of the state-of-the-art facility signals a major boost in agricultural productivity in the region.

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Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA). Through diversified agricultural activities, we are empowering small-scale farmers to produce more and earn more from agriculture thus improving their standards of living,” she said.

The governor said the seedling propagation center will provide farmers with high yielding and disease tolerant tomato seedlings so to increase production and lower cost of farming.

She said the center is part of her elaborate plan to position the county farmers as the major beneficiaries of the upcoming Sagana Agro-Industrial Park where farm produce aggregation centers and processing factories are being put up.

“Availability of the facilities will enable farmers reap more from value addition and will save them from produce post-harvest losses. By and by, these interventions are aimed at improving the living standards of the county farmers,” she added.

Dr. John Gachara, the County Execu-

tive Committee Member for Agriculture, Livestock, Veterinary & Fisheries, said that the flagship project will contribute to increased tomato production in the area as well as other horticultural crops whose seedlings will also be propagated at the center.

“The price of seedlings has been on the rise, growing from Ksh.9 to Ksh.15. With the establishment of this center, farmers will have access to quality seedlings at a subsidized price, enabling them to maximize their profits,” said Dr. Gachara.

He said that Governor Waiguru has been very deliberate in her efforts to support farmers increase productivity enabling them to earn better incomes thus improving their standards of living.

Tomato farmers are looking forward to the completion of the seedling propagation center saying that due to its close proximity, it will save them the hustles associated with sourcing for quality and genuine seedlings.

“We used to buy seedlings from distant

locations thus incurring transportation expenses. Now, with reduced prices and convenience, we can allocate the saved funds to purchase more seedlings and other essential farm inputs.” said Wilson Muriuki, a local farmer.

His sentiments were echoed by Karani Gitari, who noted that the construction of the propagation center by the county government will be a game-changer in terms of cost efficiency.

“We will save a lot of money previously spent on transportation to acquire seedlings. With assured quality and subsidized prices, we can enhance our profitability,” he said.

Natalia Muriuki, another tomato farmer in Kangai, said that it was increasingly becoming difficult for farmers to access quality seedlings due to high transport cost caused by rise in fuel prices.

“Having this propagation center nearby will mitigate these costs, ensuring affordability and accessibility of seedlings for farmers like me,” she said.

Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times



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NEWS IN BRIEF



Twenty-Four Crime Scene Investigators drawn from the Bomb Disposal Unit and CSI services yesterday commenced a two-week training on investigating terrorist crime scenes. The training which is sponsored by the US Embassy in Kenya through the Anti-Terrorism Assistance program aims to empower the forensic team with requisite skills necessary for processing terrorist crime scenes using modern-day technology. Officiating the course opening at the National Criminal Investigations Academy, the Director, Investigations Bureau Mr Abdallah Komesha called upon the forensic team to buckle down for the high level intensive training, noting that the US government had dispatched highly skilled facilitators to train them.



Contractors who fail to complete county government project on time will have their contracts terminated, Makueni County Governor Mutula Kilonzo Jnr has warned. Consequently, Mutula put on notice all contractors doing county projects saying his government would not condone delays and that he would ensure all development projects are completed within the time specified. The governor was speaking last Friday at the Kathozweni Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society where a contractor has delayed piping water to the dairy processing plant for the last 10 months. "Going forward, I will personally ensure projects initiated by my government are completed within the time specified in the project. My government will no longer entertain such contractors, their contracts will be terminated," warned Mutula who was on a development tour of Kathozweni Subcounty.



To promote peace and stability in the North Rift region, the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK) has taken a significant stride by empowering 30 peace actors with essential skills. The training is aimed at equipping them with the ability to identify threats to peace, comprehend the underlying causes of insecurity, and devise practical solutions. The 30 selected peace actors from Elgeyo Marakwet, West Pokot, and Baringo Counties, have been entrusted with the crucial task of promoting peace along the Kerio Valley belt. The initiative aims to mitigate conflicts that have plagued the region for years. During a comprehensive 2-day training session held in Iten, Elgeyo Marakwet County, the peace actors delved into the complexities of the region's socio-political landscape. They identified the scramble for diminishing natural resources, exacerbated by the adverse impacts of climate change, as the primary driver of conflict and insecurity in the Kerio Valley belt. The Chief Officer, Peace and Disaster Management Elgeyo Marakwet Lawrence Mutwol noted that the peace actors would enhance the peace at the grassroots level, terming it a welcome initiative. Speaking about the initiative, one of the trained peace actors Ronald Rotich emphasized the importance of grassroots involvement in resolving the region's security challenges.



The government has commissioned 430 new wagons to improve efficiency in the country's freight services. The arrival of the wagons will also bolster the clearance of a backlog of 100,000 tonnes comprised of steel pellets and coils and other loose cargo at the port of Mombasa. Speaking in Mombasa during the commissioning exercise, State Department for Transport PS Mohamed Daghar said the wagons will enhance capacity of the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) and the Metre Gauge Railway (MGR) by gradually replacing the current wagons that are over 40 years old. The wagons are of different specifications and have additional safety features. They can carry double-stuck containers and have a load capacity of 70 and 64 tonnes on SGR and MGR respectively.



Kenya Wildlife Service in Taita Taveta County has employed innovation and the use of technology in tracking wildlife movements to curb human-wildlife conflicts that have been rampant in the region in the recent past. Speaking on Sunday at the Tsavo Conservation Area Headquarters in Voi during the commemoration of the 2024 World Wildlife Day celebrated on the third day of March every year themed: 'Connecting People and Planet, Exploring Innovation in Conservation', the Assistant Director in charge of Community Wildlife Service Josphat Erupe assured that KWS is up to the task of minimizing instances of beast versus human conflicts. He noted that they have implemented technologies to save wildlife, including tracking gadgets for elephants and drones to monitor and locate wild animals. "The main objective of this move is to provide support to our people to prevent the damage to properties, injury, and loss of lives," said Erupe. Further, he said, as a way to curb human-wildlife conflicts, KWS has also formed youth groups that are tasked with linking communities with area wardens in case of stray wild animals, a move that ensures timely responses.



Women in West Pokot County have a reason to smile after undergoing training on how to establish kitchen gardens for food security and combat the adverse effects of climate change.

The women who hail from Murpus village received the training sponsored by Perur Rays of Hope organization and its development partners in response to the ever-changing climatic conditions and erratic rainfall patterns which pose a threat to food security.

They were trained on the methods of growing vegetables in a kitchen garden within a small area using minimal water with maximum production of vegetables.

Caroline Menach, Principal of St. Elizabeth Girls' Secondary School and Director of Perur Ray of Hope Organization explained that the women are known for their unwavering commitment to their work, which is why the Perur Ray of Hope Organization in collaboration with other development partners joined forces to build their capacity to combat the effects of climate change.

She said the organization primarily focuses on assisting women since the community heavily relies on women because they play a vital role in providing food and taking care of the children besides ensuring that the children get a good education.

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Kenya Launches Coordinated Border Management Program To Boost Security And Trade



By: Cynthia Masibo
@themkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- “Kenya’s strategic position in East Africa has long underscored the importance of effective border management in enhancing trade,” remarked PS Omollo, elucidating the underlying rationale behind the government’s resolute commitment to fortifying border infrastructure.

- Central to the program’s objectives is the development of comprehensive Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) meticulously designed to ensure uniformity and efficacy across all points of entry. These SOPs serve as the cornerstone for harmonizing border operations, streamlining processes, and fortifying security protocols.



Interior PS Raymond Omollo and other officials during the launch of the revised Kenya Coordinated Border Management Program (KCBMP) at Kenya School of Government in Nairobi.

In a bid to fortify its borders and invigorate trade dynamics, Kenya has embarked on a groundbreaking initiative, the Coordinated Border Management Program. Spearheaded by Interior Principal Secretary, Raymond Omollo, the program marks a significant leap towards modernizing border operations and harnessing technology to bolster security measures.

Addressing the press, PS Omollo emphasized the pivotal role Kenya plays in East Africa due to its strategic location, underscoring the critical importance of efficient border management systems. He highlighted the imperative of fostering trade and safeguard-

ing national security through meticulous border control mechanisms.

“Kenya’s strategic position in East Africa has long underscored the importance of effective border management in enhancing trade,” remarked PS Omollo, elucidating the underlying rationale behind the government’s resolute commitment to fortifying border infrastructure.

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der operations, streamlining processes, and fortifying security protocols.

By embracing cutting-edge technology and innovative methodologies, Kenya endeavors to transcend traditional border management paradigms, fostering a dynamic and resilient ecosystem conducive to trade facilitation and security enhancement.

The Coordinated Border Management Program represents a paradigm shift in Kenya’s approach towards border governance, epitomizing a concerted effort to synergize resources, expertise, and technology to fortify national frontiers.

The integration of advanced techno-

logical solutions such as biometric identification systems, surveillance drones, and electronic cargo tracking mechanisms underscores Kenya’s unwavering commitment to enhancing border security while expediting the flow of goods and services across international boundaries.

Furthermore, the program underscores Kenya’s proactive stance in aligning its border management strategies with global best practices, fostering collaboration with regional and international partners to fortify cross-border cooperation and information exchange mechanisms.

The implementation of the Coordinated Border Management Program heralds a new era of heightened vigilance and efficiency, bolstering Kenya’s resilience against emerging security threats while catalyzing economic growth through the facilitation of seamless trade flows.

With the advent of the program, stakeholders anticipate a transformative shift in the landscape of border governance, characterized by enhanced transparency, accountability, and responsiveness to evolving security challenges.

In conclusion, Kenya’s launch of the Coordinated Border Management Program marks a watershed moment in the nation’s quest to fortify its borders, stimulate economic prosperity, and safeguard national security interests. Through unwavering dedication and strategic foresight, Kenya embarks on a journey towards a more secure, prosperous, and interconnected future, underpinned by the principles of cooperation, innovation, and resilience.

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Gachagua Chairs Consultative Meeting Over Insecurity In Laikipia County

By: DPCS



Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua being welcomed by Laikipia County governor Joshua Irungu to the security meeting venue.

Worth Noting:

- “The government has brought you here for a job. The job is simple. Secure our people. Make sure, our people sleep in peace; make sure women do not live in fear of being raped or girls being defiled; our men must not sleep outside guarding their families,” the deputy president said.
- The Deputy President announced an additional 250 National Police Reservists (NPRs) to boost security in the troubled county.
- Further, he pledged that operational and logistics will be addressed, and asked the County Commissioner and Police Commander John Nyoike to work with political leaders. He asked the political and religious leaders and the community to support the security officers.

Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua held a high-level meeting of leaders and security chiefs of Laikipia county to strategise on ending the rampant insecurity in the county which has claimed lives and property.

At the Sunday evening meeting of political, National Government Administration Officers, security officers, County Executive members, religious leaders, the business community, Members of County Assembly, opinion leaders among Mr Gachagua cautioned that security matters are not negotiable and laxity will not be tolerated.

“We want 100% security for our people. Even a single life lost is too much. People here have lived in fear for far too long and this is unacceptable. I ask the new County Commissioner (Onesmus Kyatha) and your team to put your heads together with the rest of the security agents,” he said.

He told the security officers that the government can no longer sit back as criminals rape, kill and steal livestock.

“The government has brought you here for a job. The job is simple. Secure our people. Make sure, our people sleep in peace; make sure women do not live in fear of being raped or girls being defiled; our men must not sleep outside guarding their families,” the deputy president said.

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the political and religious leaders and the community to support the security officers.

“I want to ask our men and women in uniform. Be good people and live to your oath of office. When the leaders or the community, give you information, guard it with your life; these bandits are dangerous. If you protect the confidentiality, you will have a lot of information to make your work very easy. I ask leaders to continue engaging the officers,” the Deputy President said.

Earlier at Ng’arua the Holy Family Catholic in Laikipia West and at two security meetings, Mr Gachagua said the development potential of the county has been hurt by rampant insecurity and the Ruto Administration will not allow this to continue.

He said President Ruto has to be supported by all so that he can implement the 2022 promise of ending insecurity in the county.

The Deputy President said he saw no reason or difficulty for security officers’ failure to end attacks against the people there, recalling that he served in Ng’arua as a District Officer in 1998, at the height of ethnic animosity and attacks, but worked with the security agencies and the community, restoring sanity in the then troubled region.

“We told the people that if they elected Dr Ruto President and Rigathi Gachagua as his Deputy, matters of insecurity will end. We intend to keep that promise. We know the formula; it is possible. There is no room for discussion.

It will not be good for any officer who intends to come in between our plans. There is no transfer of lazy officers,” he said.

Mr Gachagua said the people of Laikipia must enjoy peace and security as long as there is a government in place.

In an engagement with the public at Matuiku Township, Mr Gachagua told the County Commissioner Kyatha and County Police Commander Nyoike to flush out criminals harassing residents. The two officers committed, publicly, to work and deliver as instructed.

“We cannot allow the people to be harassed when you have weapons and other resources of the Government. People must sleep peacefully, not keeping vigil over insecurity. We have a responsible Government in place,” the Deputy President said.

Mr Gachagua said the people of Laikipia are hard working, but insecurity continues to impede their work.

He said the government is investing in irrigation and other infrastructural developments for full realisation of

the socio-economic potential of the people.

On the other hand, the Deputy President said the National Government is committed to ending human wildlife conflict to avoid loss of lives and livelihoods due to stray animals from the Laikipia Conservancy.

“I ask the MPs to review the laws to allow for the National Police Service to complement the Kenya Wildlife Service in containing the wildlife,” he said at the Ngarua Church.

The Deputy President also asked the security agencies to put more effort into eradicating illicit alcohol, drugs and substance abuse in the County.

Principal Secretary for Defence Patrick Mariru said security agencies are under instructions to eliminate the criminals.

Leaders present called for unity behind President Ruto to enable him deliver development as promised to the people.

“We thank the Deputy President in ensuring insecurity has been addressed. We can see the positive strides that have been taken,” Laikipia Governor Joshua Irungu.

The Deputy President also visited St Marys Mwenje Secondary School and made a Ksh 5 million donation for completion of the school dining hall.

Other leaders include Laikipia Deputy Governor Reuben Kamuri, Laikipia Senator John Kinyua, Laikipia County MP Jane Kagiri, Laikipia West MP Wachira Karani, Ndaragwa MP George Gachagua, Subukia MP Samuel Gachobe, Naivasha MP Jayne Kihara, Kiambu County MP Anne Wamuratha, Nyandarua County MP Faith Gitau, Molo MP Kuria Kimani and Emurua Dikirr MP Johana Ng’eno as well as the former Laikipia County MP Cate Waruguru, MCAs led by Joseph Gitahi of Githiga Ward, among other leaders.



Some of the leaders who attended the security meeting

Counties Set To Receive Additional Ksh. 46.4 Billion To Foster Devolution

By: Sally Namuye

Counties will now get an additional 46 billion shillings to facilitate their mandate after President William Ruto assented to the County Governments Additional Allocation Bill.

Speaking while signing the Bill into law, President William Ruto said the state will continue to mobilize resources and support the smooth operations of County Governments.

“Today, we have made available KSh. 46 billion that will facilitate our devolved units to discharge their mandate,” said the president.

According to the president, the government is committed to foster inclusive development and strengthen devolution.

“This amount is meant to enhance the implementation of the administration’s plan through provision of fertilizers subsidy, the special economic zones, support in construction of county headquarters, provision of



President William Ruto assented to the County Governments Additional Allocation Bill

library services, enhance own source revenue, primary health care and climate change interventions.” He said. Of the 46 billion made available by

the presidential assent, 450 million will go towards the completion of five county headquarters among them county governments of Lamu, Isiolo,

Nyandarua, Tharaka Nithi and Tana River that could not raise enough revenues to complete the projects.

National Assembly Wins Petition On Affordable Housing Bill 2023

By: PSCU

The National Assembly undertook an effective and constitutionally compliant public participation on the Affordable Housing Bill, 2023, the High Court has ruled.

This verdict was delivered by Justice Mwanaisha Saida Shariff sitting at the High Court in Kisumu, in a petition where one Mr. Lawrence Omule Apiyo had sued the National Assembly

alongside the Office of the Attorney General and the Cabinet Secretary for Lands, Public Works, Housing and Urban Settlement regarding public participation on the Bill.

In her ruling, Justice Mwanaisha noted that the National Assembly had adduced sufficient evidence to prove that there had been public participation beyond the submission of written memoranda on the Bill.

The Petitioner had accused the National Assembly of restricting public participation on the Affordable Housing Bill, 2023 (National Assembly

Bill No. 75 of 2023) to only submission of memoranda, which he argued was not inclusive.

“This court takes judicial notice of the fact that public hearings and consultations with stakeholders and experts concluded on 30th January 2024, and the Affordable Housing Bill has already undergone a second reading before the 3rd Respondent (National Assembly), with a vote being taken in favour,” ruled Justice Mwanaisha.

Mr. Apiyo had filed the petition on 15th December 2023; less than a week after the Clerk of the National Assembly, Mr. Samuel Njoroge put out a notice inviting Members of the Public to submit written memoranda on the Bill, which had been committed by the House to the Departmental Committee on Housing, Urban Planning and Public Works as well as that on Finance.

During the hearing of the petition, the National Assembly told the Court that submission of memoranda was just one of the methods that were to be employed in undertaking public participation.



National Assembly.

Christian Life Is Enabled Continuously By The Holy Spirit



By: Eric Musa
 EMEA.ericmusa@gmail.com

Consider John 2:23-25, "Because of the miraculous signs Jesus did in Jerusalem at the Passover celebration, many began to trust in Him. But Jesus didn't trust them, because He knew all about people. No one needed to tell him about human nature, for he knew what was in each person's heart."

Because of the miracles Jesus performed, many believed in Him, but did NOT believe on Jesus as their LORD and SAVIOUR. You should know Christ Jesus deep in your heart as your MASTER and Lord. You MUST be BORN AGAIN

Jesus told Nicodemus: "All your good works and religious work was not enough, you need more." Out of the heart proceedeth envy, wickedness, falsehood etc, and these are the

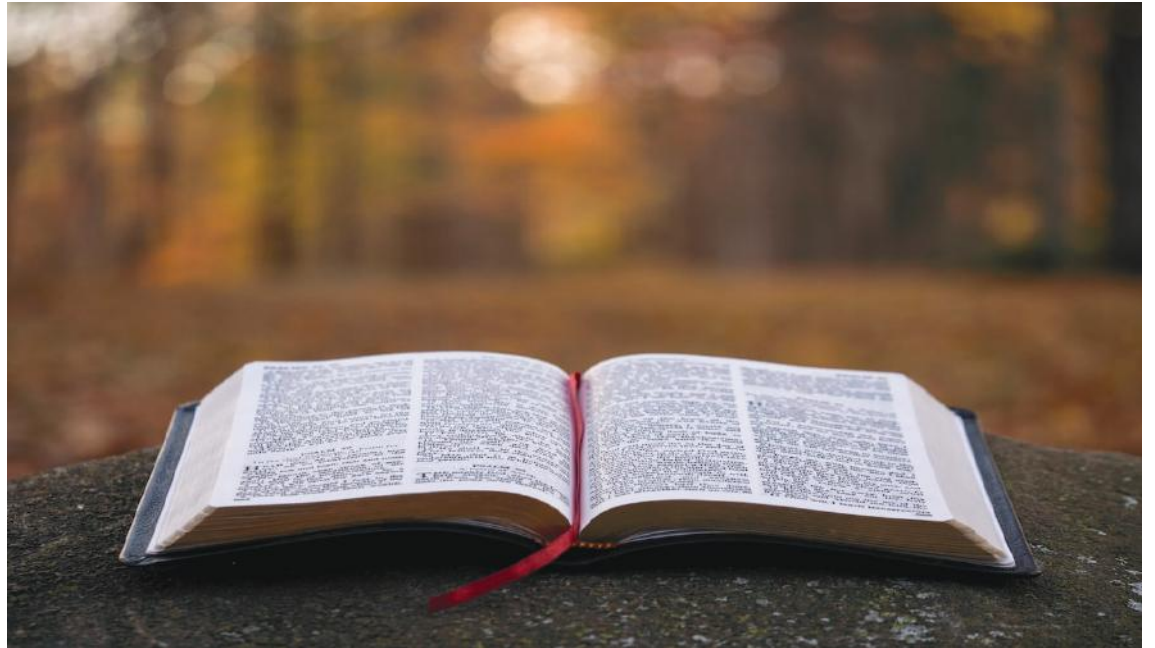
things that defile a man! If you break one commandment, you have broken all. We've not fulfilled the beatitudes.

Mark Twain was once asked, what are the greatest words in the English dictionary, he said, "NOT GUILTY."

Because of sin we are tainted, like how a dye does to a white garment. The blood of Christ Jesus cleanses us from ALL SINS. How can this be! This simple! Jesus gave the analogy of the wind, you can feel it, hear it, where it blows you know not! The same way, the HOLY SPIRIT comes in us and gives us a NEW NATURE. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing the WORD OF GOD. It pleased God that the preaching of the Gospel be foolishness to those who are perishing!

Christ Jesus comes and indwells in us, the Holy Spirit lives in us.

The Lt. Evangelist Billy Graham once said which I concur, "I could NOT live the Christian life an hour without the works of the Holy Spirit! I am a failure! I feel my sense of failure all the time., I belong in the gutter with all the sinners saved by grace, I am a sinner, saved by the grace of God." Just as Moses raised the bronze serpent, and those Isra-



elites which had been bitten, when they look at it, they were healed. The same applies to Jesus, as simple as it seems, somehow too easy, cannot be explained in a laboratory, this is how God ordained it to be: BELIEVE.

People find themselves caught up in chains. Chains that they cannot break. Tell God that, and let the Holy Spirit come inside you, and He breaks those chains in the name of

Christ Jesus.

WHAT A LOVING GOD WE SERVE! HOW GRACIOUS! HOW MERCIFUL! SELAH!

Evangelist Eric Musa:

(My message continuously: The best decision in this earthly life is to receive Christ Jesus as your personal Saviour: Believe and confess Christ Jesus as your Lord and Saviour and be filled with the Holy Spirit:AMEN). As it is written; "NOW is the acceptable time, TODAY is the day of SALVATION.- 2 Cor 6:2". For prayers, devotion; to support Evangelism contact Ev. Eric Musa on +254722157300 (Email: EMEA.ericmusa@gmail.com). Remember, God Loves you unconditionally, perfectly and forever.

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Is Ndindi Nyoro Candidature Sending Cold Shivers Down The Spines Of His Opponents?



By: Joseph Mutua Ndonga
mutuandonga@yahoo.com



Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro.

Worth Noting:

- As a writer and a political analyst, this is what I gathered from the majority of people mainly Kikuyu community when I sought their views.
- We recall that Gachagua was a key player in that government of President Daniel Arap Moi. Can he tell us the role he played? He never played the role of uniting the Kikuyus. He instead helped President Moi to divide our community and at no time did he ever faulted Moi for abandoning the region.
- DP Gachagua was just playing politics. We know he is targeting Ndindi Nyoro. This is because the race to replace former President Uhuru Kenyatta as the kingpin of the Mountain has narrowed down between him and Kiharu MP.

The other I heard Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua claiming that the young leaders from Mount Kenya were furthering the course of the outsiders opposed to the unity of our region.

While casting himself as the most experienced and senior-most politician from the region, he stated that they will not succeed.

We cannot allow them to take us back to the period between 1992 to 2002 when we stayed outside the government. This happened because we were divided and we were not talking in one voice.

Our region was deserted in terms of development. The national government goodies were being shared and distributed to other regions.

As a writer and a political analyst, this is what I gathered from the majority of people mainly Kikuyu community when I sought their views.

We recall that Gachagua was a key player in that government of President Daniel Arap Moi. Can he tell us the role he played? He never played the role of uniting the Kikuyus. He instead helped President Moi to divide our community and at no time did he ever faulted Moi for abandoning the region.

DP Gachagua was just playing politics. We know he is targeting Ndindi Nyoro. This is because the race to replace former President Uhuru Kenyatta as the kingpin of the Mountain has narrowed down between him and Kiharu MP.

The DP did not expect a strong candidate to emerge.

Initially he thought that Ndindi Nyoro was a lightweight. He has since realized that he is a force to reckon with.

The DP made his claims at a time when the MP was visiting different parts of the country after being invited by local leaders to launch development projects, deliver messages of peace and unity and articulate and disseminate the policies of the national government.

The local leaders would take this opportunity to shower him with praises.

Ndindi Nyoro is a presidential material.

Some would aver he is poised to take the mantle of Mount Kenya kingpin and later become the President of the

Republic of Kenya. He stands a high chance of succeeding President William Ruto in 2032 when he completes his second and final term.

Earlier, I had written we article in this column.

I argued that the Kiharu MP and the chairman of the National Assembly's Budget Appropriation Committee Ndindi Nyoro is yet to openly declare his bid for the kingpin of the Mount Kenya region.

But as things turns out, his opponents had started panicking. Ndindi was indeed sending cold shivers down their spines. To tame him, we have seen them escalating this war to State House.

This brings me to the question. Did President William Ruto have a hand in Ndindi's bid? The answer is a big No. There was no evidence to support these claims.

During his recent three-day of the Kikuyu land, President Ruto once proved wrong his critics.

He steered clear of local politics and concentrated on development matters.

In so doing, he once again demonstrated his commitment to walk the walk. This is by focusing on fulfilling the promises he had made during the campaigns.

He knew it was hard to accomplish this without peace and unity.

So, during the visit, he repeatedly cautioned the local leaders against engaging in early and premature succession politics.

The visit came hot on the heel of heightened supremacy battle for Mount Kenya kingpin

Earlier, Ndindi Nyoro's campaign took a new turn when Ndindi hosted more than 20 Kenya Kwanza members of parliament drawn from different parts of the country in his Kiharu constituency.

DP Gachagua later visited Muranga County. He was accompanied by 117 members of parliament (MPs) during a fundraiser in Kigumo. I heard people particularly Kikuyus claiming that he had 'hired' these MPs.

Back to Kiharu, the MPs attended the education event on their own volition. Speaker after speaker showered him with accolades. Ndindi's track record

on matters of development, peace and unity speaks for itself.

Former Secretary General of KNUT and ODM nominated MP Wilson Sosian set the ball rolling. He noted that Ndindi was a presidential material.

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 started peddling unfounded rumors that President William Ruto was sponsoring Ndindi's campaign.

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.

Though Gachagua is arguably the senior-most leader, the recent developments have shown that his popularity was dwindling.

Ndindi's political star was on the other hand rising.

Well, DP Gachagua curves a niche of being a truthful and a God-fearing man. So, with due respect, I want to let him know this.

Majority of Kikuyu 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.

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 ma-

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 rooting for Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro to lead the Mountain would further cite the following reasons.

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.

He moved a step further when he initiated a school feeding programme for the students in all day secondary schools in Kiharu constituency.

Again, dozens of MPs from across the country attended this event.

Ndindi has demonstrated he is a servant of the people.

This places him as the best-suited to take up the mantle of Mount Kenya kingpin. We are definitely going to drum up support for him so that he can clinch the seat.

Ndindi steered clear of this topic.

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

Those who had attended the earlier events stated: We told you that Honorable Ndindi Nyoro is a good, caring and down to earth leader.

As a pioneer, we have been inviting him to come to our regions to help us rollout similar projects. He is still ahead of us.

What lesson do we learn here? He is larger than life. Besides steering Mount Kenya to success and prosperity, he has the qualities of a national leader. You never know, he may succeed President William Ruto when he completes his two terms of 10 years in 2032.

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

Gachagua Asks Counties To Enlist Services In Huduma Centre

By: DPCS



Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua being assisted by Laikipia East MP Mwangi Kiunjuri to cut the tape, signifying the official opening of the Makutano Huduma Centre branch

Worth Noting:

At the same time, Gachagua also asked members of the National Government to ride on the co-funding model between the Constituency and the National Government in establishing Huduma Jitume Digital Centres across the country.

Mr Gachagua said such facilities will support creation of more jobs alongside the Digital Hubs that will be constructed in every ward in Kenya.

“I invite members of the National Assembly to take advantage of the co-funding model to establish Huduma Jitume Digital Centres in their constituencies. We must create jobs for these young men and women,” he said.

Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has asked Governors to enlist their services at Huduma Centres for citizens to enjoy them alongside those of the National Government.

Speaking in Makutano township, Laikipia East constituency of Laikipia County yesterday when he launched Makutano Huduma Centre, the DP also asked the counties to take advantage of online platforms for efficiency.

“I call on the counties to consider moving all their services online as a priority, for quality,” he said.

The Deputy President said the 53 Huduma centers across the country have the capacity to support the counties in physical and online services.

More than 130 services are available in 53 Huduma Centres in 33 counties. At least 60,000 people access services daily in the Huduma Centres.

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“I invite members of the National Assembly to take advantage of the co-funding model to establish Huduma Jitume Digital Centres in their

constituencies. We must create jobs for these young men and women,” he said.

Gachagua said the government invests a lot of resources in education, hence, job creation is urgent.

“As we also work to set up 30 Huduma

ma Jitume Digital Centres in the next 12 months, it is our determination that the same investment in Educating our youth is applied in creating employment opportunities for them,” he said.

Gachagua also asked Kenyans to uti-

lise government services at Huduma Centres across the country, promising that the Ruto administration is determined to increase the facilities.

The DP said such facilities help the public access all government services under one roof.

“This Huduma Centre is very important. I have enjoyed their services. My National Identification Card will be ready in a few days. Birth certificates, National Health Insurance Fund, pension and other services are all available, he said after a tour of the facility.

He added: “Indeed, the Makutano Facility is strategic. It will serve over 500,000 residents of Laikipia and the bordering Counties, whose Huduma Centres are far away. The fact that the facility has offered in-person assistance to over 1,100 customers since February 1, 2024, means there is dire need for service,” he said.

The Deputy President asked leaders and the community to support the security agencies and the National Government Administration Officers in eliminating insecurity in Laikipia. He said security is key to development hence the need for all to work together for sustainable peace.

He directed the County Commissioner and the Police Commander to also eradicate illicit alcohol, drug and substance abuse.



Inside the Makutano Huduma Centre.

Government To implement CBC Fully, DP Gachagua Assures

By: DPCS

The government will fully implement the Competency Based Curriculum for learners to gain key skills for development, Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has said.

Speaking at Nyahururu’s Munyaka Mixed Secondary School in Laikipia County, the Deputy President said the Ruto Administration is keen on implementing reforms in the Education Sector to meet the development needs of the nation.

“This year, the Government committed 27% of our budget to education to, among other issues, support implementation of the Presidential Working Party Recommendations. We are implementing the CBC, besides the funding model to allow for more students to access quality education,” the Deputy President said.

In the 2023-2024, the Government allocated over Sh628 abillion to the Education Sector.

He assured parents and other stakeholders in the Education Sector that the reforms will deliver a better workforce.

Mr Gachagua said the Government will continue investing in upgrading school infrastructure and other gaps negatively impacting education.

To support completion of the school’s dining hall, the Deputy President delivered Sh5 million and promised that a similar amount will be allocated to the school in the next financial year. He asked the area MP Wachira Karani to allocate Sh3 Million from the Constituency Development Fund to complete the dining hall.



Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua and other leaders join students of Munyaka Secondary School for a jog

EPRA Introduces Regulation To Improve Quality Of Electricity

By: John Kariuki
@themkenyaintimes

Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA) has developed regulations that will open up the electricity market and allow private sector investors to participate in the distribution of electricity.

The draft Energy (Electricity Market, Bulk Supply and Open Access) Regulations, 2024 will upon gazettment apply to the generation, importation, exportation, transmission, distribution and retail supply of electrical energy. The regulations have been developed following a petition by Independent Power Producers (IPPs) to allow open access to power transmission and distribution.

Speaking during the public participation workshop in Nairobi EPRA Director General Daniel Kiptoo Bargarora said that the investors will be at liberty to participate in power generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure business enabling them to supply bulk electricity to private retail vendors who will, in turn, oversee last-mile connectivity and billing to consumers.



EPRA Director General Daniel Kiptoo Bargarora.

“The open access principle is a step forward in modernising our electricity market and promoting competition. It introduces the wheeling of electricity which holds the potential to unlock new investment opportunities, enhance grid reliability, and ultimately deliver greater value to consumers who can enjoy lower power bills, less frequent outages and more choices on electricity suppliers,” he said.

The Authority will promote fair pricing by reviewing and approving proposed tariffs for any service to be charged by licensees. This includes tariffs to be applied by generators, retailers, network service charges, wheeling charges, use of system charges, and ancillary services charges.

The regulations further highlight how the structure and design of the electricity market will be developed, the different roles of different licensees in the sector will play as well as the responsibilities of transmission and distribution licensees in maintaining their networks and providing non-discriminatory access to other licensees and eligible consumers.

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Broken Trust



It is priceless compared to your lies.

Hundreds of years are not enough
To earn a broken trust once more.
It could be obviously tough
To treat a person to the core.

It takes a second to lose
All the trust you have earned before,
Even tons of excuses
Can't take back it anymore.

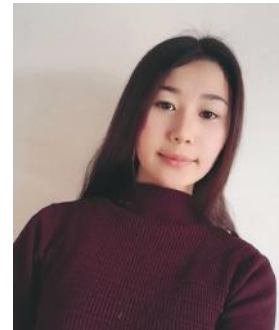
I am Davronbekova Sevinch Xushnodbek daughter I was born on September 13, 2006 in city of Khorezm region. Currently, I am student of the 11th grade of the 18 school. I have been attending the bead decoration Barkamol Avlod children's school for 4 years. I have been taking pride of place in regional and international competitions. Every week I will be a guest on Khorezm television. I have many more dreams in the future.

When we trust with a pure heart,
They always find a way to break it.
Maybe my heart is a piece of art,
So sometimes I try to fake it.

Trust is something fragile,
Never touch it, please!
Do not be with it agile,
You can hold it and squeeze.

My trust is not for sale,
No money is able to buy
Something that has been broken inside,

My Mother



Always believe in me,
I won't break your faith.
I tell to the whole world
Your daughter loves you.

Thanks, you are alive,
Always stand by me.
Mothers like you in the world
I don't know if there are any more.

Your hands are in prayer,
You are more than everyone else.
You are my paradise
You are my world.

I am alive because of you
I am the only one in the world.
Because of your prayer,
I will become a mature person.

Khushbaqova Anjela Berdimuratovna was born on 17th April in 2006. Currently, she lives in Oltinsoy district, Surkhandarya region of the Republic Uzbekistan. Her creative works were published in France anthology and she is holder several International certificates.



Mom, look, I have tears in my eyes
Why is this wandering heart restless?
I didn't take your word for it
And now my ways are doomed

My head hit the walls
A wretch who does not appreciate you
My tears are flowing painfully
All I'm looking for is gold and a throne

Don't realize your love
You hardly hide your pains
My tongue is numb from bitter pain
Life is a real test

He is awake without sleep
A man carefully preserves his days
If you stay, you are helpless
Praying for good nights

I wish I could bring back your black hair
If I can find a cure for facial wrinkles
I wish you a happy life
I wish I could give you happiness

I wish I could stay away from trials
I wish I could laugh from happiness
without crying from pain
I wish I was a mother like you
I wish I could feel my youth again

As life flows, it turns into a river and fills
up like the gurgling water in a ditch
The youth was laughing as he left
My loved ones have turned their backs

A stone of slander fell on my head
When the environment is full, it is good
for a person
I haven't tasted the poison yet
The wicked do not enter into any faith

Mom, look, my eyes are full of tears
Dew is flowing on my eyelashes
You are just a dildo to me
My heart is filled with carelessness

I appreciate your patience
Endure all difficulties without overcoming
I have reached this day because of you
You brought us to support us

I am weak, my mother
I will be patient like you
This is the moment that comes out of
my heart

MOM I LOVE YOU 

Diyora River 

I am Ibodullaeva Diyora Zohidovna, I was born on February 17, 2006 in Samarkand region. I am 18 years old now.

Uzbekistan Is A Country Of Happy People

My trip to the Amudarya district of the Republic of Karakalpakstan prompted me to write an article on this topic. At the entrance to the Amudarya region, I sat on the bridge next to the Pantan bridge over the Amudarya (a floating bridge for people and vehicles) and watched with interest as the cars slowly passed by. Because the bridge is a bit old (built in 1938) and due to its narrowness, cars pass in a row.

At the beginning of the bridge, a beautiful wall like a tall monument caught my attention. I was happy to see the inscription "Uzbekistan - the land of the happy" on this monument, and I loudly said "Uzbekistan - the land of the happy" to my companions. These words did not leave my mind during the whole trip.

Indeed, beautiful Uzbekistan is the country of the happiest and happiest people. Our country was ranked among the 50 happiest countries out of 156 countries in the world and took 44th place. Among the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Uzbekistan ranks first as the country of the happiest people. On March 20, "World Happiness Day", a new report titled "The Happiest Uzbeks in the CIS" was published in Internet publications. What do we mean by happiness or a happy person?

Happiness cannot be measured by wealth. Happiness is an inner feeling, we cannot grasp it with our hands, but we feel it with our heart. Everyone has a different interpretation of happiness. Happiness can be found only in a country where peace and tranquility prevail. Happy people live a free and peaceful life in the most beautiful paradise land. The sky of Uzbekistan is clear, the waters are clear, the people are friendly, kind, hospitable. If anyone doubts our happiness, let them come to a paradise-like country like Uzbekistan and see with their own eyes that people live happily in the arms of happiness!

In the era of modern techniques and technologies, the definition of prosperous Uzbekistan has spread to the whole world.

Foreign tourists who have heard the incomparable description of our country dream of traveling to our beautiful country.

I am proud to be a child of the peaceful and prosperous, beautiful, beautiful paradise of Uzbekistan, and to be a happy citizen of this country.

Soadat Kurbanova

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National Executive Must Concede To Let Go All Devolved Functions And Attendant Resources

Remove Costly Duplications And Overlaps Causing Economic And Financial Risks; Rationalize And Reduce Unnecessary State Corporations; Build Stronger Devolution For Fair Economy



By: Ndung'u Wainaina

The Intergovernmental Relations Committee has convened a national symposium to review the state of intergovernmental relations as well as agreeing on the path to consolidating and deepening devolved system of governance.

The symposium is being held in Naivasha, Nakuru County from yesterday to tomorrow.

It is unacceptable ten years after ushering in devolved system of governance, significant devolved functions and their attendant resource both financial and human are still unconstitutionally held by National Government. This is gross violation of the Constitutional set timeline to implement full devolution.

There has been significant reluctance by National Executive in respect to the transfer of the remaining functions. Troublingly there has been concerted attempts at the reversals of already partially transferred functions..

Even with the limited devolution implementation so far, Kenya is a much transformed landscape with amazing opportunities for rural areas and urban centres economic revival and transformation. There is now economic life in previously dead towns and market centres beaming with life after devolution. Devolution of resources to match transferred functions is hinged on the principle that resources should follow functions.

The constitutional functions assignment and transfer together with resources is one of the most critical aspects of Kenya's devolved governance structure.

It is the core promise of the 2010 Constitution. Even though the same is constitutionally provided for, there are still challenges that are being experienced in the transfer of functions and the role that is played by each level of government.

The Constitution envisages that there should be a fair degree of comity between the two levels of government and in that regard, the Intergovernmental Relations Act, 2012 establishes the legal and institutional framework for consultation, cooperation on and dispute resolution between the National and county governments and amongst the county governments inter alia, in the process of transfer and performance of functions. To the extent that an effective functions transfer process has a direct impact on the quality of service delivery, any outstanding issues in the transfer pro-

cess must be concluded with utmost urgency. Effective contribution of the Senate is necessary to facilitate the transfer of the functions which are yet to be transferred.

The Supreme Court of Kenya's Legal Opinion of 2013 on the Division of Revenue and the High Court of Kenya's decision on Constituencies Development Funds of 2015 reasserted and affirmed the constitutional autonomy and competence of the county governments to execute and oversee all devolved functions and service delivery in their areas of jurisdiction.

At this critical one decade after devolution rollout, a more deliberate unbundling and transfer of remaining functions should be hastened. Comprehensive assessment, assignment and publish register of assets and liabilities carried over from the former local authorities should be concluded. Undertake comprehensive transfer of pensions, benefits and records of all personnel who have transited from the national to the county governments. Increased deliberate firm political decisions to align, restructure and reorder the national government ministries, departments and agencies with the principles and objects of devolution should be sustained. Concerted effort should be undertaken by the two levels of government to ensure public engagement through effective civic education. Retrogressive laws and policies aimed at claw backs or to conveniently overreach the authority of the national government through parallel structures should be resisted and rejected.

Undertaking nationwide, comprehensive and effective civic education on devolution is absolutely important. Six months ago, President William Ruto's promised that the national government will in the next 60 days (already expired) transfer all devolved functions currently being held and undertaken unconstitutionally by national government ministries and departments.

This promise remain futile. Deeds speak better than words. The national government has successfully, through the National Assembly, pushed legislative and administrative processes that subvert devolved functions.

The national government, while free to infiltrate its policies at the county levels, it must do so through the structures recognized under the Constitution and not run parallel or du-

plicate system. The law is clear that the national government may channel grants, whether conditional or unconditional, to the county governments as additional revenue within the meaning of Article 202 and not any other entity which performs the functions allocated to the county by the Constitution. The national government cannot purport to channel grants to an entity whose intended projects effectively undermine the role of the government at the county level.

The Inter-Governmental Technical Relations Committee (IGTRC) has stated that devolved functions and assets valued at more than KSh400 Billion are yet to be transferred to county governments. A report by IGTRC) shows that 10 years after devolution, there are significant devolved functions that are still being undertaken by national ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs).

According to IGTRC report, most of the national Ministries still unconstitutionally holding the largest elements of devolved functions include agriculture, health, water, energy, transport and roads, education, lands, trade, tourism and wildlife, environment, and housing and urban development. The IGTRC further notes that National Government administration structure is yet to fully be reformed and restructured to accord with and respect devolved of government. This fundamentally undermine devolution and create unnecessary costly parallel governance structures in the counties.

The Intergovernmental symposium should agree on how recommendations by the IGTRC on the exclusive and concurrent functions should be fully that are yet to be operationalized. There are few exclusive functions that are yet to be operationalized across all counties.

The major difficulty concerning exclusive functions is that the national government is still performing some of these functions or certain aspects of them, despite the functions having been transferred to the county governments.

The precise mode of operationalizing concurrent functions has not been resolved in all sectors. The exact levels of responsibility and accountability of each level of government concerning most of the concurrent functions remain indeterminate. The has to be agreed framework for unbundling concurrent functions and

the consequent assignment of responsibilities between the two levels of governments applying inter alia the subsidiarity principle.

There are significant functional overlaps and duplications have been noted.

These overlaps are of great concerns as they annually cost more than KSh-500Billion and keep causing a huge economic and financial risks to the country. The two levels of government have not always adhered to their respective roles and levels of responsibility regarding the functions that they have been assigned to counties. Their planning and budgeting still capture functions that are legally outside their jurisdictions.

The functions of the state corporations largely remain unbundled to date, a process which is a necessary precursor to transferring any component of their functions that should be performed by county governments. Annually state corporations have been receiving budgetary allocations averaging KSh500Billion. Yet they are performing duplicated functions. The state corporations must be rationalized, reduced and all devolved functions they are performing be transferred to County governments

The principle finance follows functions must be fully implemented and adhered to faithfully. Effective devolved governance units must of necessity have a broader mandates and implicit expectations to deliver functions at local level. By being closer to the people, they receive more demands than what the statutes allocate them. There is need for financial allocations to functions to take cognizance of this fact. The devolved units provide services where there was none and they perform beyond what the central government used to do. The end goal is to apply available resources to reach more people. It is crucial that accountability and participation in the devolved units is strengthened and robustly enforced.

The Intergovernmental symposium must resolved is critical issues of delayed disbursements and skewed revenue share. Further the National Treasury must be fully reformed to serve two levels of governments independently. The National government budget and fiscal matters should

Worth Noting:

- The Supreme Court of Kenya's Legal Opinion of 2013 on the Division of Revenue and the High Court of Kenya's decision on Constituencies Development Funds of 2015 reasserted and affirmed the constitutional autonomy and competence of the county governments to execute and oversee all devolved functions and service delivery in their areas of jurisdiction.
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National Executive Must Concede To Let Go All Devolved Functions And Attendant Resources

Remove Costly Duplications And Overlaps Causing Economic And Financial Risks; Rationalize And Reduce Unnecessary State Corporations; Build Stronger Devolution For Fair Economy

Contd from Page 16.

be performed by independent office separate from the role of the National Treasury. It is very important that County governments have a voice on the national table of economic, fiscal and taxation policy decision making as those decisions have direct implications to the devolved units.

In conclusion, the implementation of the system of devolved government is largely on course. Nonetheless, there is need to urgently expedite overhaul, and repeal as per constitutional requirements of the old order existing policies, legislation and institutional frameworks to ensure that they facilitate improved devolved governance and service delivery which can only be attained if the respective levels of government

adequately carry out their responsibilities as spelt out in the Constitution and the law.

The Constitution needs further breakdown because the functions listed therein are still highly aggregated. A casual division along the lines of “policy versus implementation” or “national versus county” is still a broad spectrum for classification or delineation with a high degree of haziness on the specific boundaries of these functions. Therefore, reliance on the Fourth Schedule alone as the basis for delimiting the boundaries of responsibility between the National and county governments in matters of the division of functions might prove futile.

There is need to, through cooperative government and intergovernmental relations, enact national policy and legislation on functions and powers to clarify the constitutional

assignment of functions and powers to the two levels of government. This legislation, which should be styled “The Functions and Powers Act”, should aim to operationalize Articles 186(1), (2) and the Fourth Schedule, 186(3), 183(1)(b), and 187 of the constitution. This must be achieved through making provision for the clarification of functional assignment and the functional lists; establishment of a framework for the national government assignment of additional functions and powers to county governments; and establishment of a framework for the intergovernmental transfer of functions and powers. The core of devolution lies functional assignment and the costing that defines the process.

While some sector national ministries have tried to incorporate principles of devolution in their policy development process, others have

continued to create structures, which completely ignore extent the devolution and fiscal imperative. Further, apart from inertia, there have been problems such as lack of policy clarity, lack of clarity on the institutional development required to implement decentralization, and lack of clarity on the part of each sectoral ministry as to what initiative they are expected to take.

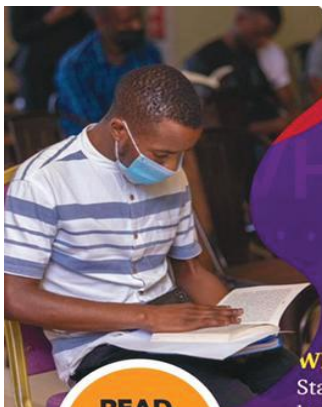
As a country, devolution is the most significant political undertaking in post-independence. Devolution is today the anchor of social and political stability of the country. The 2010 Constitution heralded a new era of more open and inclusive governance best epitomized by devolution, a system that is significantly bridging development gaps between regions, bringing services delivery services closer to the people, and empowering and creating opportunities to lo-

cal communities, and ensuring economy is growing from all corners of the country.

Kenya is at a great moment in its history with corresponding risk for failure. People of Kenya must not allow a constitutional democratic recession. The must guard against entrenching old ways under the new systems. They must not breed apathy by substantiating apprehensions that the ambitions of the political leadership are not aligned to the needs of the people they serve.

Kenyans must stay committed to the Constitution, learn lessons and make their common devolution journey worthwhile,

Ndung’u Wainaina is the Executive Director; International Center for Policy and Conflict, ICPC



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,
+ Gift hamper

All participants
Certificates of participation
at each level.

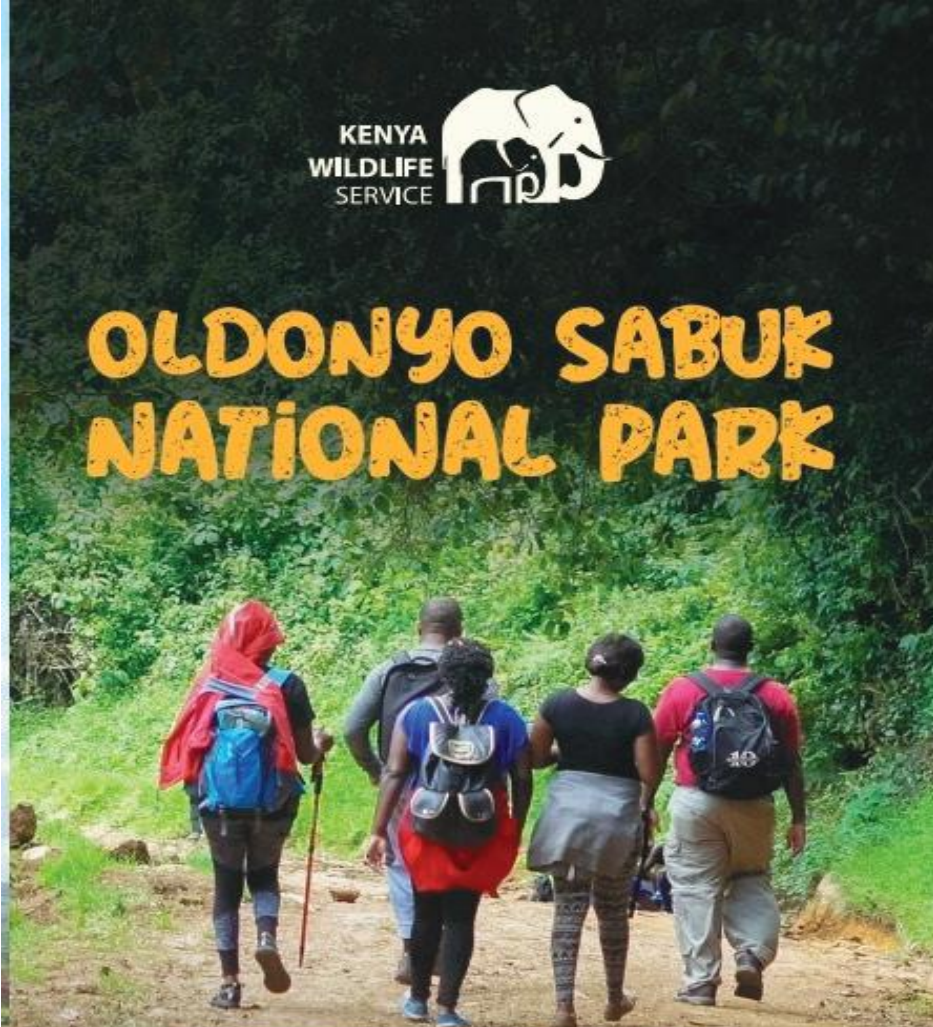
How to submit:
Send your typed review and photo to
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Raila Says Finance Act 2023 Is Oppressive

By: KBC Digital

ODM leader Raila Odinga says the Finance Act 2023 is an oppressive law.

Speaking on Sunday during a recruitment drive in Suba South constituency, Homa Bay County, Raila claimed punitive taxes introduced by the law have come to haunt even the legislators who supported it.

“I am not in parliament to participate in matters happening there, but I knew from the outset that the Finance Bill was not good for Kenyans and instructed our members to oppose it,” he said.

He said the cost of living was still high and that he will not relent in pushing the government to most it for the benefit of Kenyans.

“We had our demands during the NADCO talks. We wanted to be involved in the appointment of the

IEBC Commissioners, we wanted the cost of living to be brought to manageable levels and many other things,” he said.

Siaya Governor James Orenge urged the Kenya Kwanza administration to support devolution by disbursing money to counties in good time.

Earlier in the day, Raila met with ODM delegates from Suba South Branch at Nyamanga where he urged them to continue with the recruitment drive and ensure the party remains strong in the constituency.

He also opened the Party Office at Sindo market in Suba South.



ODM leader Raila Odinga in Suba South.

Somalia Deposits Ratification Instrument With EAC SG

By: Capital Correspondent

Somalia has deposited the Instrument of Ratification for the East Africa Community (EAC) Treaty in Arusha completing admission requirements for the bloc.

EAC Secretary General Peter Mathuki confirmed the development after the Horn of Africa state deposited her Instrument of Ratification with his office at the regional bloc’s Headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania.

Early last month the EAC Heads of State approved the admission of the new country, which is trying to recover from a civil war.

Somalia now becomes the 8th member of the EAC.

The milestone marks the culmination of Somalia’s journey towards full membership in the regional bloc, the bloc’s Secretariat announced on Sunday.

The accession process began on December 16 when Somalia formally joined the EAC after President

Hassan Sheikh Mohamud signed the Treaty of Accession.

The historic ceremony took place at State House Entebbe, Uganda, in the presence of President Mohamud, his South Sudanese counterpart Salva Kiir, who is the current chairperson of the EAC, and other dignitaries.

Somalia became the 8th member of the EAC after signing the bloc’s treaty in December 2023.

The endorsement of Somalia’s application by the EAC Summit of Heads of State on November 24 paved the way for its accession into the community.

‘Moment of pride’

President Mohamud, speaking after the ceremony, hailed Somalia’s membership in the EAC as a moment of pride and expressed commitment to fostering economic, social, and political ties for the accelerated development of the region.

Summit required Somalia to deposit the instrument of ratification with the EAC Secretary General within six months of signing the Treaty of Accession.

Additionally, the Summit tasked the EAC Council of Ministers to develop a roadmap for Somalia’s integration into the community and report progress to the next meeting of the Summit.

Somalia’s journey towards EAC membership commenced in July 2022 when Mogadishu expressed interest in joining the bloc.

President Mohamud’s high-level visit to the EAC headquarters at the time marked the formal launch of Somalia’s bid and aimed to garner support from Member States.

This visit coincided with a High-Level Retreat by EAC Heads of State to review the region’s common market protocol.

With Somalia’s impending membership, the East African Community will comprise nine Partner States, including Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania.



Map of Somalia locating the capital, Mogadishu, and Hawadley.

CS Njeru Officiates At AMCOW Preparatory Process Consultative Meeting For 10th World Water Forum

By: John Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes



Cabinet Secretary for Water Sanitation and Irrigation Mr. Zachariah Njeru

Cabinet Secretary for Water Sanitation and Irrigation Mr. Zachariah Njeru, yesterday welcomed the regional African Ministers Council of Water (AMCOW) member states for a consultation meeting in preparation for 10th World Water Forum; to take place from 18 – 24 May, in Bali, Indonesia.

The World Water Forum (WWF) is the world's largest water-related event organized every three years by the World Water Council. The Forum brings together the international community with the aim to build political commitment, promote awareness, and trigger action on critical water issues at all levels.

The ongoing consultations builds on the outcomes of the 9th World Water Forum which formed the basis for Africa's key messages and common position at the UN 2023 Conference is jointly organized with AMCOW as the main convener with the African Civil Society Network on Water (ANEW) and the African Renaissance.

The Nairobi consultative meet-

ing brings together a range of participants including :a selection of member states drawn from each of the Five (5) sub-regions of Africa, regional Economic communities (RECs),River and Lake basin Organizations ,International organization as well as development partners including the UN family, the private sector, Civil Society Organization and members of the Board of Governors of the World Water Council, the main organizer of the 10th WWF joining the meeting online.

The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary State Department for Water and Sanitation Julius Korir, Water Secretary Eng. SAO Alima, AMCOW Executive Secretary Dr Rashid Mbaziiraand the Director Transboundary Water Resources Mrs. Gladys Wekesa .

It has sights on the clarity on the preparatory processes, commitment by members states and stakeholders to prepare for and engage effectively, prioritization of Africa Region session proposals for inclusion onto the main program, consideration

and input into the Gender and Youth Mainstreaming toolkit as well as the work of the Gender Cluster Lab and working towards consensus on a collaborative strategy and action plan for mainstreaming gender and social inclusion in water and sanitation sector.

In his remarks, the CS who is the AMCOW Vice President for the East Africa Region said the meeting presented a perfect moment for Africa to dive deep into agenda for the World Water Forum and identify our key priorities and common messages.

He stressed the importance of Africa going to the Forum with one voice and clear messages articulating our situation and priorities. 'We also have to be mindful that Africa is diverse with different sub-regions dealing with different set of challenges as far as water and sanitation is concerned'. He said.

CS Njeru said water and Sanitation underpin sustainable development and play a crucial role towards achieving the African Union Agenda 2063 and all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Sanitation, hygiene and water are all a necessity for life. Sanitation, hygiene and water security are indispensable for domestic consumption. They are essential for many other sectors including health, education, agriculture, food production, energy production, transport, industry and tourism.

The CS underscored the importance of water and sanitation. He pointed out that nearly 3 out of 4 jobs in the global workforce are moderately or highly dependent upon access to water and water-related services.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) interventions became critical as a 'first line of defense'. Water has also shown to be at the heart of climate change adaptation, serving as the crucial link between the climate system, human society, and the environment.

Further, the CS postulated that the progress in the Sanitation, Hygiene and Water Security automatically translates into progress in other economic sectors. "Failure to achieve targets in the water, sanitation and hygiene automatically hold back progress in all other sustainable development goals". He added.

CS Njeru said water and sanitation expenditure needed a scale up. 'As you all know, achieving the water and sanitation 2030 SDG targets requires a huge number of investments in Africa. At least US\$66 billion is needed annually to address infrastructure backlogs for universal access to water and sanitation. This is 5 times the current annual allocation of \$ 13 billion per year. The Infrastructure Consortium for Africa estimates that an annual investment gap is between \$43-56 billion. Further, an additional \$9-\$14 billion per year is needed to achieve secure water resources in Africa,' He said.

In his remarks, PS Korir stressed the importance of Africa going to the forum with one voice and clear messages articulating our situation and priorities. "We also have to be mindful that Africa is diverse with different sub-regions dealing with different set of challenges as far as water and sanitation is concerned' He said.

He said past forum since 1997 have helped strengthen partnerships in tackling water and sanitation issues on the continent. More importantly, the past editions have helped provide greater awareness and visibility to what the continent is doing at political, sub-regional and country levels. The last 9th World Water Forum, held in 2022 on African soil, Dakar, Senegal; was the highest point in the history of the Forum as it marked the first of its kind to be held in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Other notable attendees included the Executive Director of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water, and Land Reform, Namibia and former AMCOW Technical Advisory Committee Chairperson, Mrs. Ndiyakupi Nghituwamata, Dr Tahani Sileet Minister Assistant for International Cooperation at Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, the Arab Republic of Egypt and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Member in the African Minister Council On Water (AMCOW).



CS Zack Njeru (in blue suit) poses for a photo with AMCOW Ministers.

Worth Noting:

- The Nairobi consultative meeting brings together a range of participants including :a selection of member states drawn from each of the Five (5) sub-regions of Africa, regional Economic communities (RECs),River and Lake basin Organizations ,International organization as well as development partners including the UN family, the private sector, Civil Society Organization and members of the Board of Governors of the World Water Council, the main organizer of the 10th WWF joining the meeting online.
- The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary State Department for Water and Sanitation Julius Korir, Water Secretary Eng. SAO Alima, AMCOW Executive Secretary Dr Rashid Mbaziiraand the Director Transboundary Water Resources Mrs. Gladys Wekesa .

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Chief Guest
HON RIGATHI GACHAGUA,
Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya

11 COUNTIES 66 CONSTITUENCIES

GOVERNORS

 HON. MWALIMU MUTUA NGUNJIRI Nairobi Governor	 HON. CECILY MUTUA NGUNJIRI Nairobi Governor	 HON. DR. WANGUI KARANJA Nairobi Governor	 HON. DR. NJOKI NJIRU BAHATI Nairobi Governor	 HON. WYCLIFFE NJIRU THAMBALA Nairobi Governor	 HON. AEDH BHANU GACACA Meru Governor	 HON. S. SUSANJWA Meru Governor	 HON. E. ANNE WANJIRU Meru Governor	 HON. E. KIPRONO BANTAOKE Meru Governor	 HON. E. JOSHUA WANJAU Meru Governor	 HON. E. WANJAU WANJAU Meru Governor
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MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

 HON. MWANGI NGUNJIRI Nairobi MP	 HON. MWANGI NGUNJIRI Nairobi MP	 HON. MWANGI NGUNJIRI Nairobi MP	 HON. MWANGI NGUNJIRI Nairobi MP	 HON. MWANGI NGUNJIRI Nairobi MP	 HON. MWANGI NGUNJIRI Nairobi MP	 HON. MWANGI NGUNJIRI Nairobi MP	 HON. MWANGI NGUNJIRI Nairobi MP	 HON. MWANGI NGUNJIRI Nairobi MP	 HON. MWANGI NGUNJIRI Nairobi MP	 HON. MWANGI NGUNJIRI Nairobi MP
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Let Us Join Hands To Save Our Youth



Sports >> *Paris Saint-Germain's preparations for today's Champions League last-16 second leg away to Real Sociedad have been overshadowed by coach Luis Enrique's handling of star man Kylian Mbappe.

Mbappe Tension Overshadows PSG's Crunch Champions League Date



Paris Saint-Germain's French forward #07 Kylian Mbappe grimaces after a shock during the French L1 football match between Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) and Olympique de Marseille (OM) at The Parc des Princes Stadium in Paris on September 24, 2023. (Photo by Bertrand GUAY / AFP).

Paris Saint-Germain's preparations for today's Champions League last-16 second leg away to Real Sociedad have been overshadowed by coach Luis Enrique's handling of star man Kylian Mbappe.

PSG have suffered numerous humiliating defeats at this stage of the Champions League in recent years but they are ideally placed to advance to the quarter-finals this time after winning 2-0 at home to the Basque side in last month's first leg.

Mbappe scored the opening goal in that game but the following day the superstar striker informed PSG of his intention to leave when his contract expires at the end of the campaign.

Luis Enrique might have been expected to make the most of being able to call on Mbappe until then, but instead, he has made a point of reducing his top scorer's

playing time.

Mbappe was left on the bench for PSG's next game at Nantes, although he came on to score a penalty in a 2-0 win.

A week later he started as captain at home against Rennes but was substituted on 65 minutes. His replacement Goncalo Ramos went on to score the equaliser in a 1-1 draw.

Mbappe has made almost 300 appearances for PSG since arriving from Monaco in 2017, but he had only previously been taken off earlier in a game either due to injury or with PSG already winning.

Yet last Friday he was hooked at half-time in a 0-0 draw at Monaco, and once again there was no question of him being injured or even of Luis Enrique trying to save his superstar for the Champions League.

"Sooner or later we are going

to have to play without him, so I am trying to find the best way of doing so," the coach said.

His comments came after he pointedly declared in a press conference last week that PSG would have "a much better team" next season, by which time Mbappe is expected to be playing for Real Madrid.

Mbappe, who is PSG's all-time top scorer with 244 goals, appeared eager to make a point that there was nothing wrong with him in Monaco as he emerged from the dressing room after half-time.

Having changed into a tracksuit, he walked around the pitch waving to fans and then took a seat in the stand beside his mother, rather than on the bench next to his teammates.

PSG can afford to experiment in Ligue 1 given they lead the table by nine points from Brest with

10 games left.

However, Luis Enrique's decision to handle Mbappe in this way ahead of such an important European date has been questioned.

"I'm puzzled. It seems that ever since he informed the club of his departure, he's been subjected to punishment, perhaps by the coach, or maybe it's coming from the directors," remarked Alain Roche, a former PSG defender and current sporting director, now serving as a pundit for broadcaster Canal Plus.

"I think it is inappropriate to create such a controversy four days before a game as important as the second leg against La Real."

Mbappe has scored 32 goals in 33 games for his club this season, including four in the Champions League.

No other PSG player has reached double figures and Mbappe will surely start in San Sebastian as the French champions look to finish the job.

They have a comfortable lead against opponents who lie seventh in La Liga and have won only once in nine games.

Then again the Parisians are all too familiar with dramatic collapses in Champions League knockout ties.

Two of their most notorious defeats came on Spanish soil in last-16 ties after they had won at home in the first leg.

Two years ago they beat Madrid 1-0 in Paris and then went ahead in the return thanks to Mbappe, only to concede three times in the second half and go out.

In 2017 they hammered Barcelona 4-0 at home only to cave in and lose 6-1 at Camp Nou.

Another exit this time, against weaker opposition and given Luis Enrique's handling of Mbappe, would be disastrous for the coach and club.

AFP

SPORTS NEWS

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GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *Jurgen Klopp claimed Darwin Nunez's controversial late winner against Nottingham Forest was legitimate as Liverpool moved four points clear at the top of the Premier League on Saturday.

Klopp Dismisses Forest Complaints Over Nunez Winner



Liverpool's Uruguayan striker #09 Darwin Nunez celebrates with teammates after scoring a goal during the English Premier League football match between Nottingham Forest and Liverpool at The City Ground in Nottingham, central England, on March 2, 2024. (Photo by Paul ELLIS / AFP).

Jurgen Klopp claimed Darwin Nunez's controversial late winner against Nottingham Forest was legitimate as Liverpool moved four points clear at the top of the Premier League on Saturday.

Nunez marked his return from injury by heading home nine minutes into stoppage-time at the City Ground.

But the Uruguay forward's decisive contribution left Forest furious after referee Paul Tierney had stopped play before the build-up to the goal for an apparent head injury to Liverpool defender Ibrahima Konate.

Tierney blew with Forest in possession on the edge of Liverpool's area and after Konate had quickly recovered, the official dropped the ball to Reds goalkeeper Caoim-

hin Kelleher, who then started the move that led to Nunez's goal.

"It happened exactly the same in the first half didn't it? Exactly the same, just the other way round," Klopp said.

"I accepted it would happen like that because it happened in the first half. If it didn't happen in the first half, I would have asked the question as well.

"I would assume that's the rule, I don't know. But because it happened twice and got handled exactly the same, I don't really see their reasons for a discussion."

Earlier in the game, Tierney halted a Liverpool attack after Forest captain Ryan Yates was felled by Harvey Elliott's shot and play resumed with goalkeeper Matz Sels taking possession.

"I understand 100 per cent the excitement and the anger of Nottingham, of course, they fought for everything. But it happened twice the same and was consistent," Klopp said.

Nunez's winner secured Liverpool their first league victory at the City Ground in almost 40 years.

The priceless success by the banks of the River Trent piled pressure on second-placed Manchester City and third-placed Arsenal, who play on Sunday and Monday against Manchester United and Sheffield United respectively.

Klopp admitted it had been a huge effort from his injury-hit squad, who have registered six straight wins in all competitions,

including last Sunday's League Cup final win over Chelsea.

"Four games in 11 days, come on. Five in 15," Klopp said. "It's really tough. With our squad situation it's super-tough and how the boys fought through that is really special.

"The fourth game was the toughest. It was an unbelievable effort the boys put in. A proper, proper shift.

"If you had asked me 12 days ago if it was possible to win all four games, I'd have said no."

AFP

SPORTS NEWS



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Backpage



What Makes A Quality Book?



Dr Paula O.M. Otukile-Founder Francistown International Book Festival.

By: Our Reporter
@themkenyatimes

Numerous questions stands when it comes to the book proficiency. However only someone with patience can undertand as it reduces anxiety.

1. Is it the number of copies bought?
2. Is it the popularity of the author?
3. Is it the length the book or number of pages?
4. Is it a good cover? Or good quality paper used to print?

Answer!

- *A well edited book.
- *A book without grammatical errors.
- *Proper spelled words.
- *Good language usage.
- *Relevant topics and good coherent ideas.

Your book needs an isbn too. Review it more and more, and make editions now and then. do corrections regularly and take your time. Speed kills, if tired do not read or review but rather rest.

Even if it takes you four years, just wait until you have proof read well.

Do not forget to share your manuscript with four or five professionals until you are satisfied with their corrections then you can publish the book.

A book without proper spelling and editing loses the quality or consideration of the author in the book industry.

It is important to be known for eloquence and proper planning and delivery in terms of books written.

NB: Grammar that is good, good coherent ideas, good language usage that makes a book the best book.

Author Inspires Young Children To Work On Their Dreams



Mrs Onneile Ramasilo

By: Our Reporter
@themkenyatimes

Mrs Onneile Ramasilo will be launching her book called, "Born To Write."

Mrs Onneile Née Setlakgosi, Is the marketing manager of the upcoming Francistown International Book Festival that will be held at the Francistown Civic Centre, on the 8th of March 2024.

She says her book is supposed to inspire the younger children on nurturing their dreams and fulfilling them. Speaking to the Mount Kenya times reporter she said; she is very sure that dreams or aspirations of what one wants to be begins at grassroots level hence the enhancement of the ideas through positive encouragement always produces better results.

Mrs Ramasilo intends to embark on empowering young children particularly the girl child on making them believe into their dreams.

She said "The future is female and without encouragement there will be no strong future leaders as only this begins now on the early childhood years."

It is important to note that Onneile is from Central region in Botswana, yet she resides

in Kanye, she is a mother and a wife, she has been a very bubbly person from young age, growing up she knew she was going to be a writer, she works for Midweek sun, and also does other miscellaneous work too and all these contributed on her being the best narrator because she records the daily routines of her family mentally and later on write and develop into stories.

Lots of people are expected at the book festival and she intends to mingle and to network in order to get better insights of the book world.

She thanked her fans and her family for the support and hopes to make greater sales in the coming days.

