



**Ruto Supports Biden's Roadmap For Israel-Palestine Conflict Resolution**  
 President William Ruto has expressed his support for President Joe Biden's proposed roadmap to end the escalating conflict between Israel and Palestine. Ruto shared his views on the plan via his official X (formerly Twitter) platform.

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# Coffee Nets Over KSh17 Billion In One Year

**News>> Finance And Division Of Revenue Bills Top The Agenda As National Assembly Resumes Sittings**

**P. 8.** The National Assembly is set to resume sittings today for the second part of the Third Session following the short recess.



**News>> Kisii Woman Rep Dorice Donya Launches Sanitary Pad Donation Initiative To Aid Schoolgirls**

**P. 12.** Millions of women and girls around the world face stigma, exclusion, and discrimination simply because they menstruate and lack access to sanitary towels.

**Calls to the farmers to increase production of quality coffee have been intensified owing to the high demand for the produce in the market. In Mt Kenya region, salutation has been made to Kirinyaga farmers who have been producing the high quality coffee that is sold through the Nairobi Coffee Exchange (NCE).**



*Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua at Murang'a Coffee Mill in company of Cooperative Cabinet Secretary Simon Chelugui and Murang'a Governor irungu Kang'ata*

**STORY ON PAGE 9**

# MT KENYA BUSINESS CONFERENCE

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# Pastor Dorcas Calls For Involvement Of All In Alcohol And Drugs Abuse

By: OSDP



The Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua and Pastor Dorcas Rigathi greet congregants at Our Lady of Visitation Catholic Church, Timau, Buuri Constituency, Meru County where she had accompanied the Deputy President for Sunday Mass. Photo/OSDP.

**Worth Noting:**

- She commended the clergy, from across faiths, Muslim, Hindu, and Christian faiths for opening up their facilities to restore the boys and men lost in the streets and wasting their lives in the gutter and streets following intoxication by different substances.
- She particularly appreciated the work of Sister Veronica who opened the Holy Innocence BPSS Rehabilitation Centre in Timau where the office of the Spouse of the Deputy President (OSDP) partnered in the rehabilitation of the first cohort of men from addictions.

Pastor Dorcas Rigathi encouraged the multi-agency approach in the fight against alcohol, drugs, and substance abuse in the country.

Speaking at a church in Meru on Sunday where she accompanied Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, Pastor Dorcas commended the efforts of the President, Deputy President, Members of the National Assembly and County Assemblies in tackling the scourge of addictions in the country.

“The President, Deputy President, and Members of the National and County Assemblies are doing a difficult job and pushing for laws to reduce the rampant deaths of the boy child. Alcohol and drugs have caused us extreme losses. We must unite as women and parents and go get our children, and work towards flushing out the psychoactive substances

from their body systems, love them, so they can come back home, and become part of the citizens building our nation,” she said.

She commended the clergy, from across faiths, Muslim, Hindu, and Christian faiths for opening up their facilities to restore the boys and men lost in the streets and wasting their lives in the gutter and streets following intoxication by different substances.

She particularly appreciated the work of Sister Veronica who opened the Holy Innocence BPSS Rehabilitation Centre in Timau where the office of the Spouse of the Deputy President (OSDP) partnered in the rehabilitation of the first cohort of men from addictions.

Present was Meru Governor Kawira Mwangaza, Laikipia Governor Joshua Irungu, Buuri MP Mugambi Rindikiri,

Meru Woman Representative Elizabeth Kailemia, MPs Moses Kirima (Imenti Central) Abdul Rahim Dawood (Imenti North), Mpuru Aburi (Tigania East), John Paul Mwirigi (Igembe South), Julius Taitumu (Igembe North), Jayne Kihara (Naivasha), and Daniel Karitho (Igembe Central) among other leaders.

“All these boys you find drunk and sleeping in the gutter, and outside in the cold are the fathers of tomorrow. Their bodies are intoxicated with alcohol, and others have died,” said Pastor Dorcas.

She also decried the high number of widows in the country following her numerous meetings with widows in different parts of the country, signifying the interconnectedness of the boy child program, and the widows and orphans program.

“When I went to Laikipia for a widows

program, we expected 2,000 but 6,000 turned up. This means more than 6,000 men have died. It is also worrying that widows in Kenya are in the ages of 25, 30 and 40. Even in the Bible, a widow is expected to be 60 years and above,” she added.

Kenya has eight million widows in her population.

Pastor Dorcas urged the people to embrace those who express a desire to go for rehabilitation, and also support them post-rehabilitation.

The Deputy President said that they would also not relent in the war against illicit brews and commended the national administration officers for their role in the many wins against the menace.

Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times



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## THEME

### "Beyond Borders: Exploring Global Business Perspectives"

## NEWS IN BRIEF



President William Samoei Ruto yesterday arrived in Seoul, South Korea, for the Korea-Africa Summit, which will kick off today. The summit aims to build strong relations between South Korea and Africa, leveraging each other's strengths to foster mutual growth, tackle global challenges, and reinforce solidarity for peace and security. The President will also hold bilateral talks with President Yoon Suk Yeol aimed at escalating areas of cooperation. On arrival, he was received by Ambassador Kang Seok-hee, former Korean Ambassador to Seychelles and currently the State Representative for Reconstruction Efforts in Ukraine. Kenyan Ambassador to South Korea Prof. Emmy Kipsoi was present.



The Kenya Kwanza government is realigning its efforts and commitments for stronger working relations with Development Partners. Yesterday, Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua at his Official Residence in Karen, Nairobi, chaired a High Level Policy Forum meeting to consolidate the Government's approach for enhanced partnership. In attendance were National Treasury Cabinet Secretary Njuguna Ndung'u, Health Cabinet Secretary Susan Nakhumicha, Water and Sanitation Cabinet Secretary Zachariah Njeru, Secretary to the Cabinet Mercy Wanjau as well as Water Principal Secretary Julius Korir among other senior officers.



The Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) emerged a big winner during the last week's Agricultural Society of Kenya Show held in Meru County. The KTDA team at the Meru ASK Show celebrated as they were awarded the trophies and certificates by area governor Kawira Mwangaza after the Trade Fair where they bagged five awards. The awards include; Best Stand Exhibiting Agriculture and /or Earth Moving Equipment; Best Large Trade Stand (Commercial and Industrial); Best Agro-Processing Stand; Best Display in Data and Mobile Services; and Best Local Stand in Strategies of International Trade and Exports.



In order to ensure they effectively and efficiently serve thousands of their customers, Biashara Sacco recently organised an exposure trip for its team of Assistant Managers. The Sacco, headquartered in Nyeri town, Nyeri County and with branches in several other counties took the assistant managers to Mombasa for five days where they were taken through various technics pertaining to their duties. Other counties where Biashara Sacco whose board is chaired by Nyeri businessman Joseph Njamuku has branches include Nairobi, Kiambu, Kirinyaga, Laikipia, Kirinyaga, Embu, Nyan-darua, Kajiado and Nakuru.

### MP Kagombe To Undergo Mental Test Ahead Of Friday Plea Taking

Gatundu South Member of Parliament Gabriel Kagombe is set to undergo a mental test ahead of his plea taking on Friday for the alleged murder of a boda boda rider.

He is accused of shooting the boda boda rider in Thika when supporters of two politicians in Kiambu clashed over a market project.

The court further directed that he be detained at the Muthaiga police station.

Kagombe was arrested on Friday at his Kileleshwa home over allegations of misuse of a firearm and killing of a boda boda rider David Nduati.

On May 16 Kamenu Ward Rep Peter Mburu mobilised his supporters and allocated them a space and immediately embarked on erecting makeshift market sheds.



# NEWS PAPER

IN BUSINESS



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# CGIAR Announces Inaugural Science Week To Promote Sustainable Food Systems

By: Christine Muchira  
 @themtkenyentimes

**Worth Noting:**

- “With science, we can reimagine a sustainable and healthy future for people and the planet,” said Dr. Elouafi. Adding that: “At the inaugural CGIAR Science Week, we will bring together the people, ideas, and innovations that can make this ambition a reality.”
- With stakeholder and partner consultations on CGIAR’s proposed research programs for 2025-2030, the event offers a unique opportunity to shape the scientific response to the world’s most urgent challenges.



CGIAR has announced its inaugural Science Week that will take place from 1st to 5th July 2024 at the United Nations Campus in Nairobi, Kenya. The event comes at a time when climate change continues to disrupt global food, land, and water systems and harm lives and livelihoods of farmers and consumers around the world. CGIAR Science Week will bring together scientists, policymakers, industry experts, and advocates from around the world to address these pressing challenges as the need for sustainable solutions becomes more critical. CGIAR Executive Managing Direc-

tor Dr. Ismahane Elouafi stressed that science can reimagine a sustainable and healthy future for people and the planet. “With science, we can reimagine a sustainable and healthy future for people and the planet,” said Dr. Elouafi. Adding that: “At the inaugural CGIAR Science Week, we will bring together the people, ideas, and innovations that can make this ambition a reality.” With stakeholder and partner consultations on CGIAR’s proposed research programs for 2025-2030, the event offers a unique opportunity to shape the scientific response to the world’s most

urgent challenges. There will be other activities including speeches and panel discussions with experts in agriculture, climate science, food security, and policymakers as well as Science Talks and workshops that showcase the best of food, land, and water systems science and innovation. Similarly there will be an exhibition of game-changing innovations that are improving the lives of producers and consumers around the world and field visits to CGIAR and partner labs and research stations to see science in action.

CGIAR Science Week will feature an impressive lineup of speakers with confirmed participation or partnership with the government of Kenya, African Union, Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), African Development Bank (AfDB). CGIAR is a global research partnership focused on transforming food, land, and water systems to combat climate change. With 15 research centers worldwide, CGIAR develops innovative solutions to enhance agricultural productivity and promote sustainability.

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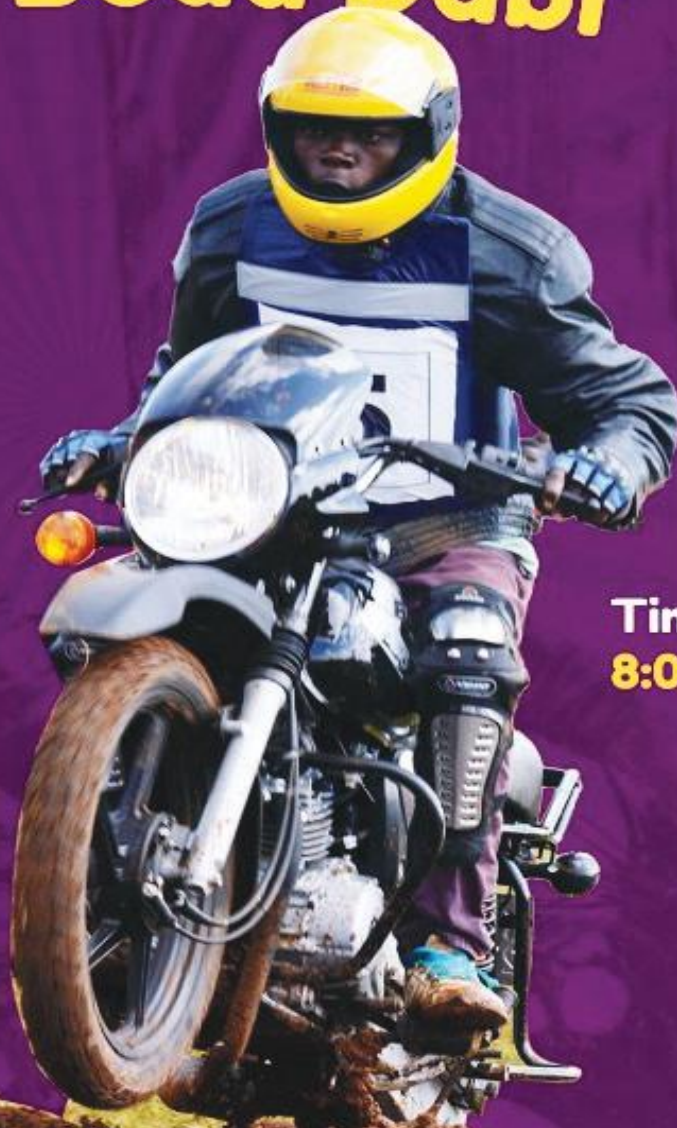
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# Finance And Division Of Revenue Bills Top The Agenda As National Assembly Resumes Sittings

By: PSCU

The National Assembly is set to resume sittings today for the second part of the Third Session following the short recess.

A packed agenda awaits lawmakers with consideration of key Bills, including the Division of Revenue Bill, 2024 and the Finance Bill 2024.

Members will prioritize consideration of the mediated version of the Division of Revenue Bill, 2024 which outlines an increased equitable share to counties in the Financial Year 2024/25.

This follows successful negotiations by the Mediation Committee, co-chaired by Kiharu MP Ndingi Nyoro and Meru Senator Kathuri Murungi.

The Supplementary Estimates II and the 2024/2025 Budget Estimates, along with their Appropriation Bills, will also be reviewed by the House. Several other important bills are on the docket, including

consideration of the County Allocation of Revenue Bill and the Kenya Drugs Authority Bill.

The County Boundaries Bill which seeks to establish a framework for resolving county boundary disputes will also undergo the First Reading.

In addition, the House is expected to prioritize the Land Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2023 which seeks to allow Kenyans access to land records and perform land related transactions across the country. The Bill also seeks to amend the Registration of Documents Act by decentralizing land registries for registration of documents across the country.

Lawmakers will also consider reports from various Committees. Reports on the National Government Constituencies Development Fund for nine constituencies in Bungoma County and the Financial Statements of specified state corporations will be debated.

The Second Report of the Public Investments Committee on Social Services, Administration and Agriculture on its consideration of the Reports of the Auditor-General on the Financial Statements of the Kenya



Medical Training College, the Kenyatta University Teaching Referral and Research Hospital and the Kenya Medical Research Institute Legislators is also scheduled for debate.

Also scheduled for consideration are the Public Petitions Committee Report on its consideration of a public petition regarding funds spent by the National Government contrary to the Provisions of Article 223

of the Constitution and a Report of the Departmental Committee on Trade, Industry and Cooperatives on the Inquiry into Alleged Unfair Trade Practices by Foreign Investors in Kenya.

# Legislator Unveils Empowerment Programme To Benefit Special Group

By: Isaiah Nayika and Elvis Nalua  
@themkenyaintimes

Trans Nzoia Women Representative Lilian Siyoi has launched a Self-Reliant Empowerment Programme to benefit women, youth, and People Living with Disabilities (PWDs) in the region.

The programme launched under the National Government Affirmative Action Fund (NGAAF) umbrella will help uplift the beneficiaries and transform them to be self-reliant.

Speaking in Kitale during the launch of the programme, Siyoi said the initiative will, among other things, strive to help beneficiaries access and engage in income-generating activities, which she explained will help uplift living standards.

The launch saw sewing machines, plastic chairs, tents, water pump generators, water tanks, and financial grants being given to the vulnerable

groups.

“Through this Self-Reliant Empowerment programme, about 3 to 4 youth and women groups from each of the 25 wards in the county stand to benefit,” she said.

Siyoi revealed that the targeted groups will have to undergo financial management training, which she said will help the beneficiaries have a sound financial management mind.

“Training is an essential element of this programme, as it will ensure proper utilisation of the financial grants issued,” she said.

Highlighting the achievements her office has achieved since assuming power, Siyoi said that through NGAAF, many people who had lost hope in life have started to dream again.

Trans Nzoia Senator Allan Chesang, present during the exercise, applauded Siyoi for her commendable efforts directed towards empowering the underprivileged, explaining that such initiatives should be supported by all leaders.



Trans Nzoia Women Representative Lilian Siyoi

His words were echoed by Kiminini Member of Parliament Maurice Bisau, who lauded Hon. Siyoi for the life-changing programme, which he said will go a long way to eradicating

poverty. Siyoi was accompanied by legislators Dorice Donya (Kisii), Leah Sankaire (Kajiado), Njeri Maina (Kirinyaga), Cynthia Muge (Nan-

di), Jehow Fatuma (Wajir), Fatuma Mohamed (Migori), Beatrice Elachi (Dagoretti North), and Real Kasiwai (West Pokot), among others.

# Coffee Sold Through The Auction Nets More Than Sh17 Billion

By: MKT Reporter  
@themtkenyatimes

Calls to the farmers to increase production of quality coffee have been intensified owing to the high demand for the produce in the market.

In Mt Kenya region, salutation has been made to Kirinyaga farmers who have been producing the high quality coffee that is sold through the Nairobi Coffee Exchange (NCE).

In the farmers engagements forums in Kirinyaga, Murang'a, Nyeri and Kiambu, convened by NCE, to evaluate the performance of Direct Settlement System (DSS) where in the 2023/2024 coffee year, 496,440 bags of coffee have been sold through the auction.

NCE has been convening farmers' forums to deliberate on gains, suggesting on areas of improvements.

Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has been saying that the government backed reforms will ensure farmers have accessible inputs to facilitate increased production from the current 51,000 metric tonnes to over 100,000 metric tonnes.

"I have been bestowed with responsibility to streamline the coffee, tea and milk sectors to productivity," said Gachagua during an event to launch a coffee plant in Mathioya.

NCE Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ms Lisper Ndung'u said the introduction of regulations have led to positive improvement in the sector, as the farmers get better prices at the auction adding that the quality grades attract the local and international buyers.

Ms Ndung'u says the players in the value chain are closely monitored by the regulators to ensure they work in respect to the regulations for the interest of the farmers in the 33 counties.

"In the value chain there are farmers, millers, marketing agents, warehouse managers, buyers all who have been placed in the Direct Settlement System (DSS) that pays for the services rendered," said Ms Ndung'u.

NCE has directed that the societies in the crop year 2024/2025 must be connected with the DSS, where the leadership will monitor the transactions freely.

"At the inception of the reforms, there were challenges in DSS as farmers' details entered were incorrect thus making it difficult in the remittance of payments," said Ndung'u.

The service providers in the coffee value chain, she said, are required to harmonise their charges and upload them in the DSS.

In the counties sensitization meetings, the farmers suggested that they be paid in dollars instead of the



Nairobi Coffee Exchange (NCE) Ms Lisper Ndung'u.

Kenya shillings, as the coffee regulations 2019 demands.

The farmers questioned the delay in remittance of the payment after the sale of their coffee contrary to the regulations.

In the meetings, issues pertaining the delayed coffee milling, close collaboration with Coffee Research Institute (CRI) to help combat pests and diseases, strengthening of reforms, availability of subsidized fertilisers, payment of the produce through dollar accounts featured most.

The regulators issue circulars to guide the multi billion shillings industry to profitability, through ensuring the players adhere to the laid down regulations.

A condition to end the delayed payment, the regulators have set timelines to the service providers, to issue invoices through the DSS, failure to which the full amount be remitted to the growers.

But Cooperative Cabinet Secretary Simon Chelugui said the DSS has reduced the long process, with the farmers accessing their money instantly five working days after the auction.

Chelugui said the delay in remittance of money to the growers has been occasioned by buyers' delay to pay the money.

"The regulations are clear as penalties are imposed on the buyers should they fail to remit payment. The penalties administered by the Agriculture Food Authority include suspension of the buyers licenses," said Mr Chelugui.

A member of NCE working committee Mr Peter Githinji said DSS ensures timely and transparent payment of coffee sales proceeds, di-

rectly transferring funds to farmers' accounts.

Githinji said there was a need for dialogue among the farmers to ensure issues are resolved amicably.

"The system reduces delays and financial mismanagement risks, enhancing farmers' financial stability and trust in the trading process," said Githinji.

Githinji represented the NCE chairman Kenneth Gitonga in the farmers engagement forums in the counties of Nyeri and Kirinyaga, where he urged the farmers to nurture their coffee trees effectively for increased production.

The Cooperative Bank Agribusiness Manager Ms Esther Kariuki said in the management of DSS, they are working in consultation with the regulatory bodies, to ensure service providers' charges are harmonised for payments after the auction.

"From July 1st, the service providers contracted by the coffee societies and estates are under instruction to upload their contract agreement through the DSS platform. This will assist in payment without delay after the conclusion of the weekly auction," said Ms Kariuki.

Chairman at Inoi Cooperative Society in Kirinyaga, Mr Felix Muriithi Mwai said the government should support the farmers on availability of affordable inputs geared towards increased production of the commodity.

Mwai said the Kenya government should emulate Ugandan where the growers concentrate in avenues to increase production of the commodity.

"In Kenya the government has over-policed the coffee sector with a lot of regulations with little energy

on strategies to increase production, while little is being done on availability of inputs to support increased production," said Mwai.

Peter Njoroge Kamunyu, a farmer in Mathioya said the regulations demand farmers' dues should be paid through the Direct Settlement System (DSS) after the auction in effort to reduce illegal deductions.

Kamunyu said NCE should work to ensure the members in the society management committees are IT literate to ensure they follow up the payments should there be delays.

"It is a challenge that the remittance of resources takes between three weeks and one month without the knowledge of the committees," said Kamunyu

Francis Ngone, the chairman at Murang'a Farmers Cooperative Union said there was a need to strengthen the reforms, as the regulations are critical in the revamping of the sector.

Ngone said 80 percent of the reforms have been achieved, calling on for the implementation of the remaining ones.

"The formulation of the coffee policies started way back in 2016. It has been a long journey but we are about to get through," said Ngone.

Morris Mwangi Wangari a farmer at Rung'eto cooperative society in Kirinyaga said there was need for the government to introduce the extension officers to ensure the modern farming practises are followed to the latter.

"More education is required on functions of the DSS as the majority of the farmers are in the dark on its operations," said Wangari.

## Worth Noting:

- NCE Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ms Lisper Ndung'u said the introduction of regulations have led to positive improvement in the sector, as the farmers get better prices at the auction adding that the quality grades attract the local and international buyers.

- Ms Ndung'u says the players in the value chain are closely monitored by the regulators to ensure they work in respect to the regulations for the interest of the farmers in the 33 counties.

- "In the value chain there are farmers, millers, marketing agents, warehouse managers, buyers all who have been placed in the Direct Settlement System (DSS) that pays for the services rendered," said Ms Ndung'u.

# Nyewasco To Hold AGM On June 24

By: MKT Correspondent  
 @themkenyatimes

Nyeri Water and Sanitation Company (Nyewasco) will hold its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on June 23.

The company yesterday convened a stakeholders forum where various matters pertaining to the firm were discussed.

Stakeholders were informed of various achievements and challenges that they have been facing for the last one year.

One of the major achievement, the stakeholders were informed, was being named the best Water provider in East, Central and South Africa.

The meeting was called to review the performance of the company in the last one year and focus on the future of the company head of the 23rd Annual General Meeting.

Yesterday, various stakeholders led by Tana Water Works Development Agency (TWWDA) chairman Wanyaga Gathaka attended the forum at The White Rhino Hotel in Nyeri town.



Tana Water Works Development Agency chairman Wanyaga Gathaka addressing Nyewasco stakeholders at The White Rhino Hotel in Nyeri town yesterday. Photo/PAUL WANJIRU.

## The Sign Of Holiness Pt 1



By: Eric Musa  
 EMEA.ericmusa@gmail.com

The sign of holiness is not any outward appearance, but is inner contemplation, worship and obeying Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John: loving everybody; praying, and reading your Bible. The sign of holiness is walking in faith in everything you do. Faith means obedience. When you obey God, you have faith. When Jesus tells you to do something, and you do it, that shows God you have faith in His Son. If you do not show Him by your works that you have faith, you are going to have nothing but trouble. Then you will be wondering why good things do not come your way.

Show God that you can be contented where you are and patient. If you are contented and patient, that is a sign

you know God. I am never sure that nervous people know God. God is not nervous. Obedience means faithfulness in doing what the Word says, answering whatever call is on your life, and being a good steward of your time, as well as your money. If you are not a good steward of God's money, your bills will never be paid. Do not spend your life wondering what God is going to do. If you can read, then you should know what He is going to do. He is going to confirm Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. God is not going to write any new books to the Bible for you.

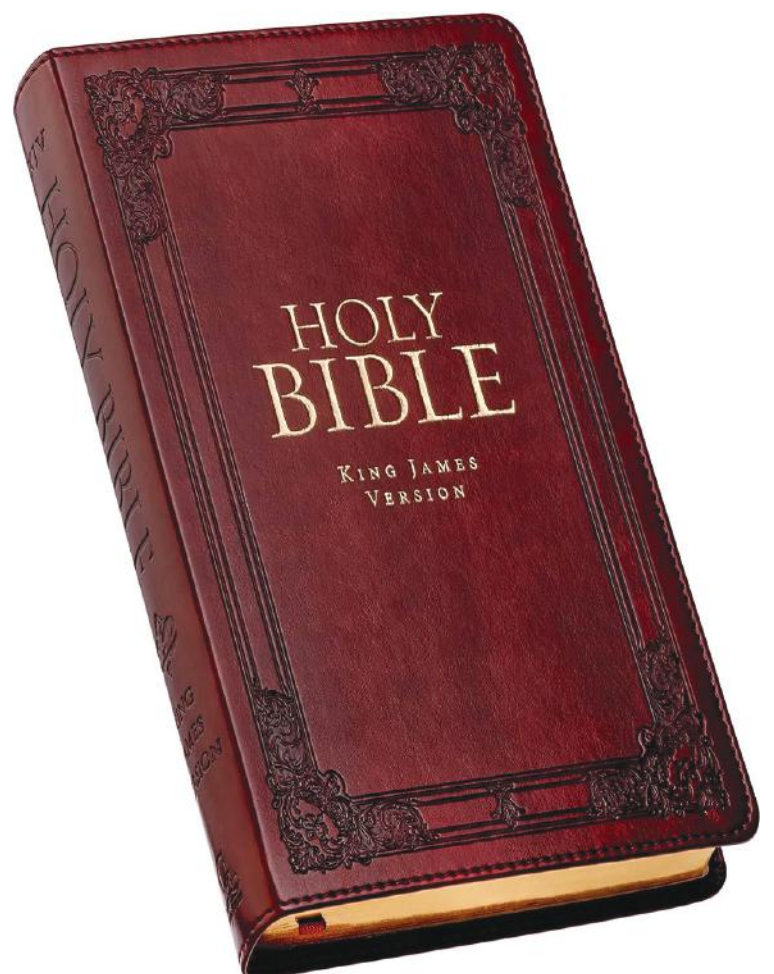
For two thousand years, He has been confirming Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John for those who believe it. You can have your own doctrine if you want to, but nothing but God's is successful. If you are not successful, do not check up on God. There is nothing wrong with Him. Check up on yourself. The Bible is never wrong. Christ Jesus is never wrong. Health-wise, children-wise, finance-wise, mind-wise. Check up on why you are not enjoying the blessings of God.

God is faithful and loves us exceedingly. He desires us to be intimately close with Him as He moulds us, and refines us as the purest gold, so that we can be valuable instruments for Him and His Glory. We are His masterpieces, whom He predestined that we may reign in this life and overcome the devil and His schemes.

GLORY, HONOR, POWER BELONGS TO THE ALMIGHTY GOD.

### 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.*



# Contrary To His Critics, Ruto Has Been Walking The Talk In Fast Tracking The Austerity Measures



By: Joseph Mutua Ndonga  
mutuandonga@yahoo.com



President William Ruto

## Worth Noting:

- After the bilateral talks with his host, President Joe Biden, the two leaders addressed a joint press conference. Kenya reaped big. The agreements and deals that Kenyan delegation signed with the US government and her companies were worth Sh1.2 trillion.
- I had earlier written an article in this column. These were my observations. In recent past, I heard the critics of President William Ruto claiming that his austerity measures were not bearing the fruits.
- To me, these arguments were speculative, ill-advised and malicious. This is because they were not based on evidential based research and analysis.
- A few weeks ago I read a statement released by National Treasury cabinet secretary Njuguna Ndungu.

A few days ago, the debate on whether President William Ruto was living up to a raft of austerity measures he had earlier rolled out came up.

This followed claims by his critics that his government had spent Sh200 million to hire a luxurious presidential jet that had flown him to the United State of America (USA) for a state visit.

But during the National Prayer Breakfast at Safari Park Hotel held two days after returning back to the country, Dr Ruto stepped out to set the record straight.

Contrary to the false hoods that were being peddled around, the trip only cost the Kenyan tax payer less than Sh10 million.

I hope this debate will now come to an end. He however assured Kenyans that the relevant arms of the government were looking at this matter.

The President added: It is good to have genuine friends.

Under my leadership, I have managed to reach out to well connected and endowed individuals across the world and they are now our friends.

These friends paid the lion share of money we spent in this trip.

To me, Sh10 million was a just a drop in the ocean.

This is if we compare to the goodies President Ruto secured during this state visit.

After the bilateral talks with his host, President Joe Biden, the two leaders addressed a joint press conference. Kenya reaped big. The agreements and deals that Kenyan delegation signed with the US government and her companies were worth Sh1.2 trillion.

I had earlier written an article in this column. These were my observations.

In recent past, I heard the critics of

President William Ruto claiming that his austerity measures were not bearing the fruits.

To me, these arguments were speculative, ill-advised and malicious.

This is because they were not based on evidential based research and analysis.

A few weeks ago I read a statement released by National Treasury cabinet secretary Njuguna Ndungu.

He unveiled the new directive by President William Ruto to have the employees of all State Corporations and Parastatals be subjected to austerity measures.

The directive took effect immediately. This once again reaffirmed the commitment of the President to walk the talk.

As we know, Cabinet Secretaries (CSs) are nominated and formally appointed by the President to help him undertake and discharge his constitutional mandate.

As such, the CS minced no word in stating that all Kenyans including the President himself must continue to live within our means.

This is the only way we would steer and return our economy back on track.

After assuming office, President Ruto faulted the outgoing 'handshake' government for harboring insatiable appetite and reckless borrowing of foreign loans.

As a result, we have inherited the highest debts ever. There is no miracle when it comes to repayment. All of us are required to tighten our belts.

The President would also enumerate other challenges that stood in his way. They included the biting drought rated to be the worst in 40 years; Russia-Ukraine war and Covid 19 pandemic. Kenya was recovering from these pandemic that had ravaged the whole

world.

After the President pronounced himself, the relevant arms of the government moved with speed to unveil a raft of interventions that would see budgets allocated for travels, accommodation of state officers within and outside the country drastically slashed.

Subsistence and out-of-pocket allowances were also targeted.

Ndungu warned the top managers of state corporations that stern action will be taken against those flouting the directives which had already been approved by parliament.

All budgets allocated for expenditures must be approved by the executive boards of directors of these public entities.

The members of boards have been properly briefed. When reviewing the budgets, they must give priority to the issue of austerity measures.

It is worth noting that the 'handshake' government of President Uhuru Kenyatta and his co-principal Raila Odinga regime had borrowed more than Sh9 trillion from the foreign lenders.

Dr Ruto assumed office at a time when loans' repayment shedule had started maturing

He knew the consequences of failing to abide by the terms of the repayment agreements were dire.

In default, Kenya would be blacklisted and isolated by the international development partners and lenders.

This explains why President Ruto did not take the matter lightly.

He has so far lived up to his word. This is in terms of ensuring the repayments were being done on time.

This, however, does not mean that we are out of wood yet. It is worth noting that six in 10 shillings collected as tax-

es goes towards servicing the foreign debts. President Ruto reiterated this recently when he attended a church service in Meru.

We are left with a paltry Sh4 shillings and this is what we spend for development and recurrent expenditures.

This is showed our economy is still not doing well.

But President Ruto has been leaving nothing to chance. He is working day and night in order to ensure our economy is back on track.

In a circular released earlier by the Head of Public Service Felix Koskei, the head of state banned the senior government officials from making unnecessary travels abroad.

The travels banned include those meant for benchmarking, training symposium and exhibitions.

The travels which are necessary will be approved by his office, he stated. He also reduced the number of the staff accompanying the officer on travel.

For cabinet secretary, one or two persons. For the others, one or travel alone.

The President issued this directive after it came to his attention that these travels were consuming a huge chunk of tax payers' monies.

During his tenure, former President Uhuru Kenyatta had rolled out some austerity measures. I'm sure Dr Ruto, who at the time was the deputy President, learn some big lessons.

Unlike Kenyatta, we know Dr Ruto is a hand-on President.

Given this scenario, I have no reason to doubt Ruto's commitment to ensure a strict adherence to the austerity measures.

For the officers who will make luxurious travels, there will be no reimbursements and per diems. They will have to cater for all the expenses from thier own pockets.

As for the necessary and approved travels, the officers will not enjoy the luxury and comfort as it used to be.

The budgets for air tickets, accomodation and allowances have been drastically cut.

They will no longer use the Aero-plane's First Class.

While in the host countries, they will stay in less expensive hotels.

President Ruto is setting a good example. He has been avoiding attending unnecessary foreign travels.

He would only make trips that he knew would bore the fruits for Kenya. Kenyans would reap big and become the biggest beneficiary. When Dr Ruto visited the US recently, he came back with goodies amounting to billions of shillings.

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

# Kisii Woman Rep Dorice Donya Launches Sanitary Pad Donation Initiative To Aid Schoolgirls



By: Elizabeth Angira



Kisii Woman Rep Dorice Donya launches sanitary towels initiative at Kenya Kisii County. Photo /Elizabeth Angira

## Worth Noting:

- Donya stressed that inadequate menstrual hygiene affects every facet of a young girl's life, perpetuating cycles of poverty and inequality.
- "Many girls grapple with feelings of shame, embarrassment, and social isolation. These consequences hinder the realization of their full potential," she said.
- Ruth Moraa, a parent whose daughter is a beneficiary of the sanitary towels, shared her challenges. She explained that the escalating cost of living makes it impossible for her to purchase sanitary towels for herself and her two daughters, forcing her to resort to using rags as a makeshift alternative.
- Living on a zero budget, she struggles to afford basic necessities like food.

Millions of women and girls around the world face stigma, exclusion, and discrimination simply because they menstruate and lack access to sanitary towels. This natural bodily function should not prevent women and girls from getting an education, earning an income, or fully participating in everyday life.

Kisii Woman Representative Dorice Donya has launched a sanitary pad donation initiative through the National Government Affirmative Action Fund (NGAAF).

Speaking at Kenya during the launch, she highlighted the critical role of promoting menstrual hygiene in safeguarding the dignity of girls.

Donya emphasized that the lack of access to adequate menstrual hygiene products disproportionately affects young girls, particularly those from financially vulnerable backgrounds.

She lamented the alarming statistics of school absenteeism and dropout rates among this demographic, attributing it significantly to the inability to afford sanitary towels.

The initiative aims to address this issue by providing menstrual hygiene products to young girls, especially those facing economic hardships.

Donya stressed that inadequate menstrual hygiene affects every facet of a young girl's life, perpetuating cycles of poverty and inequality.

"Many girls grapple with feelings of shame, embarrassment, and social isolation. These consequences hinder the realization of their full potential," she said.

Ruth Moraa, a parent whose daughter is a beneficiary of the sanitary towels, shared her challenges. She explained that the escalating cost of living makes it impossible for her to purchase sanitary towels for herself and her two daughters, forcing her to resort to using rags as a makeshift alternative.

Living on a zero budget, she struggles to afford basic necessities like food.

Moraa lauded Donya for the donation, believing it would greatly alleviate the struggles faced by women and girls in similar circumstances.

Donya announced that the distribution of sanitary towels would occur over three consecutive days, ensuring girls have access to the necessary resources to manage their menstrual hygiene effectively, thus reducing the risk of absenteeism and dropout rates.



Parents have praised the initiative, recognizing its profound impact on the lives of vulnerable young girls. They commended the unwavering commitment to fostering a more equitable society, where every child, regardless of gender or socioeconomic status, has the opportunity to thrive.

County Director of Education Phillip Chirchir remarked that the initiative symbolizes a beacon of hope and empowerment for young girls.

"With each sanitary towel distributed, a seed of change is sown, promising a brighter, more inclusive future for generations to come," he said.

Chirchir added that investing in the empowerment of young girls is an investment in the promise of a better tomorrow and assured that they would ensure the smooth running of the exercise.

According to the World Health Organization, only 39% of schools worldwide provide menstrual health education. This percentage increases in secondary schools, with 84% of secondary schools in Central and Southern Asia providing menstrual education, compared to 34% in primary schools.

# County Governments Continue To Advocate For Allocation Of More Funds; How Much Is Enough?

By: Evans Kibet and Brenda Holo  
@themtkenyentimes



## Worth Noting:

- As is with our constitutional framework for revenue sharing, there is no straight answer to this question. Among other factors that ought to be considered, is the need to ensure that county governments are able to perform the functions allocated to them i.e. Finance to follow functions. This conversation will even get more pronounced in 2024 as the Commission on Revenue Allocation reviews the recommendations for the 4th basis of sharing resources.
- Before its disbandment, the Transition Authority made notable progress to unbundle and cost some of the functions assigned to County Government in the 4th Schedule. While it is the Counties that advocated for the process to be expedited, the outcome did not favor them.

Since inception of devolved governments, allocation of funds to counties in Kenya has been a contested issue, and the 2024/2025 financial year is no exception. Among the sticky issues are the growth of county revenue from one year to next, county functions that are still implemented by the national government and distribution of conditional grants. Already, the Council of Governors (COG) has rejected the Ksh. 391.1 Billion equitable share for county governments as proposed by the National Treasury in the Draft Budget Policy Statement 2024, advocating for an increase to Ksh. 450 Billion.

The Council of Governors argues that the proposed Ksh. 391.1 Billion is insufficient to meet the growing financial demands faced by counties. Indeed, adequate financial support to county governments is paramount for advancing national development objectives and ensuring seamless delivery of basic service and equitable development across the country.

It is important to note that counties are highly dependent on this revenue, the equitable share and conditional allocations, to effectively carry out their functions and serve their people. This is because the revenue they collect from their own sources of revenue is barely enough to finance even a significant portion of their budgets. For instance, the Office of the Controller County Governments Budget Implementation Review Report for the financial year 2022/23 shows that County Governments had a total revenue Ksh. 466.01 Billion to finance their budgets out of which only Ksh. 37.81 Billion (8%) was raised from own source revenue. This dependency is higher in marginalized counties such as Wajir and Marsabit whose own revenue was less than

1% of their total expenditure compared to counties such as Nairobi and Mombasa whose own source revenue financed up to 30% of their total expenditure for the financial year 2022/23.

### The big question that lingers is how much is enough?

As is with our constitutional framework for revenue sharing, there is no straight answer to this question. Among other factors that ought to be considered, is the need to ensure that county governments are able to perform the functions allocated to them i.e. Finance to follow functions. This conversation will even get more pronounced in 2024 as the Commission on Revenue Allocation reviews the recommendations for the 4th basis of sharing resources.

Before its disbandment, the Transition Authority made notable progress to unbundle and cost some of the functions assigned to County Government in the 4th Schedule. While it is the Counties that advocated for the process to be expedited, the outcome did not favor them. Almost all the 14 functions were transferred to County Government, but to date the question remains, 'Were all the functions accompanied with all resources that the national government used to spend to deliver the same functions?'

Taking the case of ECDE function, a county such as Baringo County would need close to a billion shillings annually to maintain 4 ECDE teachers per ECDE centre in all the 1,153 operational public ECDE centres, going by the SRC recommended minimum wage averaging at Ksh. 15,000 per month. Due to financial constraints, the annual budget for the entire Department of Education and Vocational Training has hardly gone beyond

Ksh. 400 M. This partly explains the struggle by the County Governments to recruit adequate ECDE teachers and remunerate them fairly among other requirements for effective and efficient service delivery. So, before we join the recent bandwagon of recentralizing the ECDE function, let's ask what has been done to adequately finance the function. The same is observable in all the 47 counties and across sectors.

Even worse, some national government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) continue to spend monies on functions meant for county governments. A case in point is the water sector where Water Works Development Agencies are allocated funds for drilling of boreholes and repair of rural water projects, among many other functions that are a preserve of county governments according to the Constitution.

Second and most important principle is that the allocation to counties ought to be progressive. The constitution of Kenya in Article 203 (2) provides that the most recent audited accounts of revenue received, as approved by the National Assembly, forms basis for division of revenue between National and County Governments.

The Budget Policy Statement 2024 has proposed Ksh. 391.1 Billion which is 24.86% of the recently audited revenue of Ksh. 1.573 Billion for FY 2019/20. This is unfair going by the trend in revenue growth. For instance in 2022/23 Kenya recorded preliminary ordinary revenue of over Ksh. 2.0 Trillion which is much higher than the Ksh. 1.5 Trillion realized in the FY 2019/20. This represents 33% growth in revenue yet the proposed equitable share represents a growth of 24% (from 316.5 Billion in the FY 2019/20). Continued use

dated audited revenue as a basis for divisions of revenue, implies that counties are getting the shorter end of the stick.

A much bigger problem is the late disbursement of the equitable share to county governments. It takes the council of Governor's consistent outcries, including threats to shut government, for national treasury to disburse funds to county governments. Cash flow Research by International Budget Partnership Kenya and the Rift Valley Budget Hub has shown that there has been slow disbursement of equitable share and conditional grants. Disbursements to counties are lowest in the first two quarters (less than 40%) and peaks during the last quarter of the financial years. For instance, the Quarterly Economic and Budget Review Report for the first half of the FY 2023/24 shows that National Treasury shows that as at December 2023, the national treasury had disbursed Ksh. 141 Billion which is only 37% of the equitable share allocation of Ksh. 385 Billion in approved budget for FY 2023/24. In some occasions, disbursements are made very late in the financial year such that counties do not have ample time to spend before the close of the financial year.

Generally county governments continue to face financial constraints that hinder their capacity to deliver essential services effectively. This also limits the opportunity for citizens to hold the County Governments accountable for the prudent utilization of public funds and the delivery of quality services.

While Kenya's devolution is taunted as a significant reform in governance and development structure, the desired transformation will not come until the question of financing is addressed and addressed objectively. The Budget Policy Statement is not the final decision and thus subsequent conversations that culminate into passage of Divisions of Revenue Bill and the County Allocation of Revenue Bill provide citizens an opportunity to append their voice in this important decision. In doing this it will be important to keep in mind the services we expect of County Governments and the financing challenges experienced by county governments so far.

*Mr. Evans Kibet, is a Programs Officer at CEDGG and Coordinator, Rift Valley Budget Hub. Ms. Brenda Holo is a communication Intern at CEDGG. (Centre for Enhancing Democracy and Good Governance)*

## A Feeling Of Gratitude



By: Mamarasulova Dildora

A person should be thankful for the blessings he has and pray for those he does not have. The blessings are endless. The greatest blessing is faith and knowledge. First of all, we should be thankful for the small blessings in our life. It is worth being thankful for our existence in this world, for our life, for our health. When a person sees that others have what he does not have, he immediately complains about his fate with ungratefulness. Complaining about fate is not a feeling characteristic of a believer. Ingratitude, first of all, brings unhappiness. Dissatisfaction with one's fate, complaining about one's shortcomings will not change anything, on the contrary, it will increase the pain. Being grateful for the sustenance you have and being in positive emotions is extremely beneficial for the two worlds of a person. A person always compares himself with others and complains, "Why does he spend a lot, but I can't? I want to live like them and spend like them..." In fact, people who say they have no problems are the owners of many blessings. If we are grateful for our health and realize that the fulfillment of our intentions is all from Allah, then He will increase our share even more. The Lord, the Creator, commands His servants, who have enjoyed His innumerable blessings, to give thanks for these blessings. It is our duty to thank our Lord for every gift He has bestowed upon us, no matter how big or small. It is also said in our holy book: "If you give thanks, (and believe) He will be pleased with you..." We can understand from this verse that every Muslim servant who wants to find God's pleasure should always praise Him and give thanks for His blessings. If a person is satisfied with his destiny, if he does his best, he will be the most grateful to God. Real gratitude is to know the value of the blessings given, to use them in

their place, and to use them for the pleasure of the Creator.

Some are gifted with incomparable happiness, some are blessed with wealth, intelligence, and abilities, and others are blessed with a good spouse who understands and supports them. We should be thankful for that. If God opens the doors of opportunities and victories for one of his servants, He tests another servant by exposing him to poverty and hardships. It is necessary to intend that the end will be beautiful, saying that there is good in every work.

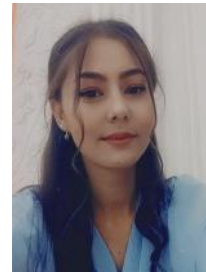
If we count the blessings that God has given us, we will not be able to count them. Therefore, it is necessary to give thanks as much as possible. If a servant does not thank himself, he will not thank others. To speak of blessings is gratitude, not to speak is ungratefulness.

Another virtue of gratitude is that if a person gives thanks by praise, his sustenance will increase. Hazrat Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, said about this: "Blessings are linked to gratitude, and gratitude is connected to abundance. As long as the servant continues to be thankful, Allah, the Exalted, will continue to increase.

Another blessing for which we should be thankful is that he gave us a healthy soul. A healthy heart gave a healthy mind. He encouraged our minds to think about things that are useful for this world and the hereafter, to make good intentions. He gave us eyes to look at the faces of our parents, family members, and teachers with love. He gave us ears to listen to the Qur'an, to listen to the words of our parents, to listen to the pleas of people who asked for help. Therefore, Allah has gifted all our body parts to be used for meritorious deeds that please Him. All are blessings to be thankful for. In short, we will be the most beloved servants of Allah if we are patient when the troubles come to the servants and give thanks when they are blessed. Everyone should learn to be happy with their situation, life, fate, and be grateful. If we are grateful, may the Lord increase it!

Termiz State Pedagogical Institute, Department of Philology, Department of Uzbek Language and Literature, second stage student Mamarasulova Dildora

## My Father Was Sick



And my mother lied that they were sitting looking at my father. His friends ignored these words and continued to have fun. And so the party ended. His comrades dispersed to their homes. Then, when Gulomjon entered the room, his father was actually lying on the bed. His mother was sitting next to him in tears. The young man lost himself for a while. He could not speak and then his language became speech. Gulomjon's lie has become the truth. But the difference was that the father was not sick, as the young man had said, but passed out. Seeing this, Gulomjon started to cry and hugged his mother. Father, forgive me, I didn't have time to please you, I couldn't be a worthy child for you, father, he was crying. I was an incompetent child who cried because I couldn't pay attention to you in time, I couldn't appreciate you. His father had been sick for a long time. There were only a few days left, it was time to fight for survival. But the father did not tell his son these things. Maybe everything would have been different if he had said it. No matter how much the mother was angry with her son, she would hold her son in her arms and cry. Unfortunately, it's too late, after all, isn't it his father who brought him up like no one else and tried to make his dreams come true. Isn't the grandfather who gave up his health, did not wear well, did not eat well, worked honestly all his life, and gave it to his son? But... but now it's too late, yes it's too late, that person will not return, spring will not return, yes spring may come again

and again, but that spring will never return. After all, what kind of light did the father see when he came to this world. After all, what can one expect from a young man who spends his life for his son and honors his own father and mother.

He had made his healthy father sick, or rather he had been sick before, but this lie to his son brought him down a lot. Hastened his father's death. The parents raised their children with such expectations, they hoped that tomorrow I would lean on them and ease my burden. Unfortunately, this hope turned into a mirage. Who or what is to blame for all this? Is it time? Is it an incompetent child? This question bothers us. Time never stopped, never turned back even 1 minute. He continued to walk.

But why? What for? He did not have time to get his father's approval for so long. Have you ever done something for your father, or once, father, let me get you a pair of shoes. Can you say that your shoes are worn out? He could not say no. He spent 5 minutes for his father. And now it's late, the guy is for life he lives in agony of conscience. This pain is not temporary, but it will torment you until you die.

There is no cure for this pain. O man, open your eyes, whenever possible, whenever possible, in the life of your father, in the life of your mother, get his approval. Time does not wait, time passes.

Appreciate them when you have the chance. They compare parents to the same white sugar. They raise us, bring us to adulthood, and create a foundation for our future, thanks to their pure, innocent and honest work. In the end, when we find our place in life, they dissolve like sugar in tea. So let's treasure every minute, every second, every loved one, especially our parents. Let's consider these people as a blessing given to us by God. Time is a flowing river, it does not cross a river once it has passed, and so is human life!

By: Gulzoda Bobonazarova

## Did Allah Take You To Heaven???



Life suddenly lost its meaning,  
I can't live without you, mother...  
No one can hurt me.  
I don't know what to do now, mom.

I run everywhere  
An example of a person who lost his name  
I was born with your love  
Mom, you were the epitome of love.

My heart is scratching without you, I miss you,  
Why are you in such a hurry to leave, mother?  
What am I looking for now?  
Tears are flowing from my eyes, mother...

Asta convinced the world...  
Pick up your broken heart, mom!!!  
Did you say that death is beautiful?  
Even old people cry and say: Mother.

Sometimes I smelled your handkerchiefs,  
Our house is empty without you...  
My precious, my heaven, you are priceless,  
For me, you are the only one in the world.

Now, mother, can we even make friends?  
Is it stuck in Mahshar Square???  
Everyone is with me, but you are Least...  
Did Allah take him to heaven?

👉 Nilufar Norsafarova

Norsafarova, daughter of Nilufar Boybori, was born on April 24, 2004 in Dehkanabad district of Kashkadarya region. At the moment, he is a student of the Uzbek language and literature department of the Shahrisabz State Pedagogical Institute, Faculty of Languages. His motto in life: Only good things remain from a person, so do only good. In 2023, he became the owner of the "Innovative Promoter" badge.

In addition, he is currently actively involved in volunteer work at the institute. "The history of the formation of proverbs", "Palindromes or words of the heart", "Specific features of an epic work", "The role and importance of connected clauses, separate clauses, impulses and introductions in a sentence", analysis of idioms in the tragedy "Medea" author of articles such as Nilufar actively participates with her creative works in collections such as "Success at the Gate", "Qalb Gavhari", "Sheriyat Shula si" and "Great Hopes in Small Hearts" with her wonderful poems.

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## BUSINESS

## Youth, Demographic Dividend, Migration, And Economic Opportunities In African Economies

By: John Kariuki  
@themtkenyatimes

The African Economic Research Consortium's (AERC) plenary session of the 60th Biannual Research Workshop was held yesterday at Radisson Blu Upper Hill, Nairobi, attended by national (Kenyan) and international participants from Africa, Europe, North America and Asia. The opening session, chaired by Dr. Patrick Njoroge, immediate former Governor of the Central Bank of Kenya, called for tapping into the youth and harnessing technology to generate jobs and sustainable economic developments in Africa.

The plenary session, themed on "Youth, Demographic Dividend, Migration, and Economic Opportunities in African Economies", was based on AERC research projects and provided timely opportunity for researchers to interact with policy makers and private sector decision makers from across many African countries.

Representing Professor Njuguna Ndung'u, Cabinet Secretary for the National Treasury and Economic Planning in Kenya, Dr. Rose Ngugi, the Executive Director of the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA), referenced the efforts being put in place by the government of Kenya to close the youth unemployment gap, while also noting the advantages and disadvantages of the demographic dividend.

"We need timely and actionable policies to reduce the huge unemployment gap across the continent.

There is no better development plan than investing in our youth who are our future. Their continuous increase in numbers is a double edged sword. It can be beneficial for inclusive growth and sustainability or a ticking time bomb on a quest for highly productive livelihoods if not appropriately harnessed by African governments. African governments can proactively harness demographic dividend benefits when young people have adequate employable skills and access to decent employment," Dr Ngugi remarked.

During his opening remarks, Professor Victor Murinde, the Executive Director of the AERC, emphasized AERC's continued commitment to providing evidence-based research for uptake into policy to help improve economic opportunities for the youth, while fostering benefits of demographic dividend and migration in Africa.

"Africa is grappling with the com-



Dr. Rose Ngugi, Executive Director, KIPPRA.

plex issues of creating jobs, migration, and demographic dynamics. The labour market aspect of this year's plenary underscores the importance of job creation and poverty education in Africa," he said, adding that AERC has a long tradition of researching these interrelated issues in order to generate new ideas and transformational policies.

"In Africa, despite the investment in education, access and quality of provision remain enormous challenges limiting the possibilities of youth, women and the vulnerable to have decent work. With the growing population, rapid urbanization, increased trade and technology, entrepreneurial and employment possibilities can be uncovered," he added.

Professor Aly Ahmadou Mbaye, Professor of Economics and Public Policy, and the Vice Chancellor, University of Cheikh Anta Diop, in Senegal, pointed out how the promotion of youth productivity in the informal sector should be a key strategy to capture the demographic dividend.

"Productivity affects international competitiveness and we need to close the mismatch in the informal sectors to balance unemployment and also be able to compete in global levels. The demand for employment is still very high in Africa, and this general trend is compounded by the fact that the proportion of the young population is high, leading to people turning to the informal sector for jobs," he said.

"The African informal work sector's importance to the continent's development in pro-

viding jobs for the youths cannot be overemphasized. However, the sector's full potential to accommodate the ever-growing youthful population across the African continent is yet to be realized and as policy makers, we need evidence-based sessions like this one to convince governments on the need to pay more attention to this area."

Economic opportunities for African youth, women and the whole population can expand by leveraging technology implementing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and improvements in educational quality with the aim of inclusive growth. One of the arguments for youth engagement in the productive sectors of the economy is the development of employable skills. Well-educated and healthy individuals with diverse skills are likely to participate in highly valued economic activities, thus boosting economic development prospects.

The plenary session featured three additional presentations by eminent economists: Prof. Imran Rasul, Professor of Economics, Department of Economics, University College London (UCL) on "Tackling youth unemployment in Africa"; Prof. Lant Pritchett, Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford, spoke on "Investing in human capital/education for a demographic dividend" and finally, "Migration Policies in Africa's RECs" by Blaise Gnimassoun, Université de Lorraine, and Université Paris Nanterre.

A high-level policy panel discus-

sion on the theme, moderated by Ms. Maggie Mutesi, Africatalyst, set the stage for frontier research by leading academics generating evidence on opportunities, risks, and challenges that affect the youth and how African economics can harness the trade-offs of demographic dividend and migration for sustainable development.

Concurrent sessions of the biannual research workshop start today on Monday, 3 June 2024. They feature 63 presentations of research proposals, work in progress, final reports, and interim PhD thesis reports.

The sessions cover a wide range of topics that fit into one or the other of the focal areas of AERC's thematic research programme: poverty, income distribution and labour market; macroeconomic policies and growth; finance and resource mobilization; production, trade, and economic integration; as well as agriculture, climate change and natural resource management issues.

Just to highlight some of the notable emerging suggestions from the ongoing AERC Biannual meeting: fronting human capital development to enhance youth skills to nurture employability and entrepreneurship via widespread TVET provision; and aligning the education curriculum to embody science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) related courses in order to spur innovativeness and ingenuity in young people, thus creating jobs in the digital space, the manufacturing sector and the ever-growing AI-driven future.

## Worth Noting:

There is no better development plan than investing in our youth who are our future. Their continuous increase in numbers is a double edged sword. It can be beneficial for inclusive growth and sustainability or a ticking time bomb on a quest for highly productive livelihoods if not appropriately harnessed by African governments. African governments can proactively harness demographic dividend benefits when young people have adequate employable skills and access to decent employment," Dr Ngugi remarked.

During his opening remarks, Professor Victor Murinde, the Executive Director of the AERC, emphasized AERC's continued commitment to providing evidence-based research for uptake into policy to help improve economic opportunities for the youth, while fostering benefits of demographic dividend and migration in Africa.

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# Ruto Supports Biden’s Roadmap For Israel-Palestine Conflict Resolution

By: Beth Nyaga

President William Ruto has expressed his support for President Joe Biden’s proposed roadmap to end the escalating conflict between Israel and Palestine.

Ruto shared his views on the plan via his official X (formerly Twitter) platform.

Ruto highlighted that the comprehensive plan, jointly initiated by the United States, Qatar, and Egypt, includes a six-week ceasefire, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from populated areas of Gaza, the release of hostages and remains, the return of Palestinians to North Gaza, and access to humanitarian assistance for conflict-affected individuals.

He noted that if this initial phase holds, it will pave the way for a reconstruction program for Gaza.

Emphasizing the severe human suffering caused by the conflict, Ruto urged Israeli and Palestinian leaders, as well as all parties of goodwill, to support the plan.

He expressed his firm belief that strong endorsement and faithful observation of the plan could lead to a permanent ceasefire and the implementation of a two-state solution, allowing Israel and Palestine to co-exist peacefully.

Ruto stated that such an outcome would contribute to a more stable and just region and world.



President William Ruto with US President Joe Biden..

# KANU To Appeal Court Ruling Revoking KICC Land Title

By: Capital Correspondent

The Kenya African National Union (KANU) says it will appeal the court ruling revoking the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) land titles.

In a statement, KANU stated that it has instructed its legal team to file a notice of appeal with immediate effect.

It further maintained that the allocation of the parcel of land was procedurally effected under the previous constitution.

“We insist on our position that the Kenya African National Union is the legitimate and bona fide owner of the said parcel of Land,” the party said in a statement.

The Environment and Land Court has ruled that the land on which the Kenyatta International Convention Centre belongs to the government after revoking the title issued to the KANU in May 1969.

According to Justice Jacqueline Mogeni, the land was illegally and unlawfully acquired by KANU, the independent party.

She further issued a declaration that the Ministry of Tourism is the lawful owner of the land.

“The allocation of the property to Kanu without following legal procedure is unlawful and illegal,” she said.

She questioned how late President Daniel Arap Moi was allocated the land that was surveyed and allotted for public use.

She observed that KANU did not in evidence present the procedure of how public land was alienated and then allocated to chairman of a political party.

She said the commissioner of lands had no power to alienate suit premises to KANU.

Kanu filed the case before the environment and land court in 2020.

It sought to reclaim the land saying it was allocated to it May 1969 by the commissioner of lands.



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Understanding Per Health



Dr. Linnet Okinyi is a veterinarian by profession and the CEO of the Sulwe vet organization. They mainly care for pets in terms of diagnosing common diseases that affects these pets, treatment and managing any form of aggressiveness among the pets. Pet health is a crucial matter for pet owners as they want to ensure their beloved companions live long healthy life.

Pets are normally attacked by diseases like Arthritis which is common in older pets, particularly dogs. It causes joint pain and stiffness, making it difficult for pets to move around, its being treated through pain management, weight loss and joint supplements. Dental disease is also another disease in pets that leads to bad breathe, gum diseases and tooth loss, its being managed or treated through by regular dental cleanings, tooth brushing and dental chewing.

They also faces skin allergy which mainly attacks dogs and cats, it causes itching, scratching and hair loss. Recommended treatment involves identifying and avoiding allergens, applying tropical creams and also taking antihistamines. Without forgetting the pet's ears which is also being infected, it causes ear pain,



scratching and discharge. It is being treated through cleaning of the ears, applying ear drops and taking antibiotics if necessary.

Rather than taking care of the pets, they might also be aggressive to their owners. Aggressiveness is being caused by various factors such as pain, fear and territorialism within their surroundings. Therefore it is a very important issue to to manage the aggressiveness of our pets, through consulting a veterinarian to rule out any underlying medical conditions.

They can also recommend pain management option and behavioural modification techniques.

Pets also need safe environment that has some comfortability. This include providing a quiet, noise free area for relaxation and minimizing such as loud noises.

Rewarding pets for good behavior such as calmness and obedience, this can be done through treats, praise and affection.

If aggressive persist or worsens, seek professional help from a certified animal behaviorist or trainer to

help your pet. They may develop a customized behavior modification plan to help your pet overcome aggression and improve its behaviour.

It is better to understand your pet health condition and being aware of pet diseases and their treatment, as well as how to manage their aggressive behaviours.

*Stephen Ochieng , Communication and Public Relations Student, Rongo University.*

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

[news@mountkenyatiimes.co.ke](mailto:news@mountkenyatiimes.co.ke)

## The Power Of Cultural Heritage On Madaraka Day

As Kenyans, June 1st holds a special place in our hearts. Madaraka Day marks the moment in 1963 when we first took the reins of self-governance. It was a day of immense pride and hope, symbolizing our newfound power and responsibility. Yet, as we celebrate this historic achievement, it's essential to recognize that true power extends beyond political freedom. It lies in the preservation and celebration of our cultural heritage, which defines who we are as a people.

Kenya is a nation blessed with diverse cultures, each contributing to the rich tapestry of our national identity. Our traditional dances, attire, music, and cuisine tell stories of resilience, unity, and history. However, in an era of rapid globalization and modernization, these precious

traditions are at risk of being overshadowed and forgotten.

Restoring and maintaining our cultural heritage is not merely a nostalgic exercise; it's a powerful act of self-affirmation. By embracing our roots, we strengthen our sense of identity and unity as a nation. This Madaraka Day, let us seize the opportunity to reconnect with our cultural practices and celebrate them as symbols of our self-governance and empowerment.

One of the most impactful ways to achieve this is by actively participating in and revitalizing our traditional festivals. These events are more than mere celebrations; they are vibrant expressions of our history, values, and community spirit. They provide a platform for intergenerational exchange, where the wisdom

of our elders meets the enthusiasm of our youth. By engaging in these festivals, we ensure that our cultural practices are cherished and passed down to future generations.

Supporting local artisans and craftspeople is another crucial step. The beadwork, pottery, textiles, and carvings created by our skilled artisans are not only beautiful but also tell stories of our past and present. Promoting and purchasing these handcrafted items sustains our cultural heritage and empowers local economies, fostering a sense of pride and ownership within our communities.

Education plays a vital role in cultural preservation. By incorporating the study of Kenyan history, languages, and traditions into our educational system, we ensure that

young Kenyans grow up with a deep understanding and appreciation of their heritage. Schools and communities can organize cultural exchange programs, storytelling sessions, and traditional art and music classes, creating spaces where our heritage thrives.

In the digital age, technology can be a powerful ally in preserving and promoting our cultural heritage. Social media platforms, websites, and digital archives can document and share our traditions with a global audience. Virtual museums and interactive experiences can bring our history and culture to life, making them accessible to anyone, anywhere.

As we celebrate Madaraka Day, let us recognize that the true power of self-governance extends beyond political independence. It encompasses

es the ability to define and celebrate our identity on our terms.

By restoring and maintaining our cultural heritages and festivals, we honor the struggles and triumphs of those who fought for our freedom. We reaffirm our commitment to a Kenya that is proud of its past, confident in its present, and hopeful for its future.

Let us come together, not just in commemoration but in action. Let us dance to the beats of our ancestors, wear our traditional attire with pride, and savor the flavors of our heritage. In doing so, we show the world that Kenya's power lies not only in its self-governance but in the vibrant, resilient spirit of its people. Happy Madaraka Day!

*Reagan Onyango, Migori.*

# EPRA Rallies The Nation To Adopt Electric Vehicles, Help Reduce Toxic Emissions

*'Kenya registers 600 percent increase in electric vehicle registrations in 2023'*

By: John Kariuki  
 @themtkenyatimes

Kenya is setting the pace in the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) realising a 600 percent growth last year as the Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority ramps up efforts to support the country's carbon emissions cuts.

"The country has witnessed a steady increase in EV imports, with electric vehicles rising by 1.6 percent in 2023 from 0.17 percent. Kenya's electric vehicle fleet currently comprises over 3,700 registered units, with approximately 90 percent being 2 and 3 wheelers," says Daniel Kiptoo Bargarora, Director General, Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority.

The local demand surge is indicative of global trends with predictions that at least 1 in 5 vehicles to be sold this year in the world will be electric. To bolster these efforts alongside enabling regulations, the energy regulator has launched a nationwide campaign dubbed Tusonge

na EVs to create awareness on safety, affordability and rally the nation towards mass market adoption with the support of the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The campaign supports the government's aspiration to attain a 5 percent market share of all newly imported vehicles being fully electric by 2025. While sales of EVs are increasing globally, there is a high concentration in major markets like the US, China and Europe. Countries like Kenya have introduced incentives to investors and prospective buyers to spur the numbers.

Last year, the Electricity and Petroleum Authority (EPRA), introduced a bulk Sh16 per KWH tariff for electric vehicles charging at designated e-ports, a move aimed at incentivising Kenyans to acquire electric vehicles. The Electric Vehicle Charging and Battery Swapping Infrastructure Guidelines sets out individual pricing regimes for e-bikes, e-motorcycles, e-car, e-trucks and e-buses.

An EV market assessment report launched alongside the campaign



looks into electric-propelled two and three-wheelers use within Nairobi. It points to a thriving EV start-up ecosystem, where more than 50 start-ups work as assemblers, energy service providers, and customer service and

support, and infrastructure developers.

EPRA will showcase the benefits of electric mobility; highlight its role in reducing emissions and how it creates economic opportunities. This

initiative underscores Kenya's commitment to a cleaner, greener future, aligning with global efforts to combat climate change.

## Resonating The Govt's Call To Go Electric

By: John Kariuki  
 @themtkenyatimes

Various stakeholders have heeded to the call by the Government through the President William Samoei Ruto to go electric in regards to embracing a more eco-friendly mode of transportation. Largely, at the moment, Kenya is driven by the Conventional fossil fuels which are a detriment to the environment.

But one company is doing a very impressive job of bringing electric cars that are very efficient fuel-consumption-wise. The Moja EV. We spoke to Eric and this is what he had to say:

I'm Eric Lumallas, and according to me, everybody should go electric. Because with electric vehicles the socio economic dynamism will change. A taxi driver can actually use 700 shillings to cover 384km which is

impossible with normal fuel.

We are also ready to do solar based infrastructure. For now we have the skyworth which is the 4\*4 that can do 620-700km per single charge 700km with a single charge. We have We have BOMA small cars that can do 220

We are ready to bring a smaller one for the Uber people we are trying to partner with AA in a bid to service the cars locally

We are also ready to assemble the cars locally



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**Sports >>** \*Vinicius Junior was Monday named by UEFA chiefs as Champions League player of the season after spearheading Real Madrid to European glory, with teammate Jude Bellingham picking up the young player award.

## Vinicius Jr Named Champions League Player Of The Season



Real Madrid's Brazilian forward Vinicius Junior poses with the trophy to celebrate the victory at the end of the UEFA Champions League final football match between Borussia Dortmund and Real Madrid, at Wembley stadium, in London, on June 1, 2024. (Photo by INA FASSBENDER / AFP).

Vinicius Junior was Monday named by UEFA chiefs as Champions League player of the season after spearheading Real Madrid to European glory, with teammate Jude Bellingham picking up the young player award.

Brazilian forward Vinicius scored six goals and made five assists in Real's victorious campaign, including the second in the 2-0 win against Borussia

Dortmund in the final at Wembley on Saturday.

Victory meant Real were crowned European champions for a record-extending 15th time.

"I'm very happy to be able to win another Champions League with this club, which has given me so much," 23-year-old Vinicius said.

England midfielder Bellingham was named as the Champions

League young player of the season after his dazzling first campaign with the Spanish giants.

The 20-year-old scored four goals and provided five assists in the Champions League for Real, who also won the Spanish league title.

"I can't put it into words," he said. "It's the best night of my life. It's got to be up there in terms of the perfect season."

AFP

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

**Sports >>** \*Two-time Champions League winning Jose Mourinho will be the new coach of Turkish club Fenerbahce, he announced on Saturday.

# Jose Mourinho To Be Unveiled As New Coach Of Fenerbahce



Roma's Portuguese coach Jose Mourinho looks on during the warm up ahead of the Italian Serie A football match between Juventus and Roma at the Allianz Stadium in Turin, on December 30, 2023. (Photo by Isabella BONOTTO / AFP).

Two-time Champions League winning Jose Mourinho will be the new coach of Turkish club Fenerbahce, he announced on Saturday.

The Portuguese coach, who won the Champions League with Porto and Inter Milan, has not worked since he was sacked by Italian Serie A side Roma in January.

He has also managed Chelsea, Manchester United, Tottenham and Real Madrid.

“Good evening Fenerbahce fans,

see you tomorrow at Kadikoy (the Istanbul suburb where the club is based) and let’s start our journey together,” Mourinho posted on his new club’s X account.

The 61-year-old Portuguese confirmed the move as he was acting as a pundit for TNT Sports television at the Champions League final at Wembley.

According to Turkey’s NTV television station, Mourinho’s appointment is due to be made official on Sunday.

Reports suggest Mourinho will sign a two-year contract for Fenerbahce, one of the three big Istanbul sides which have not won their domestic league in 10 years.

Mourinho was dismissed by Roma after two-and-a-half years in January with the club struggling in ninth at the time.

He guided Roma to the inaugural Europa Conference League trophy in 2022 and the final of last season’s Europa League.

AFP

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# SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



# International Sex Workers Day: Reproductive Healthcare And Human Rights Remain Inaccessible For Kenya's Female Sex Workers (FSWs)

By: Arnold Osano &  
Deborah Kemuma Monari

## Worth Noting:

- Various studies have also been highlighting the vulnerability of FSWs to increased risks of violence, poverty, medical negligence and mental health issues including suicidal thoughts. 'Mental Health Challenges and Perceived Risks Among Female Sex Workers in Nairobi,' a 2022 report by BMC Public Health also highlighted the need for micro and macro interventions to address these issues.

- Nguvu Change Leaders, Deborah Monari and Arnold Osano have been strongly advocating for safe and reliable healthcare for all citizens in Kenya, and on this International Sex Workers' Day, they are amplifying their campaign to seek preventive and promotive medical services for vulnerable populations like FSWs.



Arnold Osano.



Deborah Kemuma Monari.

June 2nd is known as International Sex Workers Day and below is a story that highlights the need for reproductive healthcare and human rights to be accessible for Kenya's Female Sex Workers (FSWs) as they too are the citizens of the country.

Nguvu Change Leaders from Kenya Deborah Monari and Arnold Osano have been strongly advocating for safe and reliable healthcare for all citizens in Kenya through their petitions

We request you to kindly take a look at this story and consider publishing it.

International Sex Workers Day, June 2: Reproductive healthcare and human rights remain inaccessible for Kenya's Female Sex Workers (FSWs)

The International Centre for Reproductive Health (ICRH) Kenya and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in their 2022 report on the 'Female Sex Workers Programme' estimated that in the last decade, the number of female sex workers (FSWs) in Kenya has increased by 26 per cent. In 2012, Kenya used geographic mapping, with 32 out

of the country's 47 counties participating, to estimate that there were 1,33,000 FSWs. In 2018, this exercise was repeated, revealing an increase estimated at 1,67,940.

Various studies have also been highlighting the vulnerability of FSWs to increased risks of violence, poverty, medical negligence and mental health issues including suicidal thoughts. 'Mental Health Challenges and Perceived Risks Among Female Sex Workers in Nairobi,' a 2022 report by BMC Public Health also highlighted the need for micro and macro interventions to address these issues.

Nguvu Change Leaders, Deborah Monari and Arnold Osano have been strongly advocating for safe and reliable healthcare for all citizens in Kenya, and on this International Sex Workers' Day, they are amplifying their campaign to seek preventive and promotive medical services for vulnerable populations like FSWs.

"One of the constantly recurring concerns among women in Kenya is the poor quality of health services. Female Sex Workers are exceptionally vulnerable to medical ill-treat-

ment, abuse, neglect, discrimination, and abandonment. On International Sex Workers' Day, we are seeking concrete action from authorities to ensure equitable access to quality healthcare for FSWs," said Deborah and Arnold Osano.

Arnold Osano has already launched an online campaign, urging the National and County Government Departments of Public Health and Sanitation to prioritise resource allocation towards improving the standards of healthcare services. He also highlights factors such as insufficient drugs, a low number of service providers, poor service provision conditions, and poor sanitation in healthcare facilities, forcing Kenyans to purchase drugs from private chemists and clinics at high costs.

"Female Sex Workers face threats of serious health problems such as sexually transmitted infections, and unintended pregnancies. There is an unmet need for contraceptives among them, but they cannot access it due to the high cost. The situation calls for urgently launching a comprehensive sexual and reproductive health plan for them," add the

Change Leaders.

In 2023, Deborah Monari launched an online petition that achieved victory to ensure that the right to reproductive health is not denied to underserved women. She says, "When the Nairobi City County Finance Bill 2023 was proposed, they were going to introduce charges for essential family planning services and products like contraceptive implants and post-abortion care. This would have spelt disaster for Female Sex Workers, women and teenagers from low-income homes. The proposed law would have limited their access to those healthcare services (in primary health centres and district hospitals) by making them exorbitantly priced. FSWs and women from disadvantaged families would not have been able to afford them."

Although significant cost reductions were achieved, Monari emphasises the need to ensure reproductive health services remain accessible and affordable across the country, highlighting it as a fundamental right to health and bodily agency.