



The Debt-Health Nexus: Disentangling Kenya's Public Debt Management And Its Impact On Healthcare Rights

In the recent past Kenya has been facing significant economic challenges, amidst all these a critical yet often overlooked connection exists between public debt management and the fundamental right to health.

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News>> Pastor Dorcas And Wellwishers Helps Victims Of Fire Tragedy In Kibra

P. 8. Victims of the Kibra fire in Nairobi County were assisted with personal items and reconstruction material following an inferno last week caused by an electric fault that gutted some of the houses.



News>> Kakuzi Posts KSh507 M Half-Year Pre-tax Profit As Macadamia Division Returns To The Profit Zone

P. 12. Nairobi Security Exchange listed agri-business firm and superfoods producer Kakuzi has announced a KSh507 million half-year pretax profit on the back of a general market recovery for its Macadamia Nuts and Avocado superfoods exports business.

Mt Kenya PSs Perform Well In New Poll



Raymond Omollo



Charles Hinga



Elijah Mwangi



Ephantus Kimotho



Alex Wachira



Mary Muthoni

STORY ON PAGE 9

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CS Mutua and COTU Boss Hold Talks To Foster Industrial Harmony And Address Worker Welfare



By: Cynthia Masibo
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- “We will weed out rogue agencies that are mistreating our workers and going against the agreements,” Mutua vowed, adding that the government is committed to protecting the rights of its citizens working abroad.
- To further address these concerns, Mutua announced that he would convene a high-level meeting with employment agencies. The meeting will focus on safeguarding the rights of Kenyan workers and ensuring that employment agencies operate within the law.



Kenya's labour sector, Labour and Social Protection Cabinet Secretary Alfred Mutua with The Central Organisation of Trade Unions (COTU) Secretary General Francis Atwoli

Labour and Social Protection Cabinet Secretary Alfred Mutua has pledged to foster a culture of dialogue, understanding, and harmony within Kenya's labor sector.

During a high-stakes meeting held yesterday with Central Organisation of Trade Unions (COTU) Secretary-General Francis Atwoli, the two leaders discussed several pressing issues, including the long-delayed 6 percent minimum wage increment.

The meeting, which took place amidst growing unrest in the labor sector, came at a critical time for the country. With millions of workers awaiting the implementation of the wage increment, the discussions offered a glimmer of hope for those anticipating a positive resolution.

CS Mutua assured the COTU leader that the government was fully aware of the urgency surrounding the minimum wage issue and was making considerable progress towards its implementation.

“I am seized of the matter, and progress is good. The gazettment should happen soon,” Mutua affirmed, giving hope to the workers who have been anxiously awaiting the pay rise.

Beyond the issue of minimum wage, the talks also addressed the growing number of job opportunities available for Kenyans abroad. Mutua revealed that there are currently 452,000 job openings in various countries, and the government is committed to facilitating Kenyans in securing these positions. However, the CS did not shy away from addressing the

darker side of foreign employment. He expressed disappointment over the continued mistreatment of Kenyan workers by rogue employment agencies, which have violated agreements and subjected workers to harsh conditions.

“We will weed out rogue agencies that are mistreating our workers and going against the agreements,” Mutua vowed, adding that the government is committed to protecting the rights of its citizens working abroad.

To further address these concerns, Mutua announced that he would convene a high-level meeting with employment agencies. The meeting will focus on safeguarding the rights of Kenyan workers and ensuring that employment agencies operate within the law.

Emphasizing the importance of industrial peace, Mutua stated that fostering a harmonious relationship between employees and employers is crucial for enhancing productivity in the country. He called for mutual respect between both parties, stating that such respect is fundamental for maintaining industrial harmony.

Additionally, Mutua appealed to unions to allow the new cabinet time to fully understand and address the myriad of issues affecting the labor sector before resorting to industrial action.

“This government listens,” Mutua reassured the unions, urging them to embrace dialogue over strikes as a means of resolving disputes.

In response, COTU Secretary-General Francis Atwoli expressed confidence in Mutua's ability to bring harmony to the labor sector.

He lauded Mutua's commitment to fostering meaningful relationships through dialogue and underscored the urgent need to address the plight of Kenyan workers, particularly those in the Middle East.

Atwoli suggested the establishment of labor offices in the region as a solution to better protect workers' rights and ensure their well-being.

Atwoli pledged his full support for Mutua's approach, noting that the emphasis on dialogue to prevent strikes is a welcome strategy. He emphasized that the welfare of workers should remain at the forefront of the government's agenda, and urged all stakeholders to work together towards achieving lasting solutions to the challenges facing the labor sector.

As Kenya continues to grapple with longstanding labor issues, the outcome of these discussions could mark a turning point in the quest for industrial peace and the protection of workers' rights. The joint commitment of Mutua and Atwoli to dialogue and understanding signals a hopeful future for the nation's labor sector.





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NEWS IN BRIEF



The Technical, Vocational Education, and Training (TVET) institutions are set to benefit from equipment worth Sh.13 billion from China under a Government-to-Government arrangement. The equipment, which includes advanced technologies like Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR), will be supplied to various TVET institutions, including mechanical, electrical, and electronic, agricultural machinery, mechatronics, civil and building, welding and fabrication, hospitality management, automotive, and refrigeration and air conditioning departments of the various TVET institutions. The Principal Secretary of the State Department for Technical and Vocational Education and Training, Dr. Esther Thaara Muoria commended the government for its efforts to support the TVET sector, stating that there are currently 240 TVET institutions in Kenya. She also called on the youth to join TVET institutions, stating that TVET CDACC has broken down different training programs into a skill set that allows individuals to gain skills for a short time before starting to earn from them. Dr. Muoria noted that with the Kenya Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (KCATS), the youth will be able to move seamlessly in their quest to gain skills in TVET institutions.



Kiambu County has begun the second phase of its Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) infrastructure overhaul, with the construction of 130 new model centres slated for the 2024–2025 financial year. These centres are expected to benefit over 35,000 children currently enrolled in ECDE programs across the county. Kiambu Governor Kimani Wamatangi stated that the project aims to create an environment that excites learners and develops a love for education. The ECDE centres will be well-equipped with modern facilities to promote child development, including PP1 and PP2 classrooms, administrative offices, ablution blocks for children and teachers, and a play centre. The project builds on the success of the first phase, which saw the construction and refurbishment of 134 ECDE centres across Kiambu. The project is expected to take three financial years to complete in all 524 ECDE centres in the county.

Gichugu Technical and Vocational College (TVC) has started admitting students, with learning scheduled to begin in September. The newly constructed institution, constructed through the National Government Constituency Development Fund (NG-CDF) and the Ministry of Education, offers various technical courses with a bias towards engineering. The TVC, costing Sh52 million, has a capacity of 3,000 learners and has received learning equipment and instructors. Gichugu Member of Parliament, Githinji Gichimu, has urged students to take up technical courses to prepare them for the job market or self-employment. He assured the college that his office would provide full support to all qualified students, both local and from other counties.



Teachers have been urged to postpone their planned strike and allow the government and parliament time to pass a revised finance bill that will factor in their salary increment. According to Gem member of parliament, Elisha Ochieng' Odhiambo, there was little that the government can do currently in the face of the rejection of the 2024 finance bill and the subsequent dismissal of the 2023 one by the courts. He urged teachers to go slowly with their demands and allow parliament to discharge its mandate. "I want to ask teachers to go slowly. Allow us as parliament to pass the reviewed Finance Bill 2024, and you will be paid in arrears," said Odhiambo during the occasion that was also attended by Gem Yala Deputy County Commissioner, John Otieno.



Red Cross International and the Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREW) have provided food to over 100 vulnerable families in Narok town. Representative from the Red Cross, Representative Elijah Wachira, emphasised the importance of celebrating the day with the less fortunate to give them hope for a better future. Wachira called on those privileged in society to help the less fortunate so they can lead a decent life. "The small acts of humility you show to people matter a lot because they bring a smile to a vulnerable person. We may not have a lot to feed all vulnerable people in society, but together with other stakeholders, we try to reach out to as many as we can," he said. Most families who were affected by flash floods two months ago and street children in Narok town also received lunch and refreshments. William Mwaura from CREW said they chose to celebrate with the less fortunate because they too deserved a decent life like any other person. "Every person received a package with sugar, rice, maize flour, bar soap, tea leaves, and beans. Though this may not sustain them for many days, it will put a smile on their faces for some days, and they will remember that there are people out there who care for their lives," he said.



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JKIA Workers Boycott Public Participation Session On Adani Takeover, Demand Transparency



By: Aoma Keziah
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- Led by the Kenya Aviation Workers Union (KAWU), the employees expressed their frustration over the secrecy surrounding the agreement, arguing that it raises questions about the motivations behind the deal. They insist that the Kenya Airports Authority (KAA) should be the one to take charge of the airport and not the foreign Adani firm.
- KAA is one of the few firms making profit in the country. You cannot lease an operating airport built with the taxpayer's resources to a foreign firm.



From Right, KAWU Secretary General Moss Ndiema, Secretary General Moss Ndiema, Union Official Robert Lichoro and Union Chairperson Walter Ongeru.



Kenya Aviation Workers Union during their press briefing at JKIA.

Workers at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) led by Kenya Aviation Workers Union (KAWU) have refused to participate in a scheduled public participation session regarding the proposed takeover of airport operations by Adani Group, citing concerns over the lack of transparency in the deal.

The session, organized by the Kenya Airports Authority (KAA), was meant to gather input from stakeholders on the potential benefits and challenges of the takeover. However, it was met with resistance from the workers, who are demanding that all documents related to the deal be made public before they can engage in any discussions.

"When we suspended our strike action, we wanted genuine, respectful and honest dialogue, they are now pushing through a sharp public participation, and I call it sharp because in the absence of documentation, for example, proposal in the absence of that

of the disability study, what is the basis of public participation? What is the basis at its life projection? Is this part of Kenya amateur? If it is part of Kenya, please let the government submit to the law. If they have a genuine, honest, viable PIP proposal from Adani, share it with us. Yes. Tell us how good it is." Stated KAWU secretary general Moss Ndiema

Led by the Kenya Aviation Workers Union (KAWU), the employees expressed their frustration over the secrecy surrounding the agreement, arguing that it raises questions about the motivations behind the deal. They insist that the Kenya Airports Authority (KAA) should be the one to take charge of the airport and not the foreign Adani firm.

"KAA is one of the few firms making profit in the country. You cannot lease an operating airport built with the taxpayer's resources to a foreign firm. In Kenya we have Konza City,

let the government take Adani to the city and tell them to build an airport there and they operate it. We cannot participate in a public forum where the most crucial information is being kept from us." Noted Mr Walter Ongeru, National Chairperson of KAWU

In addition, the Secretary General of the Union added that the workers will be meeting on Saturday 24th to deliberate on the strike notice they had given after a meeting with the Cabinet Secretary Energy Davis Chirchir, a meeting that they did not come to terms of agreement

"We had an attempt yesterday to have the negotiations but the government is bent on pushing the Adani takeover by hook or crook. Today, they are purporting to be having public participation at the State Pavillion. They want to coerce employees to attend the exercise but we have told them not to attend." Said Mr Ndiema

The workers also voiced concerns

about potential job losses, changes in working conditions, and the implications for national security if the airport's management is transferred to a foreign entity. They called on the government to prioritize the interests of Kenyan workers and the public in any agreements made with the Adani Group.

The standoff between the JKIA workers and the authorities highlights the growing tension over the proposed takeover, which has sparked widespread debate in the country. The workers' demand for transparency is likely to put additional pressure on the government and KAA to disclose the details of the deal and address the concerns raised by various stakeholders.

As the situation develops, all eyes will be on the government's next move and whether it will heed the call for greater transparency in the Adani takeover process.

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Pastor Dorcas And Wellwishers Helps Victims Of Fire Tragedy In Kibra

By: ODP

Victims of the Kibra fire in Nairobi County were assisted with personal items and reconstruction material following an inferno last week caused by an electric fault that gutted some of the houses.

Among the affected were six widows who are beneficiaries of the widows and orphans program under Pastor Dorcas Rigathi, the spouse of the Deputy President, Rigathi Gachagua, who also runs the Dorcas Rigathi Foundation.

The six widows received blankets, foodstuffs, dignity kits that included toiletries and soaps, and reconstruction material for their homes following the destructive inferno.

“The donated items will assist the widows and their children during this time of great need, said Esther Waiganjo.

Pastor Dorcas was represented by the Director of the Widows Program, Esther Waiganjo, who was joined by other well-wishers who also donated different items to assist the affected. They included Bishop John Parit who also supports widows in Kajiado County through different empowerment projects and works closely with Pastor Dorcas.

Pastor Dorcas works closely with clergy from across faiths – Muslim, Christian, and Hindu – to reach the vulnerable in the society who include persons with disabilities (PWDs), widows and orphans and the boy child lost in alcohol, drug, and substance abuse.

Pastor Dorcas started working with widows since her days as a student at the Kenyatta University, a passion that sprung from being raised by a widow. The widows and orphans program has, however, grown to impact more than 13,000 widows in different counties that include Nairobi, Kajiado, Embu, Bomet, Nakuru, Migori, Kilifi, Laikipia, Nyeri, and TransN-



Pastor Dorcas Rigathi Foundation's Director of the Widows Program, Esther Waiganjo and other well-wishers donating relief supplies to Kibra fire victims.

zoia.

The six widows are part of the Nairobi Widows Chapter that meets regularly at the House of Grace, Nairobi West, where they have established a tree nursery, engage in crocheting, beadwork, mat making, detergent making, and also candle making among other initiatives.

The widows in different counties have initiated economic projects suitable for their region. Widows face unique challenges as they work towards bringing up their children singlehandedly, and issues of discrimination and stigmatization following the loss of their spouses.

Joho Announces Plan To Reclaim Coastal Landing Sites

By: MKT Correspondent
@themkenyatimes

Cabinet Secretary for Mining and Blue Economy, Hassan Ali Joho, has announced a plan to reclaim public landing sites that have been illegally grabbed, a significant issue in the blue economy sector.

“The government will soon issue a legal notice to anyone occupying these landing sites illegally; hence, I call upon landing site grabbers to begin getting rid of any personal property along these areas. This call especially goes to the land grabbers within the beach area stretching from Kiunga to Lungalunga,” reiterated the CS.

The government, in collaboration with county authorities, is committed to demolishing any personal properties that encroach on these vital sites.

This effort is part of a broader strategy to ensure the sustainability and integrity of the blue economy, which

is crucial for the livelihoods of many coastal communities.

Joho called upon land grabbers to begin getting rid of any personal property along these areas, especially those within the beach area stretching from Kiunga to Lungalunga.

“I want to announce that an eligible contractor for the Liwatoni factory has been found and contracts have been prepared; hence, we are expecting that within the next 8 to 12 months we should be commissioning the factory and fully operationalising it for the interest of the Coast region,” highlighted the CS.

He also announced that an eligible contractor for the Liwatoni processing ground has been found and contracts have been prepared, with the factory expected to commission and fully operationalise within the next 8 to 12 months.

“We have had an extensive discussion with key stakeholders in the maritime sector; hence, within a week, they should have developed a framework in collaboration with



Cabinet Secretary Ali Joho with other leaders, led by Mombasa County governor Abdulswamad Nassir briefing journalists.

TVET institutions on how they can broaden the spaces for training the upcoming seafarers,” stated Joho.

Additionally, a working committee on ship wreckage will be formed to eventually get rid of worn-out ships in the country.

Mt Kenya PSs Perform Well In New Poll

By:MKT Correspondents
@themkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- As per the poll that surveyed 11,861 people through Computer Assisted Telephonic Interviews (CATI), who are all registered voters, 52% of those polled were female while 48% were male.
- With regards to those they would want retained in the event of a broad-based push, Interior's Raymond Omollo, mining's Elijah Mwangi, Energy's Alex Wachira, Public Health's Mary Muthoni, Treasury's Dr. Chris Kiptoo, Irrigation's Ephantus Kimotho and Housing's Charles Hinga, polled highest.
- Politrack's leading researcher Emmanuel Kutosi, while releasing the poll, noted the works done by the female Principal Secretaries, whom he said those polled suggested to the president to retain if a reshuffle is to be done.

Principal Secretaries from the Mt. Kenya region seems to be doing well in the President William Ruto's administration, with 7 out of 15 top performing being from the region.

The new poll released by Politrack Africa, focused on performance of the Principal Secretaries and tracking their performance by preference from Kenyans on who they would want the president to retain if changes are to be effected.

On those preferred to be retained, Elijah Mwangi of State Department for Mining leads with 67.4%, followed by Energy's Alex Wachira with 66.0% and Mary Muthoni of Public Health and Professional Standards who garnered 65.1% being number three.

In the polls, Interior PS Raymond Omollo was been ranked as the best performing in the country.

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Politrack's leading researcher Emmanuel Kutosi, while releasing the poll, noted the works done by the female Principal Secretaries, whom he said those polled suggested to the president to retain if a reshuffle is to be done.

"Public Health PS Mary Muthoni has been very visible on matters health, especially at the absence of a substance Cabinet Secretary. Most of those polled wanted her retained at her position if the president was to effect some changes," Kutosi said.

"In fact, she won admiration from across the country," he added.

There was only three lady PSs in the top 15 positions of those Kenyans would want back if a reshuffle is done.

Others are Betsy Muthoni of the state department for Blue Economy and Fisheries and Teresia Mbaika of the state department for Devolution.

Within the Mt. Kenya region, PSs Ephantus Kimotho of the State Department for Irrigation and Charles Hinga of the state department for Housing and Urban Development complete the list of top 20 PSs.

When asked about the performance

POSSIBLE PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES DISSOLUTION

Q5. a) In case of a possible Principal Secretaries Reshuffle happened, which Principal Secretary do you think should be retained?

Principal Secretary	Percentage
PS RAYMOND OMOLLO, PhD, CES State Department for Interior Security	67.4%
PS ELIJAH MWANGI State Department for Mining	67.4%
PS ALEX WACHIRA State Department for Energy	66.0%
PS MARY MUTHONI MURIBU State Department for Public Health	65.1%
PS CHRIS KIPTOO, CES State Department for Treasury	63.1%
PS EPHANTUS KIMOTHO State Department for Irrigation	62.5%
PS BETSY MUTHONI NJUGA State Department for Blue Economy & Fisheries	61.2%
PS AMR. JULIUS BITOK State Department for Immigration	59.3%
PS CHARLES HINGA State Department for Housing & Urban Development	58.1%
PS ABUBAKAR HASSAN State Department for Investment Promotion	56.7%
PS GEOFFREY KATURU State Department for Shipping & Maritime	54.3%
PS KIBIRI SING'OR State Department for Foreign Affairs	54.0%
PS ENG. JOSEPH MUNGANI MBUGUA State Department for Roads	54.0%
PS DEL. BETO KIPSANG State Department for Basic Education	53.2%
PS TERESIA MBAIKA MALOKIWE State Department for Devolution	52.0%

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POSSIBLE PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES DISSOLUTION

(b) Based on their performance, which Principal Secretary do you think should retain their position in the State Department they currently hold in case of a possible principal secretaries dissolution?

Principal Secretary	Percentage
PS RAYMOND OMOLLO, PhD, CES State Department for Interior Security	63.1%
PS ELIJAH MWANGI State Department for Mining	60.0%
PS ALEX WACHIRA State Department for Energy	59.5%
PS MARY MUTHONI MURIBU State Department for Public Health	59.3%
PS CHRIS KIPTOO, CES State Department for Treasury	59.0%
PS EPHANTUS KIMOTHO State Department for Irrigation	58.7%
PS CHARLES HINGA State Department for Housing & Urban Development	57.7%

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of Mt. Kenya PSs in the different departments they head, Kutosi noted a general collective push to work, saying the poll results depicted the views of a majority of those polled.

On the question to form a broad-based government, 41.3% of the 11,000 respondents don't support it while 36.7% support the president's decision.

22.0% of the respondents are not

sure the move would calm political temperatures or spur growth at all.

Consequently, 77% of Kenyans would want the president to either

dissolve or merge state departments and reduce the burden that is paying the state officers.

Eric Omondi Calls For Referendum To Reduce Leadership Positions In Kenya

By: Cynthia Masibo
@themkenyatimes

Eric Omondi, A Kenyan Comedian And Activist, Has Initiated The Process Of Collecting Signatures To Push For A National Referendum. The Former Churchill Show Comedian Is Advocating For A Significant Reduction In The Number Of Counties And The Elimination Of Several Political Positions, Including Those Of Senators, Women Representatives, Nominated Mps, And Nominated Members Of County Assembly (Mcas). Omondi's Argument Is Centered On The Belief That Kenya Is Overrepresented, Leading To Unnecessary Duplication Of Roles And A Burden On Taxpayers.

Speaking During A Press Conference Held At A Hotel In Nairobi, Omondi Stated, "Kenya Is Overrepresented. A Single Kenyan Is Represented By 16 People Doing The Same Thing— President, Deputy President, Governor, Deputy Governor, MP, Senator, Women Representative, MCA, Regional Commissioner, County Commissioner, Assistant County Commissioner, Chief, Sub-Chief, And Village



Eric Omondi, a Kenyan Comedian and activist addressing the media on the process of collecting signatures to push for a national referendum

Elder. This Redundancy Is Unsustainable."

Omondi's Campaign For A Referendum Aims To Address What He Perceives As An Overextension Of Leadership That Has Not Translated Into Better Services For Citizens. He Plans To Traverse The Country, Collecting The Necessary One Million Signatures Required To Initiate The Referendum Process. Confident In

The Success Of This Mission, Omondi Estimates That Gathering The Signatures Will Take No More Than Two Weeks.

The Comedian-Turned-Activist Also Drew Comparisons Between Kenya And The United States, A Country With A Far Larger Population But Fewer Government Officials. "The Taxpayers Are Carrying The Burden Of Paying For Offices That Are Over-

lapping," Omondi Remarkd. "We Have A National Government Sports Minister And A County Government Sports Minister. We Have A National Environment Minister And A County Environment Minister. How Many Environments Do We Have?"

Omondi's Criticism Extends To The Implementation Of Devolution, A Key Feature Of Kenya's 2010 Constitution That Was Designed To Bring

Services Closer To The People. According To Omondi, The Spirit Of Devolution Has Been Lost In A Maze Of Overlapping Roles And Bloated Administrative Structures That Fail To Deliver On Their Intended Purposes. "Devolution Was Supposed To Devolve Services, But That Has Not Been The Case," He Noted.

His Call For A Referendum Is Likely To Ignite Debate Across The Political Spectrum. While Some May View His Initiative As A Populist Move, Others Might See It As A Necessary Step Toward Streamlining Governance And Reducing The Economic Burden On Ordinary Kenyans. The Idea Of Reducing Counties And Scrapping Certain Leadership Positions Is Not New, But Omondi's High-Profile Push Could Bring It Back To The Forefront Of National Discourse.

Omondi's Involvement In Activism Has Grown In Recent Years, With This Latest Move Marking A Significant Escalation In His Efforts To Influence National Policy. Whether His Call For A Referendum Will Gain Traction Remains To Be Seen, But It Is Clear That Omondi's Voice Is Resonating With A Section Of Kenyans Frustrated With The Status Quo.



Kenya Set To Launch Nationwide Sensitization Drive On EU Economic Partnership Agreement

By: Aoma Keziah
@themkenyetimes

The Kenyan government is set to launch a comprehensive nationwide sensitization module aimed at enlightening the local business community about the opportunities presented by the European Union (EU) Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). The initiative seeks to provide businesses across the country with vital information on how to leverage the agreement, which is poised to open new markets for Kenyan products across the 27 EU member states.

Speaking in a joint presser in Nairobi, EU Ambassador to Kenya, Henriette Geiger, commended the Ministry's efforts to streamline and operationalize the agreement. "The EPA provides a unique opportunity for Kenya's business Community to access the European market duty-free. Once fully embraced and adopted, this agreement will significantly increase employment Oppor-



Far right, PS Industry Juma Mukhwana, Abubakar Hassan PS investment EU ambassador to Kenya Henriette Geiger and CS (MITI) Salim mvurya in picture at the MITI office

tunities and strengthen economic ties between Kenya and the EU," said Ambassador Geiger. Cabinet Secretary for Investments, Trade & Industry, Salim Mvurya, lauded the EPA as a "transformative agreement" that will significantly boost Kenya's trade prospects on the international stage.

"It is crucial that both the business and investor communities are Fully informed about the stakes involved not only for the private sector but also for public and government agencies. stated. It is a gateway to unprecedented opportunities for Kenyan products and services in Europe," Mvurya emphasized.

The sensitization module, which will be rolled out across the country, aims to equip Kenyan businesses with the knowledge and tools necessary to maximize the benefits of the EPA. The initiative will cover key aspects of the agreement, including market access provisions, rules of origin, and trade facilitation measures. It will also provide sector-specific guidance, helping businesses in agriculture, manufacturing, and services understand how to align their products with EU standards and regulations. The EU EPA is expected to enhance Kenya's access to a market of over 450 million consumers in Europe, offering duty-free and quota-free entry for Kenyan goods. This agreement, Mvurya noted, presents a unique opportunity for Kenyan exporters to expand their reach and diversify their markets, reducing reliance on traditional export destinations. As part of the sensitization efforts, the Ministry of Investments, Trade & Industry will collaborate with key stakeholders, including business associations, chambers of commerce, and trade experts, to ensure that the

information is accessible and practical for businesses of all sizes. The module will also address challenges that businesses may face in complying with EU regulations and provide solutions to overcome these hurdles. The EPA comes at a time when Kenya is striving to strengthen its economic ties with international partners and boost its export-led growth strategy. With the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) also in focus, the EPA is expected to complement Kenya's broader trade agenda, enhancing the country's position as a leading exporter in the region. The government has expressed optimism that the sensitization module will lead to increased awareness and participation in the EPA, ultimately resulting in a surge in Kenyan exports to Europe. As businesses gear up to take advantage of this opportunity, the EPA is set to play a crucial role in Kenya's economic development and integration into the global economy.

Eight Gigiri Police Officers Suspended Over Prison Break Scandal

By: Cynthia Masibo
@themkenyetimes

Eight police officers, including the Officer Commanding Police Division (OCPD) and the Officer Commanding Station (OCS) at Gigiri Police Station, have been interdicted following the escape of a high-profile murder suspect and 12 other detainees. The dramatic escape has sent shockwaves through law enforcement agencies and raised serious questions about internal security lapses within the Kenyan police force. Acting Inspector General of Police Gilbert Masengeli confirmed the suspensions during a press briefing held at the Gigiri Police Station yesterday. The officers who have been interdicted include the Gigiri Sub County Police Commander, the OCS, the Duty Officer, the Duty Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO), several station guards, and personnel from the report office. Masengeli indicated that preliminary investigations suggest the escape was an inside job, further exacerbating

public outrage and the growing mistrust of law enforcement. The primary focus of the investigation is the escape of Collins Jumaisi Kalusha, a prime suspect in the Kware murder case. Kalusha is alleged to have been involved in the murder of 42 women in Kware, a crime that sent shockwaves across the nation. His escape from custody has rekindled fears and deepened the anxiety among the families of the victims and the general public. Jumaisi's escape was not an isolated incident. He was accompanied by 12 other detainees, all Eritrean nationals who had been arrested for being in Kenya illegally. According to Masengeli, these individuals were awaiting repatriation when the break occurred in the early hours of Tuesday morning. The acting Inspector General revealed that the escape appears to have been meticulously planned and executed with the help of insiders, underscoring the gravity of the breach. "Our preliminary investigations indicate that the escape was aided by insiders, considering that officers were deployed accordingly to guard the

station," Masengeli stated. "Consequently, I have interdicted eight officers who were on duty last night." The interdicted officers are currently under investigation by the Internal Affairs Unit. Masengeli emphasized that any officer found culpable in facilitating the escape would face the full force of the law. The Internal Affairs Unit, known for its thoroughness, is expected to leave no stone unturned as they delve into the circumstances surrounding the escape. Masengeli, flanked by the Director of Criminal Investigations (DCI) Mohamed Amin and Deputy Inspector General of Police Eliud Lagat, led a team of investigators in inspecting the crime scene where the suspects made their daring escape. The area around Gigiri Police Station has been cordoned off and marked as a crime scene, with forensic experts combing for evidence that could provide clues about the breach. The Acting Inspector General also announced the launch of a nationwide manhunt for the escaped suspects, with special emphasis on recapturing Collins Jumaisi. Authorities have urged the public to remain vigilant



Senior Police bosses led by Acting Police IG Gilbert Masengel , Deputy Inspector General of Police Kenya Police Service Eliud Lagat addressing the media

and to report any information that could lead to the re-arrest of the suspects. "We have launched a manhunt to re-arrest the escapees," Masengeli said. "We further appeal to members of the public with any information that may lead to the re-arrest of the suspects, especially the murder suspect, Collins Jumaisi Kalusha, to re-

port to the nearest police station or through the police hotline numbers 999, 112, 911, and 0800 722 203." The escape of Jumaisi and the Eritrean nationals represents one of the most significant security breaches in recent memory, raising alarm bells within both the public and police ranks.

Kakuzi Posts KSh507 M Half-Year Pretax Profit As Macadamia Division Returns To The Profit Zone

By: MKT Correspondent
@themkenyetimes

Nairobi Security Exchange listed agri-business firm and superfoods producer Kakuzi has announced a KSh507 million half-year pretax profit on the back of a general market recovery for its Macadamia Nuts and Avocado superfoods exports business.

Speaking when he announced the half-year results release, the firm's Managing Director Chris Flowers said the half-year results had been positively impacted by a buoyant international avocado market, created mainly by subdued global supply for the popular superfood.

He added that international demand for macadamia nuts has also returned to pre-COVID levels, with prices steadily growing but still lagging the 2021 levels.

The firm's total turnover grew by 35% to KSh 1.175 billion, up from KSh873 million posted in the same half-year period last year.

Buoyed by lower market supply from traditional high-volume Avocado suppliers in the international market from South American countries such as Peru and Mexico, Kakuzi's avocado fortunes enjoyed a 42% growth to close the half-year trading period at KSh951 million, up from KSh670 million posted within the same period, last year.

Kakuzi's macadamia earnings have now returned to a profit zone, with a KSh32 million profit, up from a KSh329 million loss posted within the same period last year.

Demand for the firm's sustainable wood products continues to soar in the half-year trading period, with divisional profits growing 54% to KSh71 million, up from KSh46 million posted in the same period last year.

"In line with our expectations, the global macadamia industry has taken a positive turn, with all markets recording a return to near normal (pre-COVID pandemic) demand levels. Global stock levels from 2023 have largely been consumed, and 2024's production, which is currently being harvested and processed, is well-committed to the market," Flowers said.

He added, "Despite the challenges posed by reduced avocado production in Peru and Mexico, Kakuzi has shown resilience in the face of a tight supply situation in Europe and the USA. The impact of climate change on agriculture, including our own, has been significant, with the rainfall last April nearly double the normal amount, negatively affecting avocado production. However, we remain



Kakuzi Assistant Manager Extension Services Laban Mwaura, Chairman Nick Ng'ang'a, Director Pamela Ager and MD Chris Flowers at 95th AGM

steadfast in our commitment to overcoming these challenges."

Despite a tough operating environment, Kakuzi Plc Board Chairman Mr Nicholas Ng'ang'a reiterated the firm's unwavering commitment to promoting responsibly grown Kenyan superfoods in both traditional and emerging markets. Quality, traceability, and sustainability will continue to be Kakuzi's key operating pillars.

"We are proud to see more and more customers appreciating our value-added and fresh produce range of edible oil, fresh meats, and roasted and coated macadamia nuts," he said.

While commenting on the sector's operating challenges, Mr Ng'ang'a noted that the political situation in and around the Red Sea has effectively forced all the major shipping lines to travel around the Cape rather than through the Suez Canal. As a result, transit times for Kenyan avocados have been extended to nearly the edge of what is possible, which manifests in some quality problems.

"These challenges underscore the critical need to diversify our markets. We acknowledge that while China, India, and the Middle East offer long-term growth possibilities, they currently lack the scale to substitute Europe. However, exploring these markets could provide a buffer against future market disruptions," Mr Ng'ang'a said.

Mr Flowers noted that heavy rains early this year had negatively im-

acted avocado growing conditions at the farm operating level. Thankfully, only limited damage was caused to the firm's avocado biological assets. Rainwater runoff from Kakuzi's vast water catchment areas filled the firm's 19 Kakuzi earth wall dams, and the overflow channels (spillways) all performed according to their engineering design.

Mr Flowers noted that the Kakuzi Farm Market, which opened its doors last year, has established itself and successfully launched as a future-proof enterprise hub, attracting discerning and youthful clientele.

"This hub, a platform for local entrepreneurs to form business partnerships with Kakuzi, is improving our product sales and creating a win-win business model for all involved. We can all take pride in this achievement," he said, adding, "Our customers' feedback is invaluable. We've had to expand our facilities because of the increasing demand for our cold-pressed macadamia oil.

The trend towards food with farm-to-fork credentials, whether meat products, blueberries, avocados, or macadamia nuts, clearly indicates the evolving preferences of discerning consumers."

As the demand for retail products in the domestic market increases, Kakuzi, Mr Flowers assured, will continue to evaluate its capacity to satisfy the market demand.

"Already, we have had to intensify

our arable operations to provide more feed for our livestock. In turn, livestock numbers may also have to be increased to meet the demand from the Boran Barn restaurant and Butchery operations.

The Goat meat (Kabuzi) and newly established mutton ranges will also add further variety for our customers. We have also increased our areas under commercial forestry as demand for sustainably grown wood products increases. Customers see the financial benefits of quality-treated posts and construction materials for small and large-scale projects."

Early this year (March 2024), Kakuzi entered the Indian avocado export market. The firm, which has enjoyed traditional market access opportunities in Europe, China, and the Middle East, is pursuing strategic market diversification strategies, with new opportunities for avocado sales in India and Malaysia that are high on the business development priority list.

Due to the ever-growing demand for quality superfoods globally, the company expanded its avocado orchards by 60 hectares last year, up from 927 hectares at a Kshs 120 million investment cost. Kakuzi made history in 2022 by landing an inaugural shipment of fresh fruits in the Chinese market.

Worth Noting:

- “In line with our expectations, the global macadamia industry has taken a positive turn, with all markets recording a return to near normal (pre-COVID pandemic) demand levels. Global stock levels from 2023 have largely been consumed, and 2024's production, which is currently being harvested and processed, is well-committed to the market,” Flowers said.
- He added, “Despite the challenges posed by reduced avocado production in Peru and Mexico, Kakuzi has shown resilience in the face of a tight supply situation in Europe and the USA. The impact of climate change on agriculture, including our own, has been significant, with the rainfall last April nearly double the normal amount, negatively affecting avocado production. However, we remain steadfast in our commitment to overcoming these challenges.”

Stepfathers From Hell: Sampling Cases From Nyeri Law Courts

By: Wangari Humphery
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- Paul Ndung’u, the children’s officer at Nyeri Central Sub-County said he was notified of the case at the Nyeri County Referral Hospital, where the child was admitted because of a broken leg but upon further examination, the doctors realized she was defiled.
- “I was asked to find a safe home for the minor as the suspect was her father, and I admitted both the minor and her seven-year-old sister,” Ndung’u said.
- Still, in Nyeri, another stepfather was sentenced by a court to 35 years in jail for defiling his 12-year-old stepdaughter
- Senior Resident Magistrate Mary Gituma convicted SMN of the offense of defilement after the court found him guilty of defiling the minor on diverse dates between August 2, 2021, and December 5, 2021.



Nyeri Law Courts.

A wave of sexual abuse involving step-parents targeting their step-children and subjecting them to horrific experiences has startled court users.

The victims are forced to bear the wrath of their parents even as they are exposed to the cruelty of their step-parents.

In Nyeri, a stepfather was recently sentenced to life imprisonment for incest after a Nyeri Magistrate’s Court found him guilty of defiling his three-year-old daughter.

Senior Resident Magistrate Mercyline Lubia said the evidence produced in court confirmed that the accused was the father of the child and that he was the last person seen with her before and after the incident.

The court heard that the accused committed the act on January 19, 2021, within Nyeri County.

He was also charged with assaulting the child and causing bodily harm contrary to section 251 of the penal code.

He denied the charges and five witnesses were lined up to testify against the accused, including the child’s great-grandmother.

Paul Ndung’u, the children’s officer at Nyeri Central Sub-County said he was notified of the case at the Nyeri County Referral Hospital, where the child was admitted because of a broken leg but

upon further examination, the doctors realized she was defiled.

“I was asked to find a safe home for the minor as the suspect was her father, and I admitted both the minor and her seven-year-old sister,” Ndung’u said.

Still, in Nyeri, another stepfather was sentenced by a court to 35 years in jail for defiling his 12-year-old stepdaughter

Senior Resident Magistrate Mary Gituma convicted SMN of the offense of defilement after the court found him guilty of defiling the minor on diverse dates between August 2, 2021, and December 5, 2021.

During the proceedings, the accused denied the charges and pleaded his innocence before eight witnesses who testified in the case implicated him in the crime.

The minor recounted how her stepfather sexually assaulted her while her mother had gone to the market on the fateful day.

“My father came to my room when my mother was away. He dragged me to his room removed my clothes and defiled me and threatened to kill me if I told anyone,” the minor testified.

She stated that it was not the first time her father defiled her as he used to do so every time her mother went to the

market.

The child’s mother told the court that her daughter had shared her predicament with her teacher.

“I was called by the teacher and informed of this incident. I reported my husband to the police station and took my daughter to the hospital,” the mother testified.

She told the court that the accused threatened to kill their children after the confrontation.

In his defence, SMN denied that he defiled his daughter and told the court that he had problems with his wife, who was cheating on him.

He said the wife wanted him to pay school fees for his brother-in-law.

The accused admitted that his house had two rooms and the children slept separately.

In her ruling the trial magistrate said the prosecution had proved its case against SMN.

“I have considered the accused person prayed for a lenient sentence. However, the victim was 12 years old, and the accused was her stepfather and was obligated to protect her. I sentence the accused to 35 years in prison,” Magistrate Gituma stated.

In another court, a man was sentenced to 20 years in prison after defiling three

girls who are sisters and impregnating one.

The case was brought before Nyeri senior Magistrate Mercyline Lubia who convicted JM after finding him guilty of defiling the sisters.

JM was charged with three counts where the charge sheet indicated that on diverse dates on January 24, 2020, and May 10, 2021, in Kieni West, Nyeri County, he defiled JWN, TWM, and MWM aged between 15,13, and 11 years respectively.

He denied and six witnesses were produced including the mother of the complainant who testified that on January 20 last year, she went to the funeral and left her children with her husband, after three days she returned home and found the children okay.

“On May 10, 2021, my daughter aged 15 years complained her leg was aching I took her to the hospital, and she revealed that she had missed her monthly periods for two months. I interrogated her, she revealed his father has been defiling not only her but also her sister,” her mother testified.

She testified that they went home and informed his husband that the daughter was expectant, but my husband only inquired if the daughter disclosed the man responsible but she concealed the truth.

“Later I interrogated my second-born daughter at first she denied it but later revealed her father also defiled her,” her mother said.

A minor aged 15 years told the court that his father started defiling her when her mother had gone for burial for three days.

“We had gone to fetch firewood with my younger sister when our father found us. He told me to accompany him to get charcoal, on our way home after we crossed a river he told me to lie down on the ground, removed my clothes, and defile me,” she testified.

“My stomach started aching when I was taken to hospital and I was found pregnant. I didn’t have a boyfriend,” she narrated.

In his defence, JM said he had no relation with the victims and that they came with his wife and he was just a stepfather and was educating them.

The magistrate noted that the prosecution proved beyond reasonable doubt that the accused committed the offence of defilement to the three minors and impregnating one.

JM was convicted to serve 20 years on the first count of defiling a minor aged 15 years, 20 years for a second girl aged 13 years, and 15 years for defiling an 11-year-old girl to run concurrently.

I Miss Your Beautiful Eyes



By: Safarova Hamrooy Qahramon

In the middle of the night, my sleep was disturbed,
I thought a lot, I couldn't bear it.
Questions also came from the heart –
Why did you become such an expatriate?

Yeah, it is possible that there is shortcoming in the household –

We may not have had bread, soup and salt
On a difficult day, it is known who is an enemy and who is a friend,
Why are you such an expatriate?

Do you remember the days without salt?
The sound that came out of your heart,
The days you spent patiently
Why are you such an expatriate?

Look, I miss your beautiful eyes,
You cried blood at night and laughed during the day

Say, mother, say, my mum
Why are you such an expatriate?

Let the cold summer be gone,
Even the autumn that tormented you
Let that face disappear too
Why are you such an expatriate?

Here is your sprout that has grown,
He grew up with lacking affection,
You will feel different after reading my poem,
Why are you such an expatriate?

May your bright days begin, Mother
If you cry, cry from happiness, Mother
Those who were jealous yesterday are envious today

Why are you such an expatriate?

You are my patience, my strength, my wings, my mother

You are the light of my eyes, my world, my mother

You are my darling, piece of my heart, my mother,

Why are you such an expatriate?

Gaza's Prayer For Peace



By: Karshiev Avazbek Sa'dullayevich

In the heart of Gaza, where shadows lie,
Underneath a sun-scorched, cloudless sky,
Amidst the echoes of a restless fight,
Yearns a land for peace, a dawn of light.

Wounds of past wars etched deep in the sand,

Silent cries from a bruised, beloved land,
Children's laughter, a distant song,
Long for peace to come, where it belongs.

In every prayer, a plea to the skies,
For tranquility where the eagle flies,
For the broken hearts, a gentle balm,
For the land's old soul to find its calm.

Through the rubble and the tear-stained night,
Dreams of unity take graceful flight,

In the streets where despair has walked,
Hope for peace softly, silently talks.

From the minarets, a call to the skies,
Echoes of serenity, where solace lies,
In the hearts of those who still believe,
In a future where no one has to grieve.

Gaza's prayer, whispered on the wind,
A timeless wish that peace might begin,
In every sunrise, every hopeful glance,
A dance with fate, a chance to enhance.

For every mother's tear, for every child's cheer,

For every soul who waits for peace sincere,

Gaza holds a dream of tranquil days,
Where peace blooms in a thousand ways.

The Final Call



By Alisandra Jumo

Only a coward dies many times before actual death

Only the dump keeps quiet when being oppressed

But those with courage stand for themselves

And I can rise above all standing tall and shout

It's over between us

Can I blame myself for this?

Definitely not, because

I was in need be so attached to you

Only I need was shelter, comfort and

safety

But, you gave me a love potion

Is this addiction or cloud of black magic?

I can't figure it out

Only the little I have'

Is now vanished into the atmosphere

You seize it all by force

I used to rob thieves but now is either ways

But I won't stop shouting until you stop

I won't stop preaching, that

Drugs you are merciless

Priceless and heartless

Till the final call,

I was emotionally coerced by what I

repute as liberator

Only came to destruct and destroy my

brighter future

Ended being slaved

You are so mean and cruel and now

I am a stranger of my own life

I am heart Broken

Drowned by my tears

Killed by my own bullet

I Love The Rain



love the rain, its gentle touch
A soothing balm, I love so much
It washes away my worries and pain
And fills my soul with peace again

I The pitter-patter on the window pane
A symphony of nature's refrain
The earth drinks in its sweet embrace
And all the world seems in its place

The air is cool, the scent is clean
A tranquil beauty, rarely seen
I love to dance in the falling drops
And feel the rhythm, my heart never stops

The rain brings life to every living thing
A gift from above, like a melody to sing
I love the rain, its calming sound
It brings me joy, wherever it's found

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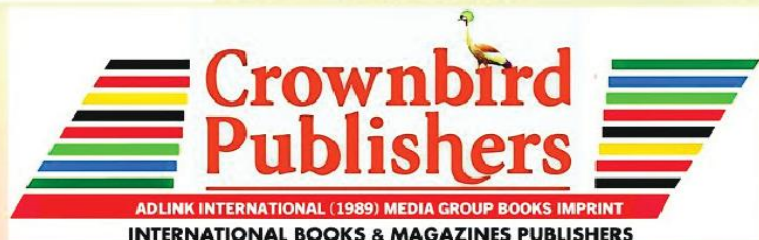
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SPORT

How Kiambu Golf Player Is Nurturing Sport's Talents

By: Felix Njenga
@themtkenyetimes

Worth Noting:

- He said that apart from the intricacies of golf under the MKGF he has started an initiative to provide books and other school essentials like pens, pencils, mathematical sets, among other things to the children so as to encourage them to embrace education too.
- "I always say that golf and education go hand in hand and I have started to give school essentials to the young golfers as I realized some come from underprivileged backgrounds and it has helped a lot improve the children's studies," he said.
- He said that he is also encouraging parents with children with disabilities to enroll into the program as golf is also played by the disabled persons.



Michael Karanga (in Blue Shirt) with young golfers at Kiambu Golf Club

Kiambu Golf Club Micheal Karanga top country amateur golf has found his niche in producing future golf stars by embarking on imparting his skills to school children.

The Michael Karanga Golf Foundation (MKGF) founded early 2022 through the Golf Mashinani initiative saw 200 children aged from 5-22 years enrol and seeked to give equal opportunities to aspiring golfers devoid of the social class.

Today over 400 young golfers drawn from public primary schools within Kiambu subcounty and high schools have enrolled in the initiative where they get training on Wednesday's and Thursday's free of charge during their school holidays.

"I am happy that the initiative I started has been embraced by both parents and their children. Parents have agreed to trust me with their children and release them to train golf and the number is growing where I know we will produce the best golfers here since they have started at an early stage and they have improved since they have come to love the sport," Karanga said.

He said that the young golfers train at the St. Andrews Ndumburi golf course where he started his golfing career and he envisions to help someone else become a success and also inspire more children to learn golf.

He said that apart from the intricacies of golf under the MKGF he has

started an initiative to provide books and other school essentials like pens, pencils, mathematical sets, among other things to the children so as to encourage them to embrace education too.

"I always say that golf and education go hand in hand and I have started to give school essentials to the young golfers as I realized some come from underprivileged backgrounds and it has helped a lot improve the children's studies," he said.

He said that he is also encouraging parents with children with disabilities to enroll into the program as golf is also played by the disabled persons.

He said that he has gone round the public schools to encourage them to embrace the golf sport where they will be going round the schools to train children who are interested.

"We want school children to know about golf and we will be going round schools to encourage the schools to allow golf sport into their extra-curricular studies," he said.

He said that the children are trained by certified trainers and called upon well-wishers to support the foundation by donating more golf clubs and golf balls so that children do not have to share.

Peter Njinu the children's coach said that he is amazed by the dedication of the children to want to play golf and

would want the sport taken to schools since the children only train whenever they close school.

"We want the sport to be taken to schools since we only train the children when they close school and some forget the skills," he said.

George Maara, a sponsor of the children said that the children's golf initiative has gone a long way to motivating them and also giving them a sense of belonging which should be encouraged by leaders.

Maara called on the county government department of sports to embrace such initiatives so that the county can develop sports activities.

"Kiambu county we have talents, we have resources and especially fields, other counties like Uasin Ngishu has developed athletics in Kiambu we have many talents which should be developed by the county government sports department," he said.

Lawrence Ndungu Kiambu golf club manager said that the club has opened its doors for school children and pub-

lic to be playing golf for free as a way of giving back to the society and also encouraging people to embrace the sport.

"We are happy to host the school going children under the Michael Karanga foundation. This is a noble thing of embracing children who are enthusiastic to learn how to play golf and we can say there is a future for golf sport," Ndungu said.

David Ndirangu a Kiambu golf club life member said that leaders should take care of the golf courses in the country which are under attack from being repossessed by county governments as their leases have expired so as to have continuity for the future of the golf sport.

"We want our children to start playing golf and there is a need for the courses to be protected by our leaders. The golf sports will give our children discipline and no child should be charged to play," Ndirangu said.

Eddy Mararo, a grade 7 pupil at Ribabai primary school said that they are excited to be given an opportunity to play Golf inside Kiambu golf club.

"It is a great feeling to play golf inside Kiambu golf club since it is where professional golf is played. Since I enrolled in the Michael Karanga foundation I have learnt a lot in golf and now I have improved and am ready to participate in competitions," he said.

Alicia Wanjiku studying in high school said that apart from being given a chance to play golf by the foundation it has gone further to sponsor needy students in paying for their school fees.

Wanjiku encouraged other students to join in the foundation and be positively engaged during their school holidays rather than stay at home.

"Karanga has embraced us and we always look forward to playing golf once we close school since it is a very exciting sport. We are also mentored by various experts regarding school work, we even learn life skills and it is a worthwhile experience," she said.





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Love Gardens	KAJIADO	FROM AS LOW AS Kes.950,000	Achievers Paradise Phase 2	NGONG	FROM AS LOW AS Kes.1.995M
Ushindi Gardens	NAKURU	FROM AS LOW AS Kes.1.095M	Achievers Business Park	NGONG	FROM AS LOW AS Kes.3.95M
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The Debt-Health Nexus: Disentangling Kenya's Public Debt Management And Its Impact On Healthcare Rights



By: Odhiambo Jerameel Kevins Owuor
@themkenyetimes



Debt-Health Nexus

Worth Noting:

- The ripple effects of debt-induced healthcare underfunding extend far beyond the immediate lack of resources. They manifest in subtle yet profound ways that undermine the very fabric of Kenya's healthcare system.
- For instance, the brain drain of healthcare professionals, a persistent challenge for Kenya, is exacerbated by the lack of competitive salaries and poor working conditions – direct consequences of constrained health budgets.
- The Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists and Dentists Union reports that over 4,000 doctors have left the country in the past five years, many citing inadequate remuneration and resource scarcity as primary motivators. This exodus of talent creates a vicious cycle, further deteriorating the quality of healthcare available to ordinary Kenyans.

In the recent past Kenya has been facing significant economic challenges, amidst all these a critical yet often overlooked connection exists between public debt management and the fundamental right to health. This intricate relationship, fraught with complexities and far-reaching consequences, demands urgent scrutiny as Kenya grapples with a burgeoning debt crisis while simultaneously striving to fulfill its constitutional obligation to provide quality healthcare to its citizens. This article delves deep into the multifaceted effects of public debt management on the realization of the right to health in Kenya, unraveling a narrative that is both deeply concerning and profoundly consequential for the nation's future.

At the heart of this analysis lies a stark reality: Kenya's public debt has skyrocketed to unprecedented levels, reaching a staggering 9.4 trillion shillings (\$65 billion) as of June 2023, according to the Central Bank of Kenya. This debt burden, now exceeding 67% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), casts a long shadow over every aspect of public expenditure, including the critical health sector. The implications of this debt accumulation on healthcare provision are both immediate and long-term, touching the lives of millions of Kenyans in ways that are often invisible yet profoundly impactful.

The most direct and palpable effect of Kenya's debt burden on healthcare is the crowding out of public health expenditure. As debt servicing costs continue to escalate, consuming an ever-larger portion of the national budget, the allocation for essential services like healthcare inevitably shrinks. A shocking analysis by the Institute of Economic Affairs reveals that for every shilling spent on debt repayment in the 2022/2023 fiscal year, only 0.3 shillings were allocated to healthcare. This stark disparity translates into tangible deficiencies on the ground: understaffed hospitals, shortages of essential medicines, and dilapidated healthcare infrastructure that fails to meet the growing needs of the population.

The ripple effects of debt-induced

healthcare underfunding extend far beyond the immediate lack of resources. They manifest in subtle yet profound ways that undermine the very fabric of Kenya's healthcare system. For instance, the brain drain of healthcare professionals, a persistent challenge for Kenya, is exacerbated by the lack of competitive salaries and poor working conditions – direct consequences of constrained health budgets. The Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists and Dentists Union reports that over 4,000 doctors have left the country in the past five years, many citing inadequate remuneration and resource scarcity as primary motivators. This exodus of talent creates a vicious cycle, further deteriorating the quality of healthcare available to ordinary Kenyans.

Moreover, the debt burden's impact on healthcare is not uniformly distributed across the population. It disproportionately affects the most vulnerable segments of society, exacerbating existing health inequalities. A 2022 study by the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) found that households in the lowest income quintile were three times more likely to experience catastrophic health expenditures compared to those in the highest quintile. This disparity is directly linked to the inadequacy of public healthcare services, forcing low-income families to seek expensive private care or forego treatment altogether. The right to health, enshrined in Article 43 of the Kenyan Constitution, becomes a hollow promise for millions, eroded by the fiscal constraints imposed by unsustainable debt.

The intersection of debt management and healthcare rights takes on added complexity when viewed through the lens of specific health challenges. Kenya's efforts to combat endemic diseases, improve maternal and child health, and address the growing burden of non-communicable diseases are all hampered by the fiscal straitjacket imposed by its debt obligations. For example, the ambitious Universal Health Coverage (UHC) program, a cornerstone of the government's Big Four Agenda,

faces significant funding shortfalls. The National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF), meant to be the vehicle for UHC implementation, covers only 20% of Kenyans as of 2023, far short of the universal coverage goal. This shortfall is directly attributable to inadequate government funding, a consequence of competing fiscal priorities dominated by debt servicing.

The debt-health nexus extends beyond domestic considerations, intertwining with Kenya's geopolitical relationships and development partnerships. As Kenya increasingly turns to international lenders to finance its debt, questions of sovereignty and policy autonomy in healthcare decision-making come to the fore. Conditionalities attached to loans from institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) often include austerity measures that can further constrain public health expenditure. A 2023 report by the East African Centre for Human Rights found that IMF-mandated fiscal consolidation measures led to a 15% reduction in per capita health spending between 2020 and 2022, directly impacting service delivery in public health facilities.

The COVID-19 pandemic served as a stark illustration of how public debt management can critically impact a nation's ability to respond to health crises. Kenya's limited fiscal space, constrained by its high debt burden, hampered its capacity to implement comprehensive public health measures, procure vaccines, and provide economic support to affected populations. The pandemic exposed and exacerbated existing weaknesses in the healthcare system, with devastating consequences. A post-pandemic analysis by the Ministry of Health revealed that excess mortality during the pandemic was 30% higher in counties with the lowest per capita health expenditure, highlighting the deadly consequences of underinvestment in healthcare infrastructure.

The ethical dimensions of prioritizing debt repayment over healthcare expenditure cannot be overlooked. It raises profound questions about intergenerational justice and the social contract between the state and its citizens. By allocating a disproportionate share of national resources to debt servicing, Kenya is effectively mortgaging the health and well-being of its current and future generations. This trade-off becomes even more poignant when considering that a significant portion of Kenya's debt has been incurred for projects with questionable economic returns, as highlighted in a scathing 2022 report by the Auditor General.

However, amidst this gloomy narrative, glimmers of hope and innovative solutions emerge. Some counties in Kenya have demonstrated that efficient resource allocation and creative

financing mechanisms can yield significant improvements in healthcare outcomes, even within the constraints of limited budgets. Makeni County, for instance, has garnered international recognition for its universal health coverage program, achieved through prioritizing health in its budget allocations and implementing innovative community-based health insurance schemes. Such examples offer valuable lessons in maximizing the impact of available resources and underscore the importance of sub-national governance in realizing the right to health.

Furthermore, the growing recognition of the debt-health nexus is spurring new approaches to debt management and healthcare financing. Debt-for-health swaps, where creditors agree to cancel a portion of a country's debt in exchange for investments in health programs, offer a promising avenue for aligning debt management with health objectives. While Kenya has yet to implement such a scheme, neighboring countries like Cameroon have successfully used this mechanism to boost healthcare funding. Advocacy groups and health rights organizations in Kenya are increasingly calling for the exploration of such innovative financing solutions.

In conclusion, the assessment of public debt management's effects on the realization of the right to health in Kenya reveals a complex and often troubling picture. The nation's debt burden casts a long shadow over its healthcare system, constraining resources, exacerbating inequalities, and undermining constitutional guarantees. Yet, this crisis also presents an opportunity for fundamental reassessment and reform. It calls for a reimagining of public finance priorities, innovative approaches to healthcare funding, and a renewed commitment to the principle that the health of a nation's citizens is its most valuable asset.

As Kenya stands at this critical juncture, the choices made in debt management and healthcare policy will shape the health outcomes of millions for generations to come. The path forward requires not just fiscal prudence but moral courage – a willingness to prioritize the well-being of citizens over abstract financial metrics. Only by squarely confronting the debt-health nexus and implementing bold, innovative solutions can Kenya hope to fulfill its promise of health as a fundamental right for all its citizens. The stakes could not be higher, for in the balance hangs not just the physical health of individuals, but the very soul of the nation.

The writer is a legal scrivener and researcher.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Breaking Barriers: The Historic Appointment Of Dorcas Oduor As Kenya's First Female Attorney General

By: James Kilonzo Bwire

The appointment of Dorcas Agik Oduor as Kenya's first female Attorney General is a momentous occasion that deserves hearty congratulations. This landmark decision not only highlights the progress made in gender inclusivity within the Kenyan government but also reflects a commitment to excellence in legal governance. Oduor's extensive experience and unwavering dedication to justice position her as a formidable force in the cabinet, ready to tackle the pressing legal challenges facing the nation.

Oduor's trailblazing career spans over three decades, beginning as a State Counsel in 1991. Her rise through the ranks to become the Secretary of Public Prosecutions showcases her legal acumen and integrity. With a wealth of experience in high-profile cases, including her roles in significant commissions, Oduor brings a depth of knowledge that will be invaluable to the cabinet. Her appointment is a tes-

tament to her hard work and resilience, paving the way for more women to aspire to leadership positions in Kenya.

Her educational background further solidifies her qualifications for this critical role. Oduor holds a Bachelor of Laws degree and a postgraduate diploma from the Kenya School of Law, along with a Master's in International Conflict Management. This robust academic foundation equips her to navigate complex legal landscapes and implement effective reforms within the judiciary. Her expertise will be crucial in enhancing the efficiency and transparency of legal processes in Kenya.

As Attorney General, Oduor will serve as the principal legal advisor to the government, a role that carries immense responsibility. She will oversee legal affairs, provide policy guidance, and ensure the implementation of laws that promote human rights and good governance. Her commitment to upholding the rule of law will be instrumental in restoring public confidence in the legal system, especially in the

wake of recent political upheavals.

Oduor's advocacy for legal reforms has been a hallmark of her career. She has consistently championed initiatives aimed at improving the efficiency and fairness of the Kenyan judiciary. Her proactive approach to legal challenges will be a significant asset to the cabinet, as she seeks to implement policies that serve the public interest effectively. Her leadership will inspire a new generation of legal professionals committed to justice and integrity.

Moreover, Oduor's appointment sends a powerful message about gender inclusivity in Kenya's political landscape. Her success is a beacon of hope for women aspiring to break barriers in male-dominated fields. It signifies a shift towards greater representation and empowerment of women in leadership roles, encouraging more women to pursue careers in law and public service.

The challenges ahead are significant, but Oduor's proven track record of handling complex legal matters posi-



Dorcas Agik Oduor as Kenya's first female Attorney General.

tions her well to address them. She will be tasked with navigating the intricacies of the legal system while ensuring that justice is accessible to all Kenyans. Her leadership will be crucial in promoting legal education and awareness, fostering a culture of respect for the rule of law.

In conclusion, Dorcas Agik Oduor's appointment as Kenya's first female Attorney General is not just a personal

achievement; it is a victory for women across the nation. Her expertise, commitment to justice, and advocacy for legal reforms will undoubtedly bring positive change to the cabinet and the Kenyan legal system. As she embarks on this historic journey, we look forward to witnessing the impact of her leadership on the future of justice in Kenya. Congratulations, Dorcas Oduor, on this well-deserved honor!

Strengthening Public Barazas: A Key To Effective Governance In Kenya

By: James Kilonzo Bwire

The Kenyan government's use of public barazas as a platform for citizen engagement in policy implementation is a commendable practice that should be strengthened and expanded. Barazas provide a vital link between the government and the people, fostering transparency, accountability, and responsive governance. As the country navigates complex challenges, harnessing the power of public participation through barazas is crucial for effective and inclusive development.

Barazas offer a direct avenue for citizens to engage with government officials, holding them accountable for service delivery and the use of public resources. This open dialogue enhances transparency in government operations, ensuring that citizens have a voice in the decisions that affect their lives. By providing a platform for citizens to voice their concerns and priorities, barazas enable the government to make informed decisions that are responsive to local needs. Furthermore, barazas bring together diverse groups of citizens, empowering them to actively partici-

pate in monitoring and providing input on government programs in their communities. This fosters a sense of ownership and civic engagement, as citizens take an active role in shaping the development agenda. By encouraging participation, barazas help to bridge the gap between the government and the people, creating a more inclusive and responsive system of governance.

During barazas, citizens have the opportunity to surface implementation challenges and bottlenecks that the government may not be aware of. This valuable feedback allows for timely course corrections, ensuring that government programs are effectively reaching their intended beneficiaries. By harnessing the knowledge and experiences of citizens, barazas contribute to the successful implementation of policies and programs. Regular interaction and feedback loops established through barazas help to rebuild trust between citizens and the government. This trust is critical for the effective implementation of policies, as citizens are more likely to support and engage with programs they have had a hand in shaping. By demonstrating responsiveness to citi-

zen input, the government can foster a culture of collaboration and mutual understanding.

However, the effectiveness of barazas can be hindered by historical and structural challenges. Research indicates that barazas have a chequered history, often viewed as tools for rubber-stamping decisions rather than genuine platforms for citizen participation. Issues such as power contestation, corruption, and intimidation can undermine the legitimacy of these gatherings, particularly in marginalized communities. For instance, in informal settlements like Mukuru Kayaba, residents have reported feeling excluded from meaningful participation, which diminishes the potential of barazas to serve as effective engagement tools. Addressing these challenges is essential to ensure that barazas truly reflect the voices of all citizens, especially the most vulnerable.

To further enhance the effectiveness of barazas, the government should consider institutionalizing them at all levels, not just at the district and sub-county levels. Increasing funding for barazas will ensure they are held more frequently, allowing for regular



Strengthening Public Barazas .

interaction and feedback between citizens and government officials. Strengthening feedback mechanisms is also vital to demonstrate the government's responsiveness to citizen input, showcasing how participation influences policy decisions and program implementation. Additionally, conducting regular assessments of barazas will help continuously improve their design and effectiveness, ensuring they remain relevant to the needs of the communities they serve.

Public barazas are a valuable tool for engaging citizens in the implementation of government programs and policies in Kenya. By enhancing accountability, transparency, and citi-

izen participation, barazas contribute to more effective and responsive governance. As the country faces complex challenges, harnessing the power of public participation through barazas is crucial for inclusive and sustainable development. The government should continue to invest in and strengthen this important mechanism for citizen engagement, ensuring that the voices of all Kenyans are heard and represented in the decision-making process. Ultimately, revitalizing barazas can empower citizens, enhance governance, and foster a more equitable society.

The Marijuana Paradox: Unmasking The Economic Potential Of Legalization In Kenya



By: Midmark Onsongo
@themkenyentimes

Worth Noting:

- Let us consider Nairobi County as a case study. Nairobi, with its dense population and vibrant economic activity, is a microcosm of Kenya's broader economy. If marijuana were legalized, the city could become a hub for the cultivation, processing, and distribution of marijuana products. The potential economic benefits are substantial.
- If Nairobi were to allocate just 1% of its arable land, approximately 10,000 hectares, for marijuana cultivation, the output could be staggering. Assuming an average yield of 1,500 kilograms per hectare, Nairobi could produce 15,000 tonnes of marijuana annually. With the current black market price of marijuana in Kenya ranging from KES 2,000 to KES 5,000 per kilogram, the legal market value could be conservatively estimated at KES 45 billion per year, assuming a mid-range price of KES 3,000 per kilogram.



Marijuana Paradox.

Marijuana, a plant that has sparked debates, fueled controversies, and created black markets worldwide, is at the center of Kenya's paradoxical drug policy. Every year, tonnes of marijuana are seized across the country, yet its continued illegal status only serves to perpetuate a system that profits from its very illegality. In Kenya, this contradiction is not just a legal issue; it is an economic one, deeply rooted in the vested interests of those who benefit from the current system. Kenya's government, while ostensibly fighting the war on drugs, seems to be turning a blind eye to the reality on the ground. Large quantities of marijuana are regularly confiscated, paraded in front of cameras, and then quietly disappear from public discourse. What happens to these seizures? Why does the government not question the effectiveness of a policy that repeatedly results in the same outcome? The reality is that marijuana is widely consumed across Kenya, particularly among the youth. Despite this, only a select few—those with connections to law enforcement or government officials—are making substantial profits from its sale. The question must be asked: What difference does it make if marijuana is illegal or legal? The current state of affairs suggests that the government may be apprehensive about the implications of legalization. If marijuana were legalized, it could destabilize the lucrative black market that benefits those in power. The legalization of marijuana could lead to the establishment of manufacturing industries, creating jobs for thousands of

young people who are already familiar with the product. This would not only provide a source of income for the youth but also contribute significantly to the country's economy. Let us consider Nairobi County as a case study. Nairobi, with its dense population and vibrant economic activity, is a microcosm of Kenya's broader economy. If marijuana were legalized, the city could become a hub for the cultivation, processing, and distribution of marijuana products. The potential economic benefits are substantial. If Nairobi were to allocate just 1% of its arable land, approximately 10,000 hectares, for marijuana cultivation, the output could be staggering. Assuming an average yield of 1,500 kilograms per hectare, Nairobi could produce 15,000 tonnes of marijuana annually. With the current black market price of marijuana in Kenya ranging from KES 2,000 to KES 5,000 per kilogram, the legal market value could be conservatively estimated at KES 45 billion per year, assuming a mid-range price of KES 3,000 per kilogram. This figure does not even take into account the value-added products like oils, edibles, and industrial hemp products that could significantly boost revenue. The legalization and commercialization of marijuana could create tens of thousands of jobs in Nairobi alone. From farmers and factory workers to marketers and distributors, the industry could employ an estimated 50,000 to 100,000 people directly. Indirect employment, including supply chain jobs and retail positions, could double this number. A tax rate of 20% on marijuana sales could

generate KES 9 billion annually in tax revenue for the government. This revenue could be reinvested into public services, infrastructure, and social programs, further stimulating the economy. The initial capital required to establish a legal marijuana industry in Nairobi could be significant, with estimates ranging from KES 20 billion to KES 50 billion for infrastructure, licensing, and regulatory frameworks. However, the return on investment would be equally substantial. Within the first five years, the industry could potentially generate a profit margin of 30% to 40%, recouping the initial investment and providing sustained economic growth. Beyond the economic argument, there is a social dimension to the legalization of marijuana that cannot be ignored. The illegal status of marijuana has disproportionately criminalized Kenya's youth, particularly in urban areas like Nairobi. Legalization would not only decriminalize the use of marijuana but also regulate it, ensuring that consumers are protected from adulterated products and that the youth are educated about responsible consumption. Moreover, the current illegal market is rife with corruption. It is an open secret that police officers in Nairobi and other parts of the country receive daily bribes from marijuana peddlers. These payments ensure that the trade continues unimpeded, with law enforcement turning a blind eye to the very activities they are supposed to suppress. If marijuana were legalized, this corruption could be curtailed. The trade would move out of the shadows, and the

money currently lining the pockets of corrupt officials could be redirected into the formal economy. To fully grasp the potential of a legal marijuana market, it is essential to understand what marijuana is and what it offers. Marijuana, or cannabis, contains over 100 chemical compounds known as cannabinoids. The most well-known are THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), which is responsible for the psychoactive effects, and CBD (cannabidiol), which has medicinal properties without the "high." The products derived from marijuana are diverse and include dried flower, used for smoking or vaporizing; oils and tinctures, concentrated forms for oral or topical use; edibles, food products infused with cannabis, such as cookies, chocolates, and beverages; and industrial hemp, a variant with low THC, used in the production of textiles, paper, and biodegradable plastics. The positive effects of marijuana include pain relief, reduction of anxiety and depression, and management of chronic conditions like epilepsy and multiple sclerosis. However, there are negative effects, particularly with excessive use, such as cognitive impairment, addiction, and potential mental health issues. The time has come for Kenya to have an honest conversation about marijuana. The benefits of legalization far outweigh the drawbacks, especially when considered in an economic context. Nairobi County alone could see billions of shillings in revenue, tens of thousands of jobs created, and a significant reduction in corruption related to the illegal trade. A systematic plan is needed to move forward with legalization. This plan should include clear regulations, a robust tax framework, and public education campaigns. It should also involve all stakeholders, from farmers to law enforcement, ensuring that the transition from an illegal to a legal market is smooth and beneficial to all. In conclusion, the continued criminalization of marijuana in Kenya is not only outdated but also economically detrimental. Legalization offers a pathway to economic growth, job creation, and social justice. The government must stop pretending not to see the reality and instead embrace the potential that a legal marijuana market holds for Kenya's future.

This article was scripted by;
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Living The Dream: Germany Nationalist Fulfils His 15 Year Dream Of Shooting Cinema Movie In Turkana

By: Sefu Sabila
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Ludwig Prince, a Germany nationalist and co-founder of a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) Startups Learning Lions in the desert county of Turkana is a man over the moon. After settling in Kenya almost two decades ago, his dream of shooting the movie and showcasing the beauty of Turkana finally came into reality, as his efforts yield to the success of a movie production Nawi set to premier in Nairobi on Saturday.

“Since coming to Kenya 15 years ago, I dreamt of shooting a cinema movie here. I was impressed by the culture and region, I wanted to share with the Western World, But it took over a decade for that dream to become a reality,” Prince said.

Despite the remoteness of the county from the country’s capital where there is ease access of modernized cinema production equipment, this did not kill his dream, his co-founder Kenyan Brizan Were said.

“Turkana is very remote; the gov-



Ludwig Prince (left) from Germany and Brizan Were (right) from Kenya, the sponsors of Nawi Movie and Co-founders of Startups Learning Lions living their decade dream after shooting a movie in Turkana County. Photo: Learning Lions..

ernment in Nairobi is so far away and vice versa. There is no established infrastructure to shoot with a big crew and heavy equipment. We also wanted to integrate our other project while shooting the movie,” he explained.

However, according to Prince, learning from each other and the zeal to grow together through Startups Learning Lions fueled his zeal for his dream.

“When we then witnessed the team not only work together but also grow and learn from one another, it validated our core beliefs at Learning Lions,” he said.

His contribution in shooting the movie Nawi, a feature cinema movie revolving around the Nawi a (Michelle Lemunya Ikeny) a teenage girl who is being forced to marry a stranger Shadrack (Ben Tekee) by his father Eree(Ochungo Benson) for wealth.

Shot in an area that fully practices child marriage and discards the future of the girl child in the community, the writer of the film Milcah Cherotich says it was an opportunity to spark the discussion on neglected topic of early marriages.

Also living her dream, is Mourine

Apuu the first female director from Turkana working with Prince and native of the Turkana says, the movie gave her an opportunity to show case her culture and other harmful practices within her community, as well as tell African stories opportunities for others.

“To me Nawi’s journey is a vessel for the untold stories of my people, carrying the responsibility to inspire positive change and eliminate harmful practices. Being the first woman director in my community to complete a full-length film is monumental. Words cannot capture the honour

and hope I feel,” she emotionally told Mt. Kenya Times.

Bring film enthusiasts from various parts of Kenya, Valentine Kinaga a filmmaker from Kisumu brought in her experience a seasoned screenwriter with passion in training and empowering youths in film making and storytelling, to effectively tell the untold stories from slums where she largely grew.

Aside from successfully producing a movie, Prince through Nawi funds has been able to support and rescue girls in Turkana at the danger of early marriages through building schools, with the first high school Wakanda Girls already completed with an enrollment of more than 300 girls.

Through the funds, the girls are able to receive stipends and supporting families to send their daughters back to school after long holidays.

While Prince and Apuu are living into their dreams, the residents of Kalokol in Loporio are also living their dream of having a campus Learning Lions NGO at shore of Lake Turkana, accessing computer literacy and education.

PPB Announces Voluntary Recall Of S-prazo Capsules Manufactured In India



By MKT Reporter

The Pharmacy and Poisons Board (PPB) has announced a voluntary recall of S-PRAZO (Esomeprazole Magnesium Delayed-Release Capsules 40mg), Batch No. SPZ-302, manufactured by Laborate Pharmaceutical India Limited.

PPB Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Fred Siyoi, said the recall follows a market complaint about a mix-up of blister strips, where some boxes contained two different blister strips, S-Prazo Capsules and Donystatin Tablets, within the same outer carton.

“In view of the above, the Board advises all pharmaceutical outlets, healthcare facilities, healthcare professionals, and members of the public to stop further distribution, sale, issuing, or use of the product batch and return the specified product

batch to their nearest healthcare facility or respective suppliers,” said Dr. Siyoi.

The Board advises pharmaceutical outlets, healthcare facilities, healthcare professionals, and the public to stop further distribution, sale, issuing, or use of the product batch and return the specified batch to their nearest healthcare facility or suppliers.

The Board remains committed to protecting public health and encourages reporting suspected cases of substandard medicines or adverse drug reactions. Reports can be made to the nearest healthcare facility or the Pharmacy and Poisons Board through the following channels: <https://pv.pharmacyboardkenya.org/users/mpublic>, *271#, mobile application: mPVERS both Android and iOS, email: pms@ppb.go.ke or pv@ppb.go.ke, and telephone no. 0795 743 049

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Sports >> *Thierry Henry has resigned from his position as France Under-21s manager after leading his country to a silver medal at the 2024 Olympics

Henry Steps Down As France Under-21s Boss



Thierry Henry. Photo/GETTY IMAGES

Thierry Henry has resigned from his position as France Under-21s manager after leading his country to a silver medal at the 2024 Olympics.

The 47-year-old signed a two-year deal to manage the side in 2023.

Henry led an under-23 side on home turf at the Paris Games, where France lost the final 5-3 to Spain in extra time.

The former Arsenal and Barcelona striker's contract had been due to run until after next year's

European Under-21 Championship in Slovakia, but Henry has decided to step away from the role.

"Winning the silver medal at the Olympic Games for my country will remain one of the greatest prides of my life," said Henry in a statement.

"I am incredibly grateful to the federation, the players, the staff and the supporters who allowed me to live a magical experience."

The France Football Federation said it "obviously regrets" Hen-

ry's decision, adding that he had "achieved the objectives set for him".

Henry won four of his six matches in charge of the under-21s, also winning eight of his 11 games in charge of the Olympic team – which included strikers Alexandre Lacazette and Jean-Philippe Mateta as overage players.

France finished top of their group following wins over the USA, Guinea and New Zealand, beating Argentina and Egypt in

the knockout stages before their final defeat by Spain.

Henry won 123 caps for France during his playing career, scoring 51 times.

BBC

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Sports >> *Ilkay Gundogan is being allowed to explore options to leave Barcelona this summer.

Gundogan Could Leave Barcelona After One Season



Ilkay Gundogan celebrates his goal against Hungary. PHOTO/UEFA EURO 2024

Ilkay Gundogan is being allowed to explore options to leave Barcelona this summer. The 33-year-old has only been at the Catalan club for one full season after opting to leave Manchester City on a free transfer. Despite being under contract for two more years, Gundogan has been told Barcelona will not stand in his way if he finds a suitable move. Clubs in England, Spain and Saudi Arabia are reportedly interested in the midfielder, who made 51 appearances across all competi-

tions last season as Barcelona finished second in La Liga. Barca boss Hansi Flick addressed speculation after Gundogan missed the team's season-opening win against Valencia because of concussion on Saturday. Flick, who previously managed Gundogan with the Germany national team, said: "I know him very well. I appreciate the player and the person he is. "We spoke about everything, but it will stay between us. It's not for you to know. I have a feeling he will stay."

Flick is keen to keep Gundogan, but the situation may be influenced by the complicated financial position at Barcelona.. They have reportedly been unable yet to register new £51m signing Dani Olmo because of the Spanish league's squad cost control rules. Barcelona are also believed to be willing to sell striker Vitor Roque before the transfer deadline. They recently announced the departure of captain Sergi Roberto, while full-back Julian Araujo left to join Bournemouth last week. Meanwhile Gundogan has an-

nounced his retirement from international football. After making his debut for his country in 2011, he went on to play 82 times for Germany and captained the side at this summer's European Championship. Though he described that as a "highlight", he added: "Even before the tournament, I felt a certain tiredness in my body and also in my head, which got me thinking. And the games at club and national level are not getting any less." BBC

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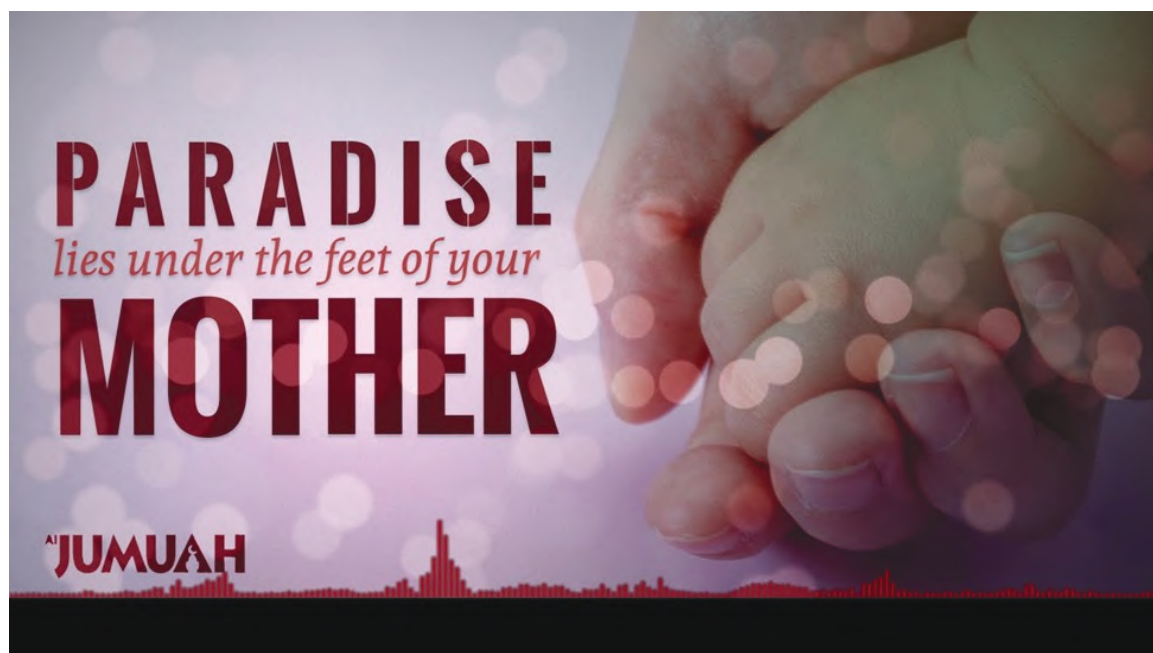
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Under The Feet Of Mothers Lies Paradise



By: O'roloy O'roqboyeva
Country: Uzbekistan



Worth Noting:

• Mother! What a magnificent being. Only she can endure sleepless nights for her child, tirelessly work for the growth of her offspring, and be ready to do anything for the peaceful life of her family, all while giving selfless love to those around her.

• Mother! The one who imparts life lessons, a compassionate and caring being. Someone who can always help both the young and the old alike, always guiding them on the right path. A loving mother who finds a way to everyone's heart in the family. A nurturing mother raising children who will benefit the nation, a beloved wife supporting her dear husband.

When we were children, or more precisely when we began to recognize ourselves, people would often ask us, "Do you love your mother more, or your father?" Naturally, most of us would answer, "My mother." This does not mean that we don't love our fathers. On the contrary, it is a high symbol of the deep love and affection we have for our mothers, a priceless expression of sincerity that even our fathers understand. The love, care, and respect we show towards our mothers never burden our fathers. For they too had mothers. Our appreciation and care for our mothers were passed down to us from our fathers.

Indeed, when we hear or say these words, an overwhelming sense of affection fills our hearts. And in our minds, the image of our kind and tender mothers begins to emerge. Honoring our mothers, placing them on a pedestal like a crown on our heads, is a legacy passed down from our fathers and grandfathers.

Mother! This word carries immense meaning within. The more you describe it, the more your heart feels at ease. Many poets have praised and composed poems about it. Great scholars have used the most precious words in their hearts to describe it. We see and feel the beauty of this world, the philosophy of life, and its meaning and enlightenment primarily through the image of a woman, her self-sacrificing heart, loyalty, and devotion.

Mother! What a magnificent being.

Only she can endure sleepless nights for her child, tirelessly work for the growth of her offspring, and be ready to do anything for the peaceful life of her family, all while giving selfless love to those around her.

Mother! The one who imparts life lessons, a compassionate and caring being. Someone who can always help both the young and the old alike, always guiding them on the right path. A loving mother who finds a way to everyone's heart in the family. A nurturing mother raising children who will benefit the nation, a beloved wife supporting her dear husband. Though she is a mother herself, she never forgets that she is also a daughter and is always ready to serve her parents. Perhaps it is her greatness in this that makes us all bow before her... For indeed, the mother, the woman, is the pillar of the world.

It is said that a human being's pain tolerance is comparable to the breaking of about 90 bones. But only in a mother's body do two hearts beat for nine months, and during childbirth, she endures the pain equivalent to the breaking of over 300 bones. The woman, who has been one with her child for nine months, offers her life to death and transforms into two beings. Remarkable, isn't it? She is willing to give her life, enduring pain and even wagering her life. That's why it is said that "Paradise lies under the feet of mothers." But what are we doing? How do we treat them?

For the mothers who gave their lives, who stayed up nights and days, who protected us, who looked after us, who were ready to sacrifice everything if a thorn pricked our feet, how do we repay them? When they are upset, instead of comforting them, we become the cause of their tears. Have we done anything to make them proud of us? Our mothers did countless good deeds for us without expecting anything in return. They sacrificed so much for us. Yet, we often make them listen to hurtful words like "You don't understand me," "I'm not a child anymore." Let's open our eyes wider, friends! Let's value our mothers while they are with us, never withholding our affection from them. If necessary, let's not hesitate to tell them every day, "Mother, I love you." In truth, we should show our love for our mothers not just through words but through actions. If we give them flowers, sweets, and even complete their tasks before they do, they will feel our love and affection.

A mother's heart, a mother's love, is like an immeasurable ocean that always surges in waves. It has the ability to see and understand, as clear as a bright sky. The first melody a child hears is the lullaby gently sung from a mother's heart. When we utter the sacred word "woman," the image of my dear and beloved mother, full of love, comes to my mind.

It is thanks to our mother that we learned to write and read, to solve various problems, and to treat the

people around us with kindness. My mother taught me to value life and every moment of it. She taught us to be hardworking and responsible people. My mother taught us to value people, care for loved ones, not to hurt children, and to respect elders. Each of us is grateful to our dear and beloved mother for all the great things she has done, for the light and warmth she gave us even before we were born. We must be grateful to our mothers for every bit of warmth, love, and affection they have given us.

In a distant village, there lived a sorrowful mother. Like many others, the calamity called war had brought sorrow and separation to her heart. There was a large tree in the middle of her yard, left as a legacy from her only son. Before going to war, the son had taken special care of this tree, loving it dearly. From the beginning of spring until late autumn, the mother would sit under the shade of this tree, longing for her son. She treated this tree as if it were her son, leaning on it, pouring out her sorrows to it. And every time she confided in the tree, she would think to herself, "The fruit of this tree is like my son's face, its rustling like my beloved's words." In winter and summer, the mother would care for the tree as if raising her child. Seeing this, we want to say, "Oh Allah, please protect this tree from the frost."

In conclusion, let us value the miracle of Allah, the angel on Earth, who has infinite love for us, and who, even though we are grown, still sees us as her children. Let's not hold back our love and attention from them. Let's not prioritize work or studies over our mothers. Remember, even if you carried your mother on your shoulders and circled the Kaaba, you wouldn't be able to repay even a single night of her care. So, let us always cherish them.

In my good and bad times, you were always by my side.

Don't let your heart be burdened when I am in pain.

Let the skies thunder and cry if they must,

But you, mother, please don't cry, please don't cry.